

HAILSHAM ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

MINUTES AND REPORTS of the Hailsham Annual Town Meeting, held at Hailsham Community Hall, Vicarage Lane, Hailsham on Wednesday 22nd April 2009 at 7.30 pm.

ATM/09/
1 **PRESENT:** 8 Hailsham Town councillors (and 2 East Sussex County councillors and 1 Wealden District Councillor); 14 Hailsham electors; 2 press members; 6 officers of Hailsham Town Council

2 The Town Mayor/Chairman of Hailsham Town Council, Councillor I. G. Haffenden, 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, J. E. Bentley-Astor, R.E.C Burnett, G. Canning, B. Cock, J. N. Ellwood, Mrs. M. Ellwood, Mrs. D. Haffenden and T. W. Haffenden,.

4 **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting (Ref. ATM/07/1 - 17) held on 24th April 2008, 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, with the inclusion of Councillor B. F. Burchmore's name in the list of apologies for absence.

5 **MATTERS ARISING**

None were presented.

6 **HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - Councillor I. G. Haffenden**

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

6.2 Councillor Haffenden stated that the written report had been restricted to activities that were pertinent to the responsibilities of Hailsham Town Council. He was pleased to announce that Hailsham Town Council had now achieved Quality Council status and that the Council staff and in particular the Town Clerk, Mrs. E. G. Jones who had worked extremely hard to achieve the award.

6.3 He outlined some of the duties he had undertaken during the past year as Mayor of Hailsham. He had great pleasure in attending a reception at the House of Lords representing the Friends of East Sussex Hospices.

6.4 He stated that he saw being a councillor on Hailsham Town Council as a balancing act between developing the town and maintaining its traditions and heritage.

- 6.5 A large amount of the year had been taken up with producing the Hailsham and Hellingly Masterplan. This document was important to the town as it acts as supplementary guidance to Wealden District Council's Local Development Framework. He thanked all his colleagues who had dedicated much of their time in producing the Masterplan, in particular the Chairman of Hellingly Parish Council, Councillor D. White.
- 6.6 He said that he had been heavily involved in the Appeal by Aldi against the refusal by Wealden District Council to grant planning permission to use the market site for the building of a supermarket. He had given evidence on behalf of Wealden District Council and stated that the Market was vital in maintaining Hailsham's identity as a market town.

TOWN COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN'S ANNUAL REPORTS

7 Environment and Leisure Committee Report - Councillor B. F. Burchmore

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

Councillor Burchmore highlighted the problem of vandalism and the cost to the Council Tax payers of Hailsham. He said that there had recently been damage to the play equipment to the South Road Play Area.

8 Burials and Properties Committee Report - Councillor J. Glover

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

- 8.2 Councillor Glover spoke briefly about the remit of the Burial and Properties Committee. He was pleased to say that the recent change of street lighting maintenance contract had saved a large amount of money.

He complemented the Cemetery Superintendent on the excellent condition of the Cemetery. He reiterated that dogs – other than guide dogs – were not allowed in Hailsham Cemetery.

Councillor Glover said that as a member of the Union Corner Hall Management Committee he was aware of how hard the other members – who were unpaid volunteers – worked, and he expressed his thanks to them.

9 Finance, Policy and Resources Report - Councillor J. N. Ellwood

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

- 9.2 The Chairman stated that Councillor J. N. Ellwood was not present at the meeting. He offered to answer questions on the report.

- 9.3 Mr. E. Miller asked about the travellers currently occupying Hailsham Town Council land in Gleneagles Drive. The Town Clerk stated that she had served the travellers with a 7-day eviction notice.

9.4 Mr. E. Miller asked if Hailsham Town Council assumed responsibility for the public conveniences in Vicarage Field would a charge be made for using the facilities. The Chairman responded that a small charge would be made to deter people from abusing the toilets and to pay towards an attendant. The Town Clerk added that there was no proposal to charge disabled users who would be able to access the conveniences with a RADAR key.

10 Planning Consultative Panel - Councillor J. Puttick

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

10.1 Councillor Puttick stated that he didn't have anything to add to his written report other to reiterate that the death of Mr. D. King had been a loss to the work of Hailsham Town Council and to the people of Hailsham generally.

Mr Dixon enquired about the permission granted for the new homes in the Gleneagles Drive area and the use of Dunbar Drive as a site entrance. He was concerned about the presence of heavy lorries so near to a school.

The Chairman explained the background to this issue and stated that Hailsham Town Council wanted to work with the developers to ensure that Hailsham Town Council land was used to gain access to the site via Gleneagles Drive rather than Dunbar Drive.

ELECTORS QUESTIONS/STATEMENTS

11 County Councillor R. Thomas praised the layout of the Hailsham Town Council Annual Report. He said it was well laid out, accessible and written in plain English.

12 Mrs. S. Thompson asked why a fence had been erected on the bridge over the Cuckoo Trail. The Town Clerk stated that there had been a number of occasions where shopping trolleys had been thrown from the bridge onto the Cuckoo Trail below. She assured the meeting that Hailsham Town Council had not paid for the fencing.

13 Mrs. S. Thompson stated that there were ten take-away outlets in the town centre; she thought this was too many. She also asked what was happening to the Buckmasters shop as it had been empty for a long time and was being vandalised. The Chairman responded that planning permission had been granted for the site to become a restaurant but nothing had happened since,

14 Mr. Hobden stated that since the new road layout had commenced, it had become dangerous for traffic enter and egress Station Road. Mr. Hobden was informed that this had been recognised and raised with East Sussex County Council Highways Department.

15 Mr. Osborne stated that he was surprised that with so many free parking spaces available in Hailsham car owners still parked on double yellow lines in the High Street. The Town Clerk stated that parking review of Hailsham would take place in the next 12 months, which would include the possibility of introducing parking restrictions in Hailsham High Street.

16 Mr. J. Wilders asked if Hailsham Town Council was concerned at the low turnout by electors at this meeting, and what efforts had been made to publicise it.

The Chairman stated that press release had been sent to the local papers about the meeting and had been used. Details of the meeting had been placed in Town Council notice boards and information was available on the Town Council website.

Councillor R. F. Kempe said that he to was disappointed at the level of attendance but this was not a reflection of the Town Council.

Mr. Dixon asked about the number of empty shop units in Hailsham and if any thought had been given to the type of outlets that were wanted in the Town. He had lived in Hailsham for a number of years and was impressed with the number of independent shops that were in Hailsham.

The Chairman said that major retailers had not been attracted to Hailsham because the shop units were too small. This may change, however, with the potential development of the Quintins Shopping Centre.

17 **WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

Mr. H. Edwards of Anglesey Avenue had given written notice of a question in connection with the provision of a bus lay-by in North Street and the general inadequacy of the bus shelter.

The Chairman stated that there had been protracted negotiations with the agents for Tesco about the lack of a lay-by at the bus stop in North Street. Because of the alleged lack of space they were unwilling to provide one. Hailsham Town Council had offered to take over the maintenance of the bus shelter but wanted a commuted sum of £5,000. This was not acceptable to Tesco and because of this would not put polycarbonate sides on the shelter as originally requested.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.40pm.

CHAIRMAN/TOWN MAYOR

Global/Minutes & Agendas/Hailsham Annual Town Meeting 22.04.09