

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of HDC and HALC**  
**Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023**  
**Parkside, County Hall North, Horsham**  
**7.00pm**

**Attendance**

Cllr Martin Boffey	Leader, HDC
Cllr John Milne	Cabinet Member for Planning & Infrastructure, HDC
Jane Eaton	Chief Executive, HDC
Catherine Howe	Head of Strategic Planning, HDC
Barbara Childs	Director of Place, HDC
Helen Peacock	Environment Coordination Manager, HDC
Cllr Malcolm Eastwood	Henfield Parish Council, Horsham DC ( HALC Chair)
Cllr Ann Blakelock	Bramber Parish Council
Cllr Sandy Duck	Billingshurst Parish Council
Cllr Mike Croker	Bramber Parish Council
Cllr John Evans	Coldwatham Parish Council
Cllr Stephen Davies	Colgate Parish Council
Cllr Ian Botting	Denne Neighbourhood Council
Guy Stanley	Forest Neighbourhood Council
Cllr Elaine Goodyear	Henfield Parish Council
Cllr Jane Jones	Henfield Parish Council
Cllr Sally Wilton	North Horsham Parish Council
Cllr Val Court	Nuthurst Parish Council
Cllr Jon Campbell	Pulborough Parish Council
Cllr Len Ellis-Brown	Pulborough Parish Council
Cllr Paul Kornycky	Rudgwick Parish Council
Cllr Sue Kornycky	Rudgwick Parish Council
Cllr Ritchie Gatt	Rusper Parish Council
Cllr Fenella Maitland-Smith	Rusper Parish Council
Cllr Matthew Payne	Shipley Parish Council
Cllr Anna Worthington-Leese	Storrington & Sullington Parish Council
Tracey Euesden	Storrington & Sullington Parish Council
Cllr Caroline Instance	Thakeham Parish Council
Cllr Norman Prince	Thakeham Parish Council
Morag Warrack	Trafalgar Neighbourhood Council
Cllr Sally Pavey	Warnham Parish Council
Cllr Steve Buddell	Washington Parish Council
Cllr R Pustar	West Chiltington Parish Council
Cllr David Green	West Grinstead Parish Council
Anna Beams	HALC Secretary

Summary: 19 of the 32 Parish Councils and 3 of the 3 Neighbourhood Councils were represented.

**1.1 Welcome by Chair of HALC Cllr Malcolm Eastwood**

1.2 Cllr Malcolm Eastwood welcomed those in attendance and recorded his thanks to Horsham District Council for hosting and organising the meeting. He explained that traditionally the joint HALC/HDC meetings have been held in the winter but by request have been moved to the summer.

**2.0 Introduction from Leader of Horsham District Council Cllr Martin Boffey**

- 2.1 Cllr Martin Boffey welcomed all those present and began by giving an introduction of himself, explaining that he began as a Councillor at Trafalgar Neighbourhood Council. In his role as Councillor, he soon understood the confusion that arises regarding the three tiers of councils which brought him to stand for District Council.
- 2.2 Following the first couple of months of induction with 27 new District Council Members, the focus was on re-shaping the Cabinet, making the usual appointments to outside bodies and re-constituting Committees. The next step is to develop a new corporate plan.
- 2.3 Cllr Boffey explained that he has a strong belief in the importance of parish and town councils and their untapped potential. He encourages parishes to have big ambitions and will seek to work with them to help them achieve their plans in any way possible.

Questions raised to Cllr Boffey:

Q: Horsham is not currently parished, will this be resolved?

A: The Governance structure may be looked at.

Q: Does HDC have a policy regarding the travelling community?

A: The number of sites allocated to the travelling community will be in the emerging Local Plan.

Q: What action will Cllr Boffey take to address HDC not listening to local councils?

A: Cllr Boffey wishes to consult with local councils as much as possible but explained that he believes in openness and transparency and it may not always be possible to give them what they need.

Q: Concern was expressed regarding lack of public access to Cabinet and Council meetings, can Cllr Boffey give a commitment that this will be reviewed?

A: The advice is to commence a constitution review after 6-12 months of the current administration.

**3.0 Climate Change and Nature**

3.1 Helen Peacock delivered presentations on Climate Change & Nature (appendix A pages 1 – 21)

3.2 She highlighted that the role of parish councils is crucial to improving bio-diversity and that bio-diversity is crucially linked to climate change.

3.3 HDC are not working in isolation, there are other projects happening outside the District.

3.4 The project is not exclusively rural.

3.5 Two full day workshops for parish councils have taken place, one in the north of the District and one in the south.

3.6 Funding is available to support landowners with bio-diversity projects. There is £5,000 per quarter available and one application can be made per year.

3.7 HDC are holding a consultation on the draft Climate Action Strategy, the consultation closes on 31<sup>st</sup> August.

Questions raised to Helen:

Q: What is the definition of a landowner? Can funding be extended to a privately owned country park?

A: Helen recommends reaching out to the Wilder Horsham team for advice on funding.

Q: Pollution and air quality is not mentioned – is there any representation regarding air quality?

A: Environmental Health have an air quality strategy. Areas have been identified as air quality management areas. Some areas are improving due to better car technology. HDC can encourage the use of more sustainable transport.

A presentation on the Local Plan followed (appendix A page 22 onwards) followed by an update by Cllr John Milne.

#### 4.0 **Horsham District Local Plan**

4.1 Update by Cllr John Milne attached. (appendix B)

#### 5.0 **Questions and answers**

5.1 Q: Why are development sites agreed within the green gap when HDC's policy is to protect green gaps?

A: HDC are looking to improve the policy on green gaps.

5.2 Q: If a Neighbourhood Plan was made before 2019 it is only valid for 2 years – why?

A: When looking at 5-year supply issues the NPPF states that if a Plan is less than 2 years old and has 3 years supply not 5, they are at risk of speculative development therefore the Neighbourhood Plan carries less weight.

5.3 Q: Could HDC offer help and guidance in understanding information received from developers in respect of water neutrality and the implications.

A: FAQs will be included in the Local Plan pack to be circulated. Training for parish councils delivered by HDC will include water neutrality.

5.4 Q: If Neighbourhood Plans are likely to be affected by the Local Plan, will there be support for parish councils?

A: HDC will talk to parish councils about potential sites and request feedback.

5.5 Q: Can parish councils be involved in dialogue regarding sites allocated after the limit of Neighbourhood Plans as the Local Plan goes to 2040?

A: Regulation 18 on the HDC website identifies possible sites under consideration.

5.6 Q: How much evidence does HDC have post-covid in respect of working patterns, movements etc?

A: Work is being undertaken to establish the effect that covid and the cost-of-living crisis has had on housing needs. It is difficult to obtain evidence of travel patterns outside of the national census.

5.7 Q: Why can parishes not see the Plan as it stands now?

A: The Plan contains commercially sensitive information, and it could also attract speculative planning applications from sites that are not recommended for inclusion in the Local Plan as well those that are, which would not be in the interest of parishes.

In summing up, it was explained that the new Plan will contain much of the previous iteration of the Plan and that there would not be sufficient time to hold new Regulation 18 consultations due to the need to get a plan in place to help protect against the speculative applications already being submitted. Regulation 18 is however an ongoing process and so all meetings and consultations with parish councils will happen as part of the Regulation 18 stage prior to the publication of the Regulation 19 Local Plan.

6.0 **Close**

- 6.1 Cllr Eastwood thanked HDC Officers for their time and for hosting the meeting and added that he appreciates the positive dialogue and working relationship that HDC has with HALC. He thanked the parishes for attending and closed the meeting.
- 6.2 The next HALC meeting is to be confirmed.

*Meeting closed 20:51*

DRAFT