

South Mid Sussex County Local Committee

2 June 2015 – At a meeting of the Committee held at 7pm, Woodlands Meed School, Burgess Hill.

Present: Mr Barrett-Miles (Burgess Hill Town), Mrs Jones (Burgess Hill East), Mr Griffiths (Chairman), (Hurstpierpoint and Bolney) and Mr Petch (Hassocks and Victoria).

Election of Chairman

1. Resolved – That Mr Griffiths is elected as Chairman of the South Mid Sussex County Local Committee for the 2015-16 municipal year.

Welcome

2. The Chairman welcomed Gill Perry, Headteacher at Woodlands Meed School and invited her to provide a short introduction to the school. Ms. Perry welcomed the Committee members and local residents to the school. She advised that the school had been nominated for a design award and that the judging was taking place on 23 July. She explained that there were 260 students across the school and college sites and that all pupils had special needs, with each class having a special aim e.g. autism. The school had a hydrotherapy pool which was open to the community in the evenings and at weekends and the school was the lead for the Meeds Special Educational Needs (SEND) Alliance. The Chairman thanked Ms. Perry for her introduction and for allowing the Committee to use the school to hold its meeting.

3. The Chairman invited Dr. Margaret Ford, Chair of the Hassocks Amenity Association (HAA), to give a short presentation (copy appended to the signed minutes) on the Spitalford Bridge Project to which the Committee had recently awarded Community Initiative Funding (CIF). The presentation included photographs of the new wall and bus shelter, which had been built with funding from HAA, CIF and Hassocks Parish Council. The Chairman thanked Dr Ford for her presentation.

Declarations of Interest

4. Mr Barrett-Miles declared a personal interest in respect of Community Initiative Application 701/SMS – Beacon District Guides Association as his granddaughter was a Girl Guide with the association.

Minutes

5. Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 24 February 2015 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

Urgent Matters

6. There were no urgent matters.

Progress Statement

7. Richard Speller, Highways Area Manager (Mid Sussex) introduced a statement of progress following the February 2015 Committee meeting (copy appended to signed minutes). He advised that he had recently been appointed to the new post, following a new area based approach and managed a Mid Sussex area team of six people. He advised that there would be a single point of contact for all highway services and that highways and infrastructure schemes would be considered annually to decide how they would be prioritised each year. He advised that existing local improvement schemes needed to be costed and investigated further but that schemes already on the Forward Works Programme for this year would be delivered.
8. Members asked how long the evaluation of existing schemes would take and whether schemes could go ahead if external funding was sourced. Mr Speller advised that a statement was awaited from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport on how existing and future schemes would be assessed. He confirmed that if external funding was available it may well be possible to deliver schemes sooner.
9. The Committee noted a response from the Cabinet Member of Highways and Transport, tabled by the Chairman, to a letter sent from the Committee following its last meeting in February 2015 regarding the process for County Local Committee infrastructure planning schemes and Traffic Regulation Orders (copy appended to the signed minutes).
10. A Hurstpierpoint resident raised concerns that he had not seen evidence of plans to deal with the impact of construction vehicles that would be using Highfield Drive road once the development at the end of the road commenced. The Chairman advised that he should contact West Sussex Highways by email at highways@westsussex.gov.uk and copy him in as the local County Councillor.
11. Resolved – That the Committee notes the Progress Statement.

Talk with Us Open Forum

12. The Chairman invited questions and comments from members of the public, which included:
 - A representative of the Hassocks Infant School Petition/Parent Group raised concerns on behalf of families whose children had not been offered a place at Hassocks Infant School from September 2015. He advised that 17 children out of 107 who had applied for a place at the school had been unsuccessful and had been offered places at alternative schools. He added that there had been a higher demand than places available in 2009 and provision had been made at the school to accommodate this. He questioned why, with the housing and demographic changes in the area, further provision had not been made in the last six years to accommodate this increase. He confirmed that some pupils had been offered places as far as 14 miles from their homes and that some would have to use public transport with journeys taking up to 45 minutes. He asked whether temporary classrooms, currently on the school field could be utilised as a temporary solution to accommodate the 17 children who were unsuccessful in gaining a place at the school.

13. Members thanked the group for their questions. Mr Petch, County Councillor for Hassocks and Victoria, advised that he had met with parents and the school and that the Governing Body was reluctant to use the temporary classrooms.

14. A Hassocks Parish Councillor advised that the Parish Council was aware of the situation and had met with County Council officers. He said it was wrong to say that a new school for Hassocks was currently being planned and confirmed that the Parish Council had written to the County Council as the Education Authority about how they would fulfil the education requirements of children living and moving in to the area.

15. The Chairman welcomed Graham Olway, Principal Manager, Capital Planning and Projects and Richard Baker, Senior Manager, Pupil Compliance, to address the issues raised. Mr Olway advised that the County Council had actively been providing extra school places over the last few years at Hassocks Infants School and Hurstpierpoint and confirmed that it was the Council's strategic duty to provide school places. He advised that national legislation only allowed parents to express a preference for a particular school and that large spikes in demand, far above projections, partly due to families moving in to the area, had created the situation. He referred to a booklet produced each year entitled 'Planning School Places 2015' and advised that work was being undertaken to look at an alternative school site. He advised that a school would not normally be expected to take more than three forms of entry i.e. three classes of 30 children in one year as this could prejudice the provision of efficient use of resources. He added that there were also concerns about the capacity of Windmills Junior School in Hassocks to accommodate larger numbers coming up from the primary school. He advised that the School Admissions Appeals Process dealt with individual situations and that the County Council was having conversations with both schools about provision for 2016 and beyond. The expectation was that there were likely to be more children in the area than the 90 places currently available.

16. The Chairman suggested that the group should ask for a meeting with the school governors and request to be involved in the future planning. He said he was aware that they had already met with the local MP Nick Herbert but that they should continue to keep him updated. He asked how the County Council's modelling process had been updated and refined to deal with factors such as changes to housing provision, including increased number of bedrooms with large houses being turned in to flats and suggested that there was a need for phasing. He emphasises that the support of the County Council in Neighbourhood Plans was essential.

17. Mr Petch, local County Councillor for Hassocks and Victoria, asked who would take the decision on whether an extra form would be provided for September 2015. Mr Olway advised that the school had advised that the temporary classrooms were currently being used for other purposes. He confirmed that the Independent Appeals Panel would look at the site plan and education schedule and would need to be convinced that 90 children was the maximum number of places that could be accommodated by the school.

18. Members said they empathised with the parents and suggested that it was not just an issue in Hassocks, but that other local areas were likely to experience the same problems in future years. The Committee agreed to write to the Cabinet Member for Education and Schools to express the urgency for a timescale for the

plan for another school in the local area based on current demand and future projections.

Prevention and Wellbeing Grants 2015-16

19. The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director Care, Wellbeing & Education and Director of Public Health and Social Care Commissioning (copy appended to the signed minutes).

20. The report set out the prevention & wellbeing commissioning objectives for 2015 along with the Prevention and Wellbeing Grant applications received for 2015-16. It also identifies how the grants were spent in 2014/15. Grants are awarded annually on merit in relation to the application and awarding criteria. The criteria reflect countywide and service area objectives, as well as specific local needs.

21. The Committee considered the grant applications for 2015-16 as set out in Appendix B and approved those that it considered most appropriate to the local needs of the community

22. Resolved -

(a) That the following applications were approved:

- **NL032 – 4Sight**, £1,900.00
- **TB06 - Age Concern Hassocks**, £3,000.00
- **JP033 - Alzheimer’s Society**, £400.00
- **TB14 - Cancervive**, £599.99
- **DR001 - Cruse West Sussex Area**, £100.00
- **NL004 - Lifecentre**, £150.00
- **TL006 - PBC Foundation**, £40.60
- **TB04 - St Peter and St James Hospice**, £2,500.00
- **TB16 – Summerhaven**, £2,385.41

(b) That the following applications were declined:

- **TB18 - Age UK West Sussex**, £1,941.77 as the Committee felt that the Prevention and Wellbeing grants should generally support start up organisations and this organisation already received an amount of funding from the County Council.
- **TB05 - Bluebird Community Transport**, £1,750.00 as the Committee considered that there were other opportunities for transport organisations to apply for funding.
- **TL022 - Collected Works CIC**, £700.00 as the members considered that the Library Service could offer this service.
- **TB28 - Cuckfield Lawn Tennis Club**, £1,000.00 as the Committee considered the application was not appropriate for the Prevention and Wellbeing Fund.

- **TB30 - Ditchling Museum of Arts and Craft**, £250.00 as the Committee considered that this project was outside of the CLC geographical area and was not appropriate for the Prevention and Wellbeing Fund.
- **TB01 – SASBAH**, £250.00 as this was a repeat application to the Prevention and Wellbeing Fund and the Committee did not feel it demonstrated the benefits to residents in the CLC area. The Committee also considered that this service should be commissioned centrally by the County Council.
- **JP032 - St Peters House Project**, £400.00 as the Committee was unclear of the benefit to residents within the South Mid Sussex CLC area and could not fund all applications due to limited resources.
- **JB001 - St Catherine’s Hospice**, £500.00 as the Committee considered that this application duplicated the work of Carers Support West Sussex and the Committee was already supporting a local hospice.

Community Initiative Funding

23. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Law, Assurance and Strategy (copy appended to the signed minutes) which detailed applications for Community Initiative Funding.

24. The Committee debated the respective merits of the projects for which funding was sought.

25. Resolved –

(a) That the following applications are approved:-

- **693/SMS – Bluebell House Allotment Group**, £1,866.48 towards the costs of gardening equipment and materials
- **701/SMS – Beacon District Guides**, £2,000.00 towards the costs buying and fitting a new kitchen.

(b) The following applications were declined:-

- **689/SMS – Horsham & Mid Sussex Voluntary Action**, £2,000.00 to purchase IT and communications systems infrastructure and website development as the Committee considered that the Community Initiative Fund was for smaller organisations with no access to funding and the organisation had a large amount of money in reserves.
- **690/SMS – Cancervive**, £6,000.00 for IT & office equipment costs and publicity and advertising materials as the organisation had applied to a number of CLCs through the Prevention and Wellbeing Grant

process and the CLC had already awarded costs through that grant process for a laptop.

- **691/SMS – Bolney Under Fives**, £6,000 for a retractable roof to cover the outside play area, as the Committee considered it was a large amount of money for the CIF with no evidence of match funding.
- **692/SMS – Sussex Travellers and Gypsies (STAG)**, £1,355.00 for costs associated with participating in the Burgess Hill Summer Fayre as the Committee considered it would be inappropriate to support just one participant at the event.
- **712/SMS – Bluebird Partnership**, £885.00 for a quarter of the costs of upgrading IT equipment and software as the Committee considered that there were other funding avenues for transport organisations to apply to.

Authority School Governors

26. The Committee considered a report by the Strategic Commissioner for Learning which included a list of current Authority Governor Ofsted reports (copy appended to the signed minutes).

Resolved:-

- (a) That under the 2007 Regulations the Committee approves the following reappointment:-
- Dr C Davies to Hassocks Infants School for a four year term.
- (b) That under the 2012 Regulations the Committee approves the following nomination for reappointment: -
- Mr T Prue to London Meed CP School for a four year term.

Date of Next Meeting

27. The Chairman confirmed that the next meeting of the Committee would be held at 7pm on Tuesday 8 September 2015 at a venue to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Chairman