

Minutes of a Meeting of Mid Sussex District Council held on 19 July 2017 from 7.00 pm to 8.15 pm.

Present: Councillors:

Bruce Forbes (Chairman)
Phillip Coote (Vice-Chairman)

Jonathan Ash-Edwards
Andrew Barrett-Miles
Edward Belsey
John Belsey*
Margaret Belsey*
Liz Bennett
Michelle Binks
Anne Boutrup*
Pete Bradbury
Heidi Brunsdon*
Cherry Catharine*
Richard Cherry
Rod Clarke
Ruth de Mierre
Tony Dorey*
David Dorking*
Sandy Ellis
Claire Fussell

Steven Hansford
Sue Hatton
Ginny Heard
Chris Hersey
Margaret Hersey
Colin Holden*
Anne Jones MBE
Jim Knight*
Jacqui Landriani*
Andrew Lea*
Anthea Lea*
Judy Llewellyn-Burke*
Andrew MacNaughton
Bob Mainstone*
Gordon Marples
Gary Marsh
Edward Matthews*

Norman Mockford*
Pru Moore*
Howard Muddin
Kirsty Page*
Geoff Rawlinson
Peter Reed
Robert Salisbury*
Linda Stockwell
Dick Sweatman
Mandy Thomas-Atkin
Colin Trumble
Neville Walker
Garry Wall
Anthony Watts Williams*
Norman Webster
John Wilkinson*
Peter Wyan

*Absent

1. OPENING PRAYER

The opening prayer was read by the Vice-Chairman.

2. TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 9

None.

3. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 28 JUNE 2017

Tom Clark, Head of Regulatory Services, informed Members that there was a typographical error after the resolution in item 7 of the minutes which should be amended to read Councillor Michelle Binks. The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 28 June 2017 were then agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA

None.

5. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL AGREES TO TAKE AS URGENT BUSINESS

None.

6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reminded Members that the Community Service Awards will take place on 17 September, and encouraged all Members to attend. He highlighted that there had been a positive response from the pupils who attended the recent 'School Council, and he read out a letter of thanks received from one of the pupils.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Ruth De Mierre for hosting the successful Strictly Summer event in the Orchards shopping Centre on Saturday 8 July. He highlighted his recent attendance at the Connect with the Countryside event held in Ardingly, in which over 2,500 people attended. The Chairman will also visit the Houses of Parliament on 21 July.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET MEETING OF 20 JULY 2017

Garry Wall, Leader of the Council, introduced the report. He stated that the report that went to Cabinet was positive, detailing positive performance of the Council that should not be glossed over. The Leader stated that the press and the public should be encouraged to attend these meetings, which are positive, detailed and worthy of scrutiny. He concluded that Members should revisit the Agenda and reports of the meeting to familiarise themselves with its content.

Jonathan Ash-Edwards, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Growth summarised that the report demonstrates the financial strength and good health of the Council which is utilised to invest in services and facilities that residents rely on. He informed Members that there is a forecast underspend which will be used to top up the leisure centre reserve. Money has been set aside for the cleansing of the A23 which is well underway. The revised Capital Programme outlines £3.4 million in investment for the current financial year; which will be spent on improving car parks, the pavilion in Clair Park, Section 106 contributions for the World's End Recreation park, flat roofs at the Orchard's Shopping Centre, and various other projects throughout the entire district.

A Member agreed that the Cabinet report is worthy of debate in Council, and enquired as to where the £200,000 Section 106 contributions for the World's End Recreation Park have been acquired from.

The Deputy Leader replied that the money has arisen from the development on Valebridge Road at the edge of the border with Lewes District Council. The impact of the development falls on Mid Sussex even if the site itself falls within Lewes District. The Council successfully negotiated Section 106 contributions for Burgess Hill after local consultation. This demonstrates the ability of the Council to achieve substantial Section 106 contributions through development.

A Member praised the enviable record on managing costs whilst improving services and investment for the community. He noted that a feature of recent years has been a modest excess of income, and asked whether there is a need for a sharper and more accurate process for forecasting income.

The Leader explained that Members themselves are part of the budget making process, which will start in earnest in September for the 2018/19 budget. Members are given the opportunity to scrutinise the budget and the outturn has been signed off by Members. The Leader noted that the current state of extra income is prudent

and has always been used to improve and invest in Council services in the same financial year. He concluded that where there is extra income, the Council is spending. The Council cannot balance the budget to zero, and it would be more prudent to spend the surplus, rather than make savings. He reminded Members that vacancies will be filled in the Finance and Planning Working Group.

As there were no further questions, Councillor Wall moved Members to the recommendation in the report, this was seconded by Councillor Ash-Edwards and agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

Council resolved to approve:

- (i) that £192,927 grant income relating to Flexible Homelessness Support Grant be transferred to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 20;
- (ii) that £4,818 grant income relating to New Homes Bonus Returned funding grant be transferred to General Reserve, as detailed in paragraph 21;
- (iii) that £40,000 of the revenue underspend be transferred to A23 Highway Cleansing Reserve as detailed in paragraph 26 (a)
- (iv) that £22,000 of the revenue underspend be transferred to the Leisure Reserve as detailed in paragraph 26 (b)
- (v) the variations to the Capital Programme contained in paragraph 40 in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure rule B4.

8. TO RECEIVE THE LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader reminded Members of the opportunity to attend Cabinet Meetings. He began by informing members of two board meetings he attended of the Coast2Capital Local Enterprise Partnership and the Greater Brighton Economic Board. Both are key to economic growth in the region, and leverage significant investment from Central government.

He announced that the Greater Brighton Economic Board has ambition to extend its sphere of influence and has invited Crawley Borough Council and Gatwick Airport Ltd to join as associate Members. This presents an interesting change to the dynamic of the Board, and now places Mid Sussex at a centralised location. The challenges that both these groups face continue to grow and are best met at the sub-regional level by all stakeholders, including Highways and County Councils to invest in key infrastructure. Mid Sussex's membership of these boards gives it a chance to shape and influence investment.

The Leader informed Members that the British Science Festival is taking place from 5 – 9 September in Brighton and is the first time the festival has been held in the local area. Both universities will be taking part and he urged Members to visit the website for more information.

The Leader noted that this administration is now at its half-way point after a successful two years. The administration is focusing on looking ahead in the interests of residents and to enable future administrations to start in a positive and stable way. However, the times remain challenging and complex and local government is not

immune to central government decisions. The Council must look at how it can plan to adapt and invest to face these challenges.

The Leader stated that a new Revenues and Benefits service is to be introduced combined with a new economic strategy involving the retention of business rates. Planning remains a complex area and the demands for planning services will increase. There must be co—ordinated growth which retains a sense of place for local residents. To maintain current levels of service in light of projected population growth, the Council will need to respond accordingly and support the voluntary sector and community projects.

To conclude, the Leader stated the Council remains on a sound financial platform, but cannot stand still and must re-align and tailor its services so they remain fit for purpose and focused on the needs of the community.

A Member enquired as to the future of the Gatwick Diamond as the expansion of the Greater Brighton Economic Board may lead to the overlapping of remits for the different groups.

The Leader replied that while the Greater Brighton Economic Board is looking to expand, it is not looking to expand to the other Councils represented by the Gatwick Diamond, such as Tandridge and Mole Valley. The Greater Brighton Economic Board and Local Enterprise Partnership represent the overarching framework and fulfil a different role to the Gatwick Diamond, which can continue to be used to represent local views. The roles of each group will have to be flexible over time, but in the short term there is definitely a role for the Gatwick Diamond.

The Leader stated that there is a role for all three groups and Mid Sussex is properly represented on all three. Mid Sussex must be a member of all these groups as it makes it perfectly placed to access resources and funding from all of them. The LEP body has the greatest access to central government funding, which has culminated in an approximate funding of £30 million for Mid Sussex.

A Member agreed that partnership working with County Councils and Town Councils is positive and many major projects have benefitted from joint working between all tiers of council, such as Hurst Farm and the growth at Burgess Hill. The Member stated that a meeting discussing the Atkins Report on Transport funding will take place at Haywards Heath Town Council tomorrow, to which the Leader is also attending.

The Leader stated that he is pleased to see Mid Sussex remains open and transparent regarding its Members' expenses, which are included in the latest edition of Mid Sussex Matters. He highlighted that there is a role to play for all individual Councils in a multi-tier framework and it is always important to work with the County and Town/Parishes. Results are achieved better when all Councils work together and not against each other. Mid Sussex respects the integrity of local groups which is demonstrated in the statement of community involvement which lists over 130 local stakeholders.

9. REPORT OF CABINET MEMBERS, INCLUDING QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.1.

Report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Growth

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Growth informed Members that he attended the Rural West Sussex Partnership, which dealt with matters affecting the rural economy, and that the successful Open4Business event will take place again on 17 October, with the same digital theme as previous years.

The Deputy Leader was pleased to announce that the Agreements for Lease for the New River redevelopment of Burgess Hill have now been signed. The Council has secured a Changing Places toilet in the proposed new Library. This represents a major milestone in the development. The demolition and decontamination of the gas holder site in Burgess Hill will now take place in the next few weeks. New River will start work on the redevelopment at Martlets Shopping Centre soon which has a target completion date 2020-21.

The Deputy leader thanked all Members and Officers involved and noted that significant work still lies ahead.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Service Delivery

The Cabinet Member for Service Delivery stated that the leisure contract with PfPI continues to perform well. In the last financial year the Council recorded two million visits to its centres. Residents of Mid Sussex remain among the fittest in the country; the Council has played a major role in this by providing great playing fields and facilities.

The Cabinet Member was pleased to announce that Beech Hurst Gardens in Haywards Heath has retained its Green Flag status after an unannounced visit by inspectors. He stated that it is the Councils vision for more parks in the District to gain this status.

The Cabinet Member informed Members that recycling rate for the District has reached 45% last month which has been achieved in partnership with Serco, and has benefitted from the introduction of an enhanced garden waste service.

The Cabinet Member explained that two CEOs were recently assaulted. These were caught on camera and have been reported to the police. The Council has given its full support to these CEOs and takes a zero tolerance approach; he reassured Members that assaults on CEOs remain very rare.

The Cabinet Member stated that the Council has increased car parking in Haywards Heath by 30plus spaces and is embarking on an extensive resurfacing programme for other car parks in Haywards Heath and Hassocks. He announced that Mid Sussex gained the Certificate of Excellence in the category for Outstanding Concise Report at the PATROL PARC (Parking Annual Report by Councils) Awards ceremony at the House of Commons on 11 July.

A Member enquired as to why there is not a more conspicuous sign advertising Beech Hurst gardens as you cannot see what is there when you drive past. As currently there is only a very small sign and the gardens need to be sold more to the public passing by.

The Cabinet Member agreed that there needs to be a bigger sign and stated that he will raise the issue in the management plan which will come before Trustees.

A Member asked whether there are camp sites and holiday venues in the District which do not currently have recycling facilities.

The Cabinet Member replied that some private sites may not have recycling facilities and visitors are usually required to take their waste home. He explained that the Council has a facility to provide up to 20 bins on an ad-hoc basis if an events held on Council's venues requires them. Furthermore, the 45% recycling rate has been achieved ahead of the implementation of the waste strategy which has been heavily scrutinised.

A Member asked for further detail on the resurfacing works to take place in Hassocks, and whether there is an estimated completed date.

The Cabinet Member replied that there is a not fixed date and confirmed that the work will be completed with minimum disruption as only half the car park will be resurfaced at a time.

A Member asked what other potential parks in the District could also receive the Green Flag accreditation and whether any work is being undertaken to promote them.

The Cabinet Member stated that it is an aspiration to have more Green Flag parks in the District the first park identified is St Johns in Burgess Hill. It is usually a requirement that there is a 'friends of' group in place which some parks do already have in place.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Customer Services.

The Cabinet Member for Customer Services announced that the Mid Sussex Matters magazine has been delivered to approximately 72,000 households which includes a Q+A on recycling, parks and free play day events, the awarding of grants, articles on dementia awareness and an update on Burgess Hill Plans.

The results of the Annual Electoral Canvass thus far are positive, with a 38% response within 4 days, compared to 24% after one week in the previous year. Overall the response via digital channels has been higher than in previous years, which reduces costs and officer time for the Council. 39% of responses were online, 18% via SMS, 14% via Freephone and 29% were returned by post.

The Cabinet Member stated that there is currently a 'Love Park's' event taking place across the District in which residents are encouraged to state why they love their local park. Park rangers are promoting this via MSDC twitter feed; she encouraged all Members to retweet. The Council is also utilising Facebook to promote the upcoming summer play day events.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Community

The Cabinet Member for Community informed Members that he had raised their concerns with the PCC at the recent crime panel. The PCC and the Chief Constable agreed that the value of crime reporting and its contribution to data collection should be encouraged. He asked Members to encourage residents to always report crime as it goes into a data pool which influences future service plans.

The Cabinet Member stated that any concerns about operational matters should be raised through the relevant District or Borough Community Safety Committee, which

has been incorporated into the Mid Sussex Partnership (MSP). The MSP is an excellent example of collaborative partnership where duplicate meetings with large numbers of attendees have been rolled into one, which saves time and money and builds better and swifter communication.

The MSP board agreed an additional £15K of funding from MSDC to further strengthen the Think Family initiative, as a result of reduced funding from WSCC. The Safeguarding Children and Adult Policy and the training strategy are now complete and will be brought to scrutiny in September. It includes updated sections on CSE, FGM and radicalisation. It also provides updated contacts for both internal and external adult and children's services. Officers are in the process of training all staff that have direct contact with residents. Officers are exploring passing on this training to Town and Parish Council staff.

He reminded Members that an e-mail was sent with a survey of the future access to GP Services in Mid Sussex. GP access is a major worry for residents so he encouraged all Members to fill in this survey. The CCG is currently considering how best to deliver extended access which could include appointments on weekday evenings after 6.30pm and at weekends based on local needs.

The Cabinet Member explained that in deciding what level of extended access provision is needed for the local population, the CCG will consider the responses to this survey, along with evidence of how GP appointments are currently used; usage of out of hours GP services, A&E and urgent treatment centres/minor injury units. He encourage Members to inform their ward residents to also fill in this survey as all this information will help inform how extended access is provided for Mid Sussex residents.

A Member noted that many who attend A&E do not need to be there, and the focus on an out-of-hours GP service may reduce pressure on A&E. Another Member asked whether there are schemes in place to divert intoxicated people from town centres to more specialist services and not A&E.

The Cabinet Member advised Members to encourage residents to view the NHS infographic on the cost of attending each service compared to visiting A&E, as currently only 30% of attendees at A&E need to be there. He stated that he is aware of night-time town centre schemes. Where these are appropriate and are being introduced, Mid Sussex will launch a media campaign to highlight them.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning announced that the District Plan hearings will resume on Tuesday 25 July for two days. He advised Members to visit the District Plan website to view all the information. The developers have been active and officers have put in vast amounts of work. He concluded that he hoped the inspector will remain focused and allow the District Plan to move forward.

10. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2

None.

The Meeting was closed at 8.15 pm.

Chairman