

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 8TH APRIL
2013 IN COOMBE COURT, THE STEYNING CENTRE AT 7.30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Cllr David Barling – Chairman
Cllrs Lloyd, Devlin, Marshall, Ness-Collins,
Rogers, Alexander, Toms, Toomey, Hopkinson,
Bowell and Staines
Paul Conroy – Neighbourhood Warden
Mike Pearce - Neighbourhood Warden
Louisa Hull PCSO
Claire McKnight Inspector
43 Members of the public
The Clerk & Deputy Clerk

**1. Introduction and welcome by the Chairman of the Parish
Council David Barling**

1.1 Cllr Barling welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish meeting

1.2 Cllr Barling introduced Katie Bourne, Police and Crime
Commissioner for Sussex.

**2. Presentation by Katie Bourne, Police and Crime
Commissioner for Sussex.**

Katie showed a presentation and informed that she was elected in November 2012. Before Police and Crime Commissioners there was a Police Authority made up of 17 members whose job it was to hold the Police to account. The Police Authority has now been disbanded and replaced by 1 Police and Crime Commissioner who has been elected for the first time ever by the public and will be in post for 3.5 years. The police will now be working in partnership with other groups and the Police and Crime Commissioners job is to encourage this further and has a statutory obligation to work with the groups. They will now be working with the health and wellbeing groups that are being set up at present, the Community Safety Partnerships, Local Authorities, the Criminal Justice System and the Youth Offending Services. There is also a statutory obligation to engage with the community, victims and witnesses, businesses and the charity sector. Katie has had to write a Police and Crime Plan and include a budget by 31st March. There are 4 strategic priorities, Crime and Community Safety, public confidence, victim focus and value for money. Some of the main priorities to be dealt with and these highlighted by the people of Sussex, are anti-social behavior, domestic violence, road safety i.e. speeding through villages and anti-social parking. There is one overall target which is to

reduce the risk of crime per thousand of population by working together in partnership in a way that it hasn't been done before and by doing prevention and intervention work especially with young children.

The Police and Crime Commissioners plan is available on line and hard copies available in libraries across Sussex.

3. Community Safety Priorities – Cllr Sue Rogers

Councillor Rogers informed the meeting that she is a Chairman for the Safety Partnership group in Horsham District. The group set the strategy for Community safety in our district and work together with the Police, Fire and Rescue, probation, Health and there is also a representative in the Police and Crime Commissioners Office. The priorities for this district for this year are Road Safety, Burglary, Anti-Social Behavior, Violence against person and community engagement with repeat and venerable victims. Horsham District is statistically the safest district in West Sussex at present. The group will be holding a public engagement event in the south of the district later in the year to explain exactly what the groups intentions are.

Community Safety in Steyning is extremely good, there is an excellent PCSO, Louisa Hull, who has strong relationship with residents. There are also 2 Neighbourhood Wardens, Paul Conroy and Michael Pearce who are paid for by the Parishes of Steyning, Bramber and Upper Beeding and they perform a valuable role with the elderly and the youth. It is the groups ambition to get more parishes in the district to fund Neighbourhood Wardens. There is now a youth worker employed and paid for by the parishes of Steyning, Bramber, Upper Beeding and Ashurst.

Finally, volunteering is one of the biggest ways in which the public can help fight against crime by signing up to a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, to be the eyes and ears on street, in the local area.

4. Questions for Katie Bourne

Derek Deedman, County Councillor. I am a regular visitor to the Seaside Children's home in Shoreham. I understand that there has been some reduction in budget to help police get back children who abscond. I fear that this will be effected by the reductions.

Can't make promises at this time, not aware of these cuts but cannot be sure of this at this stage. We are obliged to return missing children to their homes.

Jack Campbell –Very interested in financial aspects. Understand Commissioners are salaried, have you engaged more staff and what is total wage bill.

All available in public domain, and transparent. Total expenses about £245k. Previously there were 17 members with allowances and Chief Executive on £110k, Deputy on £64k, Assistant Chief Executive on £41k, Treasurer £34k and a Deputy Treasurer. Total over £460k. Day one comparison, I am on £85k, Deputy on £45k, Chief Executive on £82k, Treasurer/Chief Finance Officer £77k. 8 FTE staff –everything else as I inherited. I am entitled to take expenses for travel and allowance but do not take this. Deputy does not take either.

Phil Bowell thank you a good presentation. How much have you to save?

£52million between now and 2015.

Police do have our confidence. If the Senior officers get to point where they say they can't save anymore without seriously damaging the service, what happens?

This would not happen quite like this. We are on target with what we are doing. There is a new IT system which will bring together many IT systems in Sussex and this will allow costs to come down.

Police authority left finances in robust state and with a good budget.

Ben Staines – how many police officer are you planning to make redundant, and will the asset management have any impact in Steyning.

Redundancies have had some in last few years. No plans to lay off officers at this time. Steyning police station is well used no plans to change this. Money, send a business case, what you want and why and what you plan to do, and how it effects people in Steyning and I will see what we can do with it.

Jackie Campbell – how much spare time do you have with a family, you must be stretched thinly.

My family are grown up. I have loads of energy, I like hard work. All officers I have are extremely hard working.

Katie will respond personally to the written question.

I am interested in point about politics intervening, do you see your job as political.

Katie, stood and voted in as conservative, this is a political role. I do assure all that I am an independent thinker and I will argue for Sussex against government, for what is right.

5. Written questions.

Cllr Devlin reported on the written questions:

Question 1

Jackie Campbell I understand that an election has been called for a councilor due the resignation of a member. Can the council tell the community how much this will cost and who will be paying? The usual practice, mid term is for co-option. I wonder if all signatories to this petition understand the ramifications of their actions. I hope that when street cleaning, grass cutting, or cleaning of the toilets is cut, residents will understand where the funding has gone.

The Parish Council will be paying for the election from reserves. We are informed that it will cost in the region of £3/4k and this is first time an election has been held in mid-term. We can only co-opt onto the Council if no election is called.

If the request had been made one day sooner the election could have coincided with the County Council elections and would have been considerably cheaper, but we do not know if these people were aware of this.

Question 2

1. Is the council willing to commit to a policy of financial transparency?
2. Is the Council willing to place the annual accounts on its website as soon as they have been approved by the council?
3. If the answer to either of the above is "no", why not?

As the council has had notice of my letter for nearly three weeks I trust my questions will now be dealt with at the AGM?

The Parish Council already has transparency. Annual Accounts are published at the end of the financial year. 2011/12 is on website and 2012/13 will be on website when finalised and approved by council. The External Audit annual return is published annually. Our expenditure each month over £500 is published (excluding salaries). Any other information can be requested direct to the Clerk by appointment.

The Annual Accounts ARE ALWAYS published.

Your letter of 3 weeks ago was answered by email which you acknowledged.

Question 3

Does the Parish Council have, or has it ever had, its reserves - our taxes - invested in Butterfield Private Bank of Bermuda and if so, how great is the current exposure, what has been the maximum exposure, and what is the justification for ever having had these funds, which are not protected by the Financial Services Authority, in a foreign bank with a Moody's credit rating of 'C' minus? Who provides the Parish Council with its "Treasury Advice"?"

The Parish Council has reserves of £52,077 invested in Butterfield Private Bank which is a trading name for Butterfield Bank UK Limited. The original investment was £50,000 in 2010. Butterfield Bank is authorised and configured by the Federal Services Authority and Butterfield do have protection for their customers through the financial services compensation scheme, Parish Councils unfortunately are exempt from the financial services compensation scheme. There is currently no protection in place for Parish and Town councils, an unfortunate situation. The decision to invest with Butterfield was a Council decision and it was research very thoroughly at that time. The Parish Council has no dedicated financial advice.

There has been an internal and external audit every year since the investment and no concerns have been raised.

Regarding the C minus of Moody's comment, C minus is not a credit rating but a measure of financial strength. Moody's state that banks rated C possess adequate extensive financial strength in fact both Barclays and Lloyds have the same financial strength rating. Moody's have also designed a base line credit system for Butterfield Bank of what they call BAA2 which is the same as Barclays Bank.

6. Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 26th March 2012 were signed by the Chairman.

7. Interval

8. Close

**ANNUAL REPORTS FROM CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES
AND CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL WILL BE ATTACHED
TO THESE MINUTES**

