

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday 19 January 2017 at 8.00pm in the Village Centre, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint.

Members Present

Stephen Hand - Chairman
Rosemary Burns
David Evans
Rodney Jackson
Tony Lank

John Lowman
Judith Marsh
Bob Sampson
Julia Shorrocks
Steve Whitehead

Also Present:

Peter Griffiths (WSCC Ward member)
1 Member of the public
Stephen Hoyles CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

C16/083. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest: The following apologies for absence were received before the meeting and accepted: Allan Brown, Amanda Geel, Martin Machan, John Wilkinson (MSDC Ward member). The following declared a personal non-pecuniary interest: John Lowman in respect of item C16/088.3 Finance + General Purposes Committee (12 January 2017) (2) Tennis Club Pavilion (South Avenue Recreation Ground). There were no other declarations of interest.

C16/084. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 15 December 2016: The Council received and accepted the minutes which were then signed by the Chairman.

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the Council meeting of 15 December 2016 are approved.

C16/085. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council held on 15 December 2016: There were no matters arising from the Minutes which are not covered elsewhere on this agenda.

C16/086. Adjournment for questions from the public: There was no request from any public present and the Council was not required to consider whether to adjourn the Meeting in accordance with clause 70 of Standing Orders.

C16/087. Reports from other authorities: The Council received verbal reports from representatives of other Authorities:

(1) Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC): No report was received on this occasion.

(2) West Sussex County Council County Local Committee (WSCC/CLC) : Cllr Peter Griffiths reported: (1) Litter-picking: parishes were being encouraged to involve volunteers in the process. It was noted that the Parish Council was about to start a new arrangement with existing volunteers. (2) WSCC small grants continued to be available for parish councils. (3) the WSCC Council Tax increase would be 3.95% from April 2017, which included the additional levy permitted for social care. (4) WSCC had made a bid for additional funding for schools, equating to £178 per pupil. It was noted that Downlands Community College had recently achieved an 'outstanding' rating by Ofsted. (5) Rural Broadband coverage: WSCC were to receive a rebate from BT, which would be used to increase rural coverage. The meeting raised questions about the new footpath proposed at Chalkers Lane, the need for footpath resurfacing and the road reconstruction along Cuckfield Road, the problems of broadband coverage in parts of Sayers Common, and the lack of progress in achieving the s278 conclusion for the High Street works.

(3) Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils (MSALC) : Rodney Jackson reported that MSALC would be meeting 23 February 2017 and meeting the WSCC CEO and Leader. Rodney Jackson had attended a meeting of WSALC on 19 January 2017 at which the following were considered: the role of parish councils in promoting health and well-being; the recent changes to police services, following a presentation by Divisional commander (Sussex Police) Crawley and Horsham.

C16/088. Committee and Working Group minutes: The Committee Chairmen or, in their absence the Vice-chairmen, introduced each Minutes, which the Council was asked to receive and where appropriate, consider the RECOMMENDATIONS::

C16/088.1 Planning Committee (5 January 2017)

C16/088.2 Strategic Policy Working Group (10 January 2017): The progress of the MSDC District Plan Examination was noted, and that further hearings had taken place on 12 and 13 January 2017. A letter from the Parish Council was being drafted in response to the Examiner's letter of 10 January 2017, seeking clarification on the distinction between plan-making and planning decisions, with regard to the Ministerial Statement of 12 December 2016. It was hoped that due weight would be given to the Neighbourhood Plan when shaping the District Plan.

C16/088.3 Finance + General Purposes Committee (12 January 2017)

(1) Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)– 2016 Valuation results: The Council's staff are members of the WSCC LGPS and is classified as a 'small scheduled body' for the purposes of pooling its pension contribution into the scheme. The Council has been asked to sign the Pooling Agreement, along with all other Parish Councils in the pool. (Ref: WSCC email 9 December 2016 – Small Scheduled Bodies Pool; Pooling Agreement DRAFT WSCC Nov 2016)

RESOLVED : That the Chairman and one other Member is authorised to sign the West Sussex County Council Pooling Agreement 2016, on behalf of the Council in accordance with Standing Orders Clause 22.

(2) Tennis Club Pavilion (South Avenue Recreation Ground) : As reported to the Committee at its meeting 8 December 2016, the pavilion has experienced some storm damage. The repairs were being undertaken by the Tennis Club but, at a meeting between the Club Chairman and the Clerk on 15 December 2016, the question of the longer-term future of the pavilion was raised. The current building is a light timber construction, and the possibility of a replacement with a more substantial structure was discussed. Funding could potentially be met by a combination of s106 grant and the Club's own resources. The land and building are owned by the Council and leased to the Club, with the current lease expiring in 2019. If the Club were to invest in a new building then it would reasonably expect some extended security of tenure and a new lease could be granted by Council. The matter will be formally considered by the Club in early 2017 but, meanwhile it was suggested that the Council could give its support in principle to the construction of a new pavilion, to be funded as described.

RESOLVED: That the Council supports in principle the construction of a replacement pavilion at the Tennis Club, South Avenue Recreation Ground, subject to planning permission and appropriate funding being secured.

C16/088.4 Parkland Management Committee (17 January 2017)

C16/089. Budget 2017/18: Council was asked to approve the Budget and Precept for 2017/18. The matter had been considered by Finance + General Purposes Committee at its meeting 12 January 2017, and the following changes were proposed for approval by Council: It was agreed to add the following CAPEX/one-off items:

- 1) 2 x new noticeboards, to be installed in the new developments (£3,000)
- 2) preparatory works for new play equipment at Reeds Lane Recreation Ground (£2,000)

With these amendments it was noted that the Revenue Budget indicated a deficit of £2,673 on expenditure of £235,484. The CAPEX Budget showed a surplus of £171,000 on expenditure of £91,400. It was predicted that the total funds will increase from £238,046 to £394,973 at 31 March 2018. **It was proposed that there is a 2% increase in Band D Council Tax (to £66.98) which, with a 3.1% increase in the Tax Base, provides for a 5.1% increase in Precept to £193,736.** (Ref: Budget 2017/18 V5 12 January 2017; BRIEFING NOTE 2017/18 Budget and Precept 22 December 2016)

RESOLVED:

- (1) Budget 2017/18 (V5) is approved.**
- (2) The Precept 2017/18 is set at £193,736 equating to an increase on the Band D Council Tax of 2%.**

C16/090. Social Media – FACEBOOK: The Council was asked to agree to a trial for the use of a FACEBOOK account, to be managed by the Parish Office and only for the use of the Parish Council in issuing messages. The Council has been operating a Twitter account for the past year, following an agreed protocol, without incident. A similar protocol will apply for the FACEBOOK account, as detailed in the BRIEFING NOTE. (Ref: BRIEFING NOTE Guidelines for the use of social media – FACEBOOK - 10 January 2017)

RESOLVED: The Council introduces a FACEBOOK account, for a trial of six months in accordance with the protocol guidelines.

C16/091 Resignation of Councillor: The Council noted that Member Pam Mitchell had resigned from Council with effect 2 January 2017, due to work commitments and a likely move out of the area. There were now two vacancies on Council, one of which has been advertised for election and can now be co-opted. Following this meeting of Council a Notice of Election would be posted for the second vacancy, as required by s87 of the 1972 LGA. The following timetable was now proposed:

24 January 2017 - Notice of election

8 February 2017 – Councillor information session (this has already been advertised)

15 February 2017 - advertise vacancy by co-option (assuming no request for election is made)

7 March 2017 – Councillor information session (if required)

13 March 2017 deadline for applications for both vacancies

21 March 2017 - interview of candidates by Governance + Staff Panel

23 March 2017 - recommendations to Council for approval of co-options

(Ref: *Local Government Act 1972 s87*)

RESOLVED: Council approves the timetable for the co-option of Council Members.

C16/092. Information items, correspondence received and requests: The Council was asked to note:

(1) SALC Newsletter January 2017

(2) BT Phone boxes consultation: MSDC issued advice on the BT consultation for the removal of 48 phone boxes around the District, including the following 5 within this Parish:

Opposite No. 11 Cuckfield Road, Hurstpierpoint; Outside No. 23 Willow Way Hurstpierpoint; Outside No. 144 High Street Hurstpierpoint; Outside No.59 College Lane Hurstpierpoint; Next to telephone exchange Weald Close, Hurstpierpoint. The closing date was 6 January 2017 but advice only received on 21 December 2016, at which time Parish Council Members were asked for individual responses. No comments were received by the deadline. (*Consultation on the removal of phone boxes – MSDC 24 Nov 2016; HP&SCPC email 21 December 2016*)

(3) Sayers Common traffic matters: It was reported that there had been a notable increase in HGV use into Twineham Lane, and this raised questions about permitted uses in the area. It was agreed that the matter would be investigated.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.45 pm.

Chairman
