

Cuckfield Parish Council
Minutes of a Meeting held at 8.00 pm on 9th July 2009

Present: Mr Salisbury (Chairman), Mr Gregory (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Revell, Mrs King, Mrs Burgess, Mr Blanch, Mr Gallagher

In Attendance: Mrs Jones (Clerk)

- 63 Public Question Time:** There were no members of the public present at the meeting.
- 64 Apologies for absence** were received from Mr Mercer, Mrs Macintyre and Mr Bradbury
- 65 Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest regarding any matters on the agenda.
- 66 Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting** The minutes of the meeting held on 21st May 2009 were taken as read and confirmed as a true record.

67 Clerk's Report & Matters Arising from the Minutes

Minute 08/254.02: Chain of Office: The request from the Parish Council for the return of the Urban Council's Chain of Office had been acknowledged by the District Council and a response was awaited.

Minute 09/08: Chairman's Board of Honour: This had been delivered to the office but unfortunately, the board was damaged and would require repair

Minute 09/10: Risk Assessment: The clerk's assistant was currently reviewing this documentation.

Minute 09/15: Staff Insurance: A letter would be sent to all members of staff regarding the need to have their own insurance for their property. A copy of the Parish Council's health and safety policy would also be enclosed.

Minute 09/17: Parish Plan: No action had been taken with regard to the updating of the Plan.

68 Chairman's Report

A meeting had been held with the County Councillor and a consultant, from a professional real estate company specialising in commercial property development, and the clerk to discuss economic development in Cuckfield. It was considered that there would be a demand for small, high quality, units and it had been agreed that the consultant would provide an outline for discussion at a further meeting.

The Chairman had been approached by MSDC as to whether the Council would prefer to undertake formal training with regards to the Standards Board or whether a visit from an independent member of the Standards Board to discuss issues would be more suitable. It was agreed to invite a member of the Board to the next Council meeting.

It was noted that Defra was to undertake a further housing needs survey in Cuckfield. However, due to the short notice and the fact that a survey had been undertaken by Action in Rural Sussex the previous year, it was proving difficult to attract key members of the community to the meeting in July.

It was also noted that there had been further delays with the newsletter. The Parish Council would need to keep this matter under review.

69 Committee Reports

69.1 Planning Committee : The minutes dated 4th & 25th June were noted by the Council

69.2 Roads & Traffic Committee: The proposals for a 20 mph speed limit in Bolnore Village were noted.

69.3 Environment Committee: The minutes dated 4th June were noted by the Council. Mr Gregory reported that he had attended an interesting meeting of the Mid Sussex Network for Older People. Mr Gregory brought to members attention that the next environment meeting would commence with two presentations regarding the restoration of the Observer Post and the conservation of the Observer Field. All members of the Council were welcome to attend. There had been a near accident when a member of staff was watering the hanging baskets recently. It was agreed to look at the purchase of a small pump on wheels as a matter of urgency.

69.4 Finance Committee: The minutes dated 25th June were noted by Council. The Chairman reported that monthly meetings were now taking place with the clerk to look at budgets, etc. and that these were proving to be most informative.

69.5 Queen's Hall Committee: The minutes dated 25th June were noted by Council. The clerk reported that there was an issue of subsidence with the green room. A structural engineer had been instructed to make investigations and his report was awaited. Arrangements were in hand to change the fire exits.

70 Schedule of Payments

The schedule of payments, previously circulated and totalling £23,567.95, was approved by the Council

71 Transfer of land from the District Council to the Parish Council

The Chairman reported that very little progress had been made with the MSDC Asset Transfer Group. After discussion, it was agreed that the District Council be approached to transfer the Glebe Road Allotments and the land at the end of Courtmead Road to the Parish Council. It was considered that this was a reasonable request as the Parish Council was the statutory allotment authority and there was a long waiting list for allotments within the community. However, the costs of maintaining the Recreation Ground were very high and it was agreed that the transfer of this should be left for the future.

72 Training for Parish Councillors

Consultation was being undertaken by NALC regarding compulsory training for parish councillors. This consultation had arisen following mainly financial problems with various councils. It was considered that whilst councillors considered that training was extremely important, training by itself would not stop problems arising and compulsory training would not be attractive to many volunteers. It was agreed to respond that the Parish Council considered that training should not be compulsory but should be meaningful, local and tailored to the needs of the council.

73 Purchase of Land

There was a discussion regarding the possible availability of land for purchase in Cuckfield. It was agreed to approach the District Valuer for a valuation in order to ascertain the viability of this project. The matter would then be discussed in full by the Council.

74 Grant applications

The following applications were considered and agreed by the Parish Council:

FurniHelp Mid Sussex:	£100.00
Streetmate Youth Workers:	£100.00
Victim Support:	£100.00
Citizens Advice Bureau:	£100.00
Mediation Service:	£50.00
Crimestoppers	£50.00

The Council noted that these donations exhausted the budget for the current financial year.

75 County Councillor and District Councillor Reports

Councillors expressed their disappointment that neither of the representatives from the District Council had attended a parish council meeting for some considerable time. It was agreed to write to both councillors asking them to advise on who was currently representing Cuckfield at the District Council

76 Publications

The following publications were available from the Clerk: Local Council Review; MSDC Reports; Gatwick Noise Consultation, High Weald Plan; Water Resources Update; Recommendations for the provision of gypsies and travellers; MSOPC News

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm.