

## MINUTES

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# EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

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**MINUTES of a MEETING of the EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL held at Council Chamber, County Hall, Lewes on 21 MARCH 2017 at 10.00 am**

**Present** Councillors John Barnes MBE, Colin Belsey, Nick Bennett, Bill Bentley, Carla Butler, Peter Charlton, Tania Charman, Charles Clark, Godfrey Daniel, Angharad Davies, Chris Dowling, Claire Dowling, Stuart Earl, David Elkin, Michael Ensor (Chairman), Kathryn Field, Kim Forward, Roy Galley, Keith Glazier, Philip Howson, Laurence Keeley, Carolyn Lambert, Carl Maynard, Peter Pragnell (Vice Chairman), Judy Rogers, Phil Scott, Jim Sheppard, Daniel Shing, Stephen Shing, Alan Shuttleworth, Rupert Simmons, Rosalyn St. Pierre, Bob Standley, Richard Stogdon, Barry Taylor, Sylvia Tidy, David Tutt, John Ungar, Steve Wallis, Trevor Webb, Francis Whetstone and Michael Wincott

### **49 Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2017**

49.1 RESOLVED - to confirm the minutes of the previous meeting of the County Council held on 7 February 2017 as a correct record

### **50 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Blanch, Carstairs, O'Keeffe MBE and Pursglove

### **51 Chairman's business**

#### **COUNCILLOR CARSTAIRS**

51.1 The Chairman reported that, due to health issues, it was unlikely that Councillor Carstairs would be attending meetings before the County Council elections in May. On behalf of the Council the Chairman and Councillor Howson wished him a speedy recovery.

#### **COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS**

51.2 The Chairman announced that this is the last full Council meeting before the elections in May. The Chairman wished all councillors every success for their futures whether they were seeking re-election or were retiring and thanked all councillors for their work on behalf of the people of East Sussex. Other members including the six Group Leaders or their representatives also paid tribute to the contribution councillors, particularly those who were retiring, had made during their time on the Council. The Chairman reminded councillors that purdah had come into force and of the need to exercise discretion during the coming weeks.

#### **CHAIRMAN'S ACTIVITIES**

51.3 The Chairman reported that he had attended a number of engagements since the last meeting of the County Council including: attending a Brighton University graduation ceremony,

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the Mayor of Bexhill's Ball, the Checktrade Exhibition at the Azur, Hastings, the High Sherriff's dinner in Lewes, the licensing of the priest in charge at St Barnabas Church and volunteers tea at Horam village hall and Manor Barn, Bexhill. The Chairman reported that he had also visited the care home at Greenwood, Bexhill. The Vice-Chairman has also attended a number of events.

### PRAYERS

51.4 The Chairman thanked Paul Wenham for leading prayers before the meeting.

### PETITIONS

51.5 The Chairman informed the Council that immediately before the meeting the following petition had been received:

Councillor St Pierre (on behalf of Councillor O'Keeffe)	- calling upon the County Council to provide increased traffic calming measures in the interests of road safety in Priory Street and Southover High Street.
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## 52 Questions from members of the public

52.1 Copies of questions asked by Gabriel Carlyle from St Leonards on Sea, Karl Horton from Hastings and Arnold Simanowitz from Lewes the answers from Councillor Stogdon (Chair of the Pension Committee) are attached to these minutes. Supplementary questions were asked and responded to.

## 53 Reports

53.1 The Chairman of the County Council, having called over the reports set out in the agenda, reserved the following paragraphs for discussion:

Cabinet	- paragraph 1
East Sussex Fire Authority	- paragraph 1

### NON-RESERVED PARAGRAPHS

53.2 On the motion of the Chairman of the County Council, the Council ADOPTED those paragraphs in the reports of the Committees that had not been reserved for discussion.

## 54 Report of the Cabinet

54.1 Councillor Glazier moved the reserved paragraph of the report

54.2 The motion was CARRIED after debate

## 55 Questions from County Councillors

### ORAL QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS

55.1 The following members asked questions of the Lead Cabinet Members indicated and they responded:

Questioner	Respondent	Subject
Councillor Tutt	Councillor Glazier	Local government funding settlement for East Sussex

Questioner	Respondent	Subject
Councillor St Pierre	Councillor Tidy	Unaccompanied asylum seeking children entering East Sussex
Councillor Field	Councillor Bennett	Possible cuts to school funding arising from changes to the national school funding formula
Councillor Daniel	Councillor Glazier	Local government funding settlement and additional funding for Adult Social Care
Councillor Daniel	Councillor Maynard	Removal of graffiti on bridges on the Bexhill to Hasting Link Road.
Councillor Field	Councillor Glazier	Councillors access to websites
Councillor D Shing	Councillor Maynard	Reinstatement of pavements following works by the utility companies
Councillor Howson	Councillor Maynard	Repairs to collapsed drains on the highway
Councillor S Shing	Councillor Maynard	Reinstatement footways following works to install water meters to homes

## WRITTEN QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 44

55.2 One written question was received from Councillor Stephen Shing for the Lead Member for Community Services. The question and answer are attached to these minutes.

55.3 The Lead Member responded to a supplementary question.

## 56 Report of the East Sussex Fire Authority

56.1 Members commented on paragraph 1 of the East Sussex Fire Authority's report and in particular thanked Gary Walsh (Chief Fire Officer) for his commitment to the Authority and wished him a happy retirement

THE CHAIRMAN DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 11.57 am

The reports referred to are included in the minute book

## QUESTION FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

### **1. Question from Gabriel Carlyle, St Leonards on Sea, East Sussex**

Both Hastings Borough Council and Lewes Town Council have now passed cross-party motions calling on East Sussex County Council to divest the East Sussex Pension Fund of its holdings in fossil fuels. What steps are being taken by the Pension Committee to find out from its investment consultants and fund managers whether the Fund's investments can be restructured so as to meet the Fund's fiduciary duties without investing in fossil fuels?

#### **Response by Councillor Stogdon, Chair of the Pension Committee**

In accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations and associated legislation, the Pension Committee exercises functions and responsibilities for dealing with the East Sussex Pension Fund in conjunction with other bodies. The Committee (rather than the investment consultants and fund managers) make arrangements for the investment, and agree the Investment Strategy/Allocation having regard to the advice of the investment consultants.

### **2. Question from Karl Horton, Hastings, East Sussex**

As a pension fund holder with East Sussex Pension Fund, I welcome the recent addition to the Fund's Investment Strategy Statement stating that "The Fund believes that climate change poses material risks to the Fund but that it also presents positive investment opportunities." In the light of this addition, what tangible steps is the Pension Fund going to take to make sure that their Investment Strategy addresses these risks?

#### **Response by Councillor Stogdon, Chair of the Pension Committee**

Following a detailed discussion regarding fossil fuel investments including wider Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG) responsibilities, and the approval of the Fund Investment Strategy Statement by the Pension Committee at its February 2017 meeting, the Committee and the Board have scheduled 13 June 2017 for a joint training session focusing on ESG responsibilities. This session will be facilitated in conjunction with the investment managers, advisers and industry experts, to explore fully the financial and/or non financial impacts including range of options open to the Fund in relation to ESG investments.

The Pension Committee is committed to an ongoing development of its ESG knowledge with particular emphasis on obtaining further information on the long term financial return in regard to fossil fuel investment, which will further be considered at the fund investment strategy day discussion/meeting in July 2017.

### **3. Question from Arnold Simanowitz, Lewes, East Sussex**

At its 8 September 2016 meeting, the East Sussex Pension Committee resolved "to agree that the Fund should continue to seek to use its influence as a corporate investor to positively influence companies' behaviour. What steps have Fund managers taken,

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over the past five years, to "positively influence" the behaviour of the fossil fuel companies, such as Exxon and Chevron, with whom it currently has millions of pounds of local people's pension monies invested, and what have been the result of these steps.

### **Response by Councillor Stogdon, Chair of the Pension Committee**

As long term investors, having a fiduciary duty to 69,000 members and 120 employers within the East Sussex Pension Fund (ESPF), the Pension Committee takes its role of safeguarding the investment assets of the Fund very seriously. As part of its responsibility, the Committee recognises that Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG) can have a material impact on the long term performance of the investments of the Pension Fund.

East Sussex Pension Fund is a member of the Local Authority Pension Fund Forum (LAPFF) which recognises the issue of stranded assets and continued fossil fuel extraction as a collective investment risk for all asset owners. LAPFF engages by meeting with companies and participating in collaborative investor initiatives including filing and supporting relevant shareholder resolutions to companies. For companies engaged in fossil fuel extraction, LAPFF's approach is to undertake robust engagement on aligning their business models with limiting climate change to a 2°C increase in global temperatures and to push for an orderly low carbon transition. For oil and gas companies, an important engagement focus is the restriction of capital expenditure on high cost resource extraction and promotion of the return of any additional cash generated to shareholders.

Monitoring of progress and outcomes includes LAPFF's participation in the Transition Pathway Initiative, which aids understanding of where companies are placed in the transition to a low carbon economy and their competence to manage this transition.

**WRITTEN QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 44**

**1. Question by Councillor Stephen Shing to the Lead Member for Community Services**

Would the Lead Member please confirm whether the County Council has purchased any mobile Speed Indication Devices and/or hand-held laser speed guns over the past 8 years. If so please could the Lead Member provide a summary of the number of devices purchased, the expenditure incurred by the Council and the number of times these devices have been used

**Answer by the Lead Member for Community Services**

The County Council has purchased one Speed Indicator Device in the past 8 years (March 2015) at a cost of £2,212 ex VAT. The unit is loaned to various road safety groups (formed under the Community Safety Partnerships) who deploy the equipment on an ad-hoc basis.

The SID is used predominantly for training purposes and has been loaned out to Parish/local community groups 6 times since it was purchased. The use of SIDs has declined with the rise in Community Speed Watch and the public wishing to report antisocial driving through Operation Crackdown rather than educate using SID. The unit remains a tool for the community to use should they wish to take this approach and a number of communities/Parish Councils have invested in their own SID following training and site risk assessments.

The County Council has not purchased any hand-held laser speed guns over the past 8 years.