

# LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

## MID-SUSSEX LOCAL PARTY HASSOCKS AND HURSTPIERPOINT BRANCH ARUNDEL AND SOUTH DOWNS CONSTITUENCY

MINUTES OF AGM HELD BY ZOOM ON MONDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 AT 7.30 pm.

Present: Rodney Jackson, Nigel Cook, Paul Hervé, Alastair Lichten, Alison Bennett, Sue Hatton, Colin Wilsdon, Kirsty Lord, Fiona Jackson, Catherine Cassidy, Luke Bouchet.

1. Apologies for Absence, Kevin and Margaret Carey, David Rogers.  
Quorum is 20 or 1/5 of membership (16) if less. Meeting not quorate but no objection so meeting continued
2. Minutes of AGM 2019 held on Monday 17th February 2020  
Agreed and signed.
3. Chairman's Report 2020 (23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020)

This will probably be one of the thinnest Chairman's Reports given by any past Chairman . The first reason is that we have had no local elections during the year . The only one which should have taken place –for the Police and Crime Commissioner – would have been held during the first national lockdown and is now scheduled for next Summer .

Secondly of course those social events and meetings which we would normally have held for our members and supporters could not take place because of Covid restrictions which lasted right through the Summer . We have tried to offer online opportunities to members to participate in virtual get-togethers to replace the Politics and a Pint which last year ( and particularly around the General Election) drew sizeable attendances , but these have been poorly supported . My thanks, however, to Alastair Lichten for organising these.

So from a Branch Committee point of view it has been a quiet year – with concentration on preparations for next year's County Council elections in which it is important substantially to increase our representation . All our Committee meetings have been held online, which has worked well and efficiently

Our County Councillor for Hassocks and Burgess Hill South , Kirsty Lord, is willing to stand again and has been re-selected along with Fiona Jackson who will contest the Hurst and Bolney Division .

The planning for both campaigns – in which Hassocks is a target division and Hurst a “stretch target “ - is already well under way . We managed to deliver a Focus to introduce Fiona across most of Hurst before lockdown No. 2. A Hassocks Focus has been printed and wll be delivered after the lockdown.

As the elections come nearer we will be asking members and supporters to get involved in the campaigns. We can anticipate that whatever the Covid situation may be next May more voters will be wanting to exercise a postal vote and for that reason we are participating in a limited mailing to households which we believe to have LibDem voters in order to encourage sign-up for postal votes .

Mid Sussex District Council has agreed to bear the cost of pre-paid addressed envelopes in which the sign-up forms can be returned for processing .

Shortly a new Committee will be elected – though it may not look very different from this year's – and so I would like to thank the members of the current Committee for their efforts over the past year .

Alison Bennett, District Councillor, reported Lib Dem Group working well and holding Tories to account. Meetings on Zoom. Public can view on U-tube

Kirsty Lord County Councillor, County Council on webcast- encourage public to view. Issues on testing and care homes. Lib Dems are strong on environment issues. All CC decisions to consider climate change.

#### 4. Financial Report

- i) Hassocks and Hurstpierpoint have not held separate bank accounts since joining Mid-Sussex in 2014. Local funds are held by and are accounted for within the Local Party; in consequence, the accounts are shown on a memorandum basis.
- ii) Mid-Sussex accounts to the national party for its and its Branches' finances with a 31<sup>st</sup> December year end. Since this is effectively old news, I have added a review of the activities of the 2020 year to date.

#### The Year 2019 -a very busy year

Following on from the 2018 which was a relatively quiet year 2019 was all but. We started the year facing the full up District and Parish elections enough to make it a busy year on their own but these were then followed by the European elections and we rounded off the year with a General Election.

Elected councillors contribute a tithe / levy towards the communications budget in local funds and the impact of this is a regular monthly income from our elected County and District councillors which is allocated to the branch.

Following the success in May 2019 this has increased the funds available to the branch with a net income of approximately £280 per month which in 2019 helped to fund the General Election campaign for Arundel and South Downs as well as local campaign activity.

Branch donations raised £ 180 to help support the campaigns by the Hurst and Hassocks branch.

The Hurst and Hassocks branch spent a total of £4,114.17 in the year mostly on election campaigns and local literature, a net deficit from 2019 of £985.53 leaving a balance of £ 760.79 at its disposal at the start of 2020.

## 2020

This year has been an unusual one – campaigning has been restricted because of the Covid 19. Local parties were just about recovering from the busy 2019 and the December General Election when we were plunged into the pandemic and needed to shut down our activities.

Locally this has meant consolidation and a chance for councillors to build their roles on local councils. In terms of branch finances, councillor levies are helping to build a base from which to fight the 2021 elections.

Campaigning in the first part of 2020 was limited to targeted mailing using Royal Mail of a survey across Hurst & Hassocks in preparation for the 2021 County Elections the costs are in the accounts below. More recently a local Focus has been printed (after the date of these accounts).

Income £3067.16(Councillor Levies £2989.36 + Donations £77.80)

Expenditure £1391.68(Printing £947.96 + ALDC membership £443.72)

Balance(at 30.09.2020) £2436.27. (As cash in Bank)

### Election of Officers

The following were nominated.

Chairman: Nigel Cook (Proposed – Rodney Jackson; Seconded –Alison Bennett),

Treasurer: Mid-Sussex Treasurer (Paul Lucraft (Mid Sussex)).

Secretary: Rodney Jackson (Proposed –Nigel Cook; Seconded – Paul Hervé ),

Membership Development Officer: Paul Hervé: Proposed- Alison Bennett; Seconded – Nigel Cook

Young Liberals Rep: None

There being no further nominations they were all elected.

### Election of Committee Members and Councillor Representatives

Colin Wilsdon; }

Sue Hatton: }

Fiona Jackson: } Proposed – Rodney Jackson, Seconded Nigel Cook

Alastair Lichten:}

Alison Bennett }

District Councillor Representative. Alison Bennett

County Councillor Representative: Kirsty Lord

Branch Rep on Mid-Sussex Executive: Colin Wilsdon: (Substitute Nigel Cook)

The Committee members were elected.

### 5. Election of Independent Assessor for Accounts

To use Constituency Independent Examiner as accounts are consolidated. Paul Lucraft (Treasurer ) to organise.

### 6. AOB

i) Opportunity for campaign training.

ii) Including Affinity(For leaflet composition)

iii) Chair will send out letter to Members and supporters asking for help.

iv)Kirsty Lord will organise Xmas cards.

v) Concern raised over leaves blocking drains in Hassocks with risk of flooding.

### 7. Meeting closed at c 8.45pm.

Signed:

Chairman