WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



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WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES of proceedings for the monthly meeting of Washington Parish Council held on Monday 12th December 2022 (these will form the minutes)

PRESENT: Cllr S Buddell (SB), Cllr B Hanvey (BH), Cllr P Heeley (Chairman), Cllr T Keech (TK), Cllr A Lisher (AL), Cllr J Luckin (JL) and Cllr J Thomas (JT)

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr Paul Marshall (WSCC). Apologies received from Cllr Joan Grech (HDC) and Cllr James Wright (HDC).

ALSO: Clerk to the Council, Ms Z Savill

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 6

ABSENT: 0

The Chairman opened the meeting at 19:30 hours.

24.66. To Consider accepting Apologies for Absence None received.

24.67.To record Declarations of Interest from members in any item to be discussed and Agree Dispensations.

No declarations of interest as defined under the Localism Act 2011 and the Parish Council Code of Conduct were made.

24.69. To Approve and Sign the Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting on 7th November October 2022

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 3rd October 2022 be **APPROVED** and duly signed by the Chairman

24.70. Public Speaking

Two residents spoke on the further information being consulted upon for the planning application at Rock Quarry, The Hollow, Washington. Their main concerns were the risk of pollution if there is no clay liner, and traffic dangers from the increased HGV movements especially on the Hollow/A28 junction. They questioned the validity of some of the data in the applicant's new 166-page report. They criticised WSCC for the shorter consultation period on such a highly technical report, and right before Christmas, when 30 days had been previously agreed. One of the

applicants, Mr Richard Goring for Wiston Estate explained that fundamentally the restoration scheme proposals remained unchanged; the majority of the report was technical information in response to questions from stakeholders in the original consultation. He answered questions and confirmed his commitment to working with the community to ensure the project is done as well as it can be. His planning consultant had requested an extension to the consultation period to later in January or February.

Cllr Paul Marshall made a number of comments and shared concerns regarding the A283 junction with the Hollow. He agreed to contact WSCC to support an extension of the consultation period. The Chairman pointed out the last consultation responses demonstrated that the traffic issues were a major concern. He pointed out that it was particularly important for WSCC to consider the potential nightmare scenario if the proposed Rampion cable route and construction compounds went ahead in the same time window. He thanked the speakers and informed them that the PC would be discussing the application later in the meeting and to request an extension to the consultation deadline.

Two members of the public left the meeting.

24.71. Reports from the County Councillor

Cllr Marshall reported on the following:

- Boundary Review: Washington parish had been restored to the Arundel and South Downs
 parliamentary constituency in the Boundary Commission's latest amendment in the recent
 consultation proposals. WSCC's response supported the Parish Council's and Storrington &
 Sullington Parish Council's original position, and he would share this after the meeting. The
 Chairman advised that the Parish Council had made its response supporting the amendment
 and which was published on its website.
- Rampion 2 Consultation 2022: He shared the PC's disappointment that no alternative cable
 route avoiding the village had been proposed in the recent consultation. He was concerned
 about the multiple access points being proposed at existing junctions along the A283 in the
 parish and that construction traffic should avoid Storrington village. He would ensure that
 the PC gets a copy of WSCC's submission as stakeholder.
- WSCC 2023/24 budget. Despite a circa £8 mllion gap in the WSCC draft £700m budget for
 next year, there were no planned cuts in the current proposals. The big demands are in
 services for children and young people and adults, particularly with the cost of living crisis.
 WSCC had recently released £3million to district and borough councils, £4.8m for the
 household support fund as well as providing significant funds to food banks and energy
 vouchers for the winter.
- Kithurst Hill Car park: WSCC has extended its management agreement until end of January 2023 and is engaging with HDC and Storrington & Sullington Parish Council on finding a long-term solution to keep the car park open to the public.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Marshall for his reports. Two members of the public left the meeting

Reports from the District Councillor: None.

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24.72. To Report matters arising from the last meeting:

The following information was noted:

- Rampion 2 consultation: receipt of the Parish Council's consultation submission was confirmed by Rampion on 28/11/2022. The submission document is published on the PC's website.
- Boundary Commission consultation: receipt of the the Parish Council's submission was confirmed by the Boundary Commission on 4/12/2022. The submission document is published on the PC's website.

24.73. Planning Applications, Decisions, Appeals, Planning Compliance and other Planning issues

24.73.1. To Consider a consultation response to the following applications:

WSCC/028/21 - Rock Common Quarry, The Hollow, Washington, Pulborough, RH20 3DA

The continued winning, working and processing of sand from the existing Rock Common Quarry, the importation of inert classified engineering and restoration material, the stockpiling and treating of the imported material, the placement of the imported material within the quarry void and the restoration and landscaping of the quarry

In view of comments expressed during the public session earlier in the meeting it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to defer the PC's discussion on the application to the next Full Council meeting on 9th January 2023. This would allow the PC more time to study the new information submitted by the applicants and responses from the public.

DC/22/2098 - Aotearoa Sanctuary Lane Storrington West Sussex

Removal of existing detached garage. Remodelling of existing dwelling incorporating erection of front, side and rear extensions, roof extensions and alterations including installation of dormers and windows, fenestration changes and associated works.

It was noted that the only difference on the original application is a proposal to extend the garage an additional 18". Following a discussion it was agreed this would be a minor change and **RESOLVED** to make no objection.

24.73.2. HDC and SDNPA Planning Decisions (for significant applications in the Washington parish): It was noted that none were reported since the last meeting.

24.73.3. Planning Compliance – for information

The Planning Compliance Closure Statistics for November 2022 from Horsham District Council were previously circulated and noted.

24.73.4. Appeals

It was noted that no appeals were lodged or decided in the parish since the last meeting.

24.73.5. Road Closures for information

West Sussex County Council had reported urgent repair and maintenance work on the A283: Wiston Bends, Wiston commencing 5th December 2022. A notification was previously circulated and published on the Parish Council's website.

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24.74.To Review, Consider, Recommend and Report on Parish Council issues, including Maintenance

24.74.1. To Report any maintenance issues affecting Parish Council property outside the Recreation Ground and Agree any required action

None raised.

24.74.2. To Accept the resignation of Cllr Kate Capella and Declare a Casual Vacancy on the Washington Ward

The Chairman was sorry to report the resignation of Cllr Kate Capella due to personal reasons. He had accepted this in writing on 1st December 2022 on the Parish Council's behalf. A casual vacancy would be declared for the Washington Ward. **RESOLVED** to formally accept the resignation effective from 1st December 2022.

24.74.3. To Agree the 2023/24 Calendar of Council and Committee Meeting Dates
RESOLVED to ADOPT the draft 2023/24 meeting dates for the Council and Committees. A date for the
Annual Parish Meeting 2024 to be decided next year.

24.74.4. To Review the grant allocation towards a new Forestry Track in Georges Lane

A copy of the National Trust's (NT) response to the Council's concerns about the poor state of the charity's new track were previously circulated. Further email correspondences from a resident questioning the Council's original decision in 2021 to award a £12k grant for the project was also circulated. It was noted that the NT was "disappointed that the work done had not, in parts, held up in the way that they had hoped". They planned to tarmac the bottom end by the farm entrance in the spring but believed that the upper sections were performing well. It was their intention to let the track settle over the winter and review its performance in the spring, together with traffic surveys to find out who is using the track and for what purpose.

AL commented that the track was not built to the more robust Forestry Commission specification as understood by the Parish Council, i.e. a substantial layer of hardcore with built-in drainage and a layer of chippings with a fine top dressing. It was noted that a number of residents had reported concerns about the proliferation of pot-holes and rapid deterioration of the new track within weeks of completion. They had complained that the Council should not be paying such a substantial amount of public money to the charity for unsatisfactory works. The Chairman reminded the Council that their original grant offer was the catalyst to get the project onto the NT's priority list or risk losing the only opportunity altogether. The track forms part of an important bridleway access to the NT car park and the South Downs National Park, and opportunities to support bridleway improvements are supported by the community in the adopted neighbourhood plan. But the Council had already rolled over the grant for a second financial year and the track was clearly not fit for purpose and was unlikely to change by next March. He proposed that with regret, the Council was not in a position to hold the grant open for these reasons. Following a further discussion it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to agree the proposal. The Council had not been made aware of any third- party liabilities attached to the original grant offer.

The £12k reserves would be re-allocated in the budget for review at the Council meeting on 9th January 2023.

24.74.5. To Discuss and Agree arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting on Friday 10th March 2023 It was noted that the APM booking is confirmed by the Village Hall to take place on Friday 10th March 2023, from 6.30pm for a 7.30pm start, and not 17th March. The Chairman proposed to replicate the agenda from the APM which had to be cancelled earlier this year, with the same speakers. SB reported his apologies due to a pre-planned family celebration. AL reported that he may also need to give his



apologies for reasons disclosed at the meeting. Following a discussion it was **RESOLVED** to agree the Chairman's proposal. Clerk to contact the speakers with invitations and an APM agenda.

24.75. Washington Recreation Ground Charity

24.75.1. To Report any maintenance issues on the Recreation Ground and Agree any required action – This item is for urgent matters which cannot wait until the next OSRA meeting

It was reported that the defibrillator outside the Village Hall was showing a red warning battery light due to the extreme cold temperatures. The unit was being stored safely in another location and would be returned when weather conditions improved. The information was noted.

24.75.2. To Report the 2022 Annual Return for the Washington Recreation Ground Charity (WRGC) It was noted that the report of the Annual Return for the WRGC would be deferred to the next Full Council Meeting on 9th January 2023.

24.75.3. Rampion 2: To consider a quotation for land access negotiations for the proposed inshore cable route through the Recreation Ground

It was reported that RWE would at some point be approaching the Council to negotiate land access to the Recreation Ground for the proposed Rampion 2 cable route. RWE's Commercial Manager had indicated at the Council's Open Spaces Committee meeting on 21st November last, that RWE would fund up to £6,500 for professional fees incurred by the Council for land access arrangements. He agreed to put this in writing, together with the compensation figures. The information was not made available in time for the meeting. A copy of estimated costs for specialist advice from Savills was previously circulated., with terms and conditions.

The Chairman commented that it may be necessary for the Council to engage in negotiations in the event that the cable route is approved by the planning inspectorate, and that this should not prejudice the Council's position on its views of the proposed cable route.

Following a discussion, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to chase for confirmation of the offer of fees and compensation and to seek a confirmed quotation from Savills on the land access process.

24.75.4. To Consider making a TPO application for the Washington Scarlet apple tree and a request to take cuttings for growing more specimens

JL reported that the Washington Scarlet (WS) apple tree at the Council's allotment has been registered after it was accepted as the official name at a meeting of the Register of Local (Fruit) Cultivars at Reading University last month. Further DNA results were anticipated early December 2022 which may reveal more interesting information about the variety. The registration was confirmed in an email (16th November 2022) to JL from Mr Roger Brown, a fruit trees expert from Steyning, and shared with Councillors. It was noted that the experts at the Reading meeting, including representatives from the Royal Horticultural Society, the National Fruit Collection and National Trust, were intrigued by the story of the WS, thought to be a rare and pretty heritage variety which produces apples of a good flavour. Mr Brown is seeking further history about the specimen. He had advised that it was possible the official name may have to change if it can be identified as an old lost variety, but it could likely still be known locally as the Washington Scarlet. This includes the apple tree at Frankland Arms which was grown from cuttings taken from the allotment tree by Mr Brown many years ago. Several were sold at one of the Village Days and it is believed there may be more trees in the parish yet to be discovered. He had agreed to notify JL of the DNA results and of any further information about the specimen.

Councillors considered and unanimously **RESOLVED** to agree Mr Brown's to take cuttings from the allotment WS tree this winter in order to grow more specimens. It was noted that Mr Brown had invited anyone to let him know if they wanted a WS of their own so that he could order enough rootstocks. Maiden trees would be available next Autumn for approximately £25 and he hoped to plant one at the

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Steyning Community Orchard in February 2024 or the following year. JL suggested that given the rare variety, the Council should protect the one on the allotment which it owns. It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to make an application for a Tree Preservation Order to protect the tree. Clerk to action

24.76. To Receive reports from Committees, Working Parties and Outside Bodies

24.76.1 To Report on the CIL Working Party Meeting on 14th November 2022

JL gave a verbal report on the online CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) meeting on 14th November which she attended with SB and AL. BH, Chairman of the Working Party, had been unable to attend as he was unwell. The Clerk could not attend due to audio technical issues. Members had discussed and evaluated responses to the Council's recent CIL Survey which closed 31st October last. There had been 19 responses with a sizeable proportion supporting the Village Hall projects, as well as existing projects identified by the Council. Each were assessed according to the Working Party's action programme including statutory requirements for CIL spending.

The following 4 projects were recommended for further review in the Council's 2023/24 budget discussions:

- Village Hall: new floor in the Chanctobury Room; sound-proofing between the rooms; wifi.
- Replacement gates to the Play Area.
- Water supply to the Allotment.
- Millford Grange Country Park improvements.

It was noted that recommendations for the Country Park improvements could not be provided as the information was still pending from SB.

The CIL Survey responses had been previously circulated to Councillors. The Chairman advised that the Council needed a list of all the recommended projects with costings before these could be considered at the meeting. JL reported that she understood the objective of the Working Party meeting was for the Council to agree on which projects to go forward and not determine costs. BH agreed and advised that it was only possible and right that costs for third party projects be provided by the proposers and not the Council. He advised on the Working Party's objectives and the criteria for the Council to consider. JL reported that the Council project for the water for the allotment would require further investigation and had ongoing cost implications which were not possible to evaluate at this stage. The Chairman thanked JL for her report and concluded that the CIL projects were work in progress. He suggested that the Working Party meets again to hone the list and to seek estimates to be brought back to Council. Clerk would seek quotations for the replacement of the play area gates and organise an online working party meeting.

24.76.2. To Receive the Open Spaces Committee draft minutes of the meeting on 21st November Draft minutes for the Committee meeting on 21st November last were previously circulated. Recommendations for comments to the Rampion 2 Consultation from the Council as Trustees were considered at the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council which followed on the same evening. Recommendations for the OSRA 2023/24 budget were considered by the Finance Committee Meeting on 5th December to be adopted by Full Council's January 2023 meeting.

It was noted that the Planning & Transport Meeting, previously scheduled on 21st November, was postponed to allow for the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council.

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24.76.3.To Receive the draft minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting on 5th December 2022

The draft minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee on 5th December last were previously circulated and noted. Recommendations, including the 2023/24 budget and precept would be considered for adoption at the next Full Council Meeting on 9th January 2023. A recommendation to transfer £15,000 from the Council's treasurer account to its business savings account was considered under the next agenda item.

24.77. Approve Payments, Receipts and Quotes

24.77.1. To Ratify Approval of quotation for planning advice and the Council's planning response to the Rampion 2 consultation

The quotation from Steve Tilbury Consulting Ltd for planning advice on the Rampion 2 consultation, was previously circulated. It was noted that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman had authorised his engagement under emergency delegated powers so that he could advise the Council in time for the Extraordinary Meeting (EOM) on 21st November last. Copies of the emails of authorisation (10th November 2022) were previously circulated. Mr Tilbury had originally quoted £700 but he had kindly reduced this to £500 as he would be able to use some of the information for his research.

RESOLVED unanimously to **RATIFY** approval of the quotation for £500 which Councillors agreed represented very good value. To be funded from the Council's unspent reserves for legal fees. An invoice for the payment was authorised later in the meeting. It was noted that the Clerk had thanked Mr Tilbury on behalf of the Council for his very helpful services and for advising at the EOM.

24.77.2. To Ratify Approval of quotation for emergency repairs to gate posts on the Recreation Ground.

The quotation of £500 from Nick Blunt Fencing Ltd to replace three gate posts on the Recreation Ground was previously circulated. The contractor was engaged under the Council's emergency delegated powers after reports from the public that the pedestrian gate by London Road had fallen onto the pavement on 28th November last. It was found that the cause was due to rot at the base of the supporting post. Rot was also observed in the other two posts of the larger gate but had not been easily visible above the cement base. Copies of the emails of authorisation of works (28th November 2022) by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman were previously circulated. It was noted that the work had been satisfactorily completed.

RESOLVED unanimously to **RATIFY** approval of the quotation which Councillors agreed represented very good value. Councillors were thankful to the contractor for carrying out the works so promptly and at short notice.

24.77.3.To Agree quotation for 2023/24 Internal and Year End Interim Audits

A quotation from Mulberry & Co to conduct the Council's 2023/24 Year End and internal audits were previously circulated. The audits could be conducted remotely if preferred and a full year's auditing would take approximately 4-6 hours depending on the scale and complexity of the Council's financial operations.. It was noted that the auditor had provided a high standard of service for the Council's audits over the last 6 years.

RESOLVED unanimously to engage Mulberry & Co's services for the quoted £65 per hour plus standard mileage at £0.45p per mile for conducted the audit on site.

24.77.4. To Agree quotation for the replacement MUGA lights

The Chairman reported that J Electrical had declined to carry out the replacement of the MUGA flood lights as they did not have access to a cherry picker to reach the posts. Two estimates from Case

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Electrical Ltd in Horsham were previously circulated: one for replacing all 4 lights and one for a set of control gear if required as the original fitting were very old and no longer standard. It was noted that the contractor was suggested to the Clerk by HDC's Building Service Engineer. A third quotation had be sought from Enerveo who will be installing the new London Road bus stop light but they had not responded. The Clerk confirmed that a third quotation was not required as the costs were within the Council's agreed threshold of authorisation. **RESOLVED** unanimously to engage Case Electrical Ltd to do the work subject to confirmation of the estimates as quotations. Clerk to action.

24.77.5. To Consider contractor's request for the Council to pay directly for materials to repair noticeboards

Councillors considered a request from a contractor to pay the timber supplier directly for materials to repair 4 of the Council's noticeboards. The £913.69 costs of the timber merchant were the same as those in the contractor's original quotation which was approved by the Council earlier this year. Repairs had been delayed due to supplier issues and the contractor had only recently requested payment for materials up front. Councillors considered the Clerk's advice and the Council's Financial Regulations. Following a discussion it was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Council was unable to agree the request. Clerk to inform the contractor.

24.77.6. To Approve Bank Reconciliation, Payments and Report Income.

Reconciled bank statements for the Treasurer's Account showing transactions in November 2022, payments schedule and invoices were previously circulated.

RESOLVED unanimously that the following payments totalling £4,804.79 be APPROVED.

oucher	Cheque	Name	Description	nount
133	Online	Zoe Savill	Clerks salary (net) 1,56	62.76
134	Online	SCribbling shop	Stationery	34.50
135	Online	Royal British Legion	Remembrance Day Wreath	20.00
136	Online	ICO, Registration Team	ICO registration	40.00
137	Online	Zoe Savill	Clerk's Mileage	18.90
138	Online	JD Sports Fashion PLC	Maintenance recreation ground	24.99
139	Online	Zoe Savill	Cherk's phone	10.00
140	Online	Zoe Savill	Clerk's electricity	10.00
141	Online	Stella Russell	Litter warden 1	115.20
142	Direct Debit	NEST	Pension	95.55
143	Online	Horsham District Council	Dog bin emptying	34.45
144	Online	Nick Blunt Fencing Ltd	Repairs and maintenance 5	540.00
145	Online	Derek Collis/DelWood	Repairs and maintenance	65.00
146	Online	Steve Tilbury Consulting Ltd	Planning consultancy 5	500.00
147	Online	TEEC Limited	Website hosting and support 2	288.00
148	Online	Sussex Land Services Ltd	Grass Cutting 5	526.64
149	Online	Sussex Land Services Ltd	Repairs and maintenance	148.80
150	Online	Sawing Heights Tree Surgery	Tree Management 7	710.00
151	Online	Washington Village Hall Memorial Hall	Meeting equipment hire	60.00

24.77.7. To Approve adjustment of the October 2022 payments

It was reported that the total payments schedule for October 2022, approved at the November meeting, was overstated by 80p and should have been £3,006.66. The correct physical payments had been paid. RESOLVED unanimously to APPROVE the adjustment.

24.77.8.To Agree the transfer of £15,000 from the Council's Treasurer's Account to the Business Savings Account.

It was recommended by the Finance Committee Meeting on 5th December 20222 to transfer £15,000

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Reserve fund from the Councils' Treasurer's Account to its Business Savings Account in order to ensure that the monies are kept within the £85,000 FSCA (Financial Services Compensation Scheme) protection limit. **RESOLVED** unanimously to **APPROVE** the transfer payment. Clerk to action with two of the Council's authorised signatories.

RESOLVE unanimously to **AGREE** the financial reports as follows:

Outstanding purchase orders: £1383.40 - Noticeboard repairs and £378.00 Post Box address Outstanding sales invoices: 0

Income: 0

Reconciled Bank Balances (Lloyds): £84,351.31.

RESOLVED to defer the reconciliation of the Nationwide business savings account to the next meeting.

24.77.9.VAT

It was noted that the Q3 2022/23 vat claim would be reported to the next meeting.

24.77.10. PAYE and National Insurance contributions

It was noted that the Q3 2022/23 tax and national insurance contributions would be reported to the next meeting for payment.

24.78. To Report correspondence received and agree any further action

The following correspondence was received:

- National Trust Forestry Track Grant: Email (3.12.22) from Mr A Murray (resident) raising further questions on the £12,000 grant allocation by the PC. Following a discussion it was RESOLVED unanimously to write a letter of response to Mr Murray explaining the Council's decision. Clerk to action.
- Rampion 2 Consultation 2022: Email (27.11.22) from Cllr Paul Marshall (WSCC) sharing the concerns raised by the Council (in an email 22.11.22 via the Chairman) regarding the inshore cable route and proposed new access routes from the A283 in the parish. Cllr Marshall confirmed that some of the points were being reflected in the County Council's submission as stakeholder. The information was noted.
- WSCC Civility & Respect Newsletter: Email (17/11/22) and newsletter received from WSCC. The
 information was noted.

24.79. Clerk's Report

- Councillors new email addresses. TK reported that he was unable to access Council
 correspondence from his email client and the mail host had not resolved the issue. But he was
 able to access the web mail version. BH reported issues with opening some of the Council files on
 One Drive. RESOLVED unanimously to delegate authority to the Clerk to engage StarTech to
 advise on the issues within approved budget. It was agreed that those Councillors still having
 issues with accessing Council mail from their email clients should notify the Clerk.
- Training:

The following was noted for information:

Code of Conduct training:

It was reported that the Chairman and JL attended HDC's Code of Conduct online training session on $28^{\rm th}$ November. A report was still pending from the organisers.

ROOM

GDPR

Councillors are reminded to delete general email correspondence over 6 months in accordance with the Council's privacy and file retention policies.

24.80.To Approve the Clerk's annual leave dates

The Clerk requested annual leave on her working days from Thursday 22nd December 2022 to Wednesday 4th January 2022. **RESOLVED** unanimously to **APPROVE**.

24.81. To Receive items for the next agenda

BH requested an update at the next meeting on the enforcement action being taken by HDC regarding Longbury Hill Wood, Rock Road and that it should be monitored by the Planning Committee.

24.82. Dates and time of next meetings at Washington Village Memorial Hall (Dore Room).

The next meeting dates were noted:

Full Council Meeting: Monday 9th January 2023, 7:30pm

Open Spaces Committee: Monday 23rd January 2023, 7:00pm

Planning & Transport Committee: Monday 23rd January 2023, 7: 45pm

Personnel Committee: date in January or early February to be determined to discuss the Clerk's Annual

Appraisal and Salary Review.

There being no further business to transact, the meeting was closed at 21:48 hrs.

Signed				
Dated	9.	1.	23	