

HAILSHAM ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

MINUTES AND REPORTS of the Hailsham Annual Town Meeting, held at Hailsham Community Hall, Vicarage Lane, Hailsham on Tuesday 8th May 2012 at 7.30 pm.

ATM/12/1 PRESENT: 20 Hailsham Town councillors; 88 Hailsham electors; 9 officers of Hailsham Town Council.

2 The Town Mayor/Chairman of Hailsham Town Council, Councillor J. E. Bentley-Astor opened the meeting by welcoming members of the public and councillors.

He said that the Annual Meeting would be held in a different way to previous years; instead of committee chairmen reading out their reports of activity on their work it was open to members of the public to wander around the various stalls and speak to the representatives from Sussex Police, East Sussex County Council. The NHS Primary Care Trust, The Square Youth Cafe and the lead councillors. There would also be the public launch of Hailsham Town Council's Business Development Plan that had been the Council's priority since its election one year ago.

Mr. M. Hillman stated that he would prefer the meeting be held in the traditional way with the formal part of the meeting first, thus allowing members of the public to ask questions of the council. The Chairman responded that this was the parishioners meeting and put the matter to a vote. On a show of hands it was agreed that the meeting be taken in the following way: The Chairman's address followed by questions and then members of the public looking at the stalls.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Hailsham Town Councillor N. S. Coltman.

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting (Ref. ATM/11/1 - 6) held on 27th April 2011, 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

There were no matters arising.

6. HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL: ANNUAL REPORT

Copies of the report were available prior to the meeting.

Councillor Bentley-Astor stated that the past year had been a very productive one since the new administration had controlled the Council. The priority had been the revitalisation of Hailsham in general and in the High Street specifically. To this end, the Council had produced document entitled "Hailsham: The Way Forward". This was being launched at this meeting and members of the public were being asked to prioritise the key areas identified in this Business Plan.

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The Chairman said that a number of service providers had been invited to the meeting and they had demonstration boards showing the work they did and how it impacted on Hailsham. Members of the public were asked for their priorities.

The Chairman said that it had been agreed that the format of the Annual Town Meeting should change this year, and that the formal part of the meeting should be taken at the end of the meeting, This would enable members of the public to move around the room, look at the display boards and ask questions of the service providers.

Mr Hillman questioned this decision and requested that the format of the meeting be put to the vote. He was in favour of the format of previous meetings where the formal part of the agenda was at the beginning of the meeting, enabling the public to ask questions of councillors.

On being put to the vote it was agreed that the formal part of the meeting be at the beginning of the meeting followed by the Council's Business Development Plan "Hailsham: The Way Forward".

The Chairman said that the Council had recently provided the means for the young people of the town to elect a Youth Mayor. He said the role of the Youth Mayor was to represent the young people of Hailsham to the Council, business and the wider community.

The Chairman introduced John Harrison, the new Town Clerk.

Mr Harrison said his first impressions of Hailsham were that it is a dynamic town with a number of issues, but also a close community with everyone pulling together; it is a diverse town with diverse opinions and ideas – but essentially everyone wanting the same thing – to work together to realise the town's potential.

The Chairman asked the meeting for questions on the Council's activities during the past year.

Many questions were asked about the closure of the public conveniences in Vicarage Field. The Chairman responded that the decision to close them was taken entirely by Wealden District Council. Whilst it was the wish of Hailsham Town Council to refurbish and assume responsibility for the running of the toilets finances were not available at the moment. A local plumber said that it may be possible for local trades people to do the work on a community basis.

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

CHAIRMAN/TOWN MAYOR