

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting Held on 9 December 2014 in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

Present: David Cumberland (Chairman) Peter Gibbons
Chris Bere Sue Hatton
Leslie Campbell Bill Hatton
Ian Credland Darryl Sinclair
Steven Ecroyd Frank Rylance
Judith Foot Ian Weir
Penny Wadsworth (for items 1-10) Jane Baker

Clerk: Linda Baker

Also present were nine members of the public for items 1-3, and three members of the public for items 1-11.

14/112 Apologies for Absence. An apology for absence was received from Paul King, who was abroad. Apologies were also received from District Councillor Gordon Marples who was attending a civic function, and County Councillor Andy Petch, who was abroad.

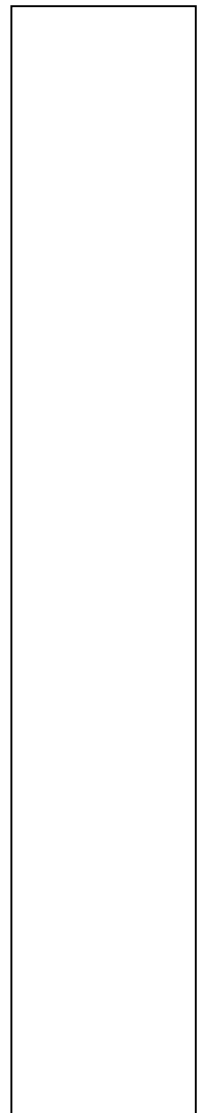
14/113 Declarations of Interest. Ian Credland and Judith Foot declared a prejudicial interest in item 4 (e), Land Parcel at London Road, Hassocks, appeal reference AP/14/0052, and left the chamber for discussion of this item. Darryl Sinclair declared an interest in item 8, as Chair of the Light Up Hassocks committee.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting for public participation. A note of the comments made is attached at attachment 1.

14/114 Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 November 2014. The minutes were taken as read, agreed by the meeting, and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

14/115 Reports.

- a) **Police Report.** The crime figures for November 2014 were noted.
- b) **District Councillor's Report.** Gordon Marples had submitted a report that:
 - MSDC was working on determining its position regarding the possible second runway at Gatwick, which was a huge issue for some parishes in Mid Sussex on or near flight paths
 - A presentation was being made to council next week regarding car parking charges in Burgess Hill.
- c) **County Councillor's Report.** Andy Petch had submitted a report that:



- WSCC had surrendered the lease on the Beacon Centre, and it was now down to the Beacon Centre management team of local volunteers and Asprey Homes to negotiate a future for the building.
 - The A273 footpath from the Jack and Jill to South Downs Garden Centre was being cleared by WSCC
 - The Spitalford Bridge project was progressing
 - Andy Petch was meeting the Minister responsible for the Fire Service to voice concerns about fire cover in West Sussex
 - An extra WSCC council meeting was being held in January 2015 to discuss the second runway at Gatwick
- d) **Grounds Committee Meeting 12 November 2014.** The minutes were noted. After discussion, it was RESOLVED that the council would meet the cost of a seed and sand injection treatment, the cost of replacing the east path, and the cost of a new mower up to £3,100, for the Adastra Bowling Green, the total cost of £7,665 to be met £4,400 from fees received from the Adastra Bowling Club and £3,225 from free reserves.
- e) **Planning Committee Meeting 17 November 2014.** The minutes were noted. Members discussed the appeal on Land Parcel at London Road, Hassocks, ref AP/14/0052. The parish council had written to the Planning Inspectorate setting out its objections to the application, and had written to MSDC requesting the council not to withdraw its objections to the application. MSDC had not yet agreed whether or not to withdraw the objections to the air quality and traffic issues. It was noted that the parish council would attend the appeal hearing to put forward its objections, but it was agreed that the council did not have the resources or expertise to become a rule 6 party at the planning inquiry. It was RESOLVED that the parish council would write to the Secretary of State requesting him to call in the application under section 77 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, on the grounds that the application would be detrimental to the Local Gap, and that it would have an adverse effect on the air quality at Stonepound Crossroads. The letter would be copied to Nick Herbert, MP and County Councillor Andy Petch.
- f) **Policy, Resources and Communications Meeting 18 November 2014.** The minutes were noted. It was NOTED that open sessions would be held on 4 March 2015 from 10.00 am to 11.30 am, and on Thursday 12 March 2015 from 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm for people interested in standing for the Parish Council in the May 2015 elections, and councillors were asked to contact the Clerk to confirm which sessions they could attend.

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g) Neighbourhood Plan Working Group Meeting 27 November

2014. The minutes were noted. The group would be asking the planning consultant working on the Neighbourhood Plan to provide details of the cost of increasing his input and how much time this might save in the overall production of the Plan, and recommendations would be made to full council if any costs exceeded the agreed budget.

h) Rail Matters. Peter Gibbons reported that the omissions in the timetable had been filled.

i) Meetings of Outside Bodies. Leslie Campbell had attended the launch of the Age Concern mini bus on 6 December 2014. The parish council had made a grant towards the cost.

14/116 Chairman's Remarks. The Chairman reported that there had been a number of postings on social media regarding the Land North of London Road, Hassocks, which councillors might like to be aware of.

14/117 Clerk's Report. 2014-2016 National Salary Award.

Agreement had been reached in the NJC on the new pay ward for local government effective from 1 January 2015, and a one off consolidated payment for employees on SCP 5-49, and it was RESOLVED that the new scales and increments would be paid to parish council staff, in accordance with their contracts.

14/118 Financial Report. The financial report and list of cheques presented was approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them.

14/119. Light Up Hassocks 28 November 2014. The event had been well attended and Darryl Sinclair was thanked for the work she had done in organising the event. There had been difficulties with the road closure as the marshalls hired to close the Keymer Road had not been present at the start of the event, and while the parade was underway, local volunteers had had difficulty in preventing through traffic, and arguments had taken place with drivers. It was hoped that lessons would be learnt, and that the organising committee would put in place contingency plans for future events.

14/12 WSCC Highways and Transport Draft Works Programme

2015/16 and 2016/17. The draft was considered. It was agreed that Gulu Sibanda at WSCC would be asked to give details of the work proposed for Keymer Road and Lodge Lane in Hassocks.

14/13 Precept 2015/16. It was RESOLVED that the precept for 2015/16 would be set at £166,276 and MSDC would be notified accordingly. It was agreed that the Policy, Resources and Communications Committee would review the council's free reserves and consult other council committees on possible expenditure which could be met from reserves.

14/14 Correspondence.

a) Age Concern, Hassocks. The letter of thanks from Age Concern was noted.

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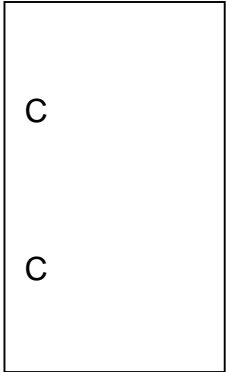
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b) WSCC Management of Public Rights of Way. The letter dated 24 November 2014 was noted. It was agreed that a response would be sent indicating that the parish council was very disappointed that rights of way inspections were being reduced from 9 months to 15 months.

c) Horse Trough, Stonepound. The letter dated 22 November 2014 from Shirley Greenhalgh was noted. It was agreed that a letter of thanks would be sent expressing the council's appreciation of all the work that had been put in over the years sponsoring and planting the trough.



There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.10 pm wishing everyone the compliments of the season.

Chairman.....

Date.....

Attachment 1.

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL 9 DECEMBER 2014.

Public Participation.

Steve Clayton asked in view of the difficulties progressing the Neighbourhood Plan over the last two and a half years if the council could pay a consultant to write it for them. He suggested de-scoping the plan to speed up the process

Philip Weir said that the precept had dropped 38% over the past five years. The village was being attacked on all sides by developers and the council should therefore throw money at the Neighbourhood Plan. The council should reject the views of its planning committee and use its resources to seek external help to fight the appeal on Ham Fields and become a rule 6 party or ask the Secretary of State to call the appeal in.

Unidentified residents commented;

- why was the council was behind other parish councils in the preparation of a plan
- stated that this was the most important document the council would ever produce,
- why had a consultant not been called in earlier,

- feelings were running very high, while residents had sympathy for councillors having to produce a Plan, they should pay the money
- there was a lack of urgency the council had started the Plan in 2011 and now in 2014 were way behind other councils

The Chairman responded that the council had asked the planning consultant to quote for taking on more of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan and to indicate how much time this could save, and the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group would give this further consideration. There were however a number of statutory stages a plan had to go through, which limited the amount of time which could be saved, even if the council employed a full time consultant, and it was impossible to predict accurately the time the whole process would take as some stages were dependant on other agencies like MSDC. The council were also looking at the possibility of using a project manager to drive the project forward. The council were well aware of the importance of the Neighbourhood Plan, and the views of residents. It was not true to say that the parish council was well behind other towns and parishes, and of the 12,000 or more towns and parishes in England, only a few had yet completed a Neighbourhood Plan. Hurstpierpoint had been selected as a government front runner which was why the parish was more advanced in the process, and Hassocks was learning from their experience.