

**Minutes of a meeting of Council
held on Wednesday, 27th March, 2019
from 7.00 pm - 8.43 pm**

Present: B Forbes (Chairman)
C Trumble (Vice-Chair)

J Ash-Edwards	S Ellis	E Matthews
A Barrett-Miles	C Fussell	P Moore
E Belsey	S Hansford	H Munda
J Belsey	G Heard	K Page
M Belsey	C Holden	G Rawlinson
L Bennett	A Jones	P Reed
M Binks	J Knight	R Salisbury
P Bradbury	J Landriani	L Stockwell
H Brunsdon	Andrew Lea	D Sweatman
C Catharine	Anthea Lea	M Thomas-Atkin
R Cherry	J Llewellyn-Burke	N Walker
R Clarke	A MacNaughton	G Wall
P Coote	G Marples	N Webster
R de Mierre	G Marsh	P Wyan

Absent: Councillors A Boutrup, T Dorey, D Dorking, S Hatton, C Hersey, M Hersey, N Mockford, A Watts Williams, R Whittaker and J Wilkinson

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 HELD ON 27 FEBRUARY 2019.

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 27 February 2019 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 Andrew Lea, Councillor Bradbury, Councillor Bennett, Councillor Barrett-Miles, Councillor Heidi Brunsdon and Councillor Jones declared a personal interest in any items related to West Sussex County Council as they are Councillors for that Authority.

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

None.

6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Chairman noted that this was the last Council meeting of the current administration and his last as Chairman. For those Members who would not be standing again, he wished them well. He announced that it had been an honour and privilege to serve as Chairman of the Council for the past 2 years and he thanked the Democratic Services team for their support.

The Leader of the Council gave a vote of thanks from all Members, and presented the Chairman with gifts, noting that he had served as Chairman at the highest order in a proper and robust manner.

7. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI).

The Solicitor to the Council drew Members attention to the tabled amendments to the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

Councillor Walker moved this item subject to the revisions tabled, noting that it had twice been considered by the Scrutiny Committee for Community, Housing and Planning twice and subjected to public consultation. Councillor MacNaughton seconded the item.

With reference to the Council's Duty to Cooperate, a Member sought assurance that proper consultation was carried out with Crawley Borough Council. It was confirmed that consultation did take place and also extended to the Member of Parliament for the area and the Local Ward Member.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendation contained in the report, which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

Council agreed to:

- (i) Adopt the proposed revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in accordance with legislation, and delegates responsibility to the Divisional Leader for Planning and Economy to ensure that the adopted SCI is placed on the website, and stakeholders are notified accordingly.

8. MSDC PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2019/20.

Councillor Thomas-Atkin moved this item, highlighting that the Statement includes a scale for apprenticeships. She confirmed that the Council's apprenticeship programme was well established, with more roles created in the past year. Councillor Ash-Edwards seconded the item.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendation contained in the report, which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

Council agreed the Pay Policy at Appendix A, to comply with the requirements of the Localism Act.

9. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2019/20 - 2021/22.

Councillor John Belsey moved the item as Chairman of the Audit Committee, drawing Members attention to key indicators contained in section 2 of the Treasury Management Statement. He noted that the Audit Committee scrutinised the reports both at the mid-year point and at year end including reviewing rates of interest, and all aspects of investments. As such he confirmed that the Council is in sound financial health with a significant investment portfolio and low debt. Councillor Llewellyn-Burke seconded the item.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendations contained in the report, which were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

Council agreed:

- (ii) the proposed Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2019/20 and the following two years, including the additions to specified investments listed above;
- (iii) the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) and the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement (MRP) as contained in Sections 4 and 2.3 respectively of the report;
- (iv) the Prudential Indicators contained within this report.

10. CAPITAL STRATEGY 2019/20.

Councillor John Belsey moved the item as Chairman of the Audit Committee noting that this is the first year the Council has produced a Capital Strategy. He highlighted that the Corporate Plan has in the past included a Strategy designed to guide such investment but this good practice has now been formalised through a revision to the CIPFA Prudential Code. The Capital Strategy therefore fulfils the requirements of this Code.

Councillor Llewellyn-Burke seconded the item and thanked Members of the Audit Committee for its scrutiny.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendation contained in the report, which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

Council approved the Capital Strategy 2019/20.

11. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS FOR THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FROM 1 JULY 2019.

Councillor Webster moved the item, noting that the interview panel were impressed by the calibre of the applications. This was seconded by Councillor Llewellyn-Burke.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendation contained in the report, which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

Council agreed to appoint Neil Gershon, Jane Henry and Jane Rothwell to the Independent Remuneration Panel for terms of 4 years from 1 July 2019, following the recommendations of the Appointments Panel.

12. STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2018.

Councillor Bradbury moved the item as Chairman of the Standards Committee. He thanked the committee (which includes District, Town and Independent Members) and noted that the committee has worked robustly over the past year. Councillor Jones seconded the item, noting that the committee continues to promote high standards.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendation contained in the report, which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

Council noted the report.

13. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP ACHIEVEMENTS 2017-18.

Councillor Ellis moved the item as Chairman of the Working Group and thanked Members and Officers who worked together to understand the training needs of Members. She noted the development of the Learning Pool as an on-line training facility, and thanked Officers for redesigning the 'Becoming a Councillor' information. She also encouraged new and returning Members to support the progress made in reducing the amount of papers produced, by opting for the on-line options available. Councillor Binks seconded the report.

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

RESOLVED

Council noted the report.

14. TO RECEIVE THE LEADER'S REPORT.

In his final report of the current administration, the Leader noted that even as elections approach, the Council continues to be forward focused, taking forward key projects, with a strong message to tell in terms of achievements and determination to deliver on the behalf of residents. He also thanked the Member Development Working Group for the progress made, and looks forward to it continuing.

He noted that work is continuing at a strategic level with his recent attendance at the Coast to Capital Board meeting, the Transport for South East Forum and Board meeting, his chairing of the recent meeting of the Greater Brighton Economic Board (GBEB) and the Joint Committee of the LEP. As GBEB Chair he also attended and opened the Coastal West Sussex business event and will be co-hosting the 'IMEX' Futureproofing the City Region event at the Amex Stadium.

He has also attended the opening of two projects which have come about as part of this strategic work; the opening of the Adur Tidal Walls at Shoreham and the Hub in Burgess Hill which all play a part in securing growth in the District and region. He noted that investment from Government is the only way to make a real difference to residents and the Council has established itself as a key player at the heart of strategic bodies.

In conclusion the Leader also noted the progress made over the past year on the project to bring the 6th Form College site back into use for residents of Mid Sussex and that the Council is committed to bringing it forward as soon as possible with the continued support of the Rt. Hon. Sir Nicholas Soames MP. He also noted the impending visit to the Council by Margot James MP, the Minister for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

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

Report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Growth

The Deputy Leader noted the District has a strong, resilient and vibrant economy and that over the past year the Council has taken steps to continue to unlock further potential. The Economic Development Strategy sets out work that the Council will do over the coming years and a strong start has been made in delivering on these commitments. The recent Open4Business event was also well received by all those attending.

He noted that the Council continues to make progress on acquisition and disposal projects. Bold decisions have been made in its strategy to acquire assets to both generate income and invest money in the District to support town centres and the economy. He thanked Officers who have supported his portfolio and thanked Members for their engagement throughout.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance

The Cabinet Member noted that work is beginning on establishing a simple and effective Council Tax Support Scheme. She also noted that the Council's performance figures for December 2018 to February 2019 will shortly be presented to the relevant Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet and reflect the best performance to date.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Customer Services

The Cabinet Member thanked the Leader and commented that it has been a privilege to hold the Portfolio for Customer Service. She commended the Officers ability to adapt to the ever changing requirements of residents and the high standards that are maintained. This can be evidenced by the Council's Customer Services Awards where the vast majority of the recipients of these awards were proposed by

customers and highlight the range of excellent work staff have done to ensure they meet and exceed customer expectations.

The Cabinet Member reflected on key achievements over the past year, in particular the launch of the new Mid Sussex District Council website and the re-branding of Mid Sussex Matters, both of which provide vital tools in passing information to residents.

Other achievements include the Annual Canvas which saw outstanding levels of returns with a significant increase of residents wishing to complete on-line, generating savings for the Council in terms of postage and staff time. The Elections team have supported towns and villages in their Neighbourhood plans on previous polling days, and are now working with the Communications team on the Voter ID pilot for local elections on 2 May. The Legal Team have also achieved the Lexcel quality standard meaning it has now been held for the last 10 years.

In conclusion the Cabinet Member noted that Councillors have also witnessed changes over the past term, including the roll out of Office 365, the access of training via the Learning Pool and meeting papers now being accessible through the Mod.Gov app. She thanked the Member Services team and the Member Development Working Group for their work in these areas.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Service Delivery

The Cabinet Member announced that as part of the Council work with West Sussex County Council to stop abuse of the Blue Badge system, a successful prosecution has recently occurred and the Blue Badge abuser has been fined £7500 for his transgressions. He noted and agreed with a Members frustration that the decision had been taken by Brighton City Council not to name the person involved.

He drew Members attention to a recent 'Swishing' event which promoted the reuse of textiles and thanked Councillor Ellis for organising such a well-attended event. Councillor Ellis added her thanks to those involved including Officers, Girl Guides, volunteers and local businesses.

He noted that judges will be visiting the Green Flag application site in East Grinstead on 15 April and an itinerary will be circulated to those interested in attending. He also confirmed the conclusion of all poolside work at the Triangle Leisure Centre, and noted the proposed enhancements identified at the Dolphin Leisure Centre, including a new cafe and softplay and new training and treatments rooms. Further details will be provided in a report to Cabinet in April.

With regards to the introduction of alternative means of paying for parking, he confirmed that this has been well received, and after a 12 month period cashless payments should reflect 17.5% of all transactions. In February there was also a 5% increase in car park transactions across the whole district.

The Cabinet Member drew Member's attention to the 85 hectares of green space identified in the outline planning applications for the Northern Arc, noting that part of the green space will be an extension of Bedelands Nature Reserve.

The Cabinet Member in response to a question confirmed that the intention is that the Bedelands extension will eventually be handed over to the management of the Friends of Bedelands Nature Reserve.

He concluded by thanking all Members who are standing down at the end of this administration as over his 16 years at the Council they have all made a difference to the residents of Mid Sussex. He extended particular thanks to Councillors Chris and Margaret Hersey and Councillor Marples.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Community

The Cabinet Member confirmed that Sussex Police have agreed a further 200 posts as part of budget proposals for 2019 making a total overall increase of 400 Officers on the ground along with very substantial efficiency improvements. The Police and Crime Commissioner has also announced that the Police Command and Control Centre is to receive further IT and staff investment. The Cabinet Member had recently visited the CCTV suite in Lewes and following local elections a visit will be arranged for Members to view the impressive equipment in use.

He reiterated the Council's continued community focussed interventions to reduce instances of anti-social behaviour by using powers to encourage positive changes in behaviour before it escalates to criminality.

He urged Members to read the Annual Equalities Report which details many initiatives undertaken by the Council to enhance life in Mid Sussex with special focus on the most vulnerable residents and seldom heard members of the community.

He also noted the financial assistance provided by the Cabinet Grants Panel where in February alone, £110,000, was provided to 16 local charities and community projects. In the prior year a sum of £128,316 was awarded in Community and Economic Development Grants and the Facilities Grants accounted for £2,467,862 of investment into local communities. Over £1.3m has also been committed to home adaptations to over 130 homes in the District.

The Cabinet Member drew Member's attention to the Wellbalanced programme in which residents at risk of trips and falls participate in classes to reduce this danger. He confirmed that from August 2015 to January 2019, 464 people had been enrolled in the programme which translates to a potential saving of over £1,206,000 in terms acute care costs as well as the human cost of a nasty fall.

He confirmed that there has been considerable investment in 18-25 year olds who are 'Not in education, employment or training' with 30 people each year being counselled and supported in order to find employment. He also acknowledged that the Mid Sussex Partnership led by the Leader is held up as an exemplar of partnership working.

Other achievements noted included the bronze award status awarded as part of the Council's participation in the Armed Forces Covenant and the Tommy silhouette displayed outside the main reception to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of World War 1. He also noted the work carried out to improve the Taxi and Private Hire services to residents including safeguarding training, the standardisation of taxi livery and vehicle age limit, as well as a strong stance taken by the Council when a driver doesn't meet standards.

He concluded by thanking all Members and Officers for their support and thanked the Leader for his leadership and strategic focus.

Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning

The Cabinet Member reflected on achievements made by the Portfolio for Housing and Planning, in particular the adoption of the District Plan in March 2018 after a supreme effort by staff and Members tasked with going through it in detail as each new stage in the process was reached. He noted there was now a strong team working on the Plan and maintaining the 5 year housing land supply and as the District Plan is a living document, work is ongoing towards the plan review which starts in 2021 with submission in 2023.

He noted that the Housing department has expanded and risen to the challenge of addressing the changes in government legislation. The temporary accommodation project is also proceeding well with four families already housed in properties provided by the Council, providing a better service to those who have already had to go through a traumatic time. He also noted that Officers continue to work to try and prevent families becoming homeless and have a range of schemes to support families in need.

In conclusion the Cabinet Member thanked all staff and Members for a rewarding term as a positive difference has been made, and there is a sound base on which to move forward.

16. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2

None.

At the conclusion of the official agenda, the Chairman invited the Leader to speak regarding a personal announcement. The Leader confirmed that it was his intention to stand down as Leader of the Council and to not stand as Councillor at the elections on 2 May 2019. In a speech to all Members he reflected on the significant achievement of the Council during the last three administrations and he thanked all Members and Officers for their support. The Deputy Leader responded, thanking him for his excellent leadership, good spirit and friendship. This was expressed further in speeches by Councillor Jones, Councillor Walker, the Chairman and Councillor Knight who spoke as Mayor of Haywards Heath, thanking him on behalf of Haywards Heath Town Councillors.

The meeting finished at 8.43 pm

Chairman