

**Minutes of a Meeting of Mid Sussex District Council  
held on 2 April 2016 from 7.00 pm to 7.55 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 MUNDIN
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 Brunson	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

**109. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC – RULE 9**

None.

**110. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 23 March 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**111. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**112. URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**113. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman informed Members that he had attended the Mayor of Burgess Hill's Civic Service and a Celebration Service for Parkinson's Awareness Week.

In addition to this he informed Members that former Councillor, Jack Slaughter had sadly passed away. He had served on the Council from 1986 until 2002. In addition to this he was Chairman of the Jack and Jill Windmill Society.

The Chairman said that Members' thoughts were with his widow, Janet.

#### **114. REPORT TO COUNCIL OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW GROUP**

Councillor Marsh introduced the report.

A Member sought clarification on point 4f) of the report and asked for simplified wording that was easier to understand.

Another Member indicated that there was an error in the report and that it should reflect iii) rather than ii). Furthermore he sought clarification on this item as he believed that this sentence should in fact refer to a Delegated Decision being issued as opposed to the current wording that implied a granting of permission would automatically be issued where there were no objections.

Councillor Marsh confirmed that it should indeed reflect a Delegated Decision being issued for solar farms where no objections had been received.

Councillor Wilkinson moved the motion be agreed and this was carried unanimously.

#### **RESOLVED**

That:-

- (1) No changes to the membership of the Scrutiny Committees;
- (2) The membership of the Audit Committee be increased to seven members;
- (3) Substitutes be allowed for Planning Committees, providing they come from another Planning Committee and be notified to Member Services no later than three days before the meeting; and
- (4) No substitutes be allowed on the Standards Committee.
- (5) Paragraphs 4(e) and 4(f) of the report be agreed as amended

#### **115. REPORT OF THE LEADER**

The Leader began by reminding Members of the two Devolution Bids that the Council was involved with and confirmed that he had attended a meeting of all 26 3SC authorities in relation to one of those. He reminded Members that the 3SC bid sought very considerable support for the significant infrastructure deficit facing the area. Its estimated value is over £5bn. All the Leaders across the 3SC area are supportive of work to seek to address this deficit and endorsed work to negotiate with Government

The Leader continued that he had attended a meeting of the Greater Brighton Economic Board. The Devolution Bid being promoted by the GBEB duplicated many areas with the 3SC and the Leader authorised that he was not content to support duplication and noted that considerable financial support and officer resource had been invested to date. The Leader further noted that four of the five authorities were involved in both devolution bids and he was alive to the complexity that this brought with it. A further workshop on these matters will be arranged for Members over the next few months.

The Leader went on to note recent events surrounding Central Sussex College and

news of its closure. He stated he was both disappointed and concerned, noting that Mid Sussex has no overall remit when it came to further education. He informed Members that he too wanted to ensure a high level of scrutiny and that he wanted the best education for residents of Mid Sussex. He explained that he and the Chief Executive had been working to support Sir Nicholas Soames as he raised issues of concern regarding Central Sussex College with the Minister responsible.

The Leader then thanked the Chairman for his stewardship over the past year and thanked officers for their work, concluding that by working together a strong team had been formed.

Several Members expressed concern about the closure of Central Sussex College and suggested that residents would expect the District Council to use what influence it had to support retention of the site for educational use.

The Leader agreed that the District Council would do what it could and noted that many Officers and Senior Members were actively engaged.

A further Member raised concern about the closure and the associated travel costs of students having to go further afield.

The Leader responded by stating that it would be wrong to raise expectations on issues that were outside the control of Mid Sussex District Council, however the matter was being raised with the relevant authorities and with the local Member of Parliament was working very hard on behalf of residents. He reiterated that the Council will do everything it can to influence and will talk with all tiers of Government on the matter.

## **116. REPORT OF CABINET MEMBERS**

### Report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Service Delivery

The Cabinet Member informed Members that from April 2017 the Business Rates threshold will double having been announced in the Chancellor's Budget and that this would be good for many local businesses.

He also informed Members that there was to be a review of the Census Joint Committee with Adur District Council leaving the partnership, and that he felt this was very timely. A review was most relevant with the introduction of Universal Credit being rolled out.

The Digital Programme had been replaced and its replacement had been implemented smoothly, this would provide a foundation for the Council to move forward. He paid tribute to Simon Hughes for his work in achieving the smooth transition. He stated that future work will allow real time reporting and that this presented a massive opportunity to be proactive and deliver improved productivity.

### Report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Property

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Property informed Members that there had been £1.5 million worth of transactions in the District's car parks with the Burgess Hill car parks in particular showing a marked increase in usage. This he indicated reflected real support for our towns and local economy. He further informed Members that improvement works to the Orchards car park Haywards Heath and the Cypress Road car park Burgess Hill were now completed.

In relation to business support the Cabinet Member informed Council that the Young Enterprise Awards were taking place next week. He also wished to thank Cllr Chris Hersey for his continuing representation of the District Council on the GATCOM Committee.

Finally he drew Members attention to the Open4Business Event which will take place on 18 October 2016 at the Kings Centre in Burgess Hill. The Focus for this year event will be on Digital and it is hoped that a more niched event will lead to an increase in footfall.

#### Report of the Cabinet Member for Planning

The Cabinet Member for Planning started by congratulating Albourne Parish Council on its successful examination of the Neighbourhood Plan. It was hoped that a report to accept the recommendations could be taken to Cabinet on 6 June 2016 with a Referendum to be held on 1 September 2016. He continued to update Members on the progress of the remaining Neighbourhood Plans with five being at or very close to examination. Horsted Keynes he noted was out for Consultation, Hassocks and Copthorne were expected to formally submit shortly and Slaugham was continuing to progress too. He indicated to Members that the planning team had calculated that the neighbourhood plans combined had allocated sites for 2,000 homes.

#### Report of the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Sustainability

The Cabinet Member started by endorsing the comments of the Deputy Leader in thanking Simon Hughes for his work which coincided with the further rollout of the green waste bin service. She advised Members that the rounds had been altered and that collections were now conducted over five days instead of six. In addition she advised Members that there had been changes to the emptying of dog waste bins with increased frequency of collections in areas of particular need.

She advised Members that today along with officers, she had been to Basingstoke to visit a waste plant that dealt with commercial food waste. The technology being used was simple but impressive.

#### Report of the Cabinet Member for Health and Community

The Cabinet Member began by thanking members for their excellent attendance at the recent Prevent Training stating that he had received many comments as to how good and informative the training was.

In response to a recent question, he wanted to reiterate that this Council takes Safeguarding, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and grooming very seriously. All Councillors have had the opportunity of being trained in Safeguarding and CSE. In addition 75% of taxi drivers have received training thus far. Bed & Breakfast and Hotel personnel are next in line to be provided with awareness training. Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities (as well as others) to ensure their functions, and any services that they may contract out to others, safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Each year, this authority is required to complete a Section 11 audit in order to demonstrate to the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Board (WSSCB) that we are compliant with the legislation. The self-assessment RAG audit has been completed and submitted to the Board and he was pleased to inform colleagues that MSDC's initial overall assessment is GREEN. We await formal confirmation of this score from the WSSCB.

The Cabinet Member moved on to discuss the West Sussex Civilian/Military Partnership and he stated that Cllr Stockwell, our Military Champion, together with an officer, attended the inaugural meeting of the West Sussex Civilian Military Partnership.

The main aim of the partnership being to bring together councils and other partners who have signed Community Covenants with the Armed Forces – they seek to ensure that ex or serving servicemen and women and their families are not disadvantaged as a result of their service.

In relation to the WSCC Care Leavers Working Group, the Cabinet Member highlighted some key points which would be important in supporting young care leavers.

He then made Members aware that MSDC have been anticipating confirmation of future funding for our Wellbeing Programme from WSCC for some time. As a result of WSCC agreement of their 2016/17 budget last Friday we are anticipating that information imminently. The Cabinet Member will keep members informed as soon as the sensitivities of managing any resulting HR issues have been resolved.

A Member thanked the portfolio holder for raising the Armed Forces Covenant.

**117. TO NOTE THE PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR LEISURE AND COMMUNITY; AND THE AUDIT COMMITTEE.**

**RESOLVED**

That the previously circulated minutes of Scrutiny Committee for Leisure and Community held on 2 March 2016 and the Audit Committee held on 16 March 2016 be noted.

**118. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2**

None

Chairman