

**Minutes of a meeting of Council
held on Wednesday, 27th April, 2022
from 7.00 pm - 7.55 pm**

Present: M Belsey (Chairman)
P Coote (Vice-Chair)

J Ash-Edwards	S Ellis	Anthea Lea
R Bates	R Eggleston	J Llewellyn-Burke
J Belsey	A Eves	G Marsh
A Bennett	B Forbes	J Mockford
A Boutrup	L Gibbs	A Peacock
P Brown	I Gibson	C Phillips
R Cartwright	S Hatton	M Pulfer
R Clarke	J Henwood	A Sparasci
M Cornish	S Hicks	D Sweatman
R Cromie	S Hillier	C Trumble
J Dabell	R Jackson	N Walker
R de Mierre	J Knight	R Webb
B Dempsey	C Laband	N Webster
J Edwards	Andrew Lea	R Whittaker

Absent: Councillors G Allen, L Bennett, P Bradbury, H Brunsdon,
P Chapman, E Coe-Gunnell White, T Hussain, R Salisbury,
S Smith and L Stockwell

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.

The following question was received from Mr P Cox:

Regarding the advice commissioned by the Council from BOP Consulting on the future of Clair Hall:

According to the Invitation to Tender relating to the contract, the consultants will provide an interim report on May 27th and the Council will then provide feedback to advise the remainder of the study.

Can the Cabinet Member responsible please clarify whether the interim report will be provided to full Council or a subgroup of the Council and if so which subgroup?

The following response was provided by the Leader, Cllr Jonathan Ash-Edwards:

Thank you for your question. As you highlighted, the Council appointed BOP, a globally recognised cultural and creative consultancy to advise on the Clair Hall site. I am delighted that an organisation with such an impressive global reputation in the creative industries sector has agreed to work with us. I welcome them on board and we hope they can now be given space to consider all the available information to help us develop evidence based proposals for the future of community facilities on the Clair Hall Site.

To answer your question, I would like to direct you to the Cabinet report in February which outlines timescales for this work. The interim report is expected to be discussed at the Cabinet meeting in the summer and will be published as part of our regular governance process.

The Invitation to Tender, the document you are referring to, has been published in the spirit of full transparency and it is important that it isn't taken out of context. The work and timelines included are only indicative and will be driven by the work the consultants are still planning.

The Council will continue to share as much information as it is possible. I would like to encourage residents to sign up to the Clair Hall engagement Hub where residents can get the latest information on the progress of the project. That link is on the Council's website and has been shared via social media.

The link to the engagement hub, and the request to subscribe to be kept informed as work progresses, has been shared via MSDC social media channels too.

Mr Cox asked the following supplementary question: Past experience has shown that inadequate scrutiny of decisions on Clair Hall can lead to bad outcomes. The Consultant's advice will be key to settling the future of Clair Hall which is an issue that is of great importance to thousands of our residents. How can the public be assured that the Consultants work will be scrutinised by a representative cross section of Council Members?

The following response was provided by the Leader:

The Council has established a Member Steering Group to guide the work and provide advice to Cabinet and they will be looking at the interim report before it is published and goes to Cabinet. That group contains representation from Haywards Heath Town Council on behalf of the community. In terms of the outcome, we are working to deliver on the mandate given to this Council by the 95% of residents who supported change and modernisation on the Clair Hall site and it is important that we deliver modern a community facility for Haywards Heath and the wider area.

3. TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 30 MARCH 2022.

The Chairman noted an amendment to the attendance list. The amended minutes of the meeting of Council held on 30 March 2022 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.

Councillor Hillier declared that he is a West Sussex County Councillor in relation to comments he made under item 7.

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 attention to the Council's Platinum Jubilee Competition for children to design a woodland bench, and encouraged Members to share details within the community. She also noted attendance at recent events, details of which are available on the Council's website, noting the very enjoyable celebration event for Clair Hall Vaccination Volunteers.

7. SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2022-2025.

The Chairman began by noting that the Council is one of the first to form such a plan and that a Working Group has spent many hours developing the document.

Councillor Pulfer moved the item as Chairman of the Working Group acknowledging that the group had good cross-party involvement where it was agreed that the document should progress to Council for approval. He noted that the Strategy shows the way the Council is moving forward into the next 5 years. The item was seconded by Councillor Ash-Edwards.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and Net Zero also commented on the document, thanking Councillor Pulfer for chairing the Working Group and for their dedication. He noted that the document will replace two previous strategies and recognises that the Council has a key role as an employer, landowner, provider and procurer of services, strategic leader, place shaper and a key partner to enable others to deliver for themselves. He noted the importance of partnership working both with the Government and West Sussex County Council and the importance of flagging-up best practice and innovation elsewhere. He also highlighted that it is realistic for the economy to be growing whilst the nation reduces its environmental impact, as the two dynamics are not mutually exclusive. He reminded Members that the document under consideration is about supporting the local economy to grow to provide jobs across the earnings spectrum and to reduce the environmental and life-quality impact of outward commuting as well as giving confidence that Mid Sussex is also an environmentally responsible place to live and do business.

Members discussed the statistics on child obesity contained in the profile document. The Leader noted that the figures are to give context to the challenges and successes across a broad range of indicators as a starting point. He acknowledged that there would need to be collaboration with others such as schools and public health groups as well as the planned investment in sports and leisure to address the issues.

Several Members welcomed the report thanked the Working Group and Officers for the extensive work to compile the document. Some Members acknowledged that the

document is ambitious and provides a direction of travel over the coming years. A few Members also noted areas that they felt could be strengthened such as aspirations for modal shifts and the inclusion of Net Zero in the Vision. It was noted that there was consensus by the Working Group and that it was important to leave room for the plan to develop and evolve over time.

In seconding the item, the Leader thanked the Working Group for consideration of a complex set of topics to provide a comprehensive and evidence based final document. He also addressed questions raised by Members. In response to questions around increasing energy performance certificates and improving home insulation he noted that the target in the strategy is on reducing emissions from the worst performing 20% of homes, in line with National Initiatives. He acknowledged that the Council has limited powers to make people improve homes, especially as it does not own housing, so must work with wider incentives. With regards to how the Council will engage with voluntary organisations because of this strategy he confirmed that the Council already does and will continue to do so.

The Leader acknowledged the improvements provided by one Member with regards to Objective 8 which provides detail for a clear plan for nature recovery showing that the Council will not just be able to be compliant with the Environmental Act but working towards being best-in-class. The Leader also provided clarification on two points raised by Members, one in relation to housing numbers which is not directly correlated to an increase in population figures and one in relation to workplace parking levies. He noted that this is a tax on any employer who provides a parking space for their employees and not taken up by Mid Sussex as it is felt inappropriate to enforce in a District where people do need to use a car to commute to places such as schools and hospitals. Several Members noted the importance of reducing carbon emissions and becoming carbon neutral, including the need to reduce transport emissions, support local businesses to reduce their footprint and the inclusion of KPI's or measures in the procurement process to hold contractors and suppliers to account.

The Leader summarised by noting that the strategy is important in bringing the economy, environment, sustainability, and climate change all together as they have an intrinsic relationship. The Council must also become Net Zero itself and this sets up the path for that to happen. It is a broad strategy which recognises that people and collaborative working have a role in achieving its goals.

The Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendations as contained in the report which was approved with 39 in favour and 5 abstentions.

RESOLVED

Council approved:

- (i) the draft Sustainable Economy Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2025 and the District Profile;
- (ii) Noted the next steps regarding delivery of the Sustainable Economy Strategy Action Plan and
- (iii) Delegated approval for any minor updates (including updates to evidence base datapoints or third-party strategy names) to officers in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and Net Zero.

The meeting finished at 7.55 pm

Chairman