

Minutes of a Meeting of Mid Sussex District Council held on 11 November 2015 from 7.00 pm to 8.15 pm.

Present: Councillors:

Peter Reed (Chairman)
Bruce Forbes (Vice-Chairman)

John Allen*	David Dorking*	Peter Martin*
Jonathan Ash-Edwards	Sandy Ellis	Edward Matthews*
Andrew Barrett-Miles	Steven Hansford	Norman Mockford
Edward Belsey	Ginny Heard*	Pru Moore
John Belsey	Chris Hersey	Howard Muddin
Margaret Belsey	Margaret Hersey*	Kirsty Page
Liz Bennett	Colin Holden	Geoff Rawlinson
Anne Boutrup	Anne Jones MBE	Robert Salisbury
Pete Bradbury	Chris King	Linda Stockwell
Heidi Brunsdon*	Jim Knight	Dick Sweatman*
Kevin Burke*	Jacqui Landriani	Mandy Thomas-Atkin*
Cherry Catharine	Andrew Lea	Colin Trumble
Richard Cherry	Anthea Lea	Neville Walker
Rod Clarke	Andrew MacNaughton	Garry Wall
Phillip Coote	Bob Mainstone	Anthony Watts Williams
Ruth de Mierre	Gordon Marples	Norman Webster
Tony Dorey*	Gary Marsh	John Wilkinson
		Peter Wyan

*Absent

48. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC – RULE 9

None.

49. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 23 September 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

51. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

52. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised that his engagements for the month were now available to view on the website.

The Chairman thanked Members for attending the Civic Service on 4 October 2015 at 6pm at St Swithun's Church, East Grinstead.

The Chairman informed Council that he had recently attended the Chairman of Horsham District Council's Charity Quiz.

The Chairman ended by saying he had opened the Council's Local Global Event on 24 October 2015 and wanted to congratulate Lin Parkinson for organising a successful event and to wish her well in her retirement.

53. DISTRICT PLAN – FOCUSED AMENDMENTS PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Councillor Walker, Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee for Planning and Economic Development introduced the report. He began by commending the final document to Members which was the product of a long journey and improvement since 2013.

Councillor Walker referred to the expert advice the Council had taken from former and current Planning Inspectors, consultants and a QC and the productive discussions with neighbouring authorities.

He reported that the District Plan had been thoroughly scrutinised and properly debated by the Scrutiny Committee the previous evening.

He ended by saying that Mid Sussex had been voted the 10th best place to live in the UK and that Members had a duty to protect the unique qualities of the district for future generations whilst supporting sustainable housing growth. He felt that the Plan provided a robust framework for this. He strongly urged Members to support the document unanimously and moved to the recommendations. This was seconded by the Cabinet Member for Planning.

One Member commented on the extensive Duty to Co-Operate work the Council has undertaken with its neighbours and the two-way engagement process to understand the mutual impacts of the Plan and this was confirmed in the number of Memorandum of Understandings that had been reviewed, agreed and signed with neighbouring authorities.

Another Member added support for the District Plan and noted that it had been a disappointment that the Plan had failed at Examination in 2013 but that the Council had turned this setback into an opportunity to improve and strengthen the District Plan. He thanked Officers for their hard work and added his support for Members to agree the recommendations.

One Member added their thanks to staff and Members for their work to deliver a good District Plan. She added that she approved of the tabled amendment to the policy on Housing Density for Town Centres.

Another Member asked for further information on the tabled amendment. The Cabinet Member for Planning explained that the decision had been taken at Scrutiny Committee to remove the need for 70 dwellings per hectare for town centres due to the difficulty in defining the geographical boundaries for each of the town centres.

The Chairman confirmed for Members that the tabled amendment would form part of the recommendations which were being considered.

Several Members added their support for the District Plan and recognised the work to make the Plan robust and fully evidenced including incorporating responses from consultees, external advisors and neighbouring authorities.

One Member commented on the exemplar way the Scrutiny Committee for Planning and Economic Development had considered and debated the Focused Amendments to the District Plan at their meeting the previous evening. He said that this was a

clear example of how seriously the current Council took its role with regard to rigorous and robust public scrutiny.

Another Member added his thanks to Officers in their clarity whilst explaining the detail. He also thanked the Cabinet Member for Planning for supporting and encouraging Parishes and Towns in the development of their Neighbourhood Plans.

The Leader of the Council said that he had listened to the debate with interest. He advised that this was one of the most important pieces of work the Council had undertaken in recent years.

He thanked his colleagues who had taken on the Portfolio over the years and also the Officers for their hard work and ability to understand complex and ever changing regulation and guidance. He thanked all Members for their participation in drawing together the final version of the District Plan that was now before the Council. He said that it was important to note that over the last few years the developing District Plan had enjoyed considerable cross party support.

He noted that the Scrutiny Committee for Planning and Economic Development had conducted a thorough scrutiny of the Plan.

He ended by saying that the housing provision figure of 800dpa was a sensible and well evidenced proposal that took into account unmet need and responses from neighbours through the Duty to Co-Operate work.

The Leader said that he felt the final Plan before Members, following nearly 300 consultation responses, was robust and well evidenced. It balanced the housing and economic needs of the district against the need to protect the environment and unique diversity of Mid Sussex.

The Cabinet Member for Planning thanked all Members who had worked on the District Plan, in particular the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee for Planning and Economic Development. He also wished to thank all of the Officers who had been involved in producing the District Plan. He moved for Members to agree the recommendations in the report.

The Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendations and following a show of hands they were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

That Council:-

- (1) approves the modifications to the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 at Appendix 3, and the tabled amendment, for a “focused amendments” consultation in accordance with the Community Involvement Plan at Appendix 4;
- (2) agrees to publish the updated Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment of the District Plan to accompany the above consultation;
- (3) endorses the updated Duty to Co-Operate Framework at Appendix 5;
- (4) authorises the Head of Economic Promotion and Planning, in consultation

with the Cabinet Member for Planning, to make any necessary minor amendments to the District Plan and supporting documents following the consultation and to submit them to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (i.e. the Planning Inspectorate); and

- (5) authorises the Head of Economic Promotion and Planning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, to suggest any necessary modifications to the District Plan during the examination process to secure its soundness, subject to any necessary public consultation.

54. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET – 19 OCTOBER 2015

The Chairman took Members to the recommendations which were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

That Council agreed to:-

- (1) transfer £5,000 grant income relating to Neighbourhood Planning to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 18 of the report;
- (2) approve the increase to the establishment as detailed in paragraph 19 of the report;
- (3) transfer £150,000 of the 2015/16 Planned Asset Maintenance revenue budget to a Planned Asset Maintenance Reserve as set out in paragraph 20 of the report;
- (4) transfer £50,000 from the revenue underspend to the Burgess Hill Growth Reserve as detailed in paragraph 21 of the report;
- (5) transfer £33,000 to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 24 of the report; and
- (6) approve the variations to the Capital Programme contained in paragraph 30 of the report in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure rule B4.

55. REPORT OF THE LEADER

The Leader provided Members with a further update on the work around the two Devolution bids which the Council are involved in, Greater Brighton (GBEB) and the Three Southern Counties (3SC). He informed Members that he had attended, along with the Chief Executive, a two day workshop on Devolution held by the LGA.

He went on to say that the workshop had been attended by 24 authorities and that it was supported by the LGA Associate Director Andrew Campbell who has been tasked with bringing the devolution proposals forward. He said that he was impressed by the level of commitment and involvement at the meeting and it was

clear that Devolution was a serious item on the agenda for the Government and other partners. It was therefore important for this Council to continue to remain at the centre of negotiations with its partners as this work progresses. Ministerial meetings were likely before Christmas.

He reminded Members that there would be a workshop on 18 November 2015 to provide more detailed information on the current progress with this work and a proposed timetable for further meetings and dialogue with the relevant government department.

The Leader ended by acknowledging that this was uncharted territory and that there might be financial challenges and risks that need to be navigated but reminded Members that this was also an opportunity for greater fiscal control and more power to deliver better local governance on behalf of residents.

56. REPORT OF CABINET MEMBERS

Report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Service Delivery

The Deputy Leader began by updating Members on the Service and Financial Planning work currently underway as part of the Corporate Plan and Budget 2016/17. He advised that the Comprehensive Spending Review was scheduled to be announced at the end of November and that the Council continues to plan for the reduction of Revenue Support Grant. He advised that the Budget will continue the theme of striving for financial independence going forward.

The Deputy Leader informed Members that the Council had received its first dividend from the investment made into the CCLA Property Fund which was for £33,000. He welcomed this news and felt that the decision made by Council to invest in the CCLA Property Fund had been far-sighted.

He ended by informing Members that he would be attending a meeting of the association of Town and Parish Councils on behalf of the Leader and that he was looking forward to engaging with colleagues and finding a constructive role that Mid Sussex District Council can take to support these local authorities.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Property

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Property began by informing Members that the Council's Open4Business event had been very successful and wished to thank those Members who had attended the event. He also thanked those Officers who had worked hard to deliver the event, including Gordon Reay and Emma Bennett.

He informed Members that the manager of the Basepoint starter units in Haywards Heath had informed him that only 5 of the 33 units were unlet and said this was the quickest letting of business space Basepoint had ever seen.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Property advised Members that KV Manufacturing has now moved its base of operation from Thailand to Burgess Hill.

He also advised Members that following the Council's decision to equip Parking Enforcement Officers with Body Worn Cameras this has led to the successful

prosecution of a member of the public who attacked and assaulted one of the officers back in the summer. He said that this highlighted the importance of this valuable new asset to protect Officers.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Property ended by informing Members that he had authorised each Town to have free parking on days of their choice after 1pm in the run up to Christmas. The Council will also be reducing the fees in long stay car parks on the Saturdays in December in order to support local businesses and trade.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Planning

The Cabinet Member for Planning began by thanking Members for agreeing the Focussed Amendments of the District Plan for final consultation. He said that this had been a long journey but the end was now in sight. He went on to say that good progress was being made on Neighbourhood Plans with Crawley Down and Burgess Hill going to referendum on 10 December 2015 and Twineham and Turners Hill receiving positive reports from Examination.

He advised that the Council had recently held the Design Awards which were presented by the Rt Hon Sir Nicholas Soames MP and went on to list the winners of the awards.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Sustainability

The Cabinet Member for Leisure and Sustainability began by thanking Members for their feedback on the Dog Waste Bin Service and that this will be noted going forward.

She informed Members that the Council has in the past achieved its target of reducing its carbon footprint by 10% and that the Sustainability Officer was working with the Mid Sussex Older People's Council to secure funding of £126,000 to assist people over 65 and families with under 5's with fuel poverty.

One Member thanked the Cabinet Member for organising the recent visits for Members of the leisure centres and asked if more visits of other areas could be arranged. The Cabinet Member was pleased that Members enjoyed the visits and thought would be given to what other areas Members could visit.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Health and Community

The Cabinet Member for Health and Community advised that he had attended the Winter Resilience Forum and said that arrangements have been made to treat 1000 miles of road across West Sussex in the event of snow. He also said that the Highways Authority had 850 Salt Bins and 1000 1tonne bags of salt for the use of non-essential roads and pavements.

He informed Members that the first meeting of the Mid Sussex Family Support Network had taken place and this was to facilitate better communication and co-ordination between different partners and services with regards to children. He advised there were currently 33 children in the district under child protection measures and that it was important for professionals to work together to support vulnerable children.

The Cabinet Member provided an update on the County's position with regards to

housing refugees from Syria and he advised that West Sussex would be responsible for housing and supporting 60 families over the next 5 years.

He ended by saying that he had met, along with a Member colleague, with the Chief Executive of Brighton & Sussex University Hospital Trust and had been informed about the progress of plans to build a new hospital at Brighton on the same site as the current one.

Two Members asked additional follow up questions on the preparations for winter and the shovelling of snow off people's driveways. The Cabinet Member for Health and Community advised that the Council would be continue to work with local farmers in order to help with snow clearance and reminded Members if they required further detailed information to contact Ben Toogood, Emergency Planning Officer.

One Member asked if the Cabinet Member could provide an update on work at the Princess Royal Hospital, Haywards Heath at the next Council meeting. The Cabinet Member said that he would do so.

The Chairman reminded Members that they could only ask questions of the Cabinet Members that directly related to current business as outlined in their reports and said that if they wished to ask other questions they needed to submit these in advance in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.2.

57. QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2

None.

Chairman