MINUTES of the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday 15 January 2015 at 8.00pm in the Village Centre, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint.

Members Present

John Wilkinson - Chairman
Sue Bourn
Rosemary Burns
Stephen Hand
David Evans
Rodney Jackson
Tony Lank
John Lowman
David Sharp
James Smith
Julia Shorrocks
Matthew Stokes

Also Present:

Cllr Peter Griffiths (WSCC Ward Member) (part meeting only)
Stephen Hoyles – CLERK TO THE COUNCIL
2 member of the public

C679. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest: The following apologies were received prior to the meeting and accepted: Allan Brown, Judith Marsh, Bob Sampson. There were no declarations of interest.

C680. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 11 December 2014: The Minutes were received and accepted and signed by the Chairman.

C681. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meetings of the Council held on 11 December 2014: The Council considered matters arising from the Minutes which were not covered elsewhere on this agenda:
(1) PARISH 2031 Neighbourhood Plan (Minute C674): The Referendum was formally announced by MSDC on 5 January 2015 with a referendum date of 12 February 2015. Arrangements were in place to publicise the referendum, as reported to the previous Council meeting. Banners advertising the referendum had been placed in 5 locations in the Parish, and 'bookmarks' (replicating the banner) were handed to each Member present for distribution. VC Stephen Hand had agreed to coordinate the distribution of bookmarks to households, reminding the public of the opportunity to vote. It was noted that MSDC had issued polling cars to households during the week. The Council considered and noted the arrangements.
(2) High Street Improvements Scheme (Minute C675): The Council noted that the s278 Agreement is currently with the Council's solicitors for vetting. The contractor and WSCC Highways have reviewed the construction process and considered the possible period for road closure. The Council considered the possible implications to the High Street of an extended closure. (also see Minute C685.4 below).

C682. Adjournment for questions from the public: The Council considered whether to adjourn the Meeting in accordance with clause 1(d) of Standing Orders, in order to receive questions from members of the public in attendance.

RESOLVED: The Meeting was adjourned in accordance with clause 1(d) of Standing Orders, in order to receive questions from members of the public in attendance.

A member of the public said that he represented the Wickham Action Group which was supporting the PARISH 2031 Neighbourhood Plan in the forthcoming referendum. The Meeting then resumed.

C683. Reports from other authorities: The Council received verbal reports from representatives of other Authorities:
C683.1 Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC): There being no representative present, no report was received on this occasion.
C683.2 West Sussex County Council County Local Committee (WSCC/CLC): Cllr Peter Griffiths reported as follows: (1) Streetlights: a sample of the PFI programme replacement had been sited in the High Street for consideration. Members had commented and responses, which were generally positive, had been passed on to the WSCC contractor. (2) The Cllr was pleased to note progress on the Neighbourhood Plan, towards the referendum. (3) Economic development and the LEP: a WSCC meeting was due to take place on 16 January 2015 to address the macro-economic issues of the County, including the principles behind the suggested A2300 Science Park. (4) Broadband: good progress was being achieved in improving coverage in rural areas in the County. (5) The County Local Committee had agreed to award £10,000 to the local Scout group as part of the improvements to their headquarters. (6) A23 Trunk road: the Cllr was continuing to lobby for increasing the length of the 'quiet-run' surface between Warninglid and Pyecombe, and the local MP was also taking interest in the matter. (7) Malthouse Lane: The Cllr was investigating the introduction of a 40mph limit along the whole length. In answer to questions from the meeting, Peter Griffiths noted concerns from WSALC about pressures on funding for social care for the elderly and the possible withdrawing of the Mid Sussex highways maintenance partnership, although neither of these matters had been confirmed; the Cllr confirmed that there were no current plans to change library services in the Parish; the problem of regular flooding of the twitten between Cuckfiled Road and Hurst Gardens would be reported.
C683.3 Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils (MSALC) : Rodney Jackson reported that he had chaired a meeting of WSLAC on 15 January 2015, which was addressed by the Sussex Assistant Chief constable Robin Smith. The matter of significantly reducing police budgets had been noted, and future functions would be emphasising the prevention

of crime, although some community policing functions would be reducing. The meeting had also considered the current debate on the A27 upgrade, and the changes in Quality council status.

C684. Accounts and finance:

C684.1 Accounts: Payments and receipts: The Council was asked to RESOLVE the following:

a) to approve the payment of accounts totalling £19,539.75 for month 10 (January). It was noted that £2,000 payable to Solicitors Mayo Wynee Baxter had, with the agreement of Chairman and VC of Council, been issued the previous week as payment on account to enable progress to be made on the High Street Improvements.
b) to note receipts of £17.96 for month 9 (December).

(Ref: Schedules 421, 420)

RESOLVED: The Council approves the schedule of payments of £19,539.75 for January 2015 .

C684.2 Accounts: Bank reconciliation, budget monitoring and assets register – quarterly monitoring: The Council was asked to approve the monthly bank reconciliation, budget monitoring (Income and Expenditure) and assets register. These reports had been considered by Governance + Audit Panel at its meeting 13 January 2015 and were considered to be in order. (*ref: HP&SCPC Financial Regulations – 22 May 2014 – Section 2.2; Bank Reconciliation statement – Month 9; Assets Register 6 June 2014 ; Income and Expenditure Statements – Month 9)*

RESOLVED: The Council approves the bank reconciliation, budget monitoring report and assets register for Month 9.

C685. Committee reports:

The Council received and noted the Committee minutes and considered any RECOMMENDATIONS:

C685.1 Planning & Environment Committee (18 December 2014)

C685.2 Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (6 January 2015)

(1) Mid Sussex District Plan – Consultation Draft: (MINUTE 5): The Working Group had reviewed the Draft District Plan (November 2014) and agreed to recommend to Council the following response:

1) Science Park (Policy DP2): The Parish Council recommends that references to a specific location in the district are removed. A separate study should be undertaken to identify actual need, viability, deliverability and site selection. The presumption of a site location before these other aspects are assessed is not acceptable planning practice.

2) Formal Sport Centre (policy DP6): The Parish council would wish to be included in discussions regarding the actual location within the Northern Arc development.

3) Traveller and Gypsy sites (policies DP8 and DP30): The site of a new 24-pitch facility is a highly sensitive matter and, as has been provided for at the Imberhorne site in East Grinstead, a specific location should be identified which can then be judged in the context of the whole District plan proposals.

4) Figure 7 - Map – Land at North and Northwest Burgess Hill – The land designation outside the proposed built-up areas should be shown as countryside, and conform to the PARISH 2031 Neighbourhood plan designations.

5) Housing (Policy DP5): The total housing targets should be stated, as these form a key component of the overall development strategy of the Plan. It is not satisfactory that housing targets will included in the Submission Draft of the Plan (as stated in the MSDC covering letter of 19 November 2014) without further consultation on the housing targets.

It was also noted that that references to the A2300 road being in Burgess Hill should not apply. *(Ref: MSDC Draft District Plan (November 2014))*

RESOLVED: The Council agrees its response to the Draft District Plan (November 2014).

C685.3 Governance + Audit Panel (13 January 2015)

(1) Appointment of Internal Auditor (Minute 5): The Panel had interviewed a candidate to consider his possible appointment effective 1 April 2015. Over the last few months invitations were sent to three possible candidates. One was interviewed by the Panel but thought not to be suitable (7 November 2013) and another declined the invitation. The Panel accordingly brought a recommendation to Council that Mark Mulberry be appointed. The Council noted its thanks to Paul Hartley who was retiring as Auditor from April 2015. *(Ref: Mark Mulberry email 11 November 2014; Internal Auditor – Terms and Scope of Appointment 2015)*

RESOLVED: The Council appoints Mark Mulberry as Internal Auditor with effect 1 April 2015.

C685.4 Policy & Resources Committee : (8 January 2015)

(1) Budget and precept (Minute PR36): The Committee brought a RECOMMENDATION to Council for the Budget and Precept for 2015/16 (which was considered as item C687 below).

(2) High Street Improvements Scheme (Minute PR39): The Committee had noted recent progress and discussed the possible effects of an extended closure of the High Street. It was noted that the addition of further signage and other possible mitigating matters might be necessary to ensure that businesses continued to function during the period of the works, and it was agreed that suitable contingency fund should be identified accordingly.

RESOLVED: The High Street Improvements Scheme should make a contingency fund of £5,000 available for suitable signage and other mitigation methods advising of the usual business during the road closure.

(3) Infrastructure Programme (Minute PR41): The Committee RECOMMENDED that the revised Programme be adopted. *(Ref: Infrastructure Programme 18 December 2014)*

RESOLVED: The Council approves the revised Infrastructure Programme (18 December 2014)

C686. Salary pay scales: The Council agreed at its December 2014 meeting (CONFIDENTIAL Minute C678.1) to certain changes to the staff structure, which had been implemented. Since then the NALC national pay review results had been announced. These provided for an average 2.2% increase from 1 January 2015, the last increase being 1% in April 2013. The total effect on the payroll cost to the Council is £2,033 pa and these figures had been included in the provisional 2015/16 Budget. The Council considered and agreed to implement these 'cost of living increases' . *(Ref: NALC/SLCC Factsheet E03-14 – November 2014 – 2014-16 National Salary award)*

RESOLVED: The Council AGREED to implement the NALC National cost of living pay award.

C687. Budget and precept 2015/16: The Council was asked to consider the Council Budget and to set the Precept for 2015/16. The Policy & Resources Committee had met on 8 January 2015 to consider the Budget to make recommendations to Council. *(Ref: Draft 2015/16 Budget - 8 January 2015; Briefing note- 2015/16 Budget - 22 December 2014)*

RESOLVED:

(1) The Council RESOLVES to adopt the Budget 2015/16 as proposed by the P&R Committee (Version 8 January 2015) .

(2) The Council RESOLVES to set the Precept at £179,000 for the financial year 2015/16, resulting in an increase of the Council Tax for a typical Band 'D' property of £64.84 (2.67%).

C688. Information items, correspondence received and requests: The Council noted the following matters and offer comment where appropriate:

C688.1 Housing allocation: MSDC had recently approved (December 2014) a revised lettings policy for social housing. The only references to Local Lettings are in sections 31, 37 and 38, and the Council is asked to note these arrangements. Discussion took place regarding the benefits or otherwise of the Parish Council running its own Housing List. The Council was advised that it was not a housing authority, and that it did not have the necessary expertise on housing needs issues. Also, members of the public could be confused if a formal List was held by MSDC, but an informal List held by the Parish Council. Notwithstanding these matters, it was agreed that Community Affairs Committee would be asked to investigate the merits of a Parish Council held Housing List, for those in the Parish applying for affordable housing, through Housing Assocations. *(Ref: MSDC Housing Allocation Scheme Choice-Based Lettings with effect from January 2015 - December 2014)*

RESOLVED: Community Affairs Committee is asked to investigate the benefits of a Parish Council held Housing List.

C688.2 Quality Council status: The Parish Council has enjoyed QC status since March 2009, but the scheme ends on 31 January 2015. It is being replaced by the NALC Local Council Award Scheme, but existing QC's can transfer to the Foundation Award level, which runs to January 2016. The Parish Office is investigating the possible benefits of continuing with this scheme and it is suggested that the Community Affairs Committee is asked to monitor this matter and bring recommendations to Council in due course. *(Ref: NALC Local Councils Award Scheme - Factsheet December 2014)*

RESOLVED: The Council proceeds with the temporary transition to the Local Councils Award Scheme – Foundation Level, and requests Community Affairs Committee to investigate the merits of continuing in the Scheme.

C680.3 SALC Newsletter: November/December 2014.

C680. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS:

The Council agreed to determine to close the meeting to the public and the press under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 to discuss the following item:

C680.1 Christmas Lights:

RESOLVED: To close the meeting to the public and the press under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.52 pm. Chairman