

Minutes of a Meeting of Mid Sussex District Council held on 28 March 2018 from 7.00 pm to 8.45 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
Gordon Marples
Gary Marsh
Edward Matthews

Norman Mockford
Pru Moore
Howard Mundin
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 Dr Ian Gibson

The 2013 draft District Plan proposed 10,600 new homes with 36% being built in strategic developments which include the appropriate new infrastructure. Today's Plan proposes 16,390 homes but reduces the proportion in strategic developments to only 30%. This means that over 11,000 new homes will be built around existing towns and villages placing significant strain on their services. Parish Councils were recently told that sites for 2,000 homes still need to be identified. Will the Council commit to delivering these 2,000 homes in strategic sites to restore the target of 36% for such homes set in the 2013 Draft Plan?

Response from Cllr. Andrew MacNaughton, Cabinet Member for Community, Housing & Planning.

Thank you Dr Gibson, I believe you have asked this question before. However, to clarify the Council cannot make the commitment you refer to for legal reasons.

The legally defined Plan making process requires the Council to consider all reasonable alternatives. Emerging Government policy also places an emphasis on the importance of smaller sites because typically they deliver faster than larger sites.

As you know the Council has committed to adopt a Site Allocation DPD which will meet the housing shortfall in the latter part of the Plan and this will enable the Council to take a strategic and robust approach to where development takes place which will ensure a planned and managed approach.

Of course the Council is aware of the need for infrastructure to support housing and this will be a feature of the Councils work when developing the Site Allocations Document.

Supplementary question from Dr Gibson

Councillors will be aware that the final District Plan was received by the Council for factual checking on Wednesday 7 March. That was just 3 working days after the Secretary of State said that he considered that there was great uncertainty in the progress of the District Plan; and on that basis he approved a further 104 new homes in Crawley Down, despite agreeing with Worth Parish Council that they were contrary to the Neighbourhood Plan.

Will this Council now give proper support to the views of local communities as expressed in the objectives and policies of Neighbourhood Plans?

Response from Cllr. Andrew McNaughton

If adopted this evening, we can give full weight to the District Plan. We are committed to review the Plan every 5 years and any amendments which may be required can be taken into consideration at this stage.

3. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 28 FEBRUARY 2018.

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 28 February 2018 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

Councillor Marples declared a personal interest in item 7, as the strategic site to the north of Clayton Mills directly backs onto his garden.

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. MID SUSSEX DISTRICT PLAN 2014-2031 - ADOPTION

The Chairman introduced the report, asking the Council to consider the adoption of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 in accordance with Regulations 17 and 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Councillor Andrew MacNaughton, Cabinet Member for Community, Housing & Planning proposed the report, noting that the Inspector's Report received on 12 March 2018 concluded that the Plan with the Main Modifications satisfies the requirements of section 20/5 of the Compulsory purchase and planning Act 2004 and meets the requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and is therefore sound. He acknowledged the work it has taken to reach this point; from the initial pre-submission consultation to the Inspector's final report, and he thanked everyone who has worked tirelessly to achieve such a result. The report was seconded by Councillor Wall who reserved his right to speak after the debate.

A Member referenced the strategic site in Hassocks, noting that the Inspector indicated it was a well-chosen site which relates well to the settlement hierarchy. He sought clarity from the Cabinet Member on the sustainability of the site. The Cabinet Member stated he was satisfied with the robust approach the Inspector has taken and confirmed that on strategic sites, densities have been indicated, and detailed issues on the site will be addressed at the planning application stage.

A Member commended the Inspector's robust approach to the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and in particular the Ashdown Forest. He gave his full support to the recommendation to adopt the District Plan.

A Member acknowledged the pressure that the Inspector put on the Council in the development of the Plan but stated that she could not support the recommendations due to the inclusion of the site at Hassocks. She raised concern that this would cause an infrastructure strain on the village, and felt that the lack of progression on the Northern Arc led to a rushed decision on the Hassocks site.

A Member noted that the Inspector's summary of the housing requirement indicated the potential for a stepped trajectory, with the Council needing to meet an increase in the housing requirements in 2023/24. He queried how this would be managed in the lead time up to 2023.

In response, the Cabinet Member drew attention to paragraph 16 of the covering Council report. There is a working assumption of a higher level of housing being delivered at the end of the Plan but with the caveat that the housing will not impact on the Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation. A full Habitats Regulation Assessment will be carried out to inform this process.

In answer to a query on the level of scrutiny that the proposed policies had been subject to, the Cabinet Member confirmed that as well as being brought to the Council's Scrutiny Committees, there has been 2 rounds of public consultation prior to submission and then final public consultation on the Modifications, in addition to the public examination of the Plan.

Regarding a query of the impact on the local economy that adopting the Plan will have, the Cabinet Member reminded Members that the Plan not only caters for places to live, it also includes allocation for employment space within the District and that the Inspector was satisfied with the balance of both.

A Member sought reassurance that the Council will reinstate its own policy on density to prevent developers increasing them after planning permission has been granted. He also noted that the report gave a balanced view and that with the adoption of the Plan, the Council would be in a position to demonstrate a robust 5 year housing land supply, and contain some of the freedoms that developers have experienced in the past. He respected the thoroughness of the District Plan process and was happy that the Council could start to meet the hopes and aspirations of the residents, including those urgently in need of housing.

In response, the Cabinet Member confirmed that the new NPPF proposes a density policy. As a Council, Planning Committees will determine the appropriate density at each planning application.

A Member queried the impact on the Ashdown Forest of the Secretary of State's decision to issue consent on four schemes following appeal, in particular Hill Place Farm in East Grinstead. The Cabinet Member drew Members attention to paragraph 34-36 of the covering report.

Reassurance was sought by one Member on the work being taken to maintain the 5 year housing land supply. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the Council has developed a good working relationship with the developers to maintain the 5 year land supply. To ensure a 5 year housing supply across the whole Plan period, the Council has started work on a Site Allocation Development Plan Document. With regard to Brighton's unmet need, the Inspector made no reference to the Council supplying the need, but the need of the sub region will be considered as part of the 5 year review with partners. The Council is also working on the Local Strategic Statement (3) across the whole area to look strategically at how the need is met.

In response to a question on how the Plan impacts on Neighbourhood Plans, the Cabinet Member reiterated that Neighbourhood Plans must conform with the District Plan if adopted. Provided that this is the case, the Neighbourhood Plans and policies within them will have full weight. He noted that DP 4 and 6 provides guidance on the housing requirement for each Parish and it does not negatively impact on Neighbourhood Plans in the short term.

A Member raised concern regarding water infrastructure and asked if anything could be done to ensure water companies deliver the water required. It was noted by the Cabinet Member that the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee for Community Housing and Planning has been proactive in inviting South East Water to attend Scrutiny meetings and the Council was actively engaging with water companies on a regular basis.

The Deputy Leader welcomed the debate and acknowledged the importance of the decision for the District. He noted the significant investment from the Council and the difficulties that had to be overcome in the context of changing Government policies but felt that it has been a rigorous and robust process. He stated that the District Plan is an important document designed to protect what makes the District a special place to live. It supports economic growth and investment in infrastructure, and he acknowledged the Government's support for areas such as the Burgess Hill re-development and full fibre gigabyte programme. He hoped that all Members on reflection should support the adoption of the District Plan to support the aims of the District as a whole and encouraged Members to hold developers to account to deliver the commitments they have made over the course of the examination

process.

A number of Members commented on the importance of the infrastructure that will result from the adoption of the District Plan and the impact that the additional housing will have on those in urgent need of housing. Members also expressed thanks to everyone involved in the process, noting that there had been extensive communication with the Parishes and the public which was appreciated by all.

The Leader, in seconding the proposal to adopt the District Plan recognised that the District has seen a great deal of change over the years and will continue to change going forward, with the Plan in place to manage it appropriately. It provides a sound basis to bring the level of infrastructure and investment forward and will serve future administrations and residents for years to come. He recognised the extent of the challenges faced over the past 20 months and noted they had all been met through diligence, competence and hard work. He thanked the portfolio holders who have worked above and beyond expectations in bringing the Plan forward and thanked all Members for the significant role they have had in the process. He collectively thanked all the Officers involved, and in particular the work of Andrew Marsh, Nathan Spilsted and Alice Henstock, as well as the legal and technical advice provided by Chris Tunnell and Rupert Warren Q.C. He also acknowledged the work of the Chief Executive and Assistant Chief Executive who lead by example, as well as the support from local Members of Parliament, in particular The Rt. Hon. Sir Nicholas Soames MP. In summary, he urged all Members to recognise the need for growth across the District, support the adoption of the District Plan and pave the way for the next phase to maintain the soundness and robustness of the Plan.

The Chairman took Members to a recorded vote.

Member	For	Against	Abstained
Councillor Ash-Edwards	✓		
Councillor John Belsey	✓		
Councillor Margaret Belsey	✓		
Councillor Michelle Binks	✓		
Councillor Anne Boutrup	✓		
Councillor Pete Bradbury	✓		
Councillor Heidi Brunsdon	✓		
Councillor Cherry Catharine	✓		
Councillor Richard Cherry	✓		
Councillor Rod Clarke	✓		
Councillor Phillip Coote	✓		
Councillor Ruth De Mierre	✓		
Councillor Tony Dorey	✓		
Councillor David Dorking	✓		
Councillor Sandy Ellis	✓		
Councillor Bruce Forbes	✓		
Councillor Claire Fussell	✓		
Councillor Steve Hansford	✓		
Councillor Sue Hatton		✓	
Councillor Ginny Heard	✓		
Councillor Chris Hersey	✓		
Councillor Margaret Hersey	✓		
Councillor Colin Holden	✓		
Councillor Anne Jones	✓		
Councillor Jim Knight	✓		

Councillor Jacqui Landriani	✓		
Councillor Andrew Lea	✓		
Councillor Anthea Lea	✓		
Councillor Judy Llewellyn-Burke	✓		
Councillor Andrew MacNaughton	✓		
Councillor Gordon Marples	✓		
Councillor Gary Marsh	✓		
Councillor Edward Matthews	✓		
Councillor Norman Mockford	✓		
Councillor Pru Moore	✓		
Councillor Howard Munda	✓		
Councillor Kirsty Page	✓		
Councillor Geoff Rawlinson	✓		
Councillor Peter Reed	✓		
Councillor Robert Salisbury	✓		
Councillor Linda Stockwell	✓		
Councillor Dick Sweatman	✓		
Councillor Mandy Thomas-Atkin	✓		
Councillor Colin Trumble	✓		
Councillor Neville Walker	✓		
Councillor Garry Wall	✓		
Councillor Norman Webster	✓		
Councillor Rex Whittaker	✓		
Councillor John Wilkinson	✓		
Councillor Peter Wyan	✓		

The 50 Members present voted with 49 in favour and 1 against.

RESOLVED

Council agreed to:

- (i) **Adopt the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 as modified by the Main Modifications recommended by the Inspector in his final Report of 12 March 2018 as the statutory development plan for the Mid Sussex area under the Planning Acts;**
- (ii) **Publish the District Plan, revised Policies Maps, Sustainability Appraisal Report and the Adoption Statement;**
- (iii) **Give delegated authority to the Divisional Leader for Planning and Economy, to make typographical and minor factual corrections to the documentation as necessary before publication.**

8. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2018/19 – 2020/21.

Cllr John Belsey proposed the report, which has been considered at the Audit Committee on 8 March, which was attended by Pamela Coppelman from Adur and Worthing District Council who outlined the Council's investment and borrowing

strategy for the forthcoming three years and the repayment status of the necessary borrowing to purchase the Orchards Shopping Centre. He confirmed that the Council has a low borrowing requirement with no cause for concern, and has had the most successful return on investment compared to other local authorities.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Growth seconded the report and thanked the Audit Committee for its scrutiny.

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

RESOLVED

Council agreed:

- (i) the proposed Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2018/19 and the following two years;**
- (ii) the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) and the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement (MRP) as contained in Sections 5 and 3.3 respectively of the report;**
- (iii) the Prudential Indicators contained within the report.**

9. MSDC PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2018/19.

The Chairman introduced the Statement which is a statutory requirement for the Authority under Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. He took Members to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

Council agreed:

- (i) the Pay Policy at Appendix A, to comply with the requirements of the Localism Act.**

10. CONSTITUTION REVIEW

Councillor Marsh, Cabinet Member for Service Delivery proposed the report which was seconded by Councillor Wilkinson who confirmed that the Constitution is reviewed on an annual basis with minor changes being proposed at this time.

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

RESOLVED

Council agreed:

- (i) The Council's Census Joint Committee shall be dissolved from 31**

March 2018.

- (ii) The delegation to individual Cabinet members currently limited to £25,000 shall be raised to £50,000.**
- (iii) All future commercial lettings at the Orchards shall be made in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member.**
- (iv) The Council's investment fund shall be noted in the Council's Constitution.**

11. TO RECEIVE THE LEADERS REPORT

The Leader confirmed that the Rt. Hon. Greg Clarke M.P., Secretary of State for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy will visit the Council on 29 March to better understand the Council's ambitions regarding the Science and Technology Park. It will also provide an opportunity to brief him on the work currently being considered to put forward a business case to bring the former College in Haywards Heath back into educational use.

He also drew Members attention to the position taken by Wealden District Council regarding the protection of the Ashdown Forest, whereby to date they have objected to over 100 planning applications affecting 13 neighbouring authorities. The Leader, along with the Leader of East Sussex County Council facilitated a meeting of Council Leaders affected to better understand the position taken. As a result, a letter has been written to Cllr Bob Standley (Leader of Wealden District Council) and presented to the Rt. Hon. Sajid Javid M.P., the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government by the Mid Sussex Member of Parliament the Rt. Hon. Sir Nicholas Soames M.P. The impact of the development on the Forest is important, however there is a strong view that Wealden District Council's actions have been disproportional to the evidence. The Leader expressed hope that Wealden District Council will continue to engage with neighbours to identify a solution that is acceptable to all parties.

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 drew Members attention the inaugural STEM Challenge and Awards which took place in the Council Chamber on Friday 23 March, involving teams from three local secondary schools (Oathall Community College, St Pauls and Warden Park). He thanked the Democratic Services Officers involved on the day, and Cllr Ruth De Mierre who was instrumental in instigating a brilliant event which was well supported by local business leaders and actively encouraged innovative participation by all the teams involved.

He confirmed that he had recently visited the Job Centre in Haywards Heath where the staff are actively engaging with the Council on ways to ensure people are directed to the job opportunities which are going to be created within the District.

The Deputy Leader also confirmed that the final meeting of the CenSus Joint

Committee had taken place on 16 March. Following the Housing Benefit Subsidy Audit for 2016/17, there had been nil recovery from Mid Sussex District Council, which demonstrates the accuracy that the staff has put into the work.

He concluded by highlighting that the new website for the Burgess Hill Growth Programme has now gone live (www.burgesshill.net) which is an excellent step in the communications strategy to ensure that information on the programme is available in the public domain.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Customer Services

The Cabinet Member for Customer Services was delighted that her team were able to successfully support all aspects of the Council's work, particularly the STEM Challenge and Awards and the Full Fibre Gigabyte programme noted by the Deputy Leader. She is proud of the high level of professionalism and customer service provided by Officers. She also noted that this quarter's 'Make a Difference' award was won by Tristan Mitchel in Parking Services for the level of care and support offered to a distressed resident.

She drew Member's attention to the work of the Member Development Working Group which has been working on different aspects of development training and planning for the New Councillor experience in 2019.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Service Delivery

The Cabinet Member for Service Delivery highlighted two positive recent achievements. The skate park in Victoria Park was officially opened by the Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member and two Ward Councillors and it has been well received and already well used. The Ward Member acknowledged the extensive consultation that had taken place with users of the skate park, and noted that it was a significant investment for local users. Also, in Burgess Hill, consultation has been completed on the play area at Worlds End recreation park and the re development will include a Changing Places toilet and new, exciting, play equipment.

In response to a Member's query, the Cabinet Member confirmed that the work to improve the pathways around Bedelands Nature Reserve is on track to start in April, weather permitting. He also committed to provide a written response to a Member's query on the timeline for construction of the facilities at the Worlds End play area, noting that it was set out during the consultation period.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Community

The Cabinet Member for Community acknowledged the achievements of the Wellbeing Team which has enjoyed its most successful year ever with employers and employees alike. It provides a resource for local businesses to support sustained lifestyle changes amongst employees to prevent future ill health. Key achievements include 408 individual face to face MOT's, 20 group talks delivered in workplaces on nutrition, exercise and relaxation, and engagement with 18-39 year olds most frequently, which is a key demographic when working to improve lifelong health.

He noted that the Falls Prevention Programme was discussed at a recent Scrutiny meeting but additional statistics reveal that in 2017 the NHS reported the total cost to

health services of falls amounted to £2bn.

He noted that 4 community based courses are now running near capacity in Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill and East Grinstead, with a fifth course being planned at the Triangle, Burgess Hill.

He drew Members attention to the recent Armed Forces Covenant Bronze Award presentation and recognised the Council's commitment to support the armed forces, reservists, veterans and military spouses/partners.

Regarding the Community Development Team he noted that they have been working with the Think Family Neighbourhood and as the initiative ended, the partner agencies agreed ongoing work. A multi-agency community development work plan is being delivered and successes to date include Skatefest Event with the attendance of 80 young people and 43 adults, as well as the launch of the Detached Youth Work weekly sessions.

He concluded by highlighting that the Safeguarding Children and Adults policy has been reviewed due to legislative and organisational changes, with appropriate training being instituted across the Council. Changes in environmental health and licensing policies have also been initiated to keep abreast of legal and changing needs of our communities and to underpin the four priority themes on which the District Plan is based.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning highlighted that there are several interesting possibilities being considered regarding provision of temporary accommodation and affordable housing, to help provide housing for people desperately in need. Members will be informed in more detail in due course.

He also reiterated his earlier thanks to everyone involved in working on bringing forward the District Plan, noting that the excellent support from Officers was second to none.

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

None.

The Meeting was closed at 8.45 pm.

Chairman