



HERSTMONCEUX ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MINUTES

All electors of the parish were invited to the meeting held on
Monday 25th March 2024 at Herstmonceux Village Hall

The Parish Meeting may by law discuss all parish affairs and pass resolutions about them. It is not a Parish Council Meeting but is the opportunity for electors to raise any issues relating to the parish.

AGENDA ITEMS

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|---|------------------------|
| 1. Welcome and Apologies | Cllr D Harding |
| 2. Minutes of previous Parish Meeting (28th March 2022) | Cllr D Harding |
| 3. Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report | Cllr D Harding |
| 4. Parish Council Finance Report | Cllr J Harrison |
| 5. Parish Business Plan 2022–2025 overview – Key Projects | Cllr D Harding |
| 6. Open Forum and Consultation on Parish Matters and Activities | |

Plus – Parish organisations showcasing of their activities

In attendance were:

Members of Herstmonceux Parish Council: Jo Angear; Stephanie Blackledge; Ketill Game; Shelagh Game; Emma Goodsell; David Harding; Jeremy Harrison; Bryan Naish; Ian Stewart (9)

ESCC Councillor: Bob Bowdler (1)

Wealden Councillor: Paul Coleshill; Mark Fairweather (2)

Parish Council Clerk / Responsible Finance Officer, Assistant Clerk, Parish Council Handyman – Clare Harrison, Maxine Hoad, Jamie Noakes (3)

Members of the Public and Local Organisation Representatives (29)

Apologies All Saints Parish Church / Knit and Stitch

Total number of attendees 43

Organisations represented and information presentations / provided by:

Cowbeeceh Bonfire Society
Herstmonceux Bowls Club
Herstmonceux Cricket Club
Herstmonceux Fitter Villages
Herstmonceux Free Church
Herstmonceux Scouts
Men's Shed
Rural Community Support Society
Sussex Police
Vitality Villages
Windmill Hill Windmill

1. Welcome and Apologies

Cllr D.Harding

The Chair of the Parish Council, Councillor David Harding officially opened the meeting at 8.05pm, having given all guests an opportunity to mingle and collect some refreshments. Cllr Harding extended a warm welcome to all who were in attendance and advised that the meeting would be recorded.

2. Minutes of previous Parish Meeting (27th March 2023)

Cllr D.Harding

Copies of the minutes were available in the room and the draft copy is on the Herstmonceux Parish Council Website. The minutes of the meeting held on 27th March 2023 were **Proposed for Approval**. Proposed Laurence Keeley, Seconded Ketill Game. **Minutes approved**. Final Minutes filed to the website.

3. Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report

Cllr D.Harding

Copies of the Parish Council Chairmain's Annual report were available in the room. Please see **Appendix 1**. Cllr David Harding read through his report. No questions followed. In addition, it was highlighted that the Parish Council office move had taken place and a warm welcome was extended to all. Items of community interest are available for viewing.

4. Parish Council Finance Report

Cllr J.Harrison

Copies of the Parish Council Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee Annual report were available in the room. Supporting financial papers included 2023-2024 year Statement of Accounts to date – 25th March 2024 . Please see **Appendix 2**. Cllr Jeremy Harrison read his report and advised all that if anyone had any questions to please speak to himself or the Parish Council Finance Officer.

5. Parish Business Plan 2022–2025 overview – Key Projects

Cllr D.Harding

The Chair reminded all about the Business Plan, by way of an example spoke about long term planning for the old Wealden Public Toilets. The Chair outlined how Business Plan objectives were monitored on a regular basis. No questions were forthcoming.

6. Open Forum and Consultation on Parish Matters and Activities, including:

A MOP – spoke of his longstanding ideas for a bypass of the Service Centre using Chapel Row. The Chair thanked the MOP for their suggestions and spoke of the known need for East Sussex Highways, County Council infrastructure capital project commitment and District Planning input into such matters.

A MOP requested clarification about the HPNP Policy 6, Lime Cross Pavilion project and whether or not it was purely dependent on the 70 homes being built. The Chair responded by explaining how projects would be funded, using CIL where possible, and national external funding, so as not putting capital expenditure on the electorate. So to a certain extent there is a dependency on funding from development. Some queries and responses followed about planning application delays and planning improvements plus the use of an external sports consultancy for community consultation, project research, data gathering and applying to national funding streams.

A MOP, school governor, spoke of speeding issues in the parish, traffic around the school crossing area and 20mph speed limit suggestions. The Chair of the Council spoke of the data collection through the BlackCat radar equipment and informed the MOP that the moving of the school crossing was agreed to not progress this line of enquiry but an alternative option of re-instating a school crossing patrol had been raised with ESCC Cllr and the school. The Chair of the Council also spoke about the changes to the carpark times and that this was mindful of traffic congestion at school drop off and pick up.

A MOP from the Water Management Board gave further information about the Lime Cross development delays / Lime Park surface water run off issues and advised that schemes needed to safeguard properties already in situ and were awaiting suitable solutions from the developer. A new scheme was awaited from the developer.

A MOP raised a discussion regarding the idea for an All-Weather track around the Recreation Ground. A word of caution was offered about potential misuse of such facilities creating health and safety issues.

A MOP raised the ongoing road safety issue at the Jet Garage (old Collins Honda) stretch of road. Concerns were acknowledged about RTC risks and flooding management / drainage issues from additional dwellings potentially being built in that vicinity. It was suggested that a reduction from 40 to 30 would help to reduce RTC risk. The Chair agreed that the Traffic Radar Black Cat equipment would be used to collect traffic data in this well known hotspot area.

A MOP spoke of improving access and walking for dog owners or a safe off the lead place – footpaths walks mentioned, public rights of way, footpaths working group keeping paths in good order. Additional bins and bag dispensers in situ to support responsible dog owners. Dog mess still an issue at the Recreation Ground. The recently renewed Wealden District PSPO supports the aim to keep our Green Areas free of dog mess and HPC will work with WDC to enforce where we can. A dedicated dog walking area was a suggestion raised from Lime Cross Survey feedback.

There was a plea from a local landowner for MOP to stay to the footpaths. A reminder was given that Public Footpaths are not a right to roam and dogs can disturb breeding birds and other wildlife. It was stated that it is possible for all to work together.

A further landowner highlighted some issues felt by local farmers and pleaded for responsible dog ownership consideration.

Wealden District Council and East Sussex County Councillors – There were no questions from the floor for the County or District Councillors.

Vitality Villages – activities on offer are coffee mornings, community allotment, Men's Shed. The allotment plot is worked on every Friday and all are welcome to go and garden. Men's Shed many projects – flag poles refurbishment, stiles refurbishment, outside chairs – the group are supported by Waitrose and Cowbeech Bonfire society. They accept local donations of equipment and wood and will come and collect. Vitality Villages work with the Free Church and Quaker meeting rooms.

Walking to school project is being promoted through the ongoing link with Fitter Villages who also provide a community link with the hospice.

Free Church – 2 community events were upcoming; free breakfast 1st Sunday of the month 10-12; drop in every Tuesday pm at Chapel Row, 1-4 free tea and coffee and cake. An activity example was the making of ‘Worry Monsters’.

Bowls Club dates to note – Open Day 20th April, 10-1. Big Bowls weekend 25th May

Cricket Club – teams update, membership is strong and activities are regular. 9 junior teams and 3 Saturday teams, plus practice evenings.

Windmill Hill Windmill – have upcoming social and open evening

Scouts – Membership is strong. A new squirrel unit for 4-6 year olds will be opening in June amongst other updates. A waiting list is operated.

Cowbeech Bonfire Society fundraising efforts have raised over £10k last year for charitable causes. Lots of events are held, to cater for all tastes.

Allotments updates - round half a dozen plots are vacant for parish residents who are interested in taking on an allotment tenancy.

Draft Wealden Local Plan – All are invited to review the documents, as much as they can (there are many documents) and feedback of comments to District Council, positive comments and challenges are welcomed. All are encouraged to pick up the strong points being proposed in the new Plan, such as the proposal for twice the distance between ancient woodland and development. This then helps to become planning legislation.

A MOP queried recent news about Council Houses being affordable. The MOP praised WDC for these efforts and said we needed to see more of this and this should go in the plan. It was felt that the selling on of Council Houses has left a reduction in stock. It was suggested that selling of Council Houses needs to be at market price. A healthy discussion ensued.

The Public Forum came to a close. The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance, input and support over the last year. **The meeting officially closed at 21:08hrs.**

Appendix 1.

Herstmonceux Parish Council Annual Public Meeting 25th March 2024 Report by the Chair of the Council

As the current Chair of the Council, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the Annual Parish Meeting. I hope you will find the meeting informative but do also feel free to ask any questions that you may have.

I would like to start with a few words of thanks to our staff, firstly to Clare, the Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, for her hard work and diligence again throughout the past year, the role of the Clerk/RFO is incredibly diverse and carries much responsibility. It's fair to say that nothing happens without the Clerk's input and/or oversight and it should not go without mention, that for the second year running the independent auditor's report came back with no required actions or improvements.

Clare has also been ably supported by Maxine in her expanded role as Assistant Clerk and you will doubtless have seen Jamie busily working around the village, carrying out a wide range of essential maintenance tasks and improvement actions.

So on behalf of the Council and the community, thank you.

Last May was also local election time. Several long-serving parish Councillors stood down and we welcomed new Parish Councillors into the fold as well as new District Councillors. As Chair, I would like to extend my thanks to all of the parish Councillors for their hard work and support and to the District and County Councillors for representing the interests of the Parish at District and County level.

During the last 12 months the Council has been focused on continuing to deliver the actions and outcomes set out in the Business Plan 2022-25. There are examples of this in the information around the room this evening but I will just highlight one or two.....

Firstly, some of you may have noticed that all of the street-lamp elements within the Parish have been replaced with modern LED lighting. This was achieved in 3 phases, the last of which completed late in 2023. The new LED lighting will undoubtedly drastically reduce electricity consumption for street lighting, this is of course of huge importance given the recent significant increases in electricity costs. It also serves the Council's priority for reducing our carbon footprint.

Our Neighbourhood Plan sets out the Council's policies for new development in the Parish with a focus on ensuring sustainable development with an appropriate balance of affordable housing and importantly maintaining the essential character of the existing built environment. This last year has seen the recent commencement of the development of 21 homes on land at the rear of what used to be Collins Honda. Planning permission for this site was first given in 2018 but following multiple additional applications to vary the number and type of dwellings, has taken until now to commence. Whilst we cautiously welcome the additional mix of housing this small development will provide, the Council will be looking to access a share of the CIL to fund infrastructure improvements to help offset some of the impacts of this development growth.

One example of gain from development completed this last year has been the footpath widening and resurfacing improvements between Woodland View and the Surgery. We are just awaiting installation of an additional waste bin at the bus stop to complete this action.

Another focus area has been on leisure facilities within the parish. Recently you may have noticed a new skate ramp has been installed in the skatepark on the recreation ground. This is part of the ongoing programme to refresh the skatepark equipment. This again is funded through development gain and we are also looking to local fundraising efforts. If you are a Wealden Community Lottery player, please do support Council's efforts to improve facilities for young people of the parish, who are instrumental in designing the upgrade layout and ramp choice, by signing up to our good cause which is to be launched on the WDC Community Lottery very soon.

For many years the Council has been discussing and planning redevelopment of the football ground area and adjoining land strip to create a new sports hub. This multi-faceted programme is largely dependent upon development gain from the neighbouring Lime Cross development of 70 houses but the current intentions of the developer remain unknown despite the Council's best efforts to engage. Work has commenced on the first phase however, and some of you may have noticed that the hedgerow between the football pitch and the hitherto unused land strip has been removed in preparation for land levelling and moving over of the football pitch.

The scope of this leisure facility programme has now been expanded to include looking at the feasibility for an all-weather track/path around the recreation ground to enable safe all-year round access for all sections of the community, and proposals for some upgrading maintenance works on the tennis court and MUGA surfacing and fencing. The Council has recently undertaken public consultation on all of the proposals for leisure facilities. We received more than 90 individual responses to this consultation and we look forward to taking the comments and views into account when designing the future stages of the programme.

The Council has recently taken ownership of Posey Green at Windmill Hill, following completion of the redevelopment of the Horseshoe Inn site. After consulting residents, landscaping options have been determined and in the coming months you will see the planting of a tree centrally on the green and some bench seating, a new trough and bulb planting. These improvements will have been largely grant-funded following a successful funding bid to WDC. Bike racks and a buggy park will also be installed on the narrow strip of land in front of the Children's Play Park up at the Recreation Ground.

Road safety in the parish remains a priority and in this respect the Council has been busy undertaking traffic surveys using the Blackcat radar equipment, to build an information base that helps inform road safety improvement measures and lobbying of ESCC highways. The Community Speedwatch team has also been busy throughout the year, undertaking regular monitoring and reporting sessions. The team of community volunteers has expanded a little but more volunteers are always welcome so please get in touch if you have an interest in helping make our roads safer. You only need to be able to offer a couple of hours per month.

I hope I have been able to give you a flavour of some of the ways that your Council has been working on your behalf. Of course, these improvement actions are additional to all of the 'business as usual' activity undertaken by the Council.

Thank you again for your attendance tonight and do please feel free to ask any questions

David Harding
Chairman, Herstmonceux Parish Council

Appendix 2.

Herstmonceux Parish Council Annual Public Meeting

25th March 2024

Report by the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Good evening everyone, I would like to introduce myself- I am Jeremy Harrison, Chair of The Parish Finance Committee. I joined The Council in May 2023, and would like to share with you what I didn't know then.....

Parish Councils can have an obligation to: Provide allotments, baths and washhouses, and burial grounds. Also, maintain monuments and memorials, provide and maintain pleasure grounds, pavements and verges, open spaces, cycle parks, mortuaries, public clocks, common pastures, conference facilities and community centres. In addition, they can support athletic, social or recreational clubs, assist with crime prevention, deal with ponds and ditches, and make dog control orders. They are obliged to: light roads and public places, provide litter bins, parking places and roadside seats. In the meantime, they may provide facilities for public meetings, public conveniences, and contribute to sustainable communities. If that wasn't enough, they shall

encourage tourism, contribute to traffic calming, road signs and transport schemes. They will review planning applications, maintain natural water springs, AND encourage well-being!

Amazingly, this list is not exhaustive- but it gives some idea of the financial obligations of The Council and shows how many functions are being handed to Parishes from District and County Council level. The main regular income streams for Herstmonceux Parish Council are the Council Tax Precept receipts, and rental income from the former Doctor`s Surgery in the main car park. The Parish Council is very prudent with expenditure, and proactive with seeking grant funding wherever possible for our major projects.

We are also spending the Community Infrastructure Levy, which is coming from recent housing developments, to improve community facilities in several areas. No capital or maintenance expenditure over £500 is made without obtaining three quotes, and costs are monitored constantly.

Our efforts in all areas have enabled The Parish Council to achieve a below inflation Increase in our Council Tax element payable in Herstmonceux this year. Households will see a rise of only 3.5%- Which equates to £2.98 per year, (or 25p per month) for a band D property. Our accounts are available here tonight- please feel free to read them and ask any questions regarding finance. We will be happy to answer those individually.

Thank you for listening, and I look forward to updating you next year.

Herstmonceux Parish Council
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

	RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS
Opening Balance		
Balance at Bank	183,339.45	
Cash in Hand		
Precept	98,218.00	
VAT Refund	4,655.56	
CIL Income	8,408.72	
CIL interest	349.54	
Bank Interest	1,236.21	
Emergency Plan Grant Income		
Other Income Inc Grant Awards	9.80	
Community Spaces Grant		
Old Surgery Tenant Rent	12,500.00	
Ground Rent-Leases/Licenses Hall,bowls	2,603.50	
Hire Charges-Green Spaces	600.00	
Dog & Litter Bin Emptying		1,443.75
Dog Bin Provision (new) inc licence		12.79
Dog Bin dispensers/fixing/bags		5.83
Recycling Partnership Waste Disposal		848.00
WC Community toilet Scheme Income fr	2,005.00	
WC Water Charges		305.00
WC Electricity Supply		
WC Cleaning Supplies and Materials		520.00
WC Cleaning Contractor		1,385.44
WC General Maintenance		66.24
WC Ground Rent		
WC Project fund (CIL)		
Old Surgery Deposit		
Old Surgery - Ground Rent		150.00
Old Surgery General Maintenance		180.00
Old Surgery Maintenance/Improvements		4,550.00
Office Rent		2,363.32
Office Electricity		356.94
Office General Maintenance		
Office Standing Charge		440.00
Data Protection Registration		35.00
Phones and Internet Charges inc Mobile		492.08
Website Provision		425.00
Barclay Card Fees		85.00
Bank Transfer		
Bank Charges	13.16	101.00
Insurance		1,931.45
Payroll Services		544.20

**Herstmonceux Parish Council
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

	RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS
Internal Audit		278.40
S137 Grant Giving		3,845.00
Donations		
Office Copier/Printer - Rental & Copying	57.10	1,632.52
Office Equipment Purchase		36.06
Office Equipment Maintenance		
ICT Subscriptions - 365 hosting / CCTV L		1,249.50
ICT Support		215.00
ICT Other - Inc Scribe Accounting Packag		1,397.65
Hall Hire		853.00
Fund - Chairman/Vice Chairman Fund/Hc		97.20
Staff Expenses		
Courses and Conferences		688.79
Subscriptions - Annual ESALC & NALC M		812.20
Subscriptions - Annual SLCC Membershi		348.00
Subscriptions - Annual WDALC Members		33.00
LandReg/Legal/Valuation Fees		815.00
Postage/Stationary/Sundries/Consumabl		43.88
Other Miscellaneous -Contingency Exper		314.91
Data Protection Officer		
External Audit		420.00
Barclaycard Payments	332.06	329.75
Elections Costs	3,080.14	6,160.28
Clerk/RFO Salary		██████████
ClerkRFO/ Tax		██████████
Clerk National Insurance Employer		██████████
Clerk National Insurance Employee		██████████
Pension Contribution - Clerk		██████████
Pension Contribution - Employer LGPS		██████████
Pension Contribution 2nd Rate - Emplo		██████████
Assistant Clerk Salary		██████████
Assistant Clerk Tax		██████████
Assistant Clerk NI Employee		██████████
Assistant Clerk NEST Employee		██████████
Assistant Clerk NEST Employer		██████████
Parish Council Handyman Salary		██████████
Parish Council Handyman Tax		██████████
Parish Council Handyman National Insur		██████████
Handyman NEST Employee		██████████
Handyman NEST Employer		██████████
Assistant Clerk NI Employer		██████████
Contingency Staffing Cover		
Parish Council Handyman NI Employer		

	RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS
Members Allowance Tax		162.88
Chairman's Allowance		249.60
Members Basic Allowance		324.00
Members Travel Allowance		
Allotment Annual Tenancy Fees	1,248.52	
Allotment Rent/Lease		800.00
Allotment Water Charges	255.00	297.48
Allotment Grass Cutting- 3 Yr Contract		850.00
Allotment Rodent Control		395.00
Allotment Association Subs	230.50	230.50
Allotment Scribe Package - Annual Cost		288.00
Allotment Scribe Package - Set up fee		147.00
Allotment Maintenance/Fencing		
FTP Community Footpath Programme		
GRD General Maintenance/Electricity	195.00	390.00
GRD Grass Cutting/Weed Control - 3 Yr		7,860.00
GRD Hedge Cutting- - 3 Yr Contract		3,283.67
GRD Maintaining the Parish (Handy Pers		23.99
GRD Skate Board Park inc Shelter Maint		425.00
GRD Recreation Ground Water Charges	2,839.48	920.89
GRD Seating		
GRD Signage		116.68
GRD Equipment		115.00
GRD MUGA/Tennis/maintenance		
GRD ROSPA Safety Inspections		178.00
GRD Fencing Works from Earmarked Re		2,764.58
GRD Skatepark Upgrade (CIL)		11,750.00
GRD Rec All Weather Accessible Track (
GRD Access Road/Carpark Maintenance		
GRD Ecological surveys (CIL)		
GRD Fitness/Outdoor Gym (CIL)		
HWY Urb Verge Cut & Posey Grn - 3 Yr	8,426.00	6,500.00
HWY Christmas Decorations		514.44
HWY Finger Post maintenance/repair		571.60
HWY Finger Post Cleaning - 3 Yr Contrac		110.00
HWY Composite Bench Cleaning - 3 Yr C		70.00
HWY Bench Provision		
HWY Bench Maintenance		
HWY Grit Bin Refill		
HWY Notice Board Repairs		245.00
HWY Defib Supply/Fitting/Maintenance		471.99
HWY Bus Shelter maintenance		15.00

Herstmonceux Parish Council
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

	RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS
HWY Bus Shelter Cleaning - 3 Yr Contrac		
HWY Public Area Maintenance- 3 Yr Con		2,615.00
HWY Speedwatch Expenses		387.25
HWY Telephone kiosk maintenance		
HWY Bollards Installation/Maint		
HWY Flowers&Plants		84.00
HWY Enhancing the Service Centre (CIL		
HWY Stunts Green Telephone Box		
HWY Bus Shelter Cricketing Lane Move		
HWY Posey Green Landscaping and sea		655.00
STL Streetlighting LED project Phase 2 &		24,092.50
STL Energy Charges		7,246.86
STL Maintenance Charge	80.10	750.75
STL Wayleave Payment	1.86	
TRE Trees and Landscaping general wor		
TRE Kings Coronation Planting		
TRE Kings Coronation Other		182.00
Emergency Plan Resources		
Elections		
General reserves		
Lime Cross Sports Centre Project (CIL)		2,705.00
Lime Cross S106 Green Space/Play Park		
PlayPark Equipment (CIL Un-Allocated)		721.80
Herstmonceux Village Hall - Refurbishme		2,793.00
Defibrillator - Emerg Plan Reserves		
LCAV Use CC	133.94	
S106 - Woodland View Footways Improv		1,536.31
Gardner Street Bus Shelter Reinstallati		2,997.18
New Office Signage (CIL Un-allocated)		852.40
Flagpole Installation (CIL Un-Allocated)	300.48	960.96
VAT	18,070.29	16,897.90
	163,847.76	200,621.00
Closing Balances:		
Balances in Bank Account		126,566.21
Cash in Hand		
TOTAL	327,187.21	327,187.21

Appendix 3.

Herstmonceux Parish Council Annual Public Meeting

25th March 2024

Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer Report

Explaining my job:

Role and Responsibilities - The Clerk/RFO is the Proper Officer of the Council and I am under a statutory duty to carry out all the functions, and, in particular, to serve or issue all the notifications required by the law of a local authority's Proper Officer. I am responsible for ensuring the instructions of the Council in connection with its function as a Local Authority are carried out.

I advise the Council on, and assist in the formation of, overall policies and procedures and produce all the information required for making effective decisions and to implement constructively all decisions. I am accountable to the Council for the effective management of all Council resources and will report to Council as and when required. I am the Head of Paid Services and line manager to the Assistant Clerk and Parish Handyman.

I am also the Responsible Finance Officer and therefore responsible for all the financial needs of the Council and the proper administration of its finances, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Council and hold responsibility for carrying Council through an annual mid-year and year end audit.

I am a fully qualified professional, legal and procedural advisor who manages, independently and objectively guides and supports the Council in its duties, (must do's), and its powers, (can choose to do), and limitations. I support Council's communication with the community, promote and inform the parishioners about the Council and its activities.

Looking Back over the last year:

This has been another busy and successful year for HPC in which we have embedded a new Council following the elections in May 2023. We thank our new Councillors for taking up the Council reins and for committing to an intense induction process, including joint new Councillor training sessions with Hailsham and Hellingly Councils. We thank the previous Councillors (who did not re-stand for election) for their hard work and endeavours over the previous council term.

This is a fast paced, strong visioned, busy and hard working Parish Council. Since May, all new Councillors have been involved in additional Parish Council activities, over and above scheduled meetings, such as by attending the district JAG, Neighbourhood Plan Project Management Group, Wealden Council events, East Sussex Association of Local Council training and Parish Council working groups that are implemented and run for specific project and research work. The 3-year operational business plan has significantly progressed and we have also managed to squeeze in an office move!

The continued effectiveness and progressive development of the staff team remains a strong aspect of the successful business delivery for this Council. The office staff have defined roles and responsibilities yet are flexible and willing to progress into new areas of experience and learning. This provides for better business continuity and is an important aspect of managing business risk. All staff access training opportunities that are reflective of their job responsibilities and share mentoring and development opportunities with other nearby councils.

Weekly health and safety checks take place. This reporting activity is imperative for the safety of the members of the public and the ongoing day to day functions of the recreational and green spaces of the Council, the old Wealden public WCs and the footways to the service centre.

Budget setting for 2024-2025 was completed (from which the Parish Council precept is set) with full engagement of the Councillor Working Groups and Committees of the Council. Continued use of the 3-year operational business plan monitors priority pieces of work and CIL spending and plans for projects ahead. Capital spend projects delivered in this last year and the LED streetlamp big changeover and the completion of Phase 1 of the skatepark revamp. Grant funding is secured for other projects where appropriate and Posey Green will be receiving a makeover from Wealden funding with the aim to improving and increasing use of this green space.

We let allotment plots and work with the Allotment Association to ensure the smooth running of the site at Stunts Green. We manage 3 year contracts for parish (urban) verge and hedge cutting; grounds (and allotment) maintenance and grass cutting; maintenance of public spaces and street furniture. The parish fingerposts are monitored and repairs and refurbishment carried out when necessary. We run a comprehensive website plus facebook and Instagram pages which offer all sorts of information. Council meeting dates, agendas and minutes are all found on the website. We have also re-instated our quarterly newsletter, distributed with the Parish News.

This is a fun and diverse job, no 2 days are ever the same. An ever-shifting workload can arise for many reasons but can completely throw out a planned schedule and create many hours of attention - including investigation of historic files, research, un-scheduled meetings and communication with external bodies. These off-piste can arise from a phone call, an email, a visitor to the office, new and old council projects creating hours of meeting prep and admin.

Your Parish Council and staff are all looking forward to the next 12 months and progressing the ideas and ambitions that have arisen from the recent whole community survey consultation, and the Lime Cross sports pavilion project, Policy 6 of the Herstmonceux Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

Appendix 4.

Herstmonceux Parish Council Annual Public Meeting

25th March 2024

Assistant Clerk Report

My name is Maxine Hoad, I am the Assistant Clerk to Herstmonceux Parish Council. My role is to assist the Clerk, Clare in the day to day running of the Parish Council. We like to ensure the Parish Council has regular open office hours to increase engagement with the local residents. I support the

Clerk and appropriate Committee Chairperson in preparing agendas and supporting meeting papers for decision making. I hold responsibility for organising and minuting the Strengthening Local Relationships and clerking the Amenities meetings, and any other meeting from time to time depending on the needs of the Council.

Part of my role is to support with the administration of Herstmonceux Allotments. They are located at Stunts Green Fruit Farm with 54 individual plots. It is overseen by an Allotments Association whose members are residents of the Parish. The Allotment Association do a wonderful job, welcoming new tenants, providing support to the tenants and meeting with the Parish Council reporting of any maintenance needs and organising events. Currently, the annual rent is £35 per full sized plot, which may be reviewed by the Council in accordance with the Allotments Act 1907-1950. There are vacant plots, so do please contact me at admin@hersmonceuxparish.org.uk if you are interested in becoming an allotment plot tenant.

Supporting community action groups such as the Speedwatch group who are regularly doing sessions to make the community safer but are in need of more volunteers, if you would like to join please contact myself admin@herstmonceuxparish.org.uk

I really value and love my role in supporting the Councillors who do a fantastic job working hard to maintain and manage the parish green spaces and public areas in Herstmonceux, Cowbeech and Windmill Hill. It really is a privilege to work with these selfless, community minded people who take time out of their own busy lives to provide support to their community.

Appendix 5.

Herstmonceux Parish Council Annual Public Meeting 25th March 2024 Parish Council Handyman Report

Hello, Jamie here,

I have been doing the Handyman role for four and a half years now, time flies and I am having fun! I am still enjoying my job and I like being out and about in the Parish and seeing you all. Thank you for your useful feedback, your compliments and when you tell me if something isn't quite right or may need fixing. This is helpful to the Council as I carry out weekly checks on all of the Parish Green spaces and report back into the office about jobs that need doing.

I feel very proud of my role in this parish and working for the Parish Council, I try to keep the parish tidy and with the help of community volunteer litter pickers, we keep the parish as free of litter as we possibly can. Please support us all in this by using the many parish litter bins that are dotted around the villages and green spaces. Please try to empty your drinks cans before putting them in the litter bins as this makes it difficult for me to empty when liquid is sloshing around the bottom of the bin bag. Above all, please pick up after your dogs and encourage others to do so as this is the most unpleasant task for me to do. This is especially important for the safety of all recreation ground users, where if dogs are let off their leads, some owners neglect to pick up after their dogs. Please be a responsible dog owner for all of our benefit and health and safety.

I have been reporting blocked drains to ESCC, fingers crossed the steward will come out and inspect them for some drain clearance. I also try to keep the pavements clear of mud and leaves for you in the winter months, and the bus stops free of spiders and cobwebs! I still really enjoy working outside, especially in the summer although I don't mind the cold and the rain either.

I still open and close the public loos but the drains and plumbing are so old that these frequently cause blockages and out of order notices. Please be reassured that we do all we can to provide these community facilities but the old Wealden Toilet building is in need of a major upgrade.

I am pleased to see all of the spring bulbs flowering around the rec, verges and on the Village Green. I will be going ahead with the sunflower planting along the Rec fence line again.
Jamie Noakes, March 2024