

HAILSHAM ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

MINUTES AND REPORTS of the Hailsham Annual Town Meeting, held at Hailsham Community Hall, Vicarage Lane, Hailsham on Wednesday 23rd April 2008 at 7.30 pm.

ATM/08/
1 PRESENT: 12 Hailsham Town councillors (and 1 East Sussex County councillor); 22 Hailsham electors; 2 press members; 7 officers of Hailsham Town Council

2 The Town Mayor/Chairman of Hailsham Town Council, Councillor J. N. Ellwood, opened the meeting, welcoming Electors, and thanked councillors and staff for their support during his term of office.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Hailsham Town Councillors:

Councillors J. L. Blake, W. F. Crittenden Mrs. M. Ellwood, Mrs. D. Haffenden T. W. Haffenden, D. E. Rose and County Councillor J. R. Thomas.

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting (Ref. ATM/07/1 - 15) held on 25th April 2007, as printed and circulated at the meeting, were taken as read, approved as representing a correct record of the proceedings, adopted by the Assembly and signed by the Chairman.

5 MATTERS ARISING

None were presented.

6 HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - Councillor J. N. Ellwood

6.1 Copies of a written report had been circulated with the Agenda.

6.2 Councillor Ellwood reported that one of Hailsham's long-serving councillors, Councillor Dudley Rose was very ill and wished him well.

6.3 He said that as members of the public had had chance to read the reports presented by Committee Chairmen, he didn't propose to ask them to read them out as in previous years, but would ask them to answer questions from the assembled audience on subjects appertaining to their committee.

TOWN COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN'S ANNUAL REPORTS

7 Environment and Leisure Committee Report - Councillor G. G. Rowe

7.1 Copies of a written report had been circulated with the agenda.

7.2 Mrs. S. Thompson enquired about the noise emanating from the Arlington Eagles Stadium. Cllr. Rowe said that Hailsham Town Council had no jurisdiction over this Stadium, as it is outside the parish of Hailsham and in the parish of Arlington. He did, however, comment that the Stadium had been on that site for many years, but if Mrs. Thompson wanted to pursue the matter she should contact the Environmental Health Department at Wealden District Council.

7.3 Mrs. Thompson asked if the trees that had been chopped down near the new Tesco site had preservation orders on them. Councillor Rowe replied that they didnot. The Chairman explained how TPOs worked.

8 Burials and Properties Committee Report - Councillor J. E. Bentley-Astor

8.1 Copies of a written report had been circulated with the agenda.

8.2 Mr. E. Miller asked if the ban on dogs within the cemetery was a total ban. The Town Clerk replied that apart from guide dogs it was. Mr Miller suggested that this was a shame as there were a lot of responsible dog owners who would enjoy walking their dogs on a lead whilst visiting a deceased relative.

9 Finance, Policy and Resources Report - Councillor I. G. Haffenden

9.1 Copies of a written report had been circulated with the agenda.

9.2 Mr. E. Miller asked if the steam cleaning unit was self funding. Cllr. Haffenden replied that it was not yet, but with increased bookings he hoped it would be in this financial year.

9.3 Mr. E. Miller enquired about the proposal for Hailsham Town Council to take over the public conveniences in Vicarage Field. Cllr. Haffenden explained the background to Hailsham Town Council's proposal to take on responsibility for the maintenance of the public toilets and said that detailed discussions with Wealden District Council would commence shortly.

9.4 Mr. I. Cunningham asked if the public amenity site in Hailsham could open for longer hours. The Chairman said that this was an East Sussex County Council facility and invited County Councillor W. Bentley to address the meeting on this issue. Cllr. Bentley explained that the facility could not open for a longer period as there was difficulty emptying the bins that were filled up. The situation could only be resolved by finding a larger alternative site. A site was being sought but this would take some time to secure.

10 Planning Consultative Panel - Councillor R. F. Kempe

Copies of a written report had been circulated with the agenda.

10.1 Mr. E. Miller asked what had happened with the proposal by Lidl to open a supermarket at Ropemaker Park in South Road. He had attended a presentation event organised by Lidl in Hailsham. The Chairman said that Lidl had submitted a planning application but Hailsham Town Council had strongly objected to the location as there was sufficient retail space available within the town centre for the store.

10.2 Cllr. J. Puttick asked for an update on the planning application by Redrow Homes to build 40 houses in Dunbar Drive on East Sussex County Council land. Cllr. Haffenden spoke about situation in relation to the site access being close to Grovelands School and the concerns of parents, teachers and councillors of the danger to children attending the school from construction traffic and residents' cars once the development was complete and occupied. These concerns had already been raised with Wealden District Council.

It was also explained that Hailsham Town Council was in negotiations with Redrow Homes about an alternative access for construction traffic to avoid using Dunbar Drive.

ELECTORS QUESTIONS/STATEMENTS

- 11 Mr. G. Fitzhugh asked what could be done to help the retail businesses in the High Street; for instance would pedestrianisation of the High Street be viable? Cllr. W. Bentley spoke about the high business rates that were having a negative affect on the retail sector, resulting in a number of empty shops.
- 12 In response to a question from Mr. E. Miller, the Chairman outlined the retail restrictions that had been applied to Tesco on the type of products and the percentage of total stock they could sell.
- 13 Mr. M. Price complained that the Hailsham Town Council website had not until recently advertised this meeting, and also that he had not received a reply from the Town Council to his e-mail asking when the meeting would be held. The Town Clerk apologised that he had been unable to access this information and that she would endeavour to make sure that it would be available next year.
- 14 Mr. M. Price said that the road surface in Diplocks Way was in an atrocious condition. The Chairman responded that this matter had been taken up with the highway authority, East Sussex County Council on numerous occasions, including at a meeting this morning. Mr. F. Catt, who at the time of the laying of the road had been an engineer with Wealden District Council, spoke about the specific difficulties with the road surface.
- 15 Mrs. G. Gurr, representing the Square Youth Café in Market Square, requested that cycle parks be erected outside the café. She was advised that this would be looked into.
- 16 Mr. A. Raeburn of the Hailsham Gazette asked what was the latest position on the South East in Bloom competition. Cllr. J. Bentley-Astor stated that the judging would take place on 4th July 2008.

17 WRITTEN QUESTIONS

No written questions had been received from members of the public.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.30PM

CHAIRMAN/TOWN MAYOR