

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Parish Council** meeting held on 12th June 2018 which commenced at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

Attendees: Parish Councillors Ian Weir, Jane Baker, Peter Gibbons, Mark Higgins, Bill Hatton, Sue Hatton, Francis Gaudencio, Emma Wood, Judith Foot .

Parish Clerk: Ian Cumberworth

Visiting Member: Cllr Michelle Binks (MSDC)

MINUTES

PC18/01 APOLOGIES

Cllr Leslie Campbell, Nick Owens, Victoria Standfast, Georgia Cheshire and Kate Bailey

Visiting Members Cllr Gordon Marples (MSDC) and Cllr Kirsty Lord (WSCC)

PC18/02 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.

PC18/03 MINUTES

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 8 May 2018 were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

PC18/04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were 2 members of the public present none of whom wished to speak but observed proceedings.

PC18/05 TO ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING MINUTES

The minutes of the Planning Committee 9th May 2018 were agreed and Planning Committee on the 29th May 2018 were noted.

Policy and Resources & Communications Committee 22nd May 2018 were noted.

Grounds & Environment Committee 31st May 2018 were noted.

PC18/06 FINANCE

The Finance report and payments totalling £20,444.84 for the period ending 31st March 2018 were approved.

PC18/07 Annual Governance Statement
Members were requested to review the Annual Governance Statement set out in Appendix 2.

The Clerk detailed how Hassocks Parish Council has discharged its responsibilities in respect of the nine governance elements required as part of the governance framework.

Members were requested to consider the detailed responses and agree that this reflects the governance framework in operation within the council.

Members duly considered the report and **RESOLVED** to agree that the statement reflects the Council's governance framework and authorise the signing of the return by the Chair and Clerk.

PC18/08 Internal Auditor's report - Members were requested to consider the Internal Auditors report which was set out in Appendix 3. Members were informed that overall the report was positive. Member's attention was drawn specifically to the table setting out the detailed action plan and the progress made to date to implement the recommendations. They were advised that further progress had also been made in respect of some of these recommendations since the issue of the auditor's report. Members raised a number of questions on specific points and in particular the issue of funds being held with one financial institution. They sought confirmation as to whether the Council had been advised by the internal auditor of any best practice authorities that operated multiple accounts to guard against exceeding the current bank guarantee thresholds. The Clerk confirmed that no best practice sites were suggested by the auditor to overcome this issue and from the Clerk's own research to date most Parish Councils with reserves continue to operate with either one or two main financial institutions therefore would still potentially be in the position of exceeding the current thresholds.

Members were requested to note the contents of the Auditor's report and the signed statement of the Internal Auditor confirming that control objectives are in place and met. Members duly noted the report.

PC18/09 Accounting Statement - The Council's accounting statements were set out in the agenda together with the detailed figures supporting the 2017/18 return.

Members were requested to consider the information provided and approve the document and authorise the signing of the return by the Chairman.

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounting statement and the signing of the document by the Chairman.

PC18/10 Risk Management the Clerk introduced the report on the review of risk management which is required to be reviewed annually. Members were informed that although this report had previously been considered by Policy, Resources & Communications committee Full Council is required to ratify the document.
Members were invited to ask questions regarding the assessments.

Members sought further clarification on a number of risks including those in relation to data storage and data protection which the clerk responded to. Members confirmed they were satisfied with the way in which the risks had been assessed and **RESOLVED** to agree the contents of the risk assessments for 2017/18.

PC18/11 Hassocks May Day Event 2018 – Members noted the report

PC18/12 REPORTS

12.1 Mid Sussex District Councillors Report

Cllr Michelle Binks (MB) informed members that she had recently been involved in a number of cycling initiatives including the setting up of the Mid Sussex cycling forum with a view to avoiding duplication of effort in promoting initiatives amongst the various interested cycling groups within Hassocks. Cllr Binks had been personally involved in organising a 'cycling bus' for schoolchildren from Hurstpierpoint to Downlands School. It is proposed this initiative will be repeated later in the year.

Cllr Binks stated that she had been involved in a number of planning enquiries. She will hold a meeting later this week regarding improvements and funding for London Road Recreation Ground. This has also included a meeting with Mackie Avenue residents re the Gleeson public consultation.

Cllr Binks indicated that a joint site visit meeting had been held at Clayton Mills between Parish, District Council members together with Mid Sussex District Council officers and representatives of Clayton Mills Tenants Association to resolve some outstanding site issues including anti-social behaviour, fly-tipping and access roads. The meeting was positively received by all parties and there may be opportunities to work together to resolve some of these issues. MSDC have held preliminary discussions with Gleeson regarding potential improvements to this site as part of the adjoining strategic development site.

Cllr Binks sought clarification as to whether the Parish Council had decided on what action they were to take regarding progressing a Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Binks was informed that the Council is currently considering its options and had a scheduled operational meeting later in the week to discuss these. It was proposed that once this group had met a Neighbourhood Working Group meeting will be convened to progress whatever action the Council agree to take. A discussion then took place setting out part of the history of the Hassocks Neighbourhood planning process and its context in the wider planning arena.

12.2 Cllr Sue Hatton (SH) informed Members that she has been appointed to the MSDC Site Allocation Group which is reviewing site allocations with a target completion date of 2020. On this basis Cllr Hatton felt it was appropriate for her to resign as member representative on the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan Working Group to ensure there was no perception of conflict of interest.

SH reminded Members that when and if developing a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) the District Plan would take precedence and therefore the NP must conform to the District Plan.

Cllr Sue Hatton confirmed that she had been involved in a number of planning issues including the ongoing issues with 103 Keymer Road (SH) also confirmed that the joint meeting held with Clayton Mills representatives and the respective Council representatives was positive.

Cllr Hatton stated that she had supported two grant funding bids from Hassocks which were being considered by the MSDC Grants Panel next week.

Cllr Sue Hatton raised concerns regarding the grass cutting of verges by both MSDC and WSCC or more accurately the lack of and encouraged the Parish council to seek assurances from the respective authorities regarding the verge cutting programme. Members were in general agreement that current level of service was poor and requested that the clerk seek clarification of frequencies and locations of cuts by the respective authorities. The clerk undertook to write to both Mid Sussex District Council and West Sussex County Council setting out the Council's concerns and seeking further details regarding the cutting scheduling.

- 12.3 Rail Matters – Oral Report (Peter Gibbons)** Members were informed that in May 2018, 476 trains were cancelled outright of which 81 trains ran but failed to stop. The significant increase in cancellations has been the result of the new rail timetable introduced across the network. The Thameslink service has been particularly badly affected by these timetable changes and is unclear when these current problems will be resolved.
- 12.4 Youth Initiatives – none**
- 12.5 Police matters - none**
- 12.6 Reports from Councillors on meetings outside bodies where the Council is represented. –**
- 12.7** Cllr Bill Hatton updated Members that he had recently attended a Parish Briefing meeting at MSDC which focussed on the future of Neighbourhood Planning and draft planning policy guidance which the Council will need to take into account when determining the way forward with the Neighbourhood Plan. The meeting went some way to allaying the fears of those Parishes with made neighbourhood plans and clarified the requirements around review of their plans.

PC18/13 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chair informed members that he had recently held discussions regarding various cycling initiatives within the parish as part of regular liaison meetings.

A number of twinning events are planned, representatives from Montraimail will be participating in a Tennis Tournament at the Weald Tennis Club from the 22nd -24th June 2018. The Chair indicated he proposes to attend and any other Members were also welcome to attend. On 13th July a meeting is scheduled to 'Meet the Neighbours' at the Jack & Jill public house. The purpose of the initiative is to provide an opportunity to network with other Councils involved in twinning initiatives to share best practice.

On the 19th July Hassocks Twinning Association will be holding their AGM.

PC18/14 CLERK'S REPORT

14.1 Letter from Mid Sussex District Council - **Chairman's Community Service Awards**. Members identified a number of potential representatives and after careful consideration took a vote and **RESOLVED** that Hassocks Parish Council would like to nominate Catherine Cassidy in recognition of the work undertaken on improving the rail station and train service for Hassocks.

14.2 **Bus Shelter Cleaning** - Members were requested to consider a recommendation from Grounds and Environment Committee (GE18/15.1) to continue to undertake monthly Bus Shelter Cleaning. The clerk explained that this service had previously been provided as part of the highway partnership agreement with Burgess Hill Town Council (BHTC) and West Sussex County Council which has now ceased. Further discussions have been held with BHTC to confirm they would be able to continue to provide this element of the service at a cost of £782.80 for the remainder of the year. The Clerk confirmed that a budget for highways existed - therefore sufficient funds were available to cover these costs. Members **RESOLVED** to approve Grounds and Environment recommendation that the Council enter into an arrangement with BHTC to provide a monthly Bus Shelter cleaning service.

14.3 **Installation of Height Restriction Barriers** - Members considered a report from Grounds and Environment Committee (GE18/12.1) where they resolved to recommend that the Council consider installing barriers in both the North and South Car parks in Adastra Park in the sum of £9,457.50 plus VAT. The Clerk informed Members that no budget provision was set aside to meet these costs therefore if Members were minded to agree this proposal it would be required to be funded from General Reserves.

Members discussed the proposal at length and carefully considered the respective risks, operational aspects and the comments of the clerk prior to making a decision. Members took a vote and agreed to amend the Grounds and Environment Committee's recommendation from two to one barrier. Members **RESOLVED** to approve the installation of one

height barrier in the North field car park at a cost of £4,930 plus Vat the cost of which will be met from general reserves.

- 14.4 **Business Plan** – Members **RESOLVED** to agree the four Key priorities set out below proposed by Policy Resources & Communications (PRC18/06) and Grounds & Environment (GE18/16) Committees to be developed in the first two years of the plan.

A Great Place to Work & Live	-	Objective 1
Connecting Our Village	-	Objective 7 & 10
Engaging with the Community	-	Objective 4

- PC18/15 URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN** for noting and/or inclusion on a future agenda.

None

- PC18/16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
To note that the date of the next Council meeting is Tuesday 10th July 2018 at 7.30pm.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted Councillors will be referred to the Confidential Agenda. If any members of the public or press are in attendance they will be requested to withdraw from the meeting in the public interest.

- PC18/17 INSURANCE** Members were advised of the outcome of the recent market testing for Insurance services which had realised savings on previous year's premiums. Members were asked to note the change in insurance provider and that the contract had been awarded via Came and Company in the sum of £3000.60 per annum for a 3 year term. The decision to appoint the successful contractor had been taken in consultation with the Chair in accordance with the Councils regulations after considering the policy coverage and cost. Members noted the outcome of the market testing.