

## HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **POLICY, RESOURCES and COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE** meeting held on **Tuesday 21 May 2019 at 7.30 pm**

Attendees: Parish Councillors: Frances Gaudencio, Sue Hatton, Peter Gibbons, Ian Weir and David Hammond

Cllr Bob Brewer was also in attendance observing the meeting

Clerk: Ian Cumberworth

**PRC19/1 APOLOGIES:** None received

Absent without apologies: Cllr Kate Bailey and Cllr Georgia Cheshire

**PRC19/2 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS:** None declared.

**PRC19/3 ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR**

The Clerk advised Members that he had received one expression of interest from Cllr Frances Gaudencio to be considered as Chair and invited other Members who wished to be considered. No other members indicated a wish to fulfil the role. It was therefore proposed that Cllr Gaudencio be appointed to this role for the forthcoming year. Members voted in favour of this proposal.

**RESOLVED** that Cllr Frances Gaudencio was elected as Chair of this committee.

The Clerk advised Members that he had not received any expressions of interest for the role of Vice Chair at this stage and invited any other interested members to be considered. Cllr Gaudencio indicated that she had discussed the option with Cllr Georgia Cheshire who had expressed an interest in the position as Vice Chair. In light of Cllr Cheshire's absence, it was **AGREED** to hold over the selection until the remaining members of the Committee were present

**PRC19/4 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2019 as previously circulated were accepted.

**PRC19/5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.**

There were no members of the public present.

**PRC19/6 CLERKS REPORT**

### 6.1 Meeting Calendar

The Clerk introduced the report setting out a recommendation that full council in April (2019) approved the meeting schedule for the forthcoming year but agreed to review this once the new council was formed.

The proposal for consideration was to explore the option of moving over to a six weekly reporting cycle for Committees. The Clerk indicated that the only Committee meeting where this could not be considered as an option was the

Planning Committee. Member's views were sought on the idea of rescheduling meetings for the forthcoming year.

Members discussed the options/merits of changing the frequency of the meetings, it was felt that both Policy Resources & Communications and Grounds & Environment Committees could be considered to be moved over to a six weekly cycle. The Clerk indicated he would be supportive in this approach if members chose this option.

Members also suggested that in the month of April meetings should be kept to a minimum to assist in the year end close down.

Members expressed the view that they wished to retain the frequency of Full Council meetings and acknowledged that the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group meetings are likely to vary going forward as the Neighbourhood Plan progresses to the next stage.

Members were keen to ensure that any realigned meetings are scheduled to align to key decision dates/timelines such as Precept/budgets etc.

Members raised some queries on the current meeting schedule which the Clerk undertook to resolve. Cllr Peter Gibbons indicated that due to other commitments he would be unable to attend Grounds & Environment Committees if they fall on the last Thursday of each month. The Clerk suggested that if Members approved the proposal to move over to the six week cycle then this should become effective from September onwards to accommodate the summer recess in August.

After careful consideration Members **RESOLVED** to agree Policy Resources & Communications Committee and Grounds & Environment Committees move to a six week meeting cycle commencing from September after the summer recess.

The Clerk undertook to redraft the meeting schedule taking into consideration the key decision dates and bring a revised version back to a future Policy Resources & Communications Committee meeting.

**6.2 Internal Audit –Year end 2019** - Members were informed that the internal audit had been concluded and the Council had received a positive opinion. No recommendations were made.

An extract from the report was included in the papers and in summary it concludes '*the overall systems & procedures you have in place are entirely fit for purpose & indeed are a model of good practice.*'

Members were advised that a copy of the full report can be viewed by members in the parish offices.

Members noted the report and the positive outcome.

**6.3 Induction Pack (verbal update)** The Clerk advised Members that he is in the process of finalising the pack which will also incorporate moving Members over to a dedicated email accounts which are accessible via a secure portal to facilitate the exchange of Council related emails. Members were advised that some of the new members had already been set up on this system. A discussion took place about how this system might work as some members

expressed concerns as to whether they would receive automatic notifications when an item had been sent to the email account or whether it would be necessary to log on periodically to pick up/establish whether there had been any activity on the account. The Clerk undertook to establish whether an automatic alert could be set up to draw member's attention that an item has been received but emphasised the importance that Council business is communicated over the secure portal.

**6.4 Communications** – No Communications were reported other than the ongoing picture diary is being posted on the website of the progress on the skate park build.

**6.5 Business Plan** – The paper was introduced by the Clerk informing members that this item was to primarily prepare members to consider the business plan at a future meeting. Initially members were being asked to consider whether this document reflects the council's current priorities.

Members were also requested to review the detailed plan that supports the high level plan which had been distributed separately by way of background information and establish which priorities they wish to focus on in the forthcoming year. Members discussed the content of the document and acknowledged that greater clarity was required in the detailed document to assist in clearly understanding what is seeking to be delivered. Cllr Gaudencio requested members to go away and review the document and to prepare to consider the matters in more detail at the next Policy Resources & Communications meeting with a view to focusing on a number of key elements set out within the plan to deliver in the forthcoming year. Members were requested to determine whether any items need to be modified or removed from the current plan.

Members also acknowledged that a number of the priorities are in progress and some delivered.

**PRC19/7 Urgent Matters**

Cllr S Hatton raised an issue surrounding parking. As the matter did not fall within the remit of Policy Resources and Communications it was suggested this matter could be deferred to Grounds & Environment Committee to consider

**PRC19/8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING.** 18 June 2019

**EXCLUSION OF 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 present they will be requested to withdraw from the meeting.

**CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS**

**PRC19/9** Members were advised there were no matters to report and that now year-end and forming the new Council has passed workloads are starting to settle back down.

Members discussed the re-establishment of a Staffing Committee and sought clarification on its previous role and what its future role should be. It was confirmed that it was primarily established to oversee recruitment processes and consisted of 4 members which included the Council Chair and the remaining positions drawn from Policy Resources & Communications Committee. Members debated whether this should be put out to other members

on the Council. The Clerk confirmed that responsibility for staff matters sits within the remit of this Committee therefore representation should be drawn from this group. Members felt that the group should be involved in other areas in addition to recruitment, such as Clerks appraisal, staffing matters raised by the Clerk etc.

Two additional volunteers were sought from the Committee, Cllr Francis Gaudencio as Chair of PR& C, Cllr Sue Hatton and Cllr Ian Weir as Chair of the Council. Another member will also be identified to sit on this group in due course.