

Minutes of a Meeting of Mid Sussex District Council held on 24 February 2016 from 7.00 pm to 7.49 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

88. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC – RULE 9

The following question was received from Dr Ian Gibson:

“Does the Council agree that the recent re-determination of the Sayers Common Appeal by the Secretary of State, and the revision to the National Planning Policy Guidance, means that the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in paragraph 14 of the NPPF is over-ridden by paragraph 198 of the same document, and its decision makers must refuse planning applications which conflict with a made neighbourhood plan, unless the benefits of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the adverse impacts, even though the LPA cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites?”

Councillor Andrew MacNaughton, the Cabinet Member for Planning responded as follows:

“It is for Planning Committees to make decisions in accordance with Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which says that determination must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Such material considerations include current Government policy and guidance, case law and recent appeal decisions. It is not for Council or the Portfolio Holder to pre-empt the decisions of the Planning Committees.”

Dr Ian Gibson then asked the Cabinet Member a supplementary question:

“Does the Council agree that paragraph 198 of the National Planning Policy Framework means that the Council should refuse planning applications that conflict with made Neighbourhood Plans unless they can identify benefits which significantly and demonstrably outweigh the adverse impacts of the application.”

The Cabinet Member referred to his previous answer as he said the question had already been answered.

89. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 27 January 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

90. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

91. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

92. CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman informed Members that the Civic Engagements were available for Members to view on the website.

93. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET – 1 FEBRUARY 2016

One Member sought clarification on the over-achievement of income.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Service Delivery advised that the current over-achievement in income in Parking and Development Management was indicative of a stronger local economy but that it was unwise to assume that this trend would continue. He went on to say that the current budget process was robust and that the advantage of the extra income has meant the Council is able to make spending decisions in advance.

As there were no other comments, the Chairman took Members to the recommendations which were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

That Council agreed to:-

- (1) transfer £65,000 grant income relating to Neighbourhood Planning to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 21 of the report;
- (2) transfer £99,292 grant income relating to Property Searches New Burdens funding 2015/16 to General Reserve, as detailed in paragraph 22 of the report;
- (3) transfer £791 grant income to General Reserve, as detailed in paragraph 23 of the report;

- (4) transfer £150,000 from the revenue underspend to the Local Development Framework Specific Reserve, as detailed in paragraph 24 of the report;
- (5) transfer £50,000 from the revenue underspend to the Community and Economic Development Fund Specific Reserve, as detailed in paragraph 24 of the report;
- (6) transfer £50,000 from the revenue underspend to the ICT Specific Reserve, as detailed in paragraph 24 of the report;
- (7) transfer £50,000 from the revenue underspend to the Parks improvement Specific Reserve, as detailed in paragraph 24 of the report;
- (8) transfer £50,000 from the revenue underspend to a CenSus consultancy Specific Reserve, as detailed in paragraph 24 of the report;
- (9) transfer £50,000 from the revenue underspend to the Business Digitalisation Specific Reserve, as detailed in paragraph 24 of the report; and
- (10) the variations to the Capital Programme contained in paragraph 33 in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rule B4.

94. CORPORATE PLAN AND BUDGET FOR 2016/17

The Chairman directed Members to page 3 of the Corporate Plan, paragraph 1.5, 5th bullet point which should continue to read "...housing and economic growth in Burgess Hill."

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Service Delivery introduced the recommendations for the first Budget and Corporate Plan for the new administration. He thanked all those Members and officers who had participated in bringing together the proposals.

The Cabinet Member provided an update on the Local Government Settlement which had been published two weeks earlier and three main changes had been incorporated into the Budget and Corporate Plan proposals:

- (1) A transitional grant of £145,000 will be provided in 2016/17 and 2017/18 to help mitigate the rapid reductions in Revenue Support Grant.
- (2) The negative grant of £300,000 forecast for 2018/19 has been removed.
- (3) The Secretary of State has increased the number of Councils, including Mid Sussex, who are allowed to increase Council Tax by up to 2% or £5, whichever is the greater.

He said that these were welcome changes and that points 1 and 2 would result in a forecast improvement of almost £600,000 to the Council's position over the next three years.

He advised that in the coming years the Council would face significant changes to its finances with severe reductions in Revenue Support Grant and its eventual

withdrawal and that New Homes Bonus would continue but in a reduced form. In the context of these changes he cited the Council's previous achievements of securing £6.8 million in savings, a 5 year freeze in Council Tax and the protection and enhancement of key services. He went on to say that as a result of this effective financial management the Council did not have to consider other options currently being considered by neighbouring authorities such as Sunday parking charges or using reserves to prop up revenue spending.

The Cabinet Member acknowledged that the proposals included an increase to Council Tax for the first time in 5 years but confirmed that Mid Sussex's Council Tax remains one of the lowest in Sussex and that the Council will continue to protect those households on the lowest incomes through the Council Tax Support Scheme.

He advised that the Budget was ambitious and that the Council continued to strive for financial independence and stated that one of the proposals being considered was to set aside a further £2 million into the Land and Property Specific Reserve in order to continue to invest. He confirmed that the dividend from the Council's initial investment into the Local Authority Property Fund amounted to almost the same as the increase in Council Tax will generate. The Council will need to continue this approach with regards to Reserves and Council owned land.

The Cabinet Member concluded by stating that the proposals also included expanding the green waste service to provide for 4000 households over 4 years, to enhance the leisure facilities in partnership with Places for People Leisure and to invest in digital technologies to enhance productivity and customer service.

There were also plans to deliver significant growth in housing, infrastructure and jobs for Burgess Hill and to protect the support provided to voluntary organisations and community grants to ensure continuing support for the most vulnerable members of the community. He moved Members to the recommendations and this was seconded by the Leader of the Council.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee for Leader and Service Delivery advised that the proposals had been extensively debated and scrutinised by the Scrutiny Committee before coming to Council and that he supported the proposals but he referred to page 61 of the Corporate Plan which made reference to the Council using its own assets to help alleviate the affordable housing crisis and asked what would be done going forward.

The Cabinet Member thanked the Committee for its diligent scrutiny and acknowledged that this was an important point and the Council needed to ensure that the right housing mix was available for people to access housing. He advised that there were several options for the Council to help alleviate this problem including Discretionary Housing Payments to help with rent, the Private Letting Negotiator and looking to the Council's land holdings.

Several Members added their support of the proposals but raised concerns about the Council Tax increase, and asked about the proposed comparisons with neighbouring authorities and the option of using Reserves.

The Cabinet Member said that he was proud that the Council had frozen Council Tax for 5 years but stated that this was not sustainable. He confirmed that work had been done to assess all options and stated that the increase in Council Tax would only produce 2.5% of the total amount of savings the Council needs to make, demonstrating that the Council looks to all other sources first. He stated that Mid

Sussex Council Tax is the third lowest in the whole of Sussex.

In response to the issue of Reserves, the Cabinet Member said that several years previously the Council's Reserves had been in a depleted state and that through careful financial management this had been reversed. He said that he felt it was unwise to use Reserves, like some other Council's do, to supplement the Revenue account as this was unsustainable. He also said that the Council can now use Reserves for opportunities to make investments for the benefit of the community.

One Member commented on the importance of the Reserves and asked for an update on how the Council's investments were performing. The Cabinet Member confirmed that through New Homes Bonus and other investment decisions the Reserves were in a healthy position and that the Local Authority Property Fund investment was forecast to produce an annual return of £160,000.

The Leader of the Council thanked the Cabinet Member for his full and comprehensive presentation of the proposals which incorporated a compelling business case and detailed service plans.

He commented that there had been a long and considered process to get to the set of proposals being considered at the meeting and thanked Members for their diligent scrutiny. He emphasised that this was a transparent budget which had been open to consultation and comment.

He added that the challenges from the Government will continue in future years and that the Council will continue to build on its track record of delivering and enhancing services whilst stimulating growth and investment in Burgess Hill. It would also be important to protect the contributions the Council makes to voluntary services who provide much needed support for the local community.

He concluded by saying the proposed Budget delivers value for money for residents through sensible and sound financial management and was proud to support the recommendations to Members.

The Chairman took Members to a vote of the recommendations as detailed in the report.

A vote was taken and is particularised below in accordance with the budget regulations:

	For	Against	Abstained
Councillor Ash-Edwards	√		
Councillor Barrett-Miles	√		
Councillor E. Belsey	√		
Councillor J. Belsey	√		
Councillor M. Belsey	√		
Councillor Bradbury	√		
Councillor Burke	√		
Councillor Catharine	√		
Councillor Cherry	√		
Councillor Coote	√		
Councillor de Mierre	√		
Councillor Dorey	√		

Councillor Dorking	√		
Councillor Ellis	√		
Councillor Forbes	√		
Councillor Hansford	√		
Councillor Heard	√		
Councillor C. Hersey	√		
Councillor M. Hersey	√		
Councillor Holden	√		
Councillor King	√		
Councillor J. Knight	√		
Councillor Landriani	√		
Councillor Andrew Lea	√		
Councillor Anthea Lea	√		
Councillor MacNaughton	√		
Councillor Mainstone	√		
Councillor Marples	√		
Councillor Martin	√		
Councillor Matthews	√		
Councillor Mockford	√		
Councillor Moore	√		
Councillor Mundin	√		
Councillor Rawlinson	√		
Councillor Reed	√		
Councillor Stockwell	√		
Councillor Thomas – Atkin	√		
Councillor Trumble	√		
Councillor Walker	√		
Councillor Wall	√		
Councillor Watts Williams	√		
Councillor Webster	√		
Councillor Wilkinson	√		

44 Members voted in support, with no votes against and no abstentions.

RESOLVED

Corporate Plan and Budget 2016/17

- (1) That the Corporate Plan and Budget for 2016/17 set out in this report be approved.

Mid Sussex District Council Budget 2016/17

- (1) Revenue Spending and MSDC council tax levels for 2016/17:
- (a) That Revenue Spending summarised below (see Section 2 for details) is approved:

	£'000
Service Net Expenditure	12,680
Balance Unallocated	41

Council Net Expenditure	12,721
Revenue Spending	12,721

- (b) That with respect to pensions, the employer's contribution rate should be 18.6% for 2016/17;
- (c) That the Mid Sussex District Council element of the Council Tax be increased by 1.99% to £152.55, with no requirement to hold a local referendum in accordance with the Act.

(3) **Capital Programme 2016/17 (see Section 3 for details):**

- (a) That the Capital Programme for 2016/17 (as set out in Section 3) is approved.

(4) **Usable Reserves and other balances**

- (a) That the estimates for cash balances (see Section 4 for details) are noted.

(5) **Financial Strategy & Medium Term Financial Plan:**

- (a) That the summary Medium Term Financial Plan to 2019/20 (see Section 5 for details) is noted.

(6) **Collection Fund:**

- (a) That the estimated surplus on the Collection Fund totalling £1,291,000 for the year ended 31st March 2016, of which the Mid Sussex District Council share is £178,430 (see Section 6 for details) is noted.

Council Taxes For The Mid Sussex Area:

- (7) It be noted that at its meeting held on 16 December 2015 the Council calculated the following amounts for the year 2016/17:
 - (a) 57,975.6 being the amount calculated, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012, as its council tax base for the year; and
 - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as set out in Table 3 Section 7 of this report.
- (8) £8,844,176 being the amount calculated as the Council Tax Requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2016/17 (excluding Parish Precepts).
- (9) That the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2016/17 in accordance with Section 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by The Localism Act 2011):
 - (a) £65,478,832 being the aggregate of the amounts, which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils;

- (b) £53,053,159 being the aggregate of the amounts, which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act;
- (c) £12,425,673 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3.3.3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3.3.3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year;
- (d) £214.33 being the amount at 3.3.3(c) above, all divided by the amount at 3.3.1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts);
- (e) £3,581,497 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish Precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (see Section 7 for details);
- (f) £152.55 being the amount at 3.3.3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3.3.3(e) above by the amount at 3.3.1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates;
- g) Part of the Council's area

Parish area	band A £	band B £	band C £	band D £	band E £	band F £	band G £	band H £
Albourne	134.74	157.20	179.65	202.11	247.02	291.94	336.85	404.22
Ansty & Staplefield	138.71	161.82	184.94	208.06	254.30	300.53	346.77	416.12
Ardingly	178.06	207.74	237.41	267.09	326.44	385.80	445.15	534.18
Ashurst Wood	159.01	185.51	212.01	238.51	291.51	344.51	397.52	477.02
Balcombe	151.13	176.32	201.51	226.70	277.08	327.46	377.83	453.40
Bolney	139.32	162.54	185.76	208.98	255.42	301.86	348.30	417.96
Burgess Hill	148.17	172.86	197.56	222.25	271.64	321.03	370.42	444.50
Cuckfield	169.21	197.41	225.61	253.81	310.21	366.61	423.02	507.62
East Grinstead	150.48	175.56	200.64	225.72	275.88	326.04	376.20	451.44
Fulking	140.53	163.96	187.38	210.80	257.64	304.49	351.33	421.60
Hassocks	138.05	161.05	184.06	207.07	253.09	299.10	345.12	414.14
Haywards Heath	130.92	152.74	174.56	196.38	240.02	283.66	327.30	392.76
Horsted Keynes	129.81	151.45	173.08	194.72	237.99	281.26	324.53	389.44
Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common	145.48	169.73	193.97	218.22	266.71	315.21	363.70	436.44
Lindfield	138.89	162.03	185.18	208.33	254.63	300.92	347.22	416.66
Lindfield Rural	127.61	148.87	170.14	191.41	233.95	276.48	319.02	382.82
Newtimber	105.61	123.21	140.81	158.41	193.61	228.81	264.02	316.82
Poynings	123.91	144.57	165.22	185.87	227.17	268.48	309.78	371.74
Pyecombe	137.73	160.69	183.64	206.60	252.51	298.42	344.33	413.20
Slaugham	143.67	167.62	191.56	215.51	263.40	311.29	359.18	431.02
Turners Hill	174.49	203.57	232.65	261.73	319.89	378.05	436.22	523.46
Twineham	133.26	155.47	177.68	199.89	244.31	288.73	333.15	399.78
West Hoathly	138.09	161.11	184.12	207.14	253.17	299.20	345.23	414.28
Worth	132.63	154.74	176.84	198.95	243.16	287.37	331.58	397.90

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at as set out in Table 3 Section 7 of this report by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (10) That it be noted that for the year 2016/17, West Sussex County Council have stated the following amounts in precept issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:

Valuation band	£	Valuation band	£
band A	805.26	band E	1,476.31
band B	939.47	band F	1,744.73
band C	1,073.68	band G	2,013.15
band D	1,207.89	band H	2,415.78

- (11) That it be noted that for the year 2016/17 the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner have stated the following amounts in precept issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation band	£	Valuation band	£
band A	99.27	band E	182.00
band B	115.82	band F	215.09
band C	132.36	band G	248.18
band D	148.91	band H	297.82

- (12) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts as at 3.3.3(g), 3.3.4 and 3.3.5 above, the Council in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2016/17 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Parish area	band A £	band B £	band C £	band D £	band E £	band F £	band G £	band H £
Albourne	1,039.27	1,212.49	1,385.69	1,558.91	1,905.33	2,251.76	2,598.18	3,117.82
Ansty & Staplefield	1,043.24	1,217.11	1,390.98	1,564.86	1,912.61	2,260.35	2,608.10	3,129.72
Ardingly	1,082.59	1,263.03	1,443.45	1,623.89	1,984.75	2,345.62	2,706.48	3,247.78
Ashurst Wood	1,063.54	1,240.80	1,418.05	1,595.31	1,949.82	2,304.33	2,658.85	3,190.62
Balcombe	1,055.66	1,231.61	1,407.55	1,583.50	1,935.39	2,287.28	2,639.16	3,167.00
Bolney	1,043.85	1,217.83	1,391.80	1,565.78	1,913.73	2,261.68	2,609.63	3,131.56
Burgess Hill	1,052.70	1,228.15	1,403.60	1,579.05	1,929.95	2,280.85	2,631.75	3,158.10
Cuckfield	1,073.74	1,252.70	1,431.65	1,610.61	1,968.52	2,326.43	2,684.35	3,221.22
East Grinstead	1,055.01	1,230.85	1,406.68	1,582.52	1,934.19	2,285.86	2,637.53	3,165.04
Fulking	1,045.06	1,219.25	1,393.42	1,567.60	1,915.95	2,264.31	2,612.66	3,135.20
Hassocks	1,042.58	1,216.34	1,390.10	1,563.87	1,911.40	2,258.92	2,606.45	3,127.74
Haywards Heath	1,035.45	1,208.03	1,380.60	1,553.18	1,898.33	2,243.48	2,588.63	3,106.36
Horsted Keynes	1,034.34	1,206.74	1,379.12	1,551.52	1,896.30	2,241.08	2,585.86	3,103.04

Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common	1,050.01	1,225.02	1,400.01	1,575.02	1,925.02	2,275.03	2,625.03	3,150.04
Lindfield	1,043.42	1,217.32	1,391.22	1,565.13	1,912.94	2,260.74	2,608.55	3,130.26
Lindfield Rural	1,032.14	1,204.16	1,376.18	1,548.21	1,892.26	2,236.30	2,580.35	3,096.42
Newtimber	1,010.14	1,178.50	1,346.85	1,515.21	1,851.92	2,188.63	2,525.35	3,030.42
Poynings	1,028.44	1,199.86	1,371.26	1,542.67	1,885.48	2,228.30	2,571.11	3,085.34
Pyecombe	1,042.26	1,215.98	1,389.68	1,563.40	1,910.82	2,258.24	2,605.66	3,126.80
Slaugham	1,048.20	1,222.91	1,397.60	1,572.31	1,921.71	2,271.11	2,620.51	3,144.62
Turners Hill	1,079.02	1,258.86	1,438.69	1,618.53	1,978.20	2,337.87	2,697.55	3,237.06
Twineham	1,037.79	1,210.76	1,383.72	1,556.69	1,902.62	2,248.55	2,594.48	3,113.38
West Hoathly	1,042.62	1,216.40	1,390.16	1,563.94	1,911.48	2,259.02	2,606.56	3,127.88
Worth	1,037.16	1,210.03	1,382.88	1,555.75	1,901.47	2,247.19	2,592.91	3,111.50

Chairman