

**Minutes of a meeting of Council
held on Wednesday, 29th January, 2020
from 7.00 pm - 8.44 pm**

Present: C Trumble (Chairman)
M Belsey (Vice-Chair)

G Allen	R de Mierre	Anthea Lea
J Ash-Edwards	B Dempsey	J Llewellyn-Burke
R Bates	R Eggleston	A MacNaughton
J Belsey	A Eves	A Peacock
A Bennett	L Gibbs	C Phillips
P Bradbury	I Gibson	M Pulfer
P Brown	S Hatton	S Smith
H Brunsdon	J Henwood	A Sparasci
P Budgen	S Hicks	L Stockwell
R Cartwright	S Hillier	D Sweatman
P Chapman	T Hussain	N Walker
R Clarke	R Jackson	R Webb
P Coote	J Knight	N Webster
M Cornish	C Laband	R Whittaker
R Cromie	Andrew Lea	

Absent: Councillors L Bennett, A Boutrup, E Coe-Gunnell White,
J Dabell, S Ellis, G Marsh, J Mockford and R Salisbury

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 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 18 DECEMBER 2020.

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 18 December 2019 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

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

In relation to item 15, Councillor Andrew Lea declared an interest as he is a West Sussex County Councillor.

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

None.

6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Chairman confirmed that along with local Members and Parish Councillors, he would be attending the funeral of one of the victims of a double murder in Crawley Down. He also drew Members attention to recent engagements attended, and a multi faith Holocaust Memorial Service held in Haywards Heath this week.

With regards to fund raising activities, he highlighted two forthcoming events, encouraging Members to join him in supporting his chosen charities at a Black-Tie dinner and a sponsored walk around the Hurstpierpoint countryside.

7. PSPO ANTI-SOCIAL VEHICLE ACTIVITY.

Councillor Anthea Lea moved the item, noting that it had been reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee and been the subject of public consultation. This was seconded by Councillor Webster who asked Members to encourage residents to continue to report incidents and noted that the Council continues to work in partnership with Sussex Police.

During the discussion, it was noted that as the antisocial activity predominantly occurs at night, the Police will be mainly responsible for enforcing the Order, and there are measures in place to address repeat instances. The aim of the Order is to address cases of anti-social activity, and not to prohibit regular meetings of car enthusiast clubs.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendations which were agreed.

RESOLVED

Council:

- (i) Agreed to implement the PSPO under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 for the prohibited activities outlined in Appendix A within the area defined on the map at Appendix B;
- (ii) Approved delegation of authority to specified officers to use those powers.

8. COUNCIL CHAMBER ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS.

The Deputy Leader moved the item noting that the primary purpose is to ensure that the Council undertakes works to comply with the Equalities Act. She confirmed that there had been a number of revisions to the scope of works, to ensure the most financially judicious approach, minimising expenditure whilst undertaking necessary works for legislative compliance and replacing worn out and increasing obsolete furnishings and equipment. She also provided a breakdown of the proposed works to be carried out and agreed to separately provide Members with the capacity of the refurbished gallery. The item was seconded by Councillor Laband.

Discussion was held on the specifics of the proposed lift. Members also noted issues with the current microphones, which are to be retained following the refurbishment, as there are issues with the ability to be heard during meetings. It was also confirmed that the lift installation, basement and toilet refurbishment will account for approximately £360,000 of the budget, with the remaining 30% being allocated to the Chamber and gallery refurbishment. The works will be project managed in-house and Planning Approval and Building Consent are not required.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendations which were agreed.

RESOLVED

Council:

- (a) Reaffirmed the need for works to enable disabled access to the Chamber and Public Gallery; and,
- (b) agreed to vary the existing budget by £203k, with additional funding to be met from the General Reserve.

9. DRAFT ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY.

Councillor Anthea Lea moved the item and clarified that paragraph 1 should read 'September' not 'October'. Consultation with key stakeholders has taken place in the development of the policy and although it is not a legislative requirement it has been reviewed and welcomed by the Scrutiny Committee as it is considered good governance to have such a policy in place. The item was seconded by Councillor Webster.

There was a general discussion. It was agreed that item 3.3 on p.34 should read 'whether or not', and confirmation was provided that enforcement of infringements will be carried out by Officers.

In relation to promoting the new policy, communications have been issued through press releases and social media activity. Details of licensed properties can be found on the Council's website at www.midsussex.gov.uk/licensing-business/animal-licensing-and-welfare.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendation which was agreed.

RESOLVED

That Council adopts the Animal Welfare Policy under The Animal Welfare Regulations (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 attached in Appendix 1 to commence on the 1st February 2020.

10. STATUTORY REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS 2019.

The Returning Officer introduced the report which focusses on polling stations which fall outside (but close to) their actual Ward. He added an additional recommendation under point (g) below. The item was moved by Councillor Webster and seconded by the Deputy Leader.

Discussion was held on the potential to reconsider Ward boundaries and provision for tellers near Polling Stations. The Returning Officer confirmed that the Local Government Boundary Commission intend to carry out a review to be concluded in 2022, at which point the Council may be asked to adopt revised ward boundaries. It was also noted that a number of small village halls do not have accessible toilet facilities, however the venues were proportionate to the electorate size.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendations with the addition of point (g) which were agreed.

RESOLVED

That Council agreed:

That 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 BCF in Herontye Ward be designated as East Court, College Lane, East Grinstead.
- (b) Polling Place for Polling District BAC in Ashurst Wood Ward be designated as East Court, College Lane, East Grinstead
- (c) Polling Place for Polling District KFB in Victoria Ward be designated as St. Wilfrids Parish Hall, Station Road, Burgess Hill.
- (d) Polling Place for Polling District FCB in High Weald Ward be designated as Lindfield Evangelical Free Church, Chaloner Close, Lindfield.
- (e) Polling Place for Polling District KEE in Dunstall Ward be designated as St Edward the Confessor Church Hall, Burgess Hill.
- (f) Polling Place for Polling District IE in Cuckfield Ward be designated as Ashenground Community Centre, Vale Road, Haywards Heath.
- (g) Polling Place for Polling District HAB in Franklands Ward be designated as The Baptist Church at Sussex Road Haywards Heath.

11. A CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW GROUP 2020.

The item was moved by Councillor Webster noting that the Monitoring Officer has a duty to review the Constitution and this takes place annually. The item was seconded by the Leader.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendation which was agreed.

RESOLVED

That Council agreed to:

Set up a Constitutional Review Group composed of 8 Members politically balanced. The composition of the Group will be 5 Conservative Members, 2 Liberal Democrat Members and one Member from the Green/Independent Groups.

12. RECRUITMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS FOR STANDARDS MATTERS FROM 1 MAY 2020.

The item was moved by Councillor Bradbury who noted the exemplary service of the current two Independent Persons. The item was seconded by Councillor Webster.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendations which were agreed.

RESOLVED

That Council:

- (i) agreed the recruitment process for the Independent Persons;
- (ii) agreed to an Appointments Panel to interview candidates for the Independent Persons for Standards Matters to consist of the Cabinet Member for Community, the Chairman of the Standards Committee and the Solicitor to the Council; and
- (iii) agree to receive the recommendations of the Appointment Panel at the meeting of Council in April 2020, with a view to appointing Independent Persons for a four year term from 1 May 2020.

13. TO RECEIVE THE LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader noted several strategic meetings he had recently attended. At the Mid Sussex Partnership Board he received an update from Police Inspector Dommett on proposed increase in numbers of Officers in Mid Sussex. This related to particular Wards and a welcome return to rural and schools policing. At the Greater Brighton Economic Board and Local Enterprise Partnership meetings the Leader continued to promote the Council and the importance of continuing to attract inward investment on infrastructure.

He noted the recent work of the Scrutiny Committees which have focussed on the Budget and Corporate Plan. He highlighted that the Council continues to be busy, delivering quality services, investing in infrastructure, protecting the environment and promoting sustainable economic growth.

The Leader welcomed a proposal for a food waste trial which has also been considered by the Scrutiny Committee. The benefits both financially and environmentally of food recycling will be a key element of the initiative. Ward Members will be provided with details in advance so they can act as ambassadors. It was noted that a Member is keen to encourage large building applications to install biomass facilities to further assist recycling ventures.

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

Report of the Deputy Leader

The Deputy Leader drew Members attention to the Council's performance for the second quarter of 2019/2020 which was reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee recently.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth

The Cabinet Member drew Members attention to the Parking Strategy Review which will report to the Housing, Planning & Economic Development Scrutiny Committee and thanked Officers and Members of the Working Group for their continued work on this.

He also highlighted the Open4Business event which is being held at the South of England Showground in Ardingly on Thursday 26th March between 3pm and 7pm. He encouraged Members to attend to show commitment to supporting local businesses. He confirmed that the event was open to the public as well and commended Officers for engaging with Metrobus in order to provide free transport from key transport nodes to the event.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Customer Services

The Cabinet Member updated the Council on training for Members. She highlighted that the Government had confirmed an increased business rate relief discount from 33% to 50% for 2020/21. Eligibility will extend to independent pubs, cinemas and grass root music venues.

In response to a Member's question, she noted that a reduction in performance in Revenues and Benefits was due to a focus on more complex issues. This is in advance of the new council tax support system being put in place and the new system should address the speed of processing.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Service Delivery

The Cabinet Member provided further information on the food waste pilot, clarifying that it is estimated that 41% of waste in the district is food, and this is based on weight not volume. If the Council collects food waste separately, there could be an improvement of 15% on the current recycling rate. He reiterated that effective communication with residents will be vital.

He provided an update on the Parks Investment Programme.

He confirmed that to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty the Council is working with Agility Eco and other local councils to form a Local Energy Advice Partnership. Subject to eligibility it can offer a free home energy visit, a free energy switching service, installation of free energy saving measures, a free telephone advice service and referrals to other further energy efficiency improvements.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Community

The Cabinet Member thanked Members who attended the Service of Remembrance for victims of the Holocaust and other genocides. He noted that people of all ages took part in the service.

He provided an update on work that is going on to support the most vulnerable groups in the District. He noted the work of Sussex Police to improve relationships with the LGBTQ plus community, and to encourage reporting of hate crimes directed at those and other protected communities. He encouraged Members to use the email address 'antisocialbehaviour@midsussex.gov.uk' to report any issues.

The Cabinet Member also highlighted the Equality and Diversity Progress Report for 2019 which is due to be considered by the Scrutiny Committee in February which will include a new and updated draft policy.

He concluded by encouraging Members to book a place on a forthcoming training course on 11 February relating to recognising and responding to hate and extremism.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning

The Cabinet Member confirmed that the cumulative number of Affordable Homes delivered at the end of December has risen to 191 and the Council continues to investigate opportunities for new forms of housing delivery including Self and Community Build Housing, Community Land Trusts and ways to maximise affordable housing delivery on Council owned sites.

He confirmed that on all sites which require 30% affordable housing, this is being achieved, with the exception of one where a commuted sum was taken instead, as the site was deemed to be too remote to be practical.

In response to a Member's question about progress with the planning application at Manor Court in Burgess Hill, the Cabinet Member agreed to write to Members with an update.

15. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2

The following question was received from Councillor Andrew Lea:

Does this council recognise the vital role that Woodlands Meed school plays in Mid Sussex and the urgent need for the school to be rebuilt to make it fit for purpose? Will this Council do everything it reasonably can to encourage and facilitate that rebuild?"

Response from the Leader:

Thank you for the question and, of course, Woodlands Meed is one of the Chairman's charities this year.

I would like to begin by expressing my admiration for the parents and staff of Woodlands Meed for the tireless work they do to give vulnerable disabled children the very best possible opportunities in life. No one chooses to have a disability and we must all do our utmost to support those in our community for whom life is less easy.

The decision making in respect of Woodlands Meed's facilities is entirely a matter for West Sussex County Council as the education authority. Indeed, in this case this Council is not even the planning authority given it is a maintained school.

I discussed Woodlands Meed with the new County Council Leader at our first meeting and know this issue is very firmly on the desk of the new leadership team. I hope that the County Council will be able to come to an acceptable and timely decision so that the children of Woodlands Meed can have fit for purpose facilities for their education.

I am not aware of any aspects of this decision which will require the District Council's input, given that it falls within the responsibility of the County Council, but if there are

any issues within this Council's remit we would of course consider any such request in a prompt manner.

The meeting finished at 8.44 pm

Chairman