

HAILSHAM ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

MINUTES AND REPORTS of the Hailsham Annual Town Meeting, held at Hailsham Community Hall, Vicarage Lane, Hailsham on Wednesday 21st April 2010 at 7.30 pm.

ATM/10/1 PRESENT: 13 Hailsham Town councillors; 11 Hailsham electors; 5 officers of Hailsham Town Council.

2 The Town Mayor/Chairman of Hailsham Town Council, Councillor I. G. Haffenden, opened the meeting and welcomed electors.

3 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Hailsham Town Councillors: Councillors Mrs. D. Haffenden, T. W. Haffenden and Mrs. B. Holbrook and Mrs. E. G. Jones (Town Clerk).

4 **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting (Ref. ATM/09/1 - 17) held on 22nd April 2009, 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**

Mr. E. Miller asked if the Parking Review promised at last year's Town Meeting had taken place. The Chairman responded that the Review had not yet taken place.

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 past year had been a busy and challenging one. He wanted to highlight three areas of work.

6.3 First of all he wanted to talk about the public toilets in Vicarage Field. Discussions with Wealden District Council about Hailsham Town Council assuming responsibility for them had proved successful. The Town Council had engaged the services of a consultant. The project was now proceeding.

Questions were asked about the closure of the toilets and the provision of portaloos in the interim period. Councillor Haffenden said that he would consider this but alternative facilities were available in supermarkets and Freedom Leisure.

6.4 The next area he wanted to talk about was the Hailsham Community Hall. Discussions had recently begun with Wealden District Council about upgrading and redeveloping the Hall.

6.5 Finally he said that Hailsham Town Council was in the process of being modernised, and a review of staffing was currently taking place

6.6 Councillor Haffenden thanked his deputy, Councillor Jeff Bentley-Astor. He also thanked the staff, in particular Terry Hall who had been his assistant.

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.
- 7.2 Councillor Burchmore highlighted the problem of vandalism and the cost to the Council Tax payers of Hailsham.
- 7.3 Mr. E. Miller asked if the Police Community Support Officers were on duty at night. The Deputy Town Clerk responded that on occasion they did and that the Town Council worked closely with the Neighbourhood Policing Team.

8 Burials and Properties Committee Report - Councillor R. Kempe

- 8.1 Copies of a written report had been circulated with the agenda.
- 8.2 Councillor Kempe spoke in respect of a number of items related to the Burial and Properties Committee.
- 8.3 Mr. Price said that on a number of occasions this year he had had complained to the Town Council about constant burning street lights in Stoney Lane and around the Common Pond. They were still burning. The Chairman said that could be a number of reasons for this, for example the lights belonged to another authority. It was suggested that Mr Price speak to Council officers after the meeting.

9. Finance, Policy and Resources Report - Councillor J. E. Bentley-Astor

- 9.1 Copies of a written report had been circulated with the agenda.
- 9.2 Miss L. Walters said that there was a marked difference in the cleanliness of the High Street on Sunday and Monday when Hailsham Town Council's Environment Warden was not on duty. Litter and rubbish was much more in evidence on these days. The Chairman responded that the cleaning of the town centre was a matter for Wealden District Council and that Hailsham Town Council provided a supplementary service only.

The Deputy Town Clerk added that the priority for Hailsham Town Council was the cleaning and inspection of its own play areas.

Mrs Thompson said that it was an unfortunate fact that some people in Hailsham thought nothing of dropping litter and cigarette ends in the street.

- 9.3 Miss L. Walters asked why when it was snowing earlier in the year were Hailsham Town Council staff sent home when Hailsham High Street needed gritting, and why two days later were the staff only gritting up from the Town Council office to the Town Clerk's house in Stoney Lane. She said that priority should have been given to the Town Centre where elderly people could have fallen on the ice.

Councillor Bentley-Astor said the day-to-day administration of the office and staff was a matter for the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk.

The Deputy Town Clerk said that it was perfectly in order for the Council to take this decision. The priority was to get the Town Clerk into work to co-ordinate the Council's response to the situation. Once grit was available Hailsham Town Council staff along with Wealden District Council staff had cleared much of the town centre.

- 9.4 Miss L. Walters asked why, when the Town Council was trying to save money, it had posted letters to all High Street traders in respect of the Lark in the Park event when in the past it had hand-delivered letters.

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that on the occasion when letters to the traders had been hand-delivered it was done by a volunteer. It was considered cost-effective to post the Lark in the Park letters.

- 9.5 Miss L. Walters thanked the Chairman for officially opening her shop in the High Street on 1st February 2010. She was pleased to note also that Hailsham Town Council on its website encouraged people to shop locally. She asked how the Chairman could square this with comments allegedly made by Hailsham Town Council staff that they wanted her shop to fail.

The Chairman responded that this clearly was not a matter for the Annual Town Meeting as he or the Town Council were not responsible for what individuals may or may not have said.

10. Planning Consultative Panel - Councillor J. Puttick

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

- 10.2 Mr. Price asked about Lidl gaining planning permission in the town.

Councillor Puttick responded that he had no objection to Lidl opening in the town; however, Ropemaker Park had been designated for no-retail outlets. They could, for instance, have bid for the unit now occupied by Iceland

11 ELECTORS QUESTIONS/STATEMENTS

11.1 WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Mr. H. Edwards of Anglesey Avenue had given written notice of a question in connection with the public conveniences in Vicarage Field. The Chairman said he had raised this matter in his opening remarks. (Minute ATM/10/6.1 refers).

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

CHAIRMAN/TOWN MAYOR