

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING, 28 April 2015 at 7.30 pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks

Present: David Cumberland (Chairman), Jane Baker, Leslie Campbell, Ian Credland, Steven Ecroyd, Judith Foot, Peter Gibbons, Bill Hatton, Darryl Sinclair, Frank Rylance, Penny Wadsworth, Ian Weir.

Clerk: Linda Baker

Also present were 9 members of the public.

- 1. Apologies for Absence.** Apologies for absence were received from Chris Bere, Paul King, and Sue Hatton.
- 2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 May 2014.** The minutes were accepted as a correct record.
- 3. Report of the Chairman.** The Chairman gave an overview of the work of the council during the year (copy attached)
- 4. Committee Reports.** Reports were received from the Chairman, and the Chairmen of the Environment, Grounds, Planning and Policy, Resources and Communications Committee, and the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (copies attached)

5. Open Forum.

Claire Tindal asked why there were no details about a Local Green Space designation for Friars Oak fields on the HPC website, why were the NPWG meeting Rydon Homes when the council had objected to their application, why data on the January 2015 consultation was published in terms of percentages and not details of numbers voting, and why the data had been divided into responses from east and west of the village as this was divisive. Ian Credland responded that there had been correspondence explaining the position on the Local Green Space. A Local Green Space could not be designated ahead of housing site allocation, so this exercise had to be done first. It was not possible to publish all the evidence relating to each site on the HPC website as this ran to thousands of pages, but ultimately it would be for residents to decide on sites through the referendum. The council had adopted a protocol for meetings with developers, and stakeholders were invited to make presentations to the NPWG so that these could form part of the evidence base. Although these presentations were not public, the minutes of the meetings were a matter of public record. With regard to the January 2015 consultation, the quantitative data had been published and the qualitative data would be published shortly. The east, west split had not changed the ranking, and percentages rather than numbers had been published because not all respondents had commented on all sites.

Nick Owens asked if the footpath over the railway line would be made all weather as it got very boggy. He also asked if the Neighbourhood Plan

strategy undercut the MSDC housing allocation for Hassocks, how would the Plan succeed with a lower number.

Ian Weir responded that making footpaths all weather was very expensive, and the parish council's strategy was to allocate some money for footpath improvements and to get WSCC to match it. WSCC tended to favour footpaths close to the village centre for improvement, but the council would hope to achieve improvements in the worst paths.

Ian Credland said that the MSDC housing figure for Hassocks was an unconstrained number. The NPWG were working towards a range of housing numbers, not a single number, as this would be less open to challenge. They would be arguing that there were a number of constraints in the village which would prevent the unconstrained number being allocated, e.g. part of the village being in the SDNP, local gaps, air quality and flooding issues. There was also the fact that Burgess Hill were taking 3,500 new dwellings which would mean that a large proportion of the District need was already being provided in the south of the District.

A resident said that 14 village children were already unable to get into the Infants School, and this needed to be addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan.

David Cumberland said that the parish council was acutely aware of the problem of demand on school places, but the council had no control over this issue, as WSCC had the statutory duty to provide school places. Ian Credland reported that a meeting had taken place on 20 April 2015 with WSCC to discuss school places and how the existing and future needs would be met. Land and funding could be provided as part of new development on greenfield sites in the village, but the community might decide it did not want greenfield development. WSCC would be undertaking a feasibility study of what can be provided on the existing school sites.

A resident asked if S106 funding could be used to upgrade footpaths. Ian Weir said he would look into the question.

A resident asked why the old sewage works in Burgess Hill could not be used for housing as development on brownfield sites would be preferable. Ian Credland responded that Burgess Hill was out of the parish council's jurisdiction, and it was thought that this site was already included in proposed development of the northern arc in Burgess Hill.

The meeting concluded at 8.30 pm.