

Cuckfield Parish Council
Minutes of a Meeting held at 8.15 pm on 14th January 2010

Present: Mr Salisbury (Chairman), Mr Gregory, Mrs Revell, Mrs King, Mrs Burgess, Mr Blanch,
Mrs Macintyre, Mr Gilboy, Mr Mercer, Mr Gallagher

In Attendance: Mrs Jones (Clerk), Mr P Bradbury (WSSC), Mr E King (MSDC)

213 Public Question Time: No matters were raised by the public

214 Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest regarding any items on the agenda

215 Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting: The minutes of the meeting held on 12th November (previously circulated) were approved by the Council

216 Clerk's Report on Matters Arising from the Agenda

The Clerk reported that the new format newsletter, published by the Parish Council, was now ready for distribution next week. No further information had been received from MSDC regarding the transfer of their land but it was understood this would be considered by the Better Environment Committee in March. As Mr Bradbury had to leave at 8.45 pm, it was agreed to bring forward item 11 of the agenda. It was hoped that Mr King would arrive later, following a meeting at the MSDC offices.

217 Report from County Councillor

Mr Bradbury reported that the proposals contained in the West Sussex Minerals & Waste Development Framework for a 'built waste facility' on land adjacent to the sewage works on the Cuckfield bypass had given rise to a great deal of local concern. He considered that the wording used in the document "acceptable in principle" was most unfortunate and should be brought to the attention of the Leader of the Council. However, the current proposals were at an early stage and detailed objections were not required at present. Mr Bradbury then reported on the County Council's budget for the next financial year. During the cold weather issues of public liability had arisen but an emergency meeting had shown that there was a real desire for all local authorities to work together. Work on the Safe Routes to School project in Ardingly Road had been approved for this financial year, as had the new roundabout by the Rose & Crown. A proposal, that had attracted significant support, was being put to WSSC by Mr Bradbury calling for the removal of the link between average speeds and speed limits.

218 Report from the Chairman

The Chairman reported that he had attended a meeting at MSDC with regard to the waste site and he considered that the site was wholly unsuitable. Looking at the documentation, it was clear that the site was in contravention of many of the County Council's own policies. As a reply was required before the end of the month, a response would be drafted shortly for circulation to members. It was now known that the Core Strategy had been delayed. It was hoped Mr King would give further information later in the evening. A meeting had been arranged with BT in London to discuss Cuckfield being used as a trial rural area for 'superfast' broadband. The Chairman had attended the Appeal for Chatfield Road but had been disappointed by the lacklustre performance of MSDC officers, the traffic consultant was also weak. The Inspector's views were unknown but he had been interested in the siting of the playground and the absence of pepper-potting for the social housing. It was hoped a decision would be received within four weeks.

219 Committee Reports

219.1 Planning Committee: The minutes dated 26th November and 10th December were noted by Council.

219.2 Environment Committee: It was agreed to make an appointment to meet with the possible sponsor for the new gates by the Garden of Remembrance

219.3 Finance Committee: The minutes dated 10th December were noted by Council.

219.4 Queen's Hall Committee: The minutes dated 26th November were noted by Council. It was noted that the work necessary to resolve the flooding would be covered by insurance. The display panels had been ruined but these were covered by insurance and it was agreed that new panels be purchased as soon as possible.

220 Budgets and Precept for the Forthcoming Financial Year

Copies of the budgets had been circulated with the agenda. The Chairman of the Finance Committee stated that the budgets had been approved by each individual committee and the budgets and precept, as agreed at the Finance Meeting on 10th December 2009 were now recommended for approval by the Council. The figure was the same as that agreed for the current year. It was proposed, seconded and **resolved** that a precept of £134,820.00 be set for the forthcoming financial year. The Chairman commented that depreciation was now being looked at and being built into the budget. The committees were being asked to plan ahead and risk assessments were all in place. This would all now be available for future councils.

221 Schedule of Paid Cheques

The schedule of paid cheques, as previously circulated, was approved by the Council.

222 Emergency Procedures in Cuckfield

The Chairman reported that during the very cold and snowy weather, the Parish Council had not been able to offer an emergency call centre and no guidance was available on the website. The possibility of forming a committee from the various groups in the community in order to provide better co-ordination and to help people to help themselves was discussed. Issues such as vulnerable residents, the clearing of pavements, provision of salt bins, collection of litter, etc. could be brought together in an emergency, social, plan. Mr Gregory agreed to look at this with a view to getting the community involved in the plan. Mr King arrived at this stage of the meeting.

223 Report from the District Councillor

Mr King reported that the Core Strategy had been delayed as MSDC were unable to deliver a five-year housing supply at present. There were two major reasons for this, firstly that Southern Water were unable to upgrade their infrastructure at Goddards Green necessary to enable large scale development in Burgess Hill and secondly due to the delay in the Haywards Heath relief road at Bolnore. Without a five-year landbank for housing, the Core Strategy would not be approved by the Planning Inspectorate. As a result of this it was likely that developers would put in applications for sites and many of these might be approved as the District Council could not show it was meeting its housing requirement. A study group had been set up by MSDC but this would not report until the summer and there would be a long delay before the Core Strategy was ready for approval. Mr King also reported that Thornfield, the holding company, had gone into receivership. The ramifications of this were not known as MSDC was working with one of their subsidiary companies.

The meeting closed at 10 pm.