

**MINUTES of the ORDINARY MEETING of the TOWN COUNCIL held in the NEW MILLENNIUM CHAMBER, MANOR HOUSE, CHURCH STREET, LITTLEHAMPTON on THURSDAY 28 MARCH 2019 at 6.30pm**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs B Blanchard-Cooper (Mayor), Ayres, Baker, Buckland, Chester, Northeast, Purchase, Squires, Tandy, Dr Walsh KStJ and Warren QVRM

**2018/2019**

**76. EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

The Mayor outlined the evacuation procedures.

**77. FILMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND MOBILE PHONES**

The procedures were noted.

**78. APOLOGIES**

There apologies from Councillors C Blanchard-Cooper and Gammon.

**79. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda. The standing declarations were noted, and the following further declarations made. Councillors Tandy and Northeast declared personal interests in matters regarding the Keystone Centre as Treasurer and Chairman of the Keystone Centre Management Committee respectively.

**80. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019 (previously circulated) were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

**81. TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT and URGENT ITEMS**

**81.1** The Mayoral list was circulated to Member's (copy attached to the minutes) and set out the range of functions that the Mayor had attended since the last Full Council meeting. Acknowledging the forthcoming local elections, the Mayor expressed his thanks to Councillors Ayres and Buckland as past Mayors for their guidance and

his fellow Councillors and staff for their contribution to the work of the Council.

**81.2 Merit Award Presentation**

The Mayor presented an individual Merit Award to Mrs Betty Beaton in recognition of her longstanding commitment to the Scout Movement. Mrs Beaton had been involved with the 5th Littlehampton Scouts since 1960 and after many years had gone on to become secretary for the Scout Fellowship, a role that she was still doing today at the age of 86. The Mayor acknowledged not only the years of dedicated service that Mrs Beaton had devoted to the Scout Movement but also her fundraising. Paying tribute to Mrs Beaton, he described her as an amazing lady, and he was very pleased to present her with the award.

**82. PUBLIC FORUM**

There were six members of the public present.

**82.1** Announcing that she would not be seeking re-election to the Town Council, Councillor Ayres expressed her thanks to the Mayor for his hard work over two terms in representing the Town. She also thanked her fellow Councillors for their support over the years and wished them well in their future endeavours.

**82.2** Mr Ellis addressed the Council on matters regarding the recent announcement of the award of central government grant funding towards the regeneration of the Town Centre. He welcomed the opportunity that this would bring to deliver improvements to the public realm. He considered it would be beneficial if more information about the grant was published and sought the assistance of the Town Council in achieving this. He requested that details of the bid submitted and the letter from Government awarding the funding be published, confirmation on how the plans would be taken forward particularly in relation to community engagement and the role of the Town Council. Referring to the press release from Government announcing the award there was reference to a 'youth build project' and he asked for clarification regarding the project to which this was related.

**82.3** It was noted that the bid had been prepared and submitted by the District Council. Having received confirmation of the success of the bid, they would begin by revisiting the original designs in the context of the grant award. The Town Clerk confirmed that Mr Ellis' question had been forwarded to the District Council who were preparing a full response. Regarding the "youth build" element it was understood that this referred to engagement with young people in delivering the project and that clarification on this point would be provided by the District Council. In terms of consultation, the District Council had confirmed that they intended to carry out further engagement with the both the public, traders and the Town Council on future plans for the Town Centre public realm improvements.

82.4 The opportunity to deliver improvements to the Town Centre was welcomed and it was noted that the District Council had confirmed that the Town Clock would be retained as a feature. Acknowledging that any future plans would be a matter for the new Council, Members emphasised the importance that any future designs created a vibrant and safe environment. It was agreed that the District Council's response to Mr Ellis' questions be shared with Members for information.

### 83. **CORRESPONDENCE OR ISSUES IN RESPECT OF THE DISTRICT OR COUNTY COUNCIL**

#### 83.1 **Notice of Written Question**

Pursuant to Section 8b of the Town Council's Standing Orders the following question had been submitted to Council by Councillor Chester who asked: *'In my view the fact that Councillors or prospective candidates were prevented from speaking at the Town electors meeting due to 'Purdah' resulted in residents being unable to be given full and accurate answers to the questions they asked. It was also not applied consistently, nor could it be as it is not possible to know who a candidate is until the candidates list is published. LGA guidance suggests that purdah could have started as late as 26 March 2019. Further my reading of it suggests it would have been appropriate for members of the Council with specific knowledge to answer questions, and appropriate for members of the public who have declared candidacy to be able to ask questions as residents of the town. Can the new Town Council review the application of Purdah in regard to the annual electors meeting as soon as possible?'*

83.2 It was observed that the prudah period was determined by the Principal Authority, Arun District Council and related to activities of local authorities, not councillors. It was also noted that the period for calling the Annual Parish Meeting was restricted to any date between the 1<sup>st</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> June. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

***The New Council be asked to review the date of the Annual Parish Meeting and associated arrangements for the purdah period.***

### 84. **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES – (NON-EXEMPT)**

#### 84.1 **Recommendations from Committees**

Council considered a report (previously circulated) which drew together the recommendations from the last cycle of Committee meetings that needed to be approved by Council. There were, two from the Policy and Finance Committee and four from the Governance and Committee.

#### 84.1.1 **Policy and Finance Committee: Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**Minute 66.4 - Policy and Procedure for the Management of Policies**

Council was recommended to approve the draft Policy and Procedure for the Management of Policies (previously circulated) which provided a framework for the development of policies and procedures. It was **RESOLVED** that:

**The Policy and Procedure for the Management of Policies be approved.**

**84.1.2 Minute 67.2 - Annual Investment Strategy 2019/20**

Council was recommended to approve the Investment Strategy for the financial year 2019/20 (previously circulated). It was **RESOLVED** that:

**The Annual Investment Strategy 2019/20 be approved.**

**84.1.3 Governance and Audit Committee: Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

**Minute 18.1 - Internal Audit Report 2018/19**

Council was recommended to approve a draft procedure for internal audit provision to assist with the review and appointment of the Town Council's independent internal auditor (previously circulated). It was **RESOLVED** that:

**The Internal Audit Provision Procedure be approved.**

**84.1.4 Minute 18.5 - Annual Review of Internal Controls**

It was **RESOLVED** that:

**Statements 2, 5, 6 and 7 of the Annual Governance Statement be approved.**

**84.1.5 Minute 18.6 - Annual Review of Corporate Risk Register**

Council was recommended to approve the Town Council's Risk Registers (previously circulated). These had been updated following an internal review of the register by Senior Officers. It was **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) The Council's Corporate Risk Management Strategy and Procedures be approved.**
- 2) The Risk Registers be approved.**

**84.2 Committee Minutes (Non-Exempt)**

**84.2.1 Policy and Finance**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019 (previously circulated) with no matters arising.

#### **84.2.2 Community Resources**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> February (previously circulated) with no matters arising.

#### **84.2.3 Community Resources**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2019 (previously circulated). Regarding Minute 68.6.1, the Christmas lights display in Wick, it was suggested that consideration be given to using wall mounted motifs in the same way that they had been successfully used in Littlehampton High Street. This would be examined.

#### **84.2.4 Planning and Transportation**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February (previously circulated). Regarding Minute 153.2, planning application LU/3/1/19/PL, the former Waitrose supermarket site, it was noted that the District Council's Economic Regeneration Team had been contacted regarding their response to the application and a reply was awaited.

#### **84.2.5 Planning and Transportation**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019 (previously circulated) with no matters arising.

#### **84.2.6 Property and Personnel**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2019 (previously circulated) with no matters arising. In view of the sparse attendance, Members were reminded of the need for Committees to be quorate.

#### **84.2.6 Property and Personnel**

Council received the Minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019 (previously circulated) with no matters arising.

#### **84.2.7 Governance and Audit**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019 (previously circulated) with no matters arising.

### **85. OFFICERS REPORTS**

#### **85.1 Financial Regulations Review**

Council considered a report (previously circulated) which contained details of the recent review of the Regulations and proposed changes which aimed to facilitate the implementation of electronic banking. It was **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) *The proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations as set out in Appendix 1 attached to the report be approved.*

- 2) **The Scheme of Delegation to Officers, Section 3.26, be updated as set out in paragraph 3.12 (ii) of the report.**

## **85.2 Continuation of the “FindItOut” service from the Project 82 building**

Council received a report (previously circulated) regarding the continuation of the Partnership Agreement with West Sussex County Council, for the delivery of the FindItOut (FIO) universal drop-in provision for 13-25-year olds at Project 82 building. It was proposed that the existing lease be renewed for a further six months while the County Council carried out a review of the Integrated Prevention and Earliest Help (IPEH) service. Members considered that the FIO service was vital for Littlehampton and were concerned that the IPEH review might result in reductions to the service. Whilst Members were content to renew the lease for a further six months, it was considered imperative that the Town Council be fully engaged in the IPEH consultation and that the Council should oppose any further reductions to this provision. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) **A 6-month interim Partnership Agreement be entered into with West Sussex County Council for the continuation of a FindItOut and YES (Youth Emotional Support) service provision at Project 82.**
- 2) **The Town Council seek to be consulted, as a stakeholder, with regard to the review of the Integrated Prevention and Earliest Help (IPEH) and that any proposals that would result in a reduction in provision be opposed.**

## **85.3 Keystone Centre Project – Next Steps**

Council received a report (previously circulated) summarising the feedback from the recent community engagement exercise regarding the proposed re-siting of the youth centre opposite the existing facility on Eldon Way. The feedback although limited, was largely positive and it was noted that the current Keystone Centre Management Committee also supported the project and welcomed the investment in a new facility. Members were supportive of the project progressing to the next stage and in commissioning a feasibility study asked that where possible the new building to be both sustainable and incorporate fibre optic cabling. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) **Authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Property and Personnel Committee to agree the final scope and commission a feasibility study for the**

**building of a new youth centre opposite the existing facility on Eldon Way.**

**2) The financial implications as set out in section 6 of the report be noted.**

#### **85.4 Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure**

**85.4.1** Council received a report (previously circulated) that outlined the need to have in place procedures to mourn the death of a Senior National Figure. Based on guidance that was being developed nationally, an Action Plan had been drafted which had also been considered by the Policy and Finance Committee at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> March. The Action Plan had been updated to reflect the comments made by that Committee and it was proposed that the Action Plan be approved, and authority delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Town Mayor, to adapt the Plan to meet the mood of the Nation and Town.

**85.4.2** In view of the time that had elapsed since such arrangements had had to be used, it was considered important that the Council had an approved way forward in place and that the plan was flexible and could be tailored to meet the mood of residents. Members also judged it prudent to develop a similar plan for use in the event of a national disaster. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) The Town Clerk progress the initial work programme set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report.**
- 2) The Action Plan as set out in paragraph 3.4 of the report be approved, subject to giving the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Town Mayor, delegated authority to adapt this to meet the mood of the Nation and Town, so as to enable flexibility to deliver what would be expected as the Town Council.**
- 3) Authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Town Mayor, to adapt this protocol so as to enable the Town to mark the death of a senior national figure, such as other Royals; the current or former Prime Minister, or a significant local figure.**
- 4) The costs be met from the Community Resources Initiatives Budget.**
- 5) Authority be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Town Mayor, to undertake the appropriate action in the event of a significant disaster, and that a full report be brought back Council for consideration during the next cycle of meetings.**

*Councillor Purchase redeclared a personal interest in the following matter as a District Councillor.*

**85.5 Members Allowances Review**

**85.5.1** Council received a report (previously circulated) which set out the outcome of the District Council review of Members Allowances. Town and Parish Councils could adopt a Parish Scheme that allowed their elected Councillors to receive a basic allowance equating to 10% of the District Council's Basic Allowance. The Panel recommended that the level of Members' Allowance paid to District Councillors should continue to be index linked to the annual staff pay settlement (an increase of 2% with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019).

**85.5.2** The level of allowance paid to Littlehampton Town Councillors had remained unchanged since 2015 and the report set out several options for consideration. Members preceded to consider the options in more detail, and it was noted that the District Council had deferred making a decision on the Panel's recommendations until after the local elections. During the ensuing discussion, it was proposed that the level of allowance paid to Littlehampton Town Councillors be increased in line with the Panel's recommendations. This proposal and a subsequent proposal that the level of allowance should not be increased were both defeated. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

***The existing allowance be retained until the matter could be considered by Councillors in the new Council, thereby deferring any increase possibly until 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019.***

**86. REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

There were none.

**87. VOTE OF THANKS**

Noting that Councillors Ayres, Calvert, Chester and Purchase would not be seeking re-election to the Town Council, those members present acknowledged their contribution and thanked them for their service.

**88. EXEMPT BUSINESS**

It was **RESOLVED** that:

***The public and accredited representatives of the press be excluded from the Meeting under Section 100 Local Government Act 1972 due to the confidential nature of the business to be conducted.***

***The following items are confidential for Members of the Council only in accordance with Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, being information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter***

*arising between the authority and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.*

**89. EXEMPT OFFICER'S REPORT**

**89.1 Events Manager**

**89.1.1** Council received a report (circulated to Members only) which set out proposals to fill the Events Manager post following the departure of the current post holder. The proposals had been informally considered by the Property Personnel Committee and included restructuring the Events Team, bringing it under the management of the Communications Manager. It was also proposed that the Events Assistant post be upgraded to Events Officer and that two full time apprenticeships be created, one of which would focus on Events with the other providing general support to the Corporate Team as well as the Events Team. It was also proposed that the Gladden Room be used to accommodate the new Events Team. The Town Clerk also sought approval for a further meeting of Council should an urgent decision be required in the run up to the forthcoming local elections. In view of the subject matter and limited agenda, it was also agreed that should this meeting go ahead, the Public Forum be suspended. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) *1) The following new structure to deliver events and related activities be approved:*
  - i. A Communications and Events Manager (23 hours per week).*
  - ii. An Events Officer (37 hours per week).*
  - iii. 2 x Apprentices (37 hours per week).*
  - iv. A 50 hours p.a. "bank" for additional hours by the Communications and Events Manager, if required.*
- 2) *These changes could be delivered from within the existing budget be noted.*
- 3) *The Events Team be relocated in the Gladden Room and their current office be released for use by the Members and Officers as set out in the report.*
- 4) *Authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of Property & Personnel Committee, to agree new job description and person specifications for these posts.*
- 5) *A provisional date for a further meeting of Full Council, if required, be set for Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at 6pm and that*

**Standing Order 1c, Public Question  
Time, be suspended for this meeting.**

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm.

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**TOWN MAYOR**