

**Minutes of a Special Meeting of Mid Sussex District Council
held on 23 March 2016 from 7.00 pm to 7.30 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 Munda
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

95. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC – RULE 9

None.

96. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 24 February 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

97. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

98. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

99. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

He also advised that on 10 March 2016 he had hosted a coffee morning for the local recipients in the New Year's Honours list, including former Mid Sussex District Council Chairman, Rosemary Burns.

100. LINDFIELD AND LINDFIELD RURAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Chairman asked the Solicitor to the Council to provide a legal update before proceeding with the debate. The Solicitor to the Council advised Members that the Council had received a letter from solicitors acting for a prospective Lindfield developer threatening judicial review if the Council makes the Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan that evening.

He said that their points of concern relate to the matters considered by Cabinet on 30 November 2015. The legislation requires any challenge to a decision to be made within 6 weeks of that decision being taken. Officers are therefore confident that a challenge on the grounds described would be out of time and in any event without merit. Legally the Neighbourhood Plan can and should be made that evening.

Councillor Margaret Hersey recommended the Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan for approval. She stated that it was the result of many months of dedicated work by a dedicated team of residents from both parishes and also received a 95% yes vote by those who voted in the referendum. She asked that the Council respect the wishes of the parishes and move to the recommendation. This was seconded by the Cabinet Member for Planning.

Another Ward Member added his approval for the Plan and urged Members to approve its adoption as part of the Local Development Plan.

The Cabinet Member for Planning congratulated the parishes for a successful outcome from the referendum and was pleased to recommend that the Neighbourhood Plan be made part of the Development Plan.

As there were no further comments, the Chairman took Members to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

That Council agrees to formally make the Neighbourhood Plan part of the Local Development Plan. This will enable the District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan to determine planning applications in Lindfield and Lindfield Rural.

101. TWINEHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Cabinet Member for Planning introduced the report and congratulated the Parish on the excellent work undertaken to produce the Neighbourhood Plan. He moved the recommendation.

This was seconded by the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Property who said he was pleased to see the Neighbourhood Plan reach this stage after several years of work.

As there were no further comments, the Chairman took Members to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

That Council agrees to formally make the Twineham Neighbourhood Plan part of the Local Development Plan. This will enable the District Council to use the plan to determine planning applications in Twineham Parish.

102. TURNERS HILL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Vice-Chairman introduced the report and said that he was pleased to recommend the Neighbourhood Plan for approval and moved Members to support the excellent work carried out by the Parish Council and residents. He said that the Neighbourhood Plan sought to protect the character of the area and wished to thank all those who were involved in bringing the Plan together. He moved Members to agree the recommendation.

This was seconded by the Cabinet Member for Planning who offered his congratulations to the Parish on getting their Neighbourhood Plan to this stage.

As there were no further comments, the Chairman took Members to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

That Council agrees to formally make the Turners Hill Neighbourhood Plan part of the Local Development Plan. This will enable the District Council to use the plan to determine planning applications in Turners Hill Parish.

103. MSDC PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2016/17

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Service Delivery introduced the report which he advised was an annual requirement under the Localism Act. He stated that the policy sets out current working practice and flexibility to attract staff in a competitive market. He moved Members to agree the recommendation.

This was seconded by the Cabinet Member for Health and Community who advised that the policy was fully compliant and in some areas exceeded the recommendations in the Localism Act and therefore urged Members to support the policy.

As there were no further comments, the Chairman took Members to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

That Council agrees the Pay Policy at Appendix A of the report, to comply with the requirements of the Localism Act.

104. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY SCHEME 2016 – 20

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee for Leisure and Community introduced the report which she advised had been robustly scrutinised by the Committee on 9 February 2016. She stated that there had been a thorough debate where lots of

issues had been discussed and thoughtful questions raised by Members and that they had unanimously endorsed the Scheme to be considered by Council for adoption and moved to the recommendation. This was seconded by the Cabinet Member for Health and Community.

One Member welcomed the Equality and Diversity Scheme but raised a concern about an area of discrimination not covered in the policy of young single mothers. The Cabinet Member for Health and Community agreed with the comments raised and said that this highlighted the importance of the policy and that it was important to treat everyone with respect. He went on to say that officers and Members are provided with regular training sessions and urged Members to support the recommendation.

As there were no further comments, the Chairman took Members to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

That Council approves the Equality and Diversity Scheme 2016-20 attached at Appendix 1.

105. REVIEW OF THE HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee for Leisure and Community introduced the report which was debated by the Committee on 2 March 2016. The debate focused on the proposed changes to the scheme and there were particular concerns around the 1% quota for transferring tenants needing to move for work purposes. She advised that Members had been reassured by officers that this would not result in properties being left empty if other higher priority residents were waiting for a property. She moved Members to the recommendation, which was seconded by the Cabinet Member for Health and Community.

One Member asked if the Housing Allocation Scheme made provision for Armed Forces personnel moving into the area and that they would still be able to go onto the housing register. The Cabinet Member for Health and Community referred to the section of the scheme under paragraph 11.2.1 where this was outlined.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Community noted the due diligence and careful consideration of the Scrutiny Committee for Leisure and Community in reviewing this scheme.

He also went on to say that this would be the last Housing Allocation Scheme overseen by Lynne Standing, the Head of Housing, Environmental Health and Building Control who will be retiring in April 2016. He thanked Mrs Standing for all her hard work over the years since joining the Council in 2002 and running the department with quiet and reassuring efficiency.

As there were no further comments, the Chairman took Members to the recommendation which was approved unanimously.

RESOLVED

That Council approves the revised Housing Allocation Scheme at Appendix 1 to take effect from April 2016.

106. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2016/17 TO 2018/19

The Chairman of the Audit Committee introduced the report which he advised had been robustly scrutinised by the Audit Committee the previous week. He said that the Treasury Management Strategy was central to the financial wellbeing of the Council. He stated that the main addition to the Strategy was the addition of two approved institutions, Svenska Handelsbanken and Close Brothers Ltd.

In addition, he advised Members of three errors in the report which had not been caught before the publication deadline which were:

- Paragraph 4.1.3 page 123, to insert “AA –“at the end of the third to last sentence. This is unchanged from last year.
- Appendix 2 page 130. Amend the Approved Investment Institutions to read
 - 3. Lloyds Banking Group
 - Lloyds Bank plc
 - Halifax plc
 - Bank of Scotland plc
 - HBOS Treasury Services plc
 - All with the same limits (£5m group limit, £4m any one bank, maximum period 5 years)
- Appendix 2 page 130. To add to the Approved Investment Institutions list “9. TSB Bank plc (£4m placement limit for maximum period of 5 years)”.

He ended by stating that there were no other substantial changes and therefore moved Members to agree the recommendations.

This was seconded by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Service Delivery who thanked the Audit Committee for their in-depth scrutiny. He advised that the strategy outlined sensible controls put in place to safeguard the significant amount of taxpayers’ money. He welcomed the additional counterparties in order to create a diverse list of approved institutions and urged Members to support the recommendations.

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

RESOLVED

That Council adopts:-

- (1) the proposed Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2016/17 and the following two years;
- (2) the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) and the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement (MRP) as contained in Sections 4 and 2.3 respectively of the report; and
- (3) the Prudential Indicators contained within this report.

107. STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2015

The Chairman of the Standards Committee introduced the report which outlined a positive position for the Council with the number of complaints being relatively low. He advised that the two current Independent Persons' terms of office would expire in April 2016 and thanked them for their service. He stated that the Committee had discussed a wide range of issues including the Code of Conduct relating to Neighbourhood Plans and urged Members to note the report.

This was seconded by Councillor Bradbury who agreed that the work of the Standards Committee had been thorough and related the concerns of the Committee over a lack of options to deal with complaints.

As there were no further comments, the Chairman took Members to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

That Council notes the contents of the 2015 Annual Report of the Standards Committee.

108. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS FOR STANDARDS MATTERS AND THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Service Delivery introduced the report and thanked the previous post holders for their contributions and stated that the Leader had written to them on behalf of the Council. He went on to say that they had interviewed four strong candidates for the Independent Persons for Standards Matters and proposed the appointment of Anthony Cox, previous Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel, and Dr David Horne who had significant experience in this area and undertaken a similar role at Brighton and Hove City Council.

He advised that there had only been one applicant for the Independent Remuneration Panel post but he and the Leader felt that Michael Green met the requirements for the post and would be a valued addition to the Panel.

This was seconded by Councillor John Belsey who said he was happy to support the recommendations.

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

RESOLVED

That Council appoints Anthony Cox and Dr David Horne as Independent Persons for Standards Matters, and appoints Michael Green to the Independent Remuneration Panel for terms of 4 years from 1 May 2016.

Chairman