

**MINUTES of the Meeting of the Council** held on Thursday 24 September 2015 at 8.00pm in the Village Hall, Sayers Common.

**Members Present**

Stephen Hand - Chairman  
Allan Brown  
Rosemary Burns  
Rodney Jackson  
Tony Lank  
John Lowman

Judith Marsh  
Pam Mitchell  
Bob Sampson  
Julia Shorrocks  
Matthew Stokes  
John Wilkinson

**Also Present:**

8 members of the public.  
Stephen Hoyles – CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

The Chairman began by noting that this was the first meeting of Council in the refurbished Village Hall, to which the Council had financially contributed, and congratulated those running the Hall on the excellent finish and quality.

**C15/041. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest:** The following apologies for absence were received before the meeting and accepted: David Evans, Steve Whitehead, Peter Griffiths (WSCC Ward Member), Cllr Anthony Watts-Williams (MSDC Ward Member), Colin Trumble (MSDC Ward Member). There were no declarations of interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.

**C15/042. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 16 July 2015:** The Council received and accepted the minutes which were then signed by the Chairman.

**C15/043. Adjournment for questions from the public:** The Council considered whether to adjourn the Meeting in accordance with clause 3(e) of Standing Orders, in order to receive questions from members of the public in attendance.  
**RESOLVED : The Council Meeting is adjourned.**

With reference to the Hurstpierpoint High Street Improvements Scheme, a member of the public asked over what period monitoring of the new traffic movements would take place, what assessment criteria would apply, and when the results would be available. A second member of the public reported that the widened pavements were not safer for pedestrians as vehicles were mounting the pavement, also no parking enforcement was taking place, and some of the yellow lines were faded. The third member of the public thanked Cllr Steve Whitehead for his liaison with the High Street Traders Group, but challenged Councillors to shop in the local shops. The person then asked what the Council would be doing to reinvigorate the High Street shops, following poor trading during the summer, and challenged the Council to spend money on the matter. It was also reported that local residents were not supporting the local shops as much as they could. The Chairman responded by encouraging all drivers to follow the revised layout and give-way signs, which then operated as intended. The Chairman confirmed that he would be meeting the Traders Group on 28 September 2015, to hear about their concerns in more detail. A carparking survey was planned to take place at the beginning of October, which would feed useful information into understanding the issues. The High Street Scheme was a result of extensive and consistent responses from the wider community, asking for a safer High Street, and the Council has engaged professional advisors to plan, design and deliver the Scheme. The Scheme has been monitored and supported by the Highway Authority WSCC throughout the process.

The Council then reconvened the Meeting.

**C15/044. Reports from other authorities:** The Council received verbal reports from representatives of other Authorities:

**(1) Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC):** Cllr John Wilkinson (MSDC Ward member) reported: (a) High Street parking enforcement: discussion was taking place with MSDC officers to improve the level of parking enforcement, and new staff were being recruited. A suggestion that members of the public could photograph parking offenders and send to MSDC had been dismissed, but was being explored again. (b) The District Plan was progressing, and the CiL (Community Infrastructure Levy) charging schedule was currently being consulted on. (c) A significant new town centre development scheme had been approved for Burgess Hill, but unfortunately there was insufficient economic case for Marletts Hall to continue. (d) The bank American Express was moving 1200 staff to Sussex House in Burgess Hill. (e) The Burgess Hill Northern Arc development scheme was attracting interest from Government and others, as an example of development planning. (f) MSDC were promoting a 'Keep Out' initiative to encourage improved behaviour in sectors of the 13-17 age group.

**(2) West Sussex County Council County Local Committee (WSCC/CLC) :** Cllr Peter Griffiths was not available to report on this occasion.

**(3) Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils (MSALC) :** Rodney Jackson reported that he had attended the SE Regional Forum of County Associations earlier in the day, where the matter of Community Wardens was discussed, and noted that this was likely to be further explored by Councils. The Parish Clerk had been invited to attend a forum with SALC and Sussex and Surrey Clerks and the NALC CEO on 10 August 2015, from which feedback to the DCLG Minister was expected. A WSALC Chairmans networking day was to be attended by the Council Chairman on 30 September 2015.

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**C15/045. Committee and Working Group minutes:** The Committee Chairmen introduced each Minutes, which the Council received and where appropriate, considered the RECOMMENDATIONS:

**(1) Planning Committee** (6 August 2015 and 10 September 2015) The retirement of Tree Warden David Brown was noted and agreed that a new appointment was highly desirable. It was noted that the new system of Chairman/VC delegated decisions had worked well.

**(2) Community Affairs Committee** (20 August 2015 and 17 September 2015)

**Minute : Parish Plan - Community Life 2016-21:** The Council considered the Parish Plan draft questionnaire which could be issued to the public with the Winter edition of the Council's Newsletter. It was noted that the questionnaire would also be carried through an online 'Monkey Survey'. In discussion some concern was expressed that the questions were too specific and presumed that the Parish Council could deliver many of the aspirations. The questionnaire was thought to be very helpful, but it was suggested that some questions could be phrased away from the assumption that the Council could or would necessarily implement all the responses. It was agreed that Community Affairs Committee would review some of the questions and bring a further draft to Council. (*Ref: Draft Questionnaire September 2015*)

**(3) Strategic Planning Working Group** (1 September 2015)

**Minute SP15/015.2: Mid Sussex District Council - Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):** MSDC was consulting on the Draft Charging Schedule with responses required by 18 September 2015. The Working Group had noted the proposed CIL rate of £235/sq m for dwellings. It had also been noted that the developments for which permission had been granted were not covered by the proposed CIL. It was agreed that the Council should not make comments. (*Ref: MSDC Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule, August 2015*)

**RESOLVED: The Parish Council has no comment on the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

**Minute SP15/016: Conservation Areas:** The Working Group considered the draft report 'Appraisal of Hurstpierpoint's Conservation Areas' produced by Hurstpierpoint Society and submitted to MSDC. The PARISH 2031 Neighbourhood Plan Aim Hurst C4 – Conservation Areas, makes provision for a review to be undertaken in the areas of Langton Lane, High Street, and Hurst Wickham. The Hurstpierpoint Society Appraisal has included these areas and added proposals for a northern section of Western Road, a section of Cuckfield Road west of the primary school site, and the addition of an area immediately north of Tott Farm buildings. A small area in College Lane is proposed to be deleted. The Working Group agreed to RECOMMEND to Council that it would support the proposals and assist Hurst Society by progressing the application. It was agreed that the small parcels of land at Apple tree Cottage, Allotments Gardens, and Southmead, between the existing Conservation Area and the South Downs National Park Boundary, should be included in the revised Conservation Area. This would ensure a continuity between the planning constraints of the National Park and those of the Conservation Area. It was reported that MSDC had stated that the Report should be re-written in a style consistent with the policies and language of Natural England, and planning protocols generally. Neither the Parish Council nor Hurst Society were not equipped to undertake this task, unless paid consultants were employed. It was agreed that MSDC were currently fully engaged on their District Plan but in due course they might assist with the re-write. (*Ref: Appraisal of Hurstpierpoint's Conservation Areas – Hurstpierpoint Society - 2015*)

**RESOLVED: The Council supports the proposals by Hurstpierpoint Society for revisions to the Conservation Areas in Hurstpierpoint and offers to progress the application. The Council wishes to include three small land parcels between the existing Area and the National Park boundary, to ensure continuity of planning constraints.**

**(4) Finance + General Purposes Committee** (13 August and 3 September 2015)

**Minute F15/027.2: Budget 2015/16 – Reforecast:** The Committee considered the reforecast of the current year Budget, which had been produced because of the impact of changes. The Budget was originally cast in November/December 2014, and approved by Council in early January 2015. At that time the following significant projects were expected:

1. The High Street Scheme would have been completed in Year 2014/15 and would not appear in the 2015/16 Budget. In practice, the Scheme was delayed and both income and expenditure occurred in 2015/16.

2. The expected s106 income for the Hurst Meadows schemes (both Highfield Drive and Little Park) was expected in 2015/16. Progress has been slow, due to the planning and legal process, and it is expected that only part of the Highfield Drive payment will be received in 2015/16, with the remainder in the following two years.

The effect of these changes would be to reduce the TOTAL RESERVES from £125,397 (at 31 March 2015) to £107,435 (at 31 March 2016). However, this assumes a net £39,000 income from the Hurst Meadows – Highfield Drive s106, and this element should be earmarked and not considered part of general reserves. These would reduce to £68,435 if the Highfield Drive s106 was excluded. This reduced level equated to 35% of the revenue budget of £195,000, but the current policy was for general reserves not to drop below 50% or £97,500. In discussion, the Committee noted that this drop in general reserves would only occur in the month of March 2016, until the first half-year precept was received early April 2016. The Committee therefore agreed to RECOMMEND to Council that the reforecast budget is adopted and that a temporary floor level in general reserves to £68,400 is accepted. Some comments had been made about the accuracy of broad estimates for construction projects, and the benefit of adding sufficient contingencies. (*Ref: BRIEFING NOTE Budget 2015/16 – reforecast - 1 September 2015 Budget reforecast 2015/16 – 1 September 2015*)

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**RESOLVED: The Reforecast Budget 2015/16 (1 September 2015) is approved, and the General Reserves can reduce temporarily to a floor level of £68,400 for the last quarter of 2015/16.**

**Minute F15/027.5: Contracts: Streetlight Energy Renewal:** the Committee considered a report for the renewal of the electricity supply for the streetlights. A fixed price non-metered system is adopted, calculated on the overall normal requirements of the streetlight stock. The Council has retained energy broker Inenco Direct to research the matter and the current supplier E.ON produced the lowest price, at £4133 + VAT for the year from 1 October 2015, based on a 24-month contract. The Committee noted that a replacement of some of the stock with low-energy LED lamps might start to take place in the period, but the impact would not be significant within the 24-month period. As this matter was not given notice on the agenda, the Committee agreed to make a recommendation to Council for its approval. (Ref: *BRIEFING NOTE Streetlight Energy Renewal – 3 September 2015*)

**RESOLVED: E.ON is awarded a 24-month electricity supply contract for streetlighting at a non-metered price of £4,133 + VAT per annum.**

**(5) Parish Plan Working Group:** (7 August 2015)

**C15/046. High Street Pedestrian and Safety Improvements Scheme:** The Council noted the progress report to Finance + General Purposes Committee at its meeting 3 September 2015 (Minute F15/028), and noted the following update: The contractor vacated the site on 11 September 2015, but the road had been opened to through traffic on 30 August 2015, following the line-painting. The TRO was formally signed-off on 7 September 2015 and normal parking enforcement arrangements now apply. Some negative and some positive comments have been received from the public, and the advice from WSCC Highways is that any changes to layouts normally meet some early resistance and it would be reasonable to review the matter after a settling period, to see if any minor adjustments are necessary. There had been suggestions that the Loading Bay area should be more clearly defined with 'hatching' and investigations are taking place to see if this could be undertaken without the need for a lengthy TRO. The matter of the 20mph TRO and signs was raised and it was noted that this was being investigated.

**C15/047. Councillor vacancies:** The Council noted the resignation of Ceri O'Connell from Council on 31 July 2015 due to a move out of the area. Following the Meeting of Council a Notice of Vacancy will be published inviting electors to request a poll, as required by law. If no such request is received with the prescribed time then the Council may co-opt a member. (Ref: *Local Government Act 1972 s87*)

**RESOLVED: The Council notes the resignation of Ceri O'Connell and the publication of a Notice of Vacancy.**

**C15/048. Routine Annual Reviews:** The Council considered the following to approve as required:

**(1) Standing Orders – Review:** The Council reviewed its Standing Orders which were last approved in September 2014. (Ref: *HP&SCPC Standing Orders(NALC 2013) September 2015*)

**RESOLVES: The Council confirms adoption of the Model Standing Orders (NALC 2013) September 2015**

**(2) Freedom of information:** The Council reviewed its Freedom of Information policy which was last adopted in September 2014. There are no changes proposed from the previous version other than to clarify the charge for pages. (Ref: *Freedom of Information Publication scheme - September 2015.*)

**RESOLVED: the Council confirms adoption of the Freedom of Information publication scheme from September 2015.**

**(3) PROTOCOL for filming and recording at public meetings:** The Council was asked to approve the Protocol. This matter has not been raised previously, but the requirements of the new Local Government Transparency Code 2015 have strengthened the rights of the public to film and record. The Protocol is based on that used by South Downs National Park Authority It was agreed to delete the first paragraph after the word 'transparency'. (Ref: *PROTOCOL for filming and recording at public meetings – 7 September 2015*)

**RESOLVED: the Council confirms adoption of the PROTOCOL for filming and recording at public meetings.**

**C15/049. Membership of Committees and Working Groups:** The Council considered the following to approve as required:

**(1) Governance and Staff Panel:** With the resignation of Cllr Ceri O'Connell it was proposed that Cllr Julia Shorrocks is appointed to the Panel.

**RESOLVED: The Council approves the appointment of Julia Shorrocks to the Governance and Staff Panel.**

**(2) Traffic and Parking Working Group:** Cllr John Wilkinson had asked to leave the Working Group and it was proposed that Cllr Julia Shorrocks is appointed in his place. Cllr Judith Marsh would step down from the Working Group and it was proposed that the High Street Traders are invited to appoint a representative to be co-opted to the Working Group.

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**RESOLVED:** The Council approves

**(1) the appointment of Julia Shorrocks to the Traffic and Parking Working Group.**

**(2) that the High Street Traders group is invited to offer a representative to be co-opted to the Traffic and Parking Working Group.**

**C15/050. Information items, correspondence received and requests:**

(1) SALC Newsletter (September 2015)

(2) Burgess Hill Green Circle Network Group – Meeting 24 June 2015 )

There being no other business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.40 pm.

Chairman

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