

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **POLICY, RESOURCES and COMMUNICATIONS** Committee meeting held on 15 March 2016 at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks

PRESENT: Cllrs Judith Foot (Chairman)
Justine Fisher
Frances Gaudencio
Peter Gibbons
Sue Hatton
Ian Weir

In attendance: Jo Whitcombe – Parish Clerk

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Cllr Ian Credland

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST None

MINUTES

Meeting 1 December 2015.

16/253 RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2015.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

To consider a proposal from the Policy, Resources and Communications subgroup – The Economic Development and Tourism Working Group.

Cllr Frances Gaudencio took the group through a paper she had written (Agenda item 5.1) and asked the Committee to accept the rationale, purpose and strategy of the working group. Cllr Sue Hatton asked what expectations there would be for assistance from the office staff as she had concerns that there was currently no capacity to take on additional work. Cllr Ian Weir said that the Parish Council could put some seed money to this project and Cllr Peter Gibbons reminded the Group that there was some money ring fenced for a Traders Association if it was to form again. Cllr Frances Gaudencio appreciated that there were resource implications and support could be offered by the Parish Council hosting networking events or providing a photocopying service.

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Cllr Sue Hatton asked whether a business plan had been written and whether the Traders would be approached. The business plan should follow the Village Plan, drawing on the Village Design Statement in order that there is a continuity of what has already been agreed.

Members discussed that Tourism and Economic Development was not a statutory duty that Hassocks Parish Council had to undertake and would want to involve Mid Sussex District Council, District Members and the local Twinning Association.

16/254 **RESOLVED** to accept this initiative as an ongoing task in principle with the caveat that future workloads must fit in with the available resource.

CLEANING CONTRACT

To explore and make recommendations on acceptable standards of cleanliness within Hassocks Parish Council managed premises.

The Clerk explained that currently the Groundsman cleans the Community Pavilion during inclement weather. This does not provide continuity of service and subsequently additional cleaning hours are required. A member of staff currently cleans the Parish Centre and has indicated that she would like to stop if alternative cover can be found.

16/255 **RESOLVED** to set up a cleaning contract for the Community Pavilion and the Parish Centre and make recommendation to Council to make funds available.

8.10pm Cllr Kate Bailey entered the room.

COMPUTER SOFTWARE AND PHONE SYSTEMS

To consider a report and agree recommendations on Hassocks Parish Council's current IT and phone systems.

The Clerk took the Group through Agenda item 7.1 and explained the current IT and phone provision in the Parish office. All staff share one email address and there is one phone line. Members accepted that the current computer and phone software needed to be upgraded and were happy with the IT proposal to install a HPE ProLiant Micro Server with Microsoft Windows 2012 Essential package.

Members accepted that the phone system also needed upgrading, however there were concerns that one hosted phone system explored had a bundle of calls capped and wanted the Clerk to explore further options that allowed the council to have unlimited calls as part of the package.

16/256 RESOLVED to purchase the Microsoft Windows upgrade and support package and recommend to Council to transfer £3500 from the Ear Marked Reserves in to the Revenue Budget.

16/257 AGREED that further quotes be obtained for a new telephone system.

FUTURE ITEMS

To consider a list of items for discussion at future meetings of the Policy, Resource and Communications (PR&C) Committee.

Cllr Judith Foot lead a discussion on Agenda Item 8.1 which listed items for future consideration in order that they maintain a profile. Items listed were producing a communications strategy, some finance projects, review Councils Standing Orders and research developer 106 monies available. To review current land holdings, staffing issues and review councillor expenses and the current office space.

A discussion ensued regarding the current level of office resource available and there was a need for the Clerk to work with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Chairman of the PR&C Committee to establish priorities.

Cllr Justine Fisher felt it was important to resolve the issues around the Parish Council's Facebook page and Twitter account as these should be managed by the Clerk.

Cllr Sue Hatton felt that bidding for Section 106 monies should also be a priority in order that the village did not lose any financial contributions from any building developments.

Members agreed that a business plan should be written encompassing the above items for future consideration at a PR&C meeting.

16/258 RESOLVED that the Clerk will work with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Parish Council and the Chairman of the PR&C Committee to agree workload priorities.

16/259 RESOLVED that the Clerk will obtain the admin rights for the Parish Councils Facebook and Twitter accounts.

16/260 RESOLVED that the Clerk would investigate the current Section 106 money available for Hassocks.

Urgent Matters at the discretion of the Chairman for noting and/or inclusion on a future agenda

Staffing Matters

The Chairman reiterated the issues around the current staffing resources available and asked the Group to consider whether an additional member of staff was required to assist with the workloads. Cllr Judith Foot would like to set up a Staffing Committee consisting of the Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Chairman of the PR&C Committee which would report back initially to the main committee of the PR&C.

Cllr Kate Bailey requested to become a member of the PR&C Committee.

8.50pm Cllr Frances Gaudencio left the meeting.

16/261 **RESOLVED** that the Clerk be requested to write a Resource paper to be presented at the next meeting of the PR&C.

16/262 **RECOMMEND** to Council that a new staffing committee be formalised consisting of the Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Chairman of the PR&C Committee.

16/263 **RECOMMEND** to Council that Cllr Kate Bailey be appointed on to the PR&C Committee.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be advised

The meeting closed at 9.00pm