



Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council
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Village Centre
Trinity Road
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West Sussex BN6 9UY

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Thursday 26 October 2023 at 7.30 pm at Hurstpierpoint Village Centre.

Members Present:

Cllr Malcolm Llewellyn (Chairman)
Cllr Sarah Baldey
Cllr Susan Dyke
Cllr David Evans
Cllr Rodney Jackson

Cllr Claire Majsai
Cllr Duncan Ranger
Cllr Bob Sampson
Cllr Annette Street
Cllr Lindsay Thompson

Also Present: Sarah Groom (Clerk), Cllr Joy Dennis (WSCC) and Cllr Alison Bennett (MSDC), and ten members of the public. Apologies were received from Cllr Geoff Zeidler (MSDC).

C23/24.075: To receive and accept apologies for absence: Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Avery, Cllr Bedford, Cllr Froud and Cllr Shorrocks, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council **ACCEPTS** the apologies for absence for Cllr Avery, Cllr Bedford, Cllr Froud and Cllr Shorrocks.

C23/24.076: To receive and record declarations of interest: Cllr Ranger declared a personal interest in the confidential item concerning the Hurstpierpoint Bowling Club as he was a fee paying member of the club so would not take part in the discussion.

C23/24.077: To receive and accept the minutes of the previous meeting of the Council held on 28 September 2023: Members reviewed the minutes and amended the incorrect numbering, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council **AGREES** the minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2023, as amended.

C23/24.078: Councillor Committee Membership: Members considered committee appointments, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council **AGREES** the appoint of Cllr Baldey and Cllr Street to the following committees:

- i. Cllr Baldey will join the Planning Committee and Community Engagement Committee; and
- ii. Cllr Street will join the Finance, Governance and Estates Committee and Community Engagement Committee.

C23/24.079: Adjournment for Questions from the Public: Members considered adjourning the meeting to receive questions from members of the public in accordance with Standing Orders.

There were four representatives present from the new organisation called "WILD" (Watchdog for Intrusive Local Development). One representative spoke about the aims of their organisation which was formed due to the loss of confidence in the Mid Sussex District Plan review. Examples included not taking into account the major impact the Plan will have on local lives or the results of the recent Croudace appeal in Albourne where the Planning Inspector ruled that the development would harm the local area. WILD appealed for the Parish Council's support. The Chairman thanked WILD for their presentation and invited WILD's feedback on the Parish Council's response to the Reg 18 consultation. The Chairman also referred WILD to the letter issued recently by Michael Gove MP which warned against planning authorities pausing their District Plan reviews.

Five residents of Sayers Common attended in support of the proposal for a Traffic Regulation Order for Reeds Lane to introduce a 7.5 tonne weight limit (except for access) from the London Road to Twineham Lane (with signage both ends). The Chairman explained there was an existing application for double yellow lines at the London Road roundabout and a passing place on the southern side of Reeds Lane next to the Recreation Ground (timescale to be

confirmed next week). A 20mph speed limit had been considered but it was agreed to keep the 30mph speed limit in place with a speed indicator device (SID) placed between the 30mph sign as you approached the village and the Kings Business Centre. The SID would monitor speed to show what speeds drivers are doing. The Community Speed Watch Co-ordinator confirmed the use of a WSCC post for the SID was already approved. Double yellow lines at the Meadow View junction were also considered but it was thought that parking in that area helped slow down speeding vehicles. One resident reported that people were parking on the pavement as they were concerned their cars would be damaged by passing vehicles but this was blocking access for wheelchair users or prams. Cllr Majsai agreed to ask residents not to do this in her next Hurst Life article.

Enforcement of the weight limit was queried and Cllr Dennis explained that there was an agreement in place with the Furzlands Business Park that all drivers are asked not to use Reeds Lane as a cut through to the A23 and she would also be happy to speak to the North Star Garage about the parking on London Road. Cllr Thompson will follow this up. Sat Navs will show a weight restriction and companies will monitor their drivers' routes. A special request can also be made to the Police that they include this matter in their patrols. Cllr Thompson asked the residents if the proposals were supported, which there were and it was agreed they would be monitored once in place and the matter could be revisited in the future. The Chairman thanked the residents for attending the meeting.

C23/24.080: Reports from Other Authorities: Members received reports from representatives of:

C23/24.080.1: West Sussex County Council (WSCC): Cllr Dennis reported that the Downlands School buses were now being reported as full and this was being investigated. Cllr Dennis is also following up the fact that the Hickstead junction improvements are not on the Highways Agency list of works. The issue of Battery Storage Farm planning applications being focused in the Twineham/Bolney area, and as far as Cowfold is creating a potential hazard from a toxic smoke disaster if there was a fire. Fifty percent of lane rental income can now be spent on pothole repairs. There will be a night closure on the High Street on 17 November for up to two nights for drains to be cleared of fat deposits. The one-day Rail Travel Card has been saved, albeit the price will increase. WSCC are currently promoting fostering opportunities. The Chairman thanked Cllr Dennis for her report.

C23/24.080.2: Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC): Cllr Zeidler had sent a written report that had been circulated to Members. Cllr Jackson confirmed that Applaud Awards for volunteers is being moved to March 2024. It was advised that the Parking Team said they would consider the temporary suspension of four of the eight electrical vehicle charging points in the Trinity Road car park as part of the parking strategy. The Chairman explained this was not acceptable as the previous Cabinet Portfolio Holder had agreed they would be suspended until vehicle charging demand had increased and arrangements just needed to be put in place. Cllr Bennett would follow up on this matter. Cllr Baldey expressed concern relayed to her about the security of the car park (in darkness) in respect of the theft of charging cables. Cllr Jackson also reported the draft Open Spaces Strategy did not include Court Bushes. The Chairman was extremely disappointed as the Parish Council had been calling for a masterplan for some three years and appealed to the ward councillors for assistance. The Chairman also asked why the Dunlop Close Play Area was listed for investment when the Oakhurst Play Area was the priority previously. Cllr Dyke asked for an update on the land north of Fairfield Rec and the Chairman explained this was due to be redeveloped into a junior football pitch for Hurst Colts. Cllr Jackson as Chairman of MSDC was holding his Civic Service on Sunday 10th December 2023, 6.00pm at the Holy Trinity Church. Cllr Bennett asked questions around the type of consultation the Parish Council would like to see for itself and residents as part of the Regulation 19 consultation on the Mid Sussex District Plan review in January 2024. Cllr Sampson requested an update on the Ecology report for the Sayers Common/Albourne significant site. Cllr Majsai requested an update from either WSCC or MSDC on youth services or providing youth clubs and the Chairman explained the direct result on the youth club closing was an increase in vandalism at Court Bushes Community Hub. Cllr Bennett concluded with an update on the Food Waste Trials and Community Grants Panel. The Chairman thanked Cllrs Bennett and Jackson for their reports. Cllrs Dennis and Cllr Bennett left the meeting at 8.40pm.

C23/24.081: Committee Minutes: Members received the minutes of the:

C23/24.081.1: Planning Committee (2 October 2023) There were no recommendations for Council.

C23/24.081.2: Finance, Governance & Estates Committee (19 October 2023) There were five recommendations for Council:

- i) **F23/24.062: Parish Council Half Year Financial Analysis:** The Committee reviewed the Parish Council's financial position at the half year stage and agreed the actions required including any changes to earmarked reserves, and it was:
RESOLVED: That Council AGREES the £7,000 transfer from Court Bushes Cost Centre (211) to the Court Bushes Sinking Fund (Earmarked Reserve 380).
- ii) **F23/24.061: Review of 2022/23 External Audit Report:** The Committee noted the External Auditor's (Moore West Sussex) Certificate for the 31 March 2023 accounts which stated there were no matters that had come to their attention giving cause for concern, and agreed to recommend it to Council for adoption, and it was:
RESOLVED: That Council ADOPTS the External Auditor's (Moore West Sussex) Certificate for the 31 March 2023 accounts.
- iii) **F23/24.064: Internal Audit:** The Committee considered the report of the first internal audit of 2023/2024, which took place on 3 October 2023 and noted the recommendations, and it was:
RESOLVED: That Council AGREES:
- a) To investigate training another member of staff to use the RBS accounting system;
 - b) To ensure Councillors sign to agree to receive their summons to meetings by electronic means; and
 - c) That all future asset purchases are accompanied by a business case (Financial Regulation 14).
- iv) **F23/24.065: Budget and Precept Setting Timetable:** The Committee reviewed the proposed timetable, principles and assumptions to commence the budget setting exercise for 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, and agreed to recommend the following timetable, principles and assumptions to Council for adoption, and it was.
RESOLVED: That Council AGREES:
- a) The proposed timetable to commence the budget setting exercise for 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.
 - b) The following principles and assumptions:
 - i) A balanced budget is required to be set.
 - ii) There are no changes to service levels.
 - iii) Charges will be reviewed and any increases agreed and applied to the budget.
 - iv) The September 2023 CPI (excluding Housing costs) figure will be used therefore Inflation of +6.7% will be applied to expenditure forecasts, unless cost increases to contracts are known, then actuals will apply.
 - v) Staff costs will initially be budgeted for at an increase of 7%. This percentage may be subject to change over the next few months.
 - vi) Reserves should only be used for one-off expenditure or capital items.
- v) **F23/24.066: Court Bushes Container Project:** The Committee re-considered a business case setting out the proposals for the purchase, delivery and installation of a new (one-trip) 20 foot ex-shipping storage container for Court Bushes Community Hub Car Park, and it was:
RESOLVED: That Council AGREES to the purchase, delivery and installation of a new (one-trip) 20 foot ex-shipping container including the ground works and electrical connection works, plus six cages to be used inside, as the total cost of the project is £11,225+VAT; and Section 106 funding would be applied for.

RESOLVED: That the Council RECEIVES the minutes of the following Committees and AGREES the above recommendations:

- i. Planning Committee (2 October 2023)
- ii. Finance, Governance & Estates Committee (19 October 2023).

C23/24.082: Community Highways Scheme/Traffic Regulation Order: Members considered submitting a Traffic Regulation Order to address issues of speeding, vehicle weight and parking issues on Reeds Lane. Following the valuable discussion with local residents it was agreed to apply for a 7.5 tonne weight limit (except for access) for the whole of Reeds Lane with appropriate signage at either end.

In addition, the Chairman reminded Members of the application previously submitted for extending the current 30mph speed limit on College Lane to the Hurst College campus 20mph speed limit thereby removing the de-restricted speed limit. This was turned down, but due to the new WSCC speed policy Members agreed to re-visit the request and apply for the 30mph from both the Cuckfield Road along Chalkers Lane and from College Lane to the College's 20mph speed zone, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council AGREES to submit a Traffic Regulation Order for

- i) A 7.5 tonne weight restriction (except for access) on Reeds Lane: and
- ii) 30mph speed limit along College Lane and Chalkers Lane (to meet the 20mph zone at the College).

C23/24.083: Reports from Representative on Outside Bodies:

C23/24.083.1: West Sussex Association of Local Councils (WSALC): The Chairman and Vice-Chairman attended a WSALC Chairman's meeting on 11 October. Information shared included the new Fire Regulations from 1 October 2023, new terrorism legislation for events (Martyn's Law), the importance of signing up to the Civility and Respect pledge to combat poor councillor behaviour and how much Parish Council's can choose to do if they so wish such as running shops or pubs. Cllr Jackson attended the WSALC AGM on 20 October 2023 and further information discussed was the Lord's decision not to allow hybrid Council meetings which were permitted under emergency Covid law, examples of community led planning and housing initiatives, the new instant justice scheme and a talk on the County Archives.

C23/24.083.2: Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils (MSALC): Cllr Jackson reported that the Chairman of MSALC was working to improve communication between Town and Parish Council's and MSDC.

C23/24.083.3: Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) Safer In Sussex Business Partnership: Cllr Evans had attended the PCC's businesses forum on 11 September, where domestic abuse, vandalism, boxing and national service was discussed.

C23/24.083: Hurstpierpoint Society: Cllr Dyke had attended her first meeting of the Society representing the Parish Council on 16 October and had previously provided a written report. Items discussed included the Hurst Meadows boundary with the back of properties in College Lane and the arrangements for the Society to help support financially the maintenance of the new copse. The Society is also interested in purchasing a speed indicator device.

C23/24.084: Information Items:

C23/24.084.1: South Downs National Park: Members noted the feedback from the 4 October 2023 South Downs National Park's Parish Council meeting attended by Cllr Dyke and Cllr Jackson. Members were encouraged to visit the Park's flagship facility at the Seven Sisters Country Park and to help promote the activities available for children. The Town and Parish Council representatives on the Board were also keen to hear from the Parish Council.

C23/24.084.2: West Sussex County Council Active Travel Consultation: Members noted the Active Travel Survey consultation which closes on 15 November 2023.

Members RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the following items, the press and public be excluded under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

Confidential Matters:

C23/24.085: Hurstpierpoint Bowling Club: Members considered the response from the Hurstpierpoint Bowling Club regarding the five-yearly rent review discussed at the last meeting. A vote was put to Members whether to amend the annual rental fee proposed, and following a unanimous vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That Council AGREES to remain with the amount proposed by the independent valuation for the five-yearly rent review of Hurstpierpoint Bowling Club (April 2023 to April 2028) as agreed at the last meeting.

C23/24.086: Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039 Review Update: Members received a verbal update on the second informal consultation meeting with Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) held on 12 October 2023 regarding the Parish Council's Regulation 18 response submitted on 19 December 2022. The meeting was attended by the Chairman and planning consultant and included Members from Twineham and Albourne Parish Councils. Two presentations were received from prospective developers.

No obvious changes were being made to the Plan and there was no evidence of levers being used by MSDC to ensure developers met certain requirements such as collaboration agreements to require them to work together. The Chairman and consultant reiterated the Parish Council's key demands including evidence of a master planning approach in order to build nucleated sustainable settlements with adequate infrastructure and drainage before any development. The District Council restated their plans for the Regulation 19 consultation in January 2024, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council NOTES the update on the informal Mid Sussex District Plan Review consultation meeting with Mid Sussex District Council held on 12 October 2023 and AGREES to continue to push home the key concerns that the Parish Council has with the Plan.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.05pm.

Chairman