



## **Annual Report of the Council 2014**

- Minutes of the Meeting 14 May 2013
- Chairman's and Committee Reports
- Audited Accounts 2012/2013
- Annual Return 2013
- Draft statement of accounts 2013/2014

**Presented at the Annual Parish Meeting  
7.30 pm Thursday 29 May 2014  
Village Centre, Hurstpierpoint**

**Contents:**

1. Agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting 2014
2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 14 May 2013
3. Chairman's Report
4. Reports of the Chairmen of the Committees
5. List of Councillors and Officers of the Council
6. Annual Statement of Accounts 2012/13 (audited)
7. Annual Return 2013
8. DRAFT Annual Statement of Accounts 2013/14

# **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**7.30 p.m. Thursday 29 May 2014**

**at the Village Centre, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint**

## **AGENDA**

1. Introduction by the Chairman, Mr John Wilkinson
2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 14 May 2013
3. Annual Report of the Council - presented by the Chairman
4. Financial Report of the Council - presented by the Clerk
5. Neighbourhood Plan - progress
6. Traffic and Parking Issues
7. Open forum for the public
8. Closing remarks by the Chairman

Chairman of the Council  
May 2014

\*\*\*\*\*

# **MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on Tuesday 14 May 2013 at 7.30 pm at the Village Centre, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint**

## **Present:**

John Wilkinson (Chairman of Council)  
Stephen Hand (Vice-chairman of council )  
9 other Parish Councillors  
the County Council ward councillor Peter Griffiths  
The Clerk, the two Assistant Clerks and the Parish Cemetery Officer,  
41 Members of the public

**1. Introduction by the Chairman:** The Chairman welcomed those present and introduced the councillors attending the meeting. The Chairman then expressed his thanks to all Council Members and to the Parish Office staff for the work over the last year. Thanks were expressed to those Council Members who had retired during the year and those who had joined the Council, and also to Deputy Clerk Jo Kearns who had retired in December 2012. The Chairman explained the challenging processes leading to the publication of the Consultation Draft Neighbourhood Plan in March 2013, and the role of the emerging District Plan published by Mid Sussex District Council. The work on preparing the High Street Improvements Scheme was also described.

**2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 15 May 2012:** The Minutes were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**3. Annual Report of the Council 2012/13:** The Chairman John Wilkinson presented the Annual Report for the Year 2012/13.

**4. Financial Report of the Council:** The Clerk to the Council presented the audited Annual Accounts for the Year 2011/12, the draft Accounts for the Year 2012/13, and the budget for 2013/14. It was noted that the Council had planned to spend some funds from reserves in 2012/13 on consultancy advice for the High Street feasibility study and the Neighbourhood Plan, but in the event the spending had been much less and income had been received from the Council's 'Frontrunner' Neighbourhood Plan status. As a result the Council had actually made a small surplus for the year. The Budget for 2013/14 was briefly explained, and it was expected that some spending from reserves would be made in the year, on one-off items including streetlight replacements, High Street Improvements, and planning consultancy advice on unwanted large planning application on the Parish.

**5. Neighbourhood Plan 2011-31 – progress report:** The Chairman presented the Consultation Draft Neighbourhood plan – PARISH 2031 which was currently in the consultation period ending 20 May 2013. He described the housing targets for the Parish and explained that the Council's view was that taking no new development was not a realistic option. It was acknowledged that new housing was disruptive for some parts of the community and could place stresses on parts of the local infrastructure. However, the Neighbourhood plan provided for some community benefits in the form of public open space, community buildings and road improvements, as well as the new developments. Council Members Neil Milton, Matthew Stokes and Vice-chairman Stephen Hand each made presentations on countryside and conservation, local schools and amenities, and employment and economy, respectively. The Chairman invited questions from the public. A comment was raised about the total number of new houses potentially in the pipeline if all applications and appeals were granted, and this number considerably exceeded the targets in the Neighbourhood plan. A further question related to the possible scale of the new development at Chalkers Lane (south) and the potential community benefits at Fairfiled Recreation Ground.

**6. Traffic and Parking issues:** The Chairman asked the Clerk to present the current position regarding traffic and parking in the Parish. The Clerk explained that the High Street Improvements Scheme had been consulted on in November 2012 and over 170 responses had been received. As a result the Council had commissioned the detail design of the Scheme, which would be an extension of the priority give-way system, with associated widened footways and kerblines realignment. It was expected that construction work would begin in early 2014. The clerk also explained that there had been a noticeable increase in parking and traffic congestion 'hot-spots' over the last year, and five areas (apart from the High Street) had been identified. The Parish Council only had very limited powers to make changes, but could influence the County and District Councils in undertaking road and off-street parking improvements. As a result a new Traffic and Parking Working Group had just been commissioned, with two co-opted local highways experts included, to investigate the issues and make recommendations (through the Parish Council) to the higher authorities. Members of the public who were interested in these matters were invited to follow progress on the Council's website.

**7. The Village Garden, Hurstpierpoint:** The Chairman asked the Clerk to present the current changes to the Garden. The Clerk explained the background to the St Lawrence Fair 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the granting of its Royal Charter, and the commissioning by a local group of a commemorative sculpture. The Parish Council had supported this local group and had agreed that the sculpture could be placed in the Village Garden along with a new seating ‘circle’. Planning permission had been granted by Mid Sussex District Council and work on site had begun this week. The old dovecote had been removed and was stored, but it was intended to relocate to a site on South Avenue Recreation Ground in due course. The commemorative sculpture was to be unveiled on 29 June 2013 and all were invited to attend.

**8. Open forum for the public:** The Chairman took open questions from the meeting. Matters raised included the concerns about the robustness of the housing targets proposed by the Council; the condition of the footpath between College Lane and St Georges Lane; parking congestion in Trinity Road and a suggestion that part of the grass verge could be used for parking; the excessive use of local roads by driving schools; traffic safety in Albourne Road; and alternative traffic access into the proposed housing development at Little Park Farm, by utilising an access from Chalkers Lane rather than Iden Hurst.

**9. Closing remarks by the Chairman:**

The Chairman thanked all those attending and noted that he was pleased to see public participation in many aspects of the local community. The meeting closed at 9.25 pm.

Chairman

\*\*\*\*\*

## 2. Chairman's Report

The year has again been dominated (but not exclusively as the following Committee Chairmen's reports will confirm) by Neighbourhood Planning, large development planning applications and the proposed Hurstpierpoint High Street improvements.

Council's work on the Neighbourhood Plan stalled in July 2013 when Mid Sussex District Council's Planning Committee decisions (for planning applications for 157 houses at Little Park/Highfield Drive and 81 houses at College Lane) went against both our Plan's proposals and the recommendations of the District Council's own planning officers. Those decisions meant that our Council had to suspend moving to the next stage of Neighbourhood Planning, namely to progress to a Submission Version status, and to await the outcome of the developer's appeal against the planning decision for Little Park/Highfield Drive as well as an appeal against refusal decision re a planning application for a large development at Kingsland Laines, Sayers Common. In the event, the Secretary of State has 'called in' all 3 major planning applications and has indicated that he will advise his decisions on each simultaneously by August 2014.

The action by the Secretary of State has enabled the Council to resume its Neighbourhood Plan progress and a Submission Version was lodged with MSDC in March and will end its statutory publicity stage on 23 May 2014. It is hoped that the Plan will then proceed to examination by an independent planning expert appointed by MSDC, who will decide whether or not the Plan should move to a referendum vote by local residents. Council has taken this latest action to provide increased defence against any further unwanted significant planning applications within the Parish; this is especially important given that the District Council's own 20-year Plan has 'hit the buffers' following a recent Planning Inquiry, giving developers massive encouragement to press on with 'opportunistic' planning applications in our area.

With regard to the proposed improvements to Hurstpierpoint's High Street, I am pleased to report that after several years of surveys, consultations, negotiations and fund-raising discussions it now seems likely that work will be undertaken in early 2015. Whilst the improvements will not solve all of the traffic problems of which we are all aware, it is expected that the High Street will become a safer place for both pedestrian and road users, though the latter may find that journeys through the High Street become slightly longer but, hopefully, less fraught.

The year has been a very active period for Councillors and Council staff and I am indebted to all for their support and individual inputs. Particular mention should be made of Vice-Chairman, Stephen Hand, and Committee/Working Group Chairmen, namely Rosemary Burns, Matthew Stokes, Julia Shorrocks and John Lowman and to Stephen Hoyles, our Parish Clerk, and his first class staff comprising Roberta, Charlotte, Cliff and Richard.

Finally, I wish to thank Neil Milton and Susanna Kemp who for personal reasons tendered their resignations from Council during the year and to welcome their co-opted successors, Allan Brown, Tony Lank and David Sharp who have already proved to be valuable members of Council.

**John Wilkinson** – Chairman of Council

---

### 3. Reports of the Chairmen of the Committees

#### COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

**Policing:** The Committee continues to work closely with our local Community Support Officers. Crime rates are low but we understand the stress and upset caused when parishioners are affected by crime. As with last year, anti-social parking is an issue. The Parish Council are coordinating with various organisations and its own Parking and Traffic Committee to try and find solutions to this problem. We are also working with local groups to try and improve facilities and evening activities for the young people of the Parish.

**St Lawrence School:** We continue to have close links with the school and will give any support requested through the difficult period of redevelopment to three form entry.

We are also supportive of the campaign from the Parent and Governor Group formed to address the traffic issues outside the school. At times, it can be extremely dangerous for pedestrians due to inconsiderate parking and driving.

**Presentations:** Once again at Community Affairs meetings we have had a number of talks from local groups and organisations. It is heartening to know that there are so many people dedicated to improving the lives of those in our community, particularly the most vulnerable. We will continue to support these groups and where appropriate contribute to their development.

**Grants and Donations:** The Committee invites applications from community groups within the parish for grants and donations. We make these twice yearly, in May and November, with the objective to provide extra funding (usually up to £500) for local organisations. These groups are usually run on a voluntary basis. Such donations are always greatly received. We would encourage all local groups to see if they fit our criteria and apply for these grants.

**Neighbourhood Plan:** Many of you will be familiar with our Neighbourhood Plan and understandably, particularly interested in the housing development part. However, it is community projects that the parish will have the strongest lead in and so the potential to positively shape the parish for years to come. We hope to use funds, which developers must provide, to create long lasting and sustainable community facilities.

I would like to thank Roberta Taylor, as clerk to the committee and all the office staff that work tirelessly on Parish matters and are responsible for implementing the community projects that councillors vote through.

**Matthew Stokes – Committee Chairman**

---

## **PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

It has been another challenging year for the Parish Council's Planning Committee.

Although the number of planning applications considered over the year remained constant the Parish Council has had to defend the Draft Neighbourhood Plan at several appeals. Contrary to the proposed Neighbourhood Plan the application for 157 houses on land at Little Park and North of Highfield Drive was refused by Mid Sussex district Council. This went to appeal, as did the application for 120 houses and a large residential home at Kingsland Laines, Sayers Common, which Mid Sussex had refused. Both these appeals along with the application for 81 houses in College Lane have been 'called in' by the Secretary of State. Having studied the Planning Inspectors' reports the Minister will make the final decision. It is almost unprecedented to 'call in' an application such as 81 houses at College Lane after a local authority has given permission. The outcome of these appeals should be known in August.

Members of the public are always welcome to attend our monthly planning meetings and to speak in either support or opposition to planning applications on the agenda of that meeting.

Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council are statutory consultees of the planning process, Mid Sussex District Council are the Planning Authority who make the final decisions taking the Parish council's comments into consideration. The South Downs National Park delegates planning applications within the Park to Mid Sussex DC to determine.

**Rosemary Burns** - Committee Chairman

---

## **SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Welcome to the end of year report for the Services Committee. Our committee has responsibility for several areas including the allotments, streetlights, toilets, seating, trees and the cemetery.

The Parish Council own some, but not all, of the street lights in our Parish. After our comprehensive review of all the lights we own, we have now been able to start our programme of upgrades. Unfortunately, due to the costs involved with the utility companies that own the cabling, we have discovered that we can only afford to replace half the number originally planned for each year. This will increase the time required for us to complete our programme but we will get there. If you would like a sneak preview to the lights which eventually will come your way, please take a trip to Highfield Drive.

This year we finally managed to install 4 new seats with memorial plaques and we hope that these will give pleasure to many villagers especially during the summer months.

For those of you who read my piece last year you might remember that I said we were removing the 8 large fir trees in the cemetery. Unfortunately these trees turned out to be rare swamp cypress trees and Mid-Sussex would not allow us to remove them. We have therefore lifted the canopy to reduce the shading over the area.

Once again a big thank you to Hurstpierpoint Society, and in particular Paddy Kehoe, for his tireless efforts in organising the planting of trees in certain Parish roads; Weald close and Willow Way were the lucky recipients this year.

Finally as ever the Services Committee would like to thank Richard Lechmere, our cemetery officer, and Cliff Everest for all their hard work in helping to keep our Parish a beautiful place in which to live.

**Julia Shorrocks** - Committee Chairman

---



#### **4. List of Councillors and Officers of the Council 2013/14**

##### **Councillors:**

1. Mr John Wilkinson (Chairman)
2. Mrs Sue Bourn
3. Mr Allan Brown
4. Mrs Rosemary Burns
5. Mr David Evans
6. Mr Stephen Hand (Vice-Chairman)
7. Mr Rodney Jackson
8. Mr Tony Lank
9. Mr John Lowman
10. Ms Judith Marsh
11. Mr Bob Sampson
12. Mr David Sharp
13. Mrs Julia Shorrocks
14. Mr James Smith
15. Mr Matthew Stokes

##### **Council Officers:**

Mr Stephen Hoyles – Clerk to the Council  
Mrs Roberta Taylor (Assistant Clerk)  
Mrs Charlotte Kempson (Assistant Clerk)  
Mr Cliff Everest (Parish Maintenance Officer)  
Mr Richard Lechmere (Cemetery Officer)  
Mr Paul Mayne (Assistant Clerk – TEMPORARY POST)

##### **Communication:**

All Councillors and Officers can be contacted through the Parish Office:

tel: 01273 833264  
email: [hurstpierpoint.pc@btinternet.com](mailto:hurstpierpoint.pc@btinternet.com)  
postal address: Parish Office, Village Centre  
Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint  
WEST SUSSEX BN6 9UY