

CUCKFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

The Queen's Hall, High Street, Cuckfield, RH17 5EL



Annual Parish Meeting 1st March 2018

Present: Mr N Page (Chairman), Mr A Burton, Mrs M Dormer, Mrs A King, Mrs F Laing, Mr P Mantripp, Mr S Oversby-Powell, Mr M Sambrook, Ms C Henson (Assistant Clerk), Mrs S Heynes (Clerk) and members of the public.

Guest Speakers: Cllr G Wall (MSDC Councillor)

Apologies: Mr C Mercer

1. **Chairman's Report**

Nigel Page provided a summary of the Council's activities over the past year, which were summarised in the published Chairman's Annual Report.

2. **Presentation by Cllr Garry Wall, MSDC**

Cllr Wall ran through the current priorities for MSDC. He further explained the current challenges were:

- Finances
- Planning
- Growth
- Economy
- Opportunities to Invest

MSDC had a growing strategic role as it's located in the centre of Sussex, one of the most important growth corridors within the country. To this end, MSDC had representatives on the following organisations:

- Gatwick Diamond Business
- Greater Brighton Economic Board
- Local Enterprise Partnership
- Shadow Transport for the South East

Previously MSDC would receive £7m funding from Government grants; this figure had reduced to 0. However MSDC had become a self-sustainable government and managed this with 5 years of frozen Council Tax rates.

However Council Tax would only increase in the future, as local government would be delivering more local services, and local people would be paying for these.

Planning guidelines were constantly changing; the District Plan public examination had completed on 5th February 2018. Once the Inspectors report had been published, if the decision was that the District Plan was sound then MSDC would look to adopt the plan as a matter of urgency. This would provide the 5 year land supply which was key to future planning decisions. Cllr Wall expressed his opinion that Cuckfield's Neighbourhood Plan was still in good shape.

Demands on servicing are increasing all the time, and to that end investment had been made in the Planning & Economic team with 10 new positions created.

Over £1bn investment was planned for Burgess Hill, and we were close to seeing some key milestones start to happen:

- Redevelopment of brownfield sites
- Dualling of the A2300
- Northern Arc development
- New Technical Park

£30m government funding had been provided to support this work.

3. Q&A Session Responses

- MSDC had tabled an offer to the Government relating to the 6th Form College, which was at the final point of the process.
- There were no plans to control or limit the number of betting shops in Haywards Heath since MSDC had taken over The Orchards Shopping Centre, or to implement any rental schemes for retailers.
- All utility providers were expected to factor in the planned growth for the area, including train companies.
- It was not possible within the public sector to retain funds from Developers until completion of local infrastructure had occurred. S106 funds were provided by Developers to finance infrastructure support and improvements.
- Taylor Wimpey had not responded to the Enforcement Notice issued for the site at Buttinghill. MSDC were planning to take further action, however it would be up to 12 months before the case would reach a court hearing.
- The Highways Authority had responsibility to ensure the development of the Northern Arc road system would direct traffic to the A2300 rather than through

Ansty/Cuckfield. Modelling of the future traffic levels had been commissioned. The 3,000 houses would take 15-20 years to be completed.

- Regarding the double taxation created by transferring the completion of local services from WSCC and MSDC to Parish Councils, Cllr Wall advised people should be prepared to question the value for money for services received.

Finally, thanks were expressed to Cllr Nigel Page, the outgoing Chair of Cuckfield Parish Council. Cllr Page had completed 6 years as Chairman and achieved a lot during this time. He would be greatly missed; Council expressed their best wishes to him in his new adventures overseas.

The meeting closed at 21:00pm.