

f) Policy, Resources and Communications Meeting 17 March 2015.

The minutes were noted.

g) Neighbourhood Plan Working Group Meetings 16 and 26 March 2015. The minutes were noted.

h) Rail Matters. Peter Gibbons had been to a meeting with Southern Rail earlier in the day with regard to the timetable changes coming into force in May 2015. There were further cuts in service on the Brighton line, but these did not affect Hassocks, but there had been some revision to the timing of some services.

i) Meetings of Outside Bodies. The Chairman had met Fred Maillardet of the HAA, at his request, to discuss the problem of the lack of volunteers coming forward to support community groups and others in the village. The parish council members for May 2015 onwards had been elected in an uncontested election and no members of the public had attended the open sessions held for prospective councillors, so the issue was one for the parish council as well. Members discussed causes and possible solutions, but it was accepted that this was a national problem, partly brought about by social change, and that therefore it was not an issue the parish council could resolve. It was suggested that the U3A which was active in the village might be able to provide some volunteers, and that the HAA might consider organising a volunteering event. The Chairman would write to Fred Maillardet outlining the discussion.

15/23 Chairman's Remarks. The Chairman wished to thank council members for their work over the last four years as this was the last full meeting of the present council before the 7 May 2015 elections. He paid tribute to those councillors who were standing down, Chris Bere who joined the council in 2008 and had chaired the Grounds Committee, Frank Rylance who also joined in 2008 and had been a particular support on IT and the website, Paul King who joined in 2011 and chaired the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group, Penny Wadsworth, who joined in 2011 and had written the monthly TalkAbout column, and Steven Ecroyd, who joined in 2013 and was chair of the Grounds Committee. He congratulated those councillors who had been re-elected to serve for a further four years.

15/24 Clerk's Report. The Clerk reported that Pat Elliott would be retiring on 21 April 2015 as an office assistant, and that councillors were welcome to attend the Parish Office at 12.00 noon on that day to mark the event.

15/25 Financial Report. The financial report and list of cheques presented were approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them.

15/26 Neighbourhood Plan Funding and Administration. A proposal for further funding and administrative support for the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan was considered. It was RESOLVED that ;

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- a) a further £15,000 would be set aside from reserves, in addition to the £25,500 already budgeted for the production of the Neighbourhood Plan, and
- b) that consideration would be given to using a self-employed administrative assistant for approximately one day per week, extra administrative assistance from DowsettMayhew, and overtime working by parish office staff when available, or a combination of these resources, to support the Neighbourhood Plan. The Chairman of the Parish Council and the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group would agree what resources would be used, and the cost.

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15/27 Parklands Copse. Ian Weir introduced a proposal from the Environment and Grounds Committees for the creation of an all-weather path through Parklands Copse. Three quotations had been obtained for tree clearance and work on the path. After discussion it was RESOLVED that:

- a) the quotation from Roots Upwards for tree clearance in the sum of £1,520 excluding VAT should be accepted,
- b) the quotation from MD Garden Contracting for the path in the sum of £5,670 should be accepted, provided it was clarified that this covered the whole length of the path 1.2m wide, to the same specification as the other quotations
- c) the Monday Group to be asked to construct the bridges and boardwalk at a cost of up to £5,000 for materials, and
- d) advice would be sought from the Sussex Wildlife Trust on the timing of the tree clearance to minimise the impact on wildlife.

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15/28 Financial Regulations. The Financial Regulations had been reviewed by the Policy, Resources and Communications Committee. RESOLVED that the Financial Regulations, as revised were adopted.

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15/29 Code of Conduct. It was proposed to revise the Code of Conduct to bring it into line with the Code for District and County Councillors. RESOLVED that the revised Code, as previously circulated, was adopted.

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15/30 Correspondence.

- a) **Land Parcel at London Road, Hassocks.** The response from the Secretary of State declining to call in application AP/14/0052 was noted.
- b) **MSDC Young Volunteer of the Year Award 2015.** The details from MSDC were noted.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.40 pm.

Chairman..... Date.....