

## **Minutes of a Meeting of Mid Sussex District Council held on 31 January 2018 from 7.00 pm to 8:02 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 Brunson  
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  
Gordon Marples  
Gary Marsh  
Edward Matthews

Norman Mockford  
Pru Moore\*  
Howard Munding  
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\*  
Rex Whittaker  
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**

#### **Question from Ms Hilary Sharpe-Smith (not present at the meeting)**

The leader of MSDC Council has publicly stated the Burgess Hill £1b regeneration vision is vitally important to the whole of Mid Sussex.

Petitioners against the closure of the Martlets Hall were told a replacement was not needed and therefore would not be funded. This need has now been identified by expert consultants employed by BHTC.

As the planned live performance centre will form part of this regeneration, why must we shoulder the entire burden, without MSDC making a fair contribution. It was MSDC who gave away our hall and will be saving the £100,000+ annual subsidy it currently attracts.

**Response from Cllr. Jonathan Ash-Edwards, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Growth.**

Thank you for your question.

In 2014 as part of its work to secure the comprehensive town centre redevelopment, which is now underway, this Council undertook a thorough review of the Martlets Hall and whether the facility should be re-provided as part of the redevelopment.

Max Associates were engaged to provide independent advice, which concluded that the number of people using the Hall was low and static. Only 10% of the bookings required a specialist stage facility. The main hall was only used 43% of the time and the other rooms were only occupied between 8-28% of the time. This represents a heavy public subsidy for an underused facility standing empty over half of the time.

The Council's financial advisers, BNP Paribas confirmed that the regeneration would not be financially viable if the Hall was re-provided. Clearly this was disappointing but it was important to look at the £65m regeneration as a whole and the many benefits it would bring to the town – modern retail units, a cinema, family restaurants, a modern library, improved public areas and 500 jobs.

This advice was very carefully considered by the Cabinet and a decision was made to accept the offer from NewRiver Retail for the redevelopment of Martlets Shopping Centre Burgess Hill in order to secure the wider community benefits. The Council and Places for People Leisure are working with the remaining users of Martlets Hall to assist their relocation to other community venues in the locality.

Burgess Hill Town Council is a separate precepting authority that has aspirations to develop a cultural quarter in Burgess Hill, as outlined in the Burgess Hill Neighbourhood Plan. As part of this work, the Town Council has been investigating the potential opportunity for a community facility in this area of the Town.

The Town Council has, no doubt, been considering this matter very carefully.

One of the key issues for any public body when evaluating community facilities of this type is to carefully consider the financial viability of the proposed facility. The question referred to the study commissioned by the Town Council. That study also concluded that "Financing the potential capital costs of such a development will be a serious challenge" and that "There are also significant challenges in making arts centres and community facilities that are financially sustainable without subsidy in the long term".

Committing Burgess Hill Council Tax payers to the potential levels of public subsidy required and borrowing over a 50 year term to support this development is a very significant decision for Burgess Hill Town Council. However, those decisions are entirely a matter for the Town Council.

This District Council has a track record of using council taxpayers' money very prudently and with a long term view. We will continue to do this alongside our work to secure £1 billion of public and private investment, which is both vitally important and offers huge opportunities to people across Mid Sussex.

**3. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 2017**

Subject to an amendment on p.10 to reflect 17 tonnes of recyclable items collected by the British Heart Foundation, the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 13 December 2017 were 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**

Councillors Coote, Marsh, Walker, Wyan and Christopher Hersey declared a personal interest in item 7 as they had previously served in the Armed Forces. Councillors Stockwell and Bradbury declared a personal interest in item 7 as they are affiliated with the military charity 'Building Heroes', and Councillor Bradbury was a signatory to the award.

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

None.

**6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman drew Members attention to his recent engagements which are available to view online.

**7. ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT PROGRESS REPORT 2018.**

Councillor Stockwell proposed the report, noting the commitment the Council has made to the Armed Forces since signing the Covenant in 2014. As employer, the Council will raise awareness amongst staff, and has signed up to the Royal British Legion's 'Count them in' campaign for the 2021 census to better establish the numbers of the Armed Forces community within the District. The report was seconded by Councillor Wall.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

Lieutenant Colonel Simon McMenemy of the Royal Yeomanry and Cadet Colour Sergeant Mackenzie Lee of the Sussex ACF formally presented the award. Lt. Col. McMenemy congratulated the Council noting that the award was a testament to the Council as an employer but also as a leader in supporting the Armed Forces. He acknowledged the personal support he received from Officers and Members of the Council when he was District Member, released to serve in Afghanistan in 2011. As a gesture of thanks he presented the Chairman with a regimental wall plaque of The Royal Yeomanry.

**RESOLVED**

That Council accepts the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Bronze Award.

## **8. LEISURE CENTRE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME.**

The Solicitor of the Councillor clarified an error on p.19 paragraph 36 which should read '£300k of which remains unallocated in the reserve.'

Councillor Boutrup proposed the report. The success of the overall investment strategy in the leisure facilities was evident by the notable increase in membership levels at all three leisure centres and she commended the ongoing diligent work of Officers and staff at Places for People Leisure (PfPL).

The report was seconded by Councillor Marsh who reassured Members that although the contract for PfPL is financially challenging at present, they will see a substantial return on this investment.

Members noted their support of the planned investment.

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

### **RESOLVED**

That Council agreed that

- (a) £150,000 is allocated from the General Reserve to add to the £300k currently in the reserve to support enhancement of The Triangle leisure pool with new attractions; and
- (b) £100,000 is allocated from General Reserve to create additional car parking spaces at The Dolphin Leisure Centre.

## **9. REVIEW OF THE HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME.**

Councillor Walker proposed the report and noted that the revisions have been reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee for Community, Housing and Planning. The report was seconded by Councillor MacNaughton.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

### **RESOLVED**

That Council:

- (i) approves the revised Housing Allocation Scheme at Appendix 1 to take effect from 1st April 2018.

## **10. INTERIM REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES AND POLLING SCHEME FOR 2018.**

The Solicitor to the Council introduced the report, drawing Members attention to the Polling Place exceptions listed in the recommendation.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

## **RESOLVED**

That Council agreed:

The polling places for all polling districts be defined as the entire District Council ward in which the polling district is situated, with the following exceptions:

- (a) Polling Place for Polling District BAC in Ashurst Wood Ward be designated East Court, College Lane, East Grinstead;
- (b) Polling Place for Polling District BCF in Herontye Ward be designated East Court, College Lane, East Grinstead;
- (c) Polling Place for Polling District FCB in High Weald Ward be designated King Edward Hall, High Street, Lindfield;
- (d) Polling Place for Polling District IE in Cuckfield Ward be designated Ashenground Community Centre, Vale Road, Haywards Heath.
- (e) Polling Place for Polling District KEE in Dunstall Ward be designated St Edward the Confessor Church Hall, Burgess Hill; and
- (f) Polling Place for Polling District KFB in Victoria Ward be designated St Wilfrid's Parish Hall, Station Road, Burgess Hill;

## **11. TO RECEIVE THE LEADERS REPORT**

The Leader highlighted the diversity of functions within his role and that of other Members. Alongside the day-to-day business, the Council was pulling its weight both strategically and locally.

At a strategic level, the Leader and Chief Executive had attended the Coast to Capital Board where there had been challenging discussions on the development of the A2300. On Monday he met with the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Rt. Hon. Sajid Javid MP to discuss infrastructure, the housing growth agenda and special areas of conservation such as the Ashdown Forest. The housing growth agenda would also be discussed during his attendance at the South East England Councils meeting later in the week, and the Deputy Leader would be representing the Council at the Greater Brighton Economic Board the following week. He noted that, every item on each agenda has a direct impact on the work that the Council is doing, and the lives of Mid Sussex residents.

On a local level this week he had also assisted with hedge clearing at Fox Hill, and had attended a presentation at Northlands Wood School where they had raised over £3000 for charity along with £1000 donated to the British Heart Foundation. A number of Members had also assisted with litter picking efforts within the Ward, leading by example within the community.

## 12 **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 thanked the Scrutiny Committee for their work in reviewing the proposed Budget for 2018/19, which will be recommended to Council in February. The budget proposals set the Council's ambitious plans for developing services, providing support to vulnerable residents and investing in facilities across Mid Sussex.

He confirmed that the Council has been successful in securing a second round of funding for Micro business grants at a total of £72k which will launch in the Spring.

He attended the Burgess Hill Business Parks Association to provide a presentation to local businesses about the Burgess Hill Growth Area, noting that there was a lot of interest in the developments and the opportunities it will present for businesses.

He also noted that the Economic Strategy is set to be presented to the Scrutiny Committee in March and drew Members attention to the priority themes. 'Places' sets out how we ensure Mid Sussex attracts and delivers inward investment and deliver growth by providing the right environment for business. 'Premises' relates to ensuring Mid Sussex has a mix of premises to encourage entrepreneurship, retention and growth of businesses. 'People' focuses on ensuring everyone has the opportunity to benefit from economic growth with the right support for skills and start-ups, and 'Promotion' ensures actively marketing the district's competitive advantages for businesses and the attractiveness of Mid Sussex for residents and visitors.

In response to a Member's question regarding post 16 education provision, following the closure of Mid Sussex College, he confirmed that the Council is playing an active facilitation role with West Sussex County Council, Education Skills Council and the Coast to Capital Enterprise Partnership, noting that Sir Nicolas Soames MP supports this work. Over the coming months the Deputy Leader anticipated some proposals coming forward.

In the interest of transparency, the Deputy Leader confirmed an interest as the Chairman of the Sussex Learning Trust, and Councillor Brunsdon declared an interest as a West Sussex County Councillor.

### Report of the Cabinet Member for Customer Services

The Cabinet Member confirmed that a new website providing information on the redevelopment in the Burgess Hill area is scheduled to go live around the end of February. The aim is to provide easily accessible information and links to all activity in the redevelopment work.

The communications team have promoted the climbing wall at the Triangle Leisure Centre, the Healthy Walks initiatives and the new design of the skate park in Hayward Heath. A new tender is also underway for the design and print of Mid Sussex Matters.

The Council's redesigned website also has a projected launch date of March. The design is intended to simplify transactions for customers and provide clearer

information on the work of the Council.

A bid has been submitted to Wave 2 of the Local Full Fibre Network Challenge which it is hoped will test and introduce ways of bringing gigabit connectivity to the Burgess Hill area.

The Customer Services team are currently working with the Waste Team, taking on the administration of the garden waste and a new reception desk will be fitted on the weekend of 10<sup>th</sup> February. From October to December a total of 19,540 calls were answered by the team, with 97% answered in an average of 18-20 seconds.

The Member Development working group were meeting with the Cabinet Member on Thursday to continue to develop the training programme for Members in 2018/19.

### Report of the Cabinet Member for Service Delivery

The Cabinet Member advised Members that the West Sussex Waste Partnership has commissioned a feasibility study into food waste collections, which is due to be reported in February and may result in local pilots in 2018. In response to a Member's question, he confirmed that the Council was in very early discussions with West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) on this project and Members will be consulted through the Scrutiny Committee following the publication of the Council's feasibility study. Should it proceed, he noted that the financial burden should not solely fall to residents of Mid Sussex.

He thanked Councillor Landriani for her work in setting in motion the pilot scheme with the British Heart Foundation to collect small white goods, noting that the first collection gathered 17 tonnes which was the best result across south east England. The next collection is scheduled for March in the same area and will be advertised with hangers on bins prior to collection. He confirmed that in determining the pilot area, the District was divided into three and the southern area chosen for its mix of towns and rural villages.

With regard to fly tipping, he noted there had been a lower number of 14 incidents this month, mainly in rural locations. However the volume of rubbish has increased. He has asked Officers for a breakdown of the sites in order to fully brief the Ward Members affected.

He noted that the garden waste service remains on target to achieve an additional 2000 new subscriptions, with the current total at 1788. He confirmed that residents can apply for a second green bin should they wish. He also noted that the new electric charging points have been rolled out in car parks, with 299 instances of use recorded so far. Work on the Victoria Park skate park is also underway, starting on time and on budget following significant consultation with those who use the existing park.

Councillor Bradbury and Councillor Lee declared an interest, as West Sussex County Councillors.

In response to Member's questions, the Cabinet Member confirmed that he is arranging for a joint communication with WSSCC to be issued, to reassure the public that in this time of uncertainty regarding recycling contracts abroad, recycling generated by the District is all processed within the UK.

In response to questions on the dates of refuse collections, he confirmed, along with the Cabinet Member for Customer Services, that 4 weekly information is available online, with a recurring pattern that can be rolled on for the following weeks. Details are also printed in Mid Sussex Matters, and any change to the usual collection timetable, such as at Christmas, are sent out to residents directly. In terms of recycling bottle tops, he confirmed that small items of plastic are not accepted, and further information on this can be provided to residents for clarity.

In response to a further question, he confirmed that he was not aware of WSCC's proposal to ban multi-axel trailers at all sites, but would seek further information on the subject.

#### Report of the Cabinet Member for Community

Due to illness, the Cabinet Member was not present at the meeting.

#### Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning

The Cabinet Member reminded Members that the Examination in Public of the District Plan hearing will be on Monday 5 February at Clair Hall. It is a short hearing on the issues relating to the new site allocation on land north of Clayton Mills, Hassocks.

He advised that the Development Management Team, in trying to improve the service to Members, plan to provide a monthly report of Resolved Enforcement Cases. This will be issued through the Member Information Service bulletin and will be available on the website.

The second meeting of the Member Working Group for Site Allocations had been held. He also noted that this year's Design Panel Awards and Ceremony will be held on 12 October 2018, with an eight person judging panel currently being drawn up.

He also confirmed his attendance at the West Sussex and Greater Brighton Strategic Planning Board earlier in the week, where the authorities involved are tasked with considering the unmet housing need across the region. The current evidence of housing need and housing provision demonstrates an annual shortfall of 1677 dwellings. This is the first time that an issue of this scale has been considered sub regionally and it could have significant political implications.

### **13. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2**

None.

The Meeting was closed at 8.02 pm.

Chairman