

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Parish Council** held on 12th March 2019
at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

Attendees: Parish Councillors Ian Weir (Chair), Peter Gibbons, Jane Baker, Bill Hatton, Leslie Campbell, Emma Wood, Sue Hatton, Georgia Cheshire, Mark Higgins, Frances Gaudencio, Victoria Standfast, and Nick Owens.

Deputy Clerk: Tracy Forte

Visiting Member: Michelle Binks (District Councillor)

MINUTES

PC18/102 APOLOGIES

Cllr Kate Bailey
Cllr Judith Foot
Gordon Marples (District Councillor)
Kirsty Lord (County Councillor)

PC18/103 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

PC18/104 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 12th February 2019 were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

PC18/105 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was one member of the public present who observed proceedings but did not wish to speak.

PC18/106 MINUTES

The following Minutes were noted by Members:

Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on the 26th February 2019.

Minutes of the Policy Resources & Communications Committee meeting held on the 19th February 2019.

Minutes of the Grounds & Environment Committee meeting held on the 21st February 2019.

PC18/107 FINANCE

Members considered the finance reports and the supporting bank statements and reviewed the payment list. The Finance report and payments totalling **£31,278.40** for the period ending 31st January 2019 were considered and approved.

PC18/108 Reports

108.1 District Councillors reports:

Cllr Sue Hatton

Site Allocation Working Group. Cllr S Hatton sits on this group and informed members that the next meeting has been delayed until Monday 18 March as they had to get some legal advice.

Saxon Mills. This site continues to be a problem. Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) Planning have informed Cllr S Hatton that condition 4 of the planning permission regarding levels on this development has been discharged. Cllr S Hatton reported that local people are still concerned that the figures used are not correct, and that houses at the entrance particularly, are higher than they should be and causing great stress to nearby houses.

London Road/Stonepound Crossroads. Cllr S Hatton informed members that the Toucan crossing which was supposed to be in place before the build started at Saxon Mills, and the mitigating work to be done at Stonepound Crossroads before any occupation, will be linked together, as suggested by MSDC Planning. Barratts are seeking to obtain what they call 'road space' from West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Highways, to do the work. This has so far not been forthcoming, and the two projects are to be put back to June at the earliest.

Housing Allocation Document. Cllr S Hatton reported that legislative alterations needed to the Policy under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 have been scrutinised by MSDC Scrutiny Committee for Community, Housing and Planning Committee on which Cllr S Hatton sits. The recommendations will be put to the next full District Council meeting for ratification next month. In this document, there will be a recommendation that Clarion Housing (previously Affinity Sutton) be readmitted to MSDC's list of preferred providers. (Clarion Housing had previously removed themselves so they could then manage their own placements without need to refer to the MSDC Common Housing Register). If replaced on the list, this would allow more flexible movement within the system for all tenants – ie downsizing or upgrading) and that MSDC would also regain almost 100% availability for allocation of housing through their Common Housing Register.

Cllr Michelle Binks

Belmont Recreation Ground. Cllr Binks reported that permission had been given for the expansion of the car park at Belmont Recreation Ground. There was not a time frame for this project yet, however it should be an improvement for residents particularly when there are sporting events at the recreation ground resulting in a high demand for parking in the locality.

Cllr Jane Baker asked Cllr Binks why Clayton Recreation Ground never appeared to feature as a concern. Cllr Baker reported that she has been endeavouring to secure

works and funding for improvements to the hedge around the recreation ground over the past eight years, with little success. In this time the hedge has deteriorated further and now ideally should be replaced. Cllr Baker was disappointed that the s106 money received from the South Downs National Park Authority was used to replace the artificial cricket wicket as opposed to maintaining the hedge which does not currently provide a secure boundary along the B2112. Cllr Binks offered to make enquiries with the relevant Officer at MSDC and to arrange an onsite meeting with Cllr Baker.

Cllr Nick Owens asked for it to be recorded that he considers it a disgrace that MSDC has discharged Condition 4 on the Saxon Mills/Ham Fields planning application without ensuring compensation for the residents whose properties have been significantly devalued by the raised levels of the development. Cllr Owens noted that Cllr Hatton had put in a great deal of work to address this matter.

Conservative Party Campaign Leaflet. Cllr Frances Gaudencio asked Cllr Binks to clarify the statement relating to the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan on the recently distributed Hassocks Conservatives Newsletter. The statement read 'we are encouraging the Parish Council to, at long last, get a Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan in place.' Cllr Gaudencio expressed great disappointment in the choice of wording and in the lack of support offered to the Parish Council Cllr Binks explained that this wording was drawn from a comment she had made last year at a Parish Council meeting, and acknowledged that it was open to misinterpretation.

Cllr Gaudencio's comments were supported by all Councillors who noted that the members of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group had worked extremely hard over a sustained period of time to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. The Committee was keen to put on record that MSDC had accepted the Regulation 16 Plan submitted by Hassocks Parish Council and the housing numbers used originally. However following the examination of the District Plan by the Planning Inspector, MSDC then refused to accept the figures submitted by Hassocks Parish Council, which left the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan in a state of uncertainty and resulted in the significant delay.

It was noted that the District and Parish Council should be working together to obtain the best for the community which was agreed by all present. Cllr Weir asked Cllr Binks if future Conservative correspondence could include a statement confirming this joint approach, to which Cllr Binks agreed.

Cllr S Hatton enquired as to whether the HPC website shows a timescale of events for the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Weir indicated that he believed this was the case, it was agreed that Cllr S Hatton would review the relevant pages to confirm.

108.2 **County Councillor report** – Cllr Kirsty Lord was unable to be present at the meeting, as she was attending the CLC meeting at Downlands School. However she had submitted the following written report to the Clerk which was read out:

I recently met with Cllr Ian Weir, Chair of the Parish Council, Cllr S Hatton, in her capacity as a councillor and governor, and the Chairs of Governors from the three schools, to discuss proposals for a new school location off Ockley Lane. We will be continuing to meet to work towards the best solution for Hassocks as it grows. We have requested a meeting with WSCC officers towards the end of the school year, when more certainty will exist around the availability of land following the determination of the Ockley Lane planning application

I continue to work on issues relating to Ham Fields/Saxon Mills supporting residents.

I raised the issue of rail replacement buses travelling down Stanford Avenue rather than Station Approach/Keymer Road/Stonepound, which some residents had contacted me about, with the Chair of the Rail Group and she has raised this with GTR during their review session.

I continue to work with the Chair of the PC and Sally Booker on the Hassocks parking scheme and have been liaising with WSCC about next steps following the recent consultation.

The County Council budget was passed un-amended on 15th February.

The report was noted by the Committee.

- 108.3 **Rail matters** – Cllr Leslie Campbell informed Members that the complete closure of the railway line between Brighton and Three Bridges for a week during February, appeared to have been relatively problem free. However it was noted that several buses had ended up in the wrong places and taking incorrect routes due to a lack of local knowledge.

Cllr Peter Gibbons informed Members that in the first 59 days of 2019 an average of 4.88 trains had been cancelled daily. However given that the line was only open for 47 of those days, the actual average figure for cancellations is 6.12 trains per day. In real terms the performance has declined since the beginning of the year. Cllr Gibbons informed members that 31 trains had been cancelled on the previous day alone.

Cllr Gibbons informed Members that as from May 2019, one morning and one evening train service would be reinstated which stops at Clapham Junction. This was very well received by the Committee, and it was agreed by the Committee that Catherine Cassidy should be formally thanked for her commitment and hard work to get this service reinstated for commuters.

- 108.4 **Youth Initiatives.** Cllr Michelle Binks reported that she had become aware via Social Media that there appears to be a need for a central list of Youth Groups and Initiatives which are running within the community. Cllr Binks enquired as to whether the Parish Council might be able to make a list available for the public if she were to collate it.

The Deputy Clerk informed the Committee that any posters or promotional material received from Community groups is always displayed in the Parish Office window and/or Rotunda. Other forms of promotion were also discussed. It was believed that the Hassocks Directory also provided a list of clubs and activities throughout the village

Cllr Frances Gaudencio suggested that a Youth Matters representative was required to lead on this area within the Council again. This was agreed by Members and noted for consideration once the new Council is in place.

- 108.5 **Police matters.** Cllr Ian Weir updated members on his recent attendance at an MSALC conference. Katy Bourne, Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, spoke at the conference and reported that recruitment had started for the additional 250 Police Constables, 100 PCSO's and 50 specialist crime investigators which would be appointed over the next four years. Katy Bourne explained that there would now be a

Crime Prevention Team which would include PC's and PCSO's. The teams would not be based in one location, however would be patrolling various villages and towns to prevent and address crime. The combination of PC's and PCSO's would give the power of arrest, which PCSO's working alone do not have.

Further to the work she has been involved in with Cllr Michelle Binks on antisocial behaviour, Cllr Sue Hatton reiterated concerns about the lack of Police presence in Hassocks and asked that this should be recorded by the Council as a formal concern. Members were in full support of this.

Cllr Ian Weir reported that the Parish Clerk had spoken to both the local Police Sergeant and Katy Bourne in two separate telephone conversations. The Clerk had reiterated the need for more effective Policing within Hassocks.

108.6 Report from Councillors on meetings of outside bodies where the Council is represented.

HKD Transition. Cllr Nick Owens informed Members that he had recently attended a meeting with HKD Transition and County Councillor Kirsty Lord to consider a Labour Party motion which has been put to WSCC to declare a Climate Emergency. Cllr Lord discussed with the group what WSCC, and the Liberal Democrats, should be doing to manage this. Cllr Nick Owens noted that whilst Parish Councils have limited power, over time HPC may be able to move to achieve this motion. Cllr Emma Wood proposed that within the Council, addressing climate change could be borne in mind when Policies are considered and passed. HPC should be aiming towards being carbon neutral and bringing these matters to the forefront.

Cllr Weir noted that it was HKD Transition who had been instrumental in the installation of solar panels at Downlands School, and that this was a good example of the influence small groups can have with the right projects.

A discussion took place about transport and air pollution and following this, Cllr Sue Hatton put forward a motion. It was proposed that HPC formally expresses concern at the delays in the mitigating works to Stonepound Crossroads, as this will have an adverse effect on the quality of air at the Crossroads and the AQMA figures.

The motion was unanimously AGREED by all Members. The Clerk was requested to write to WSCC expressing the concerns at the delays, and to MSDC to request that they follow up this delay as a matter of urgency. MSDC are responsible for the AQMA.

UK Power Networks Local Government Forum. Cllr Frances Gaudencio reported that she had recently attended a forum run by UK Power Networks which had been useful and informative. This was attended by several Local Authorities and some commercial enterprises. The forum was to promote ways that UK Powers Networks can work with local authorities in energy markets to save money and generate income to benefit communities. Future possibilities for sustainable travel was also a key point.

PC18/109 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

Benches. Cllr Ian Weir reported that he had accepted two solid teak benches on behalf of the Parish Council which had been donated by Network Rail. The benches were used at the Bus Hub at Three Bridges during the recent Brighton Mainline Improvement project, and following this Network Rail then donated the benches to local stakeholders

as a thank you. Cllr Weir informed the committee that Catherine Cassidy had been responsible for instigating the offer to Hassocks Parish Council and the Council were very grateful to Catherine Cassidy for this. The Deputy Clerk would thank Catherine on behalf of the Parish Council.

MSALC Conference. Cllr Weir reported that at the MSALC conference he recently attended he had the opportunity to speak to Louise Goldsmith, Leader of WSCC, about funding for families in trouble and the subsequent savings in both social work and police involvement from such pre-emptive work, Cllr Weir informed Members that Louise Goldsmith appeared very receptive to this.

PC18/110 CLERK'S REPORT

- 110.1 In the Clerk's absence, Members were asked to note the agenda report provided to remind Councillors and members of the public who were interested in standing as a Parish Councillor at the forthcoming elections in May of the key dates for submission of nomination forms. This was noted by Members.

Parish Council elections are due to be held on **Thursday 2nd May 2019.**

Key dates in the election timetable are as follows:

- **Notice of Election** will be Published – **Monday 18th March 2019**
- **Candidate Nominations Open** - Tuesday **19th March 2019** – Please call 01444-477222 to secure an appointment to submit completed nomination forms.
- <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/media/3682/may-2019-parish-council-nomination-pack-indy.pdf>
- Candidate Nominations Close – **4.00pm** on **Wednesday 3rd April 2019** – Do not submit nominations close to the deadline as errors can make them invalid with no time for issues to be resolved.

PC18/111 URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN for noting and/or inclusion on a future agenda.

There were none.

PC18/112 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the date of the next Council meeting is **Tuesday 9th April 2019 at 7.30pm.**

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.35pm

Signed.....

Date.....