

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Meeting of the **Parish Council** on 14th March 2017 at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber, Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

Attendees: Parish Councillors Ian Weir (Chair), Nick Owens, Peter Gibbons, Leslie Campbell, Jane Baker, Darryl Sinclair, Bill Hatton, Victoria Standfast, Chris Hobbs, Judith Foot, Frances Gaudencio, Georgia Cheshire.

MSDC Cllr Gordon Marples (left the meeting at 7.50 pm)
WSCC Cllr Andy Petch

Parish Clerk: Ian Cumberworth

17/670 APOLOGIES

670.1 To Accept Apologies for Absence. Parish Councillors: Sue Hatton, Kate Bailey, Justine Fisher.

17/671 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

671.1 Disclosure by Councillors of personal interests in matters on the agenda, and whether the Councillor regards their interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.

Cllr Darryl Sinclair declared an interest in item 9.2

17/672 MINUTES

672.1 The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 19th December 2016 were accepted. The Parish Council meeting held on the 14th February 2017 minutes were accepted after a minor amendment was agreed that they were a true and accurate record of the meeting.

17/673 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was 1 member of the public present who observed proceedings and did not raise any questions or comments.

17/674 MINUTES

To accept the following Minutes

674.1 **Grounds & Environment Committee** -27th February were noted. (5.1)

674.2 **Planning Committee** – The Council accepted the minutes of the Committee (5.2) held on the 13th February 2017.

17/675 FINANCE

675.1 The Finance report and payments totalling £24,034.66 for the period ending 31st January 2017 were approved.

17/676 REPORTS

676.1 Police Report – none

676.2 **District Councillors' Report** – Cllr Marples updated Members on Cllr Peter Martins recovery progress and indicated that it was hoped he would be able to return home in the near future and continue with his treatment.

MSDC were particularly disappointed and somewhat surprised with the outcome of the District Plan and the projected level of housing in light of the needs survey work undertaken by the Borough Council.

MSDC were of the view that the needs identified approx. 800 new homes each year which to date has not been possible to deliver yet the inspector has indicated a level north of 900. MSDC believed they had a strong case to justify the level of projected new homes however the current Inspectors report is indicating an expectation of 1026 per annum which includes 150 properties form Crawley's unmet need. This would equate to village of Hassocks size being built every 3 years.

MSDC have subsequently submitted a compromise proposal which is currently awaiting consideration by the inspector. It was also confirmed that a letter from Cllr Gary Wall (MSDC) setting out the compromise proposal had previously been circulated.

Cllr Marples indicated that at a recent surgery someone had raised concerns about Southdown Farm, Lodge Lane regarding the number of outbuildings which have been permitted and the number of bonfires being lit by the owners. MSDC enforcement team have visited the site and will continue to monitor this issue.

676.3 **County Councillors' Report**

West Sussex County Councillor Andy Petch provided members with a verbal update.

- AP indicated that with the elections coming up in May it would be useful to meet up with representatives of the Council prior to the election to tie up some loose ends. It was agreed that HPC would draw up a list of items to be followed up with AP.
- A task and finish group had been set up for Woodlands Mead school which has been engaged in providing a range of universal statements for the school which has resulted in a 4000-signature petition being received therefore in light of this the role of this group and the statements previously made will now be subject to further scrutiny.
- Some concerns had been raised regarding the completeness of some of the answers being provided by the fire service which is likely to result in an announcement to future WSCC Committees.
- AP raised an on-going issue with anti-social behaviour occurring in a lay-by within the parish which WSCC are currently exploring options to re-model the site. Initial costs indicated this would be in excess of £100,000. AP stated that he would welcome the opportunity to discuss with HPC potential options.

676.4 Rail Matters

Cllr Leslie Campbell confirmed no further meetings had been held however another strike took place on the 13th March which impacted on the service at Hassocks station.

676.5 Youth Initiatives – none

676.6 Reports from Councillors on meetings of outside bodies where the Council is represented

- Cllr Frances Gaudencio updated members that the Economic Development & Tourism Group met with traders on 31st January and a report is going forward to Policy, Resources & Communications Committee on the 21st March for consideration.
- Cllr Victoria Standfast recently attended a meeting run by the Green Circle Group who confirmed the rare Brown Hairstreak butterfly has been located in Burgess Hill. It is believed this has been as a result of reducing the frequency of Hedgerow cutting.

17/677 Update to Members/Town Council meeting – Burgess Hill Transportation.

This was a WSCC exercise run by Consultants seeking stakeholder feedback. This stage of the consultation was based on previous feedback from a number of special interest groups which prompted a strong response from County Councillors present that work undertaken by Burgess Hill Town Council Transport Study should be the main focus for the work as it more truly reflected the needs of the community. New issues raised included Public Transport links within Burgess Hill and surrounding villages remain key and WSCC needed to understand that ongoing revenue expenditure to support public transport was similarly important as any single capital transport scheme. Cllr Weir raised the issue with the consultants regarding the issue of southbound links to Brighton and the effect on Hassocks and Ditchling. Cllr Gibbons emphasised the potential and importance of utilising not-for-profit schemes to provide better bus services to the community.

17/678 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- 678.1 **MSALC Conference** – The leader of WSCC, Louise Goldsmith confirmed that 'Operation Watershed' will continue for another year and indicated that the initiative had previously realised £7 million pounds of benefit at a cost of £1.25 million.

Regional Transport Boards are being established to assist in resolving links that cross over boundaries.

The road network generated significant discussion and in particular the lack of good secondary road infrastructure to handle both local traffic and the overspill from the main network when an accident occurs.

Burgess Hill have now established a bus forum.

The leader of MSDC Gary Wall provided feedback on the District Plan which generated feedback on the need of the Planning Department to be more strategic and to be prepared to defend the rural ness of the villages.

It was confirmed that MSDC are to purchase strategic assets to generate a revenue to strengthen the financial position of the Council.

Cllr Wall confirmed there was £3 million in General Reserves available for projects and Investment.

Finally, Cllr Wall offered to come and speak/listen at any Parish Meetings

CLC - The final meeting of the current County Local Committee (CLC) held on the 28th February confirmed that the Hassocks Traffic & Parking scheme was on schedule to be implemented 2017/18.

Chairmanship Training - A group of five members from HPC recently attended a training course run by SALC which members found very educational. It proved particularly beneficial that a group members were able to attend together and this approach should be encouraged at future training opportunities.

Council Tax – New bills have now been issued. HPC shows a modest increase of 3.4% in comparison to WSCC 4%, Police & Crime 3.4% and MSDC at 2% making an overall increase in Council Tax of 3.7%.

17/679 CLERK’S REPORT

679.1 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Following the co-option onto the Council of Georgia Cheshire members **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Cheshire onto the Grounds & Environment Committee.

It was also agreed that the Clerk would provide further details on the roles of other Committees to Cllr Cheshire to consider.

The Clerk indicated that the wider Committee membership was likely to be considered at the Annual meeting.

679.2 LIGHT UP HASSOCKS

The Clerk introduced the report setting out the draft Temporary Road closure for the Light up Hassocks event scheduled for the 1st December 2017. Members were requested to determine whether the Council wish to make any representation to MSDC.

A discussion took place with regard some of the roads names may be erroneous however it was accepted that the previous road closures for the event had worked in previous years.

RESOLVED Members accepted the proposed road closure order and did not propose to make any representations to MSDC.

679.3 BUS SHELTERS

Members considered a report from Grounds & Environment (**17/633**) requesting that Council consider funding the replacement of the two shelters in London Road (Stone Pound & Little Copse) subject to detailed costings being provided. Detailed quotes were provided from an existing supplier that had previously supplied shelters to the Council. The costs provided included undertaking various groundworks to the existing sites to accommodate the new shelters. For the replacement of both shelters would cost circa £18,500 - £20,100 depending on the combination of shelters selected.

A detailed discussion commenced amongst members regarding the costs, design attributes, merits of consistent style and the potential of utilising alternative designs or suppliers.

Members acknowledged that there was no pressing need to make a decision on replacement at this stage but would welcome the opportunity to explore other options/designs before committing any expenditure on this initiative.

RESOLVED The matter be referred back to the officers to identify potential alternative suppliers/designs and to provide cost comparisons with a view to a report being brought back to future meeting to be considered.

17/680 Urgent Matters at the discretion of the Chairman for noting and/or inclusion on a future agenda.

The Clerk be requested to continue to develop the Parish Council schedule of meetings for the new Municipal year and arrange for distribution.

The Meeting closed at 8.40