

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Parish Council** held on 10th October 2017
at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

Attendees: Parish Councillors Ian Weir (Chair), Peter Gibbons, Jane Baker, Bill Hatton, Chris Hobbs, Justine Fisher, Kate Bailey, Judith Foot, Darryl Sinclair, Sue Hatton

Parish Clerk: Ian Cumberworth

Visiting Member: Michelle Binks (District Councillor)
Kirsty Lord (County Councillor)

MINUTES

PC17/84 APOLOGIES

Cllrs Leslie Campbell, Georgia Cheshire, Victoria Standfast. Frances Gaudencio and Nick Owens.

PC17/85 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

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.

None

PC17/86 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 12th September 2017 were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

PC17/87 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were 7 Members of the public present 2 of which spoke at the meeting. The first member of the public wished to raise a question regarding the position the District Councillors had taken on voting through the MSDC District Plan. The Chair indicated that this matter could not be considered at the Parish meeting and suggested they may wish to raise this at the District Councillors surgeries.

The second member of the public Ian Credland spoke about the Neighbourhood plan and the proposed strategic site. He drew member's attention to this issue that MSDC had other options available other than identifying a strategic site and members should draw the inspector's attention to this as part of their representations. He also questioned the rationale used by MSDC to reach this decision and suggested the Council should explore the sustainability of the development. Based on the MSDC proposal and the other sites being considered in Hassocks would imply

circa 1000 new homes would be provided within the Parish. He urged that the District Council should reconsider option 2 and consider other options and urged that the Parish to make the strongest representations against the plan. He did not feel the development was sustainable.

PC17/88 MINUTES

To accept the following Minutes.

To agree the minutes of the Planning Committee 18th September 2017.

To note the minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group on the 14th September 2017 and Policy Resources & Communications Committee 19th September 2017.

PC17/89 FINANCE

The Finance report and payments totalling £19, 339.14 for the period ending 31st August 2017 were approved.

PC17/90 Reports

- 90.1 District Councillors reports: - Cllr Gordon Marples (GM) had sent his apologies therefore Cllr Michelle Binks (MB) updated members that the District had considered the proposed strategic site and recommend the proposed amendments to the District plan be approved.
Current problems were being experienced with fly-tipping on London Road which MSDC are investigating.
The District Council have agreed to a 'scrape' in Adastra Avenue to improve drainage of excess water.
Over 100 visitors attended the recent Silver Sunday event held by Age Concern which was funded by a MSDC grant. Very positive feedback on the event was received by the attendees, the event was also attended by Nick Herbert MP.
- 90.2 County Councillor report: Cllr Kirsty Lord (KL) updated Members that she understands WSCC have only had minimal contact with parties regarding the District Plan site to date. KL confirmed that she was scheduled to meet with WSCC representatives to discuss the model they use to determine school need and size and in particular in light of the proposed strategic site north of Clayton Mills.
KL confirmed a number of Highways initiatives are being explored and a further report will be brought back to the Parishes Grounds and Environment Committee for consideration.
Parking safety issues are ongoing at Downlands School, it is hoped that a solution can be delivered to resolve the current parking issues during the period parents drop off and pick up the schoolchildren.
Concerns have been raised regarding the condition of the 'Cinder path' and funding is trying to be secured to carry out the necessary repairs.
On a positive note KL updated members on the issue regarding health visitors that they will be reinstated for baby clinics at Hassocks Health Centre.

- 90.3 Rail matters – PG informed Members that the planters outside the station had now been replaced/repared by the Monday Group.

PG informed Members that 161 trains had been cancelled in September of which 114 did not run. Overall for the year to date 2336 trains in total scheduled to stop at Hassocks have failed to do so. 1873 were cancelled and 463 failed to stop which equates to approx. 8.5 trains per day being cancelled.

- 90.4 Youth Initiatives- Cllr Kate Bailey and Cllr Justine Fisher informed Members that due to other commitments they would no longer be able to continue to support the running of the Youth club. They had worked tirelessly on this project and were in discussion with other agencies with a view to them taking on the role building on the foundations of the work to date. It was confirmed that the youth club for the younger children will continue to be run at St Francis Hall with the support of the new rector. It is hoped that Sussex Clubs for Young People will come forward with a proposal for running a club in the Pavilion in Adastra Park for the older age group .Cllr Fisher and Cllr Bailey undertook a detailed survey earlier this year of Downlands children’s interests outside of school and the types of facilities the youth would wish to see in the village. It was anticipated that some of this data could be utilised to inform potential council initiatives in developing the park review.

It is anticipated a more detailed report will be brought forward regarding youth provision at a future meeting.

Cllr Weir requested that it be put on record how much the Parish Council appreciated all the time Cllr Fisher and Cllr Bailey have dedicated to establish and develop the youth provision within Hassocks.

- 90.5 Police matters – Cllr Bailey emphasised the importance of reporting all offences to ensure the police were aware. It is understood a large proportion of issues in Hassocks remain unreported therefore the police are unaware of the extent of some of the problems. If more and more incidents are reported the police will direct surveillance based on known issues. Cllr Bailey agreed to drop in a supply of leaflets setting out how incidents should be reported to the Parish office.

- 90.6 Report from Councillors on meetings of outside bodies where the Council is represented- Cllr Bill Hatton stated he had recently attended a meeting at Oldland Mill which is a well-run local charity which is currently looking to improve the current tourist signage/design for the venue and are to submit an application to do so.

PC17/91 CHAIRMANS REPORT –

Cllr Ian Weir informed members that at a recent Grounds & Environment Committee it was agreed to install a Rain garden in Adastra Park as an example to show the community how attractive they can be and how they mitigate heavy rainfall. (IW) stated it was an opportunity for anyone interested to join the small working group.

The Business planning process was progressing well and the next step is to go to the Chairs meeting where it will be consolidated and prioritised.

Cycling Strategy meeting - 9th October at Horsham (IW) attended and participants were advised as to how they could influence the provision of both cycling and walking routes within and between communities, in such a way that ordinary people transfer from their cars for shorter daily journeys. Tools and processes that enabled a good idea to get prioritised to the point of LEP funding becoming available were demonstrated. It is very heartening to see that the display of proposed schemes showed that our Parish Office has ensured that Hassocks area has at least 6 or 7 schemes up for consideration.

Downlands opening of the Rose Hetheron Building took place on the 2nd October 2017 and was opened by the Duke of Gloucester .The event was well attended and everyone was impressed that the scheme was delivered within a few weeks of scheduled completion.

Downlands continues to grow and is a very popular school with significant numbers of children coming from Burgess Hill.

Strategic site – MSDC have proposed a strategic Site of 500 homes north of Clayton Mills. Cllr Weir stated there were a number of issues he wished to address on this.

The initial publicity both to the Parish Council and also the community was pretty patchy and made it difficult for anyone to comment on the proposals. The Parish has worked behind the scenes to ensure that everyone is aware of the proposal and has a fair opportunity to comment. Therefore the parish website now has detailed information both to direct the public to the relevant documents issued by MSDC and to provide a briefing note which should help those not familiar with the District Plan modifications. He particularly wanted to thank Bill Hatton for the briefing note and Tracy Bates who set up our web page to ensure the information was easy to access. A hard copy of the relevant information is available from the Parish Office for those who prefer a non-electronic approach to life.

There is a Neighbourhood Plan working Group meeting on Thursday the 12th October which will look at the MSDC proposal and weigh up the pros and cons and make a recommendation or recommendations to Council – the public can observe this meeting but there will be no opportunity to speak.

On the 31st October the MSDC proposal for a Strategic site will be debated by Full Council at a special meeting. This is a significant change to the housing numbers proposed in the Neighbourhood plan and I am minded to allow a slightly longer period of Public Participation at the beginning to ensure that the community can share their views. It will be for the Parish Councillors as representatives of the Community to weigh up the information and make a decision and I would ask you not to underestimate the time you will need to devote to preparation for the meeting. I would ask everyone to be aware that the Rules of Debate allow for each councillor to speak only once on each motion except to make points of

order, give personal explanation or exercise a right of reply. So please be prepared to make all your arguments in one go.

Finally I have always believed in building good relations with both Councillors and Officers at MSDC and working with them to ensure the voice of our Parish is heard even in cases where the proposals have uncertain benefits for the Parish. Even to the point of letting things go when they are clearly inaccurate. However, I cannot let pass a recent remark in a newsletter that is being distributed to residents as we speak. The suggestion is that the Neighbourhood Plan is 2.5 years behind schedule and the implication is that it is down to the Parish.

The Neighbourhood Plan was passed to MSDC on 21st July 2016 so that they could conduct Regulation 16 Consultation which completed on 8th September 2016. The important point here is that from this date the Neighbourhood Plan became MSDC responsibility. So back in September 2016 the Neighbourhood Plan was ready to go to Examination and yet on the 13 October 2016 the MSDC Planning Committee took no account of the Plan and approved 130 houses at Friars Oak Fields. Even though the Secretary of State called in the decision this was the 'nail in the coffin' for the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan. From this point on MSDC officers prevaricated over putting the NP to examination and the failure of their own District Plan to satisfy the Planning Inspector was yet another excuse to delay. So one whole year of delay in the Neighbourhood Plan is down to MSDC not Hassocks. For MSDC officers and Councillors to try and lay the source of the issues at the Parish Council's door whilst ignoring the MSDC failings is I believe misleading.

PC17/92 CLERK'S REPORT

92.1 EXTERNAL AUDITOR REPORT

Members were advised that the External Auditor had concluded their work and had signed off the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2017.

92.2 GRANTS

Members were informed that the Council had received four letters of thanks from grant recipients.

St Peter & St James Hospice
Kent Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance Trust
St Catherine's Trust
Victim Support (Sussex branch)

In addition members were advised that we had now received details of the cost from the British Legion of the Remembrance Sunday parade. The cost of the event is able to be met by the provision previously set aside by the Council

92.3 **SSALC.**

Members were informed that SSALC was scheduled to hold a meeting with the Chief Constable to Sussex Police (Giles York) to enable parishes to raise any strategic or unresolved policing topics via this arrangement. Members views were sought and it was **RESOLVED** members would consider any items and forward them to the Clerk to co-ordinate.

PC17/93 URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN for noting and/or inclusion on a future agenda.

There were none.

PC17/94 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the date of the next Council meeting will be an Extraordinary Council meeting to consider the District Plan representations is **Tuesday 31st October 2017 at 7.30pm.**