

HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN of a meeting of the HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL to be held in the Fleur-de-Lys Council Chambers, Market Square, Hailsham on

Wednesday, 24th April 2013 at 7.30 p.m.

Prior to commencement of the formal business of the meeting a period of not more than 15 minutes will be assigned for the purpose of permitting members of the Public to address the Council, or ask questions on matters relevant to responsibilities under the direction of this Council, at the discretion of the Chairman.

The order of formal business to be transacted will thereafter be as follows:

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** To receive apologies for absence of elected members.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** To receive notice of declarations of personal and prejudicial interest in respect of items on this agenda.
4. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**
 - 4.1 To resolve that the Minutes and Reports of the Meeting of Hailsham Town Council held on 13th March 2013 (Ref: HTC/12/10/293-308) as printed and circulated, may be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.
 - 4.2 **MATTERS ARISING**
5. **COMMITTEE and PANEL REPORTS**

(A list of committee/panel minutes attached – Please notify the Town Clerk [email: john.harrison@hailsham-tc.gov.uk telephone: 01323 445731] as soon as possible if you wish to reserve an item on any of the following committees or panels)

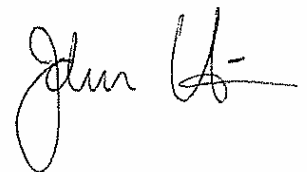
 - 5.1 To (a) note the reserved paragraphs (minutes) of the Committee/Panel Reports notified to the Town Clerk prior to the meeting, and
(b) receive request to reserve any additional paragraphs (minutes) of the Committee/Panel Reports
 - 5.2 To receive “unreserved” paragraphs (minutes) of the following Reports of Committees/Panels (as printed and circulated), and approve and adopt the recommendations contained therein.
 - A. **Planning and Development Committee Meetings (12th March 2013 and 2nd April 2013)**
 - B. **Hailsham in Bloom Committee Meetings (27th March 2013 and 17th April 2013)**

C. Business Development Committee Meeting (7th March and 11th April 2013)

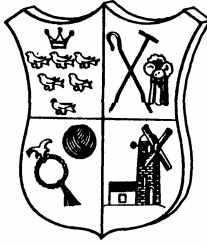
D. Finance and Budget Oversight Committee Meeting (10th April 2013)

E. Staff Administration Panel Meeting (15th April 2013)

- 5.3 To proceed through the “reserved” paragraphs consecutively (or as decided) and to resolve action before proceeding to the next reserved item.
- 6. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**
To consider whether to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan for Hailsham
(Report to follow, authors, Chair of Planning and Development Committee; Cllr Michael Ryan, and Environment and Leisure Officer; Karen Moralees,)
- 7. LAND WEST OF GOODWIN CLOSE**
To consider a request to take on the transfer of a portion of land attached to a development of nine houses and consider the council’s policy considering land transfer and commuted sums
(Report to follow, author Town Clerk; John Harrison)
- 8. FESTIVITIES AND EVENTS**
To consider the current position of Festivities and Events in Hailsham Town Council since the last report submitted in February 2013, and what possible options the Council wishes to pursue taking into account the up to date position
(Report to follow – author Business Enterprise Manager/Deputy Town Clerk; Mickey Caira)
- 9. 4 MARKET SQUARE**
To consider a request to rent the vacant premise on 4 Market Square and other potential options for the property
(Report to follow – author Town Clerk; John Harrison)
- 10. TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS FOR 2013-2014**
To consider the timetable for Town Council meetings for 2013-14, including the day of the meetings, frequency and venue.
(Report to follow – author Town Clerk; John Harrison)
- 11. COUNCILLORS’ QUESTIONS/INFORMATION FORUM**
(at the Chairman’s discretion).



JOHN HARRISON
Town Clerk



HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of Hailsham Town Council, held at the Fleur-de-Lys Council Chambers/Meeting Rooms, Market Square, Hailsham, on Wednesday 24th April 2013 at 7.30 p.m.

Public Question Time

Prior to commencement of the formal business of the meeting a period of not more than 15 minutes had been assigned for the purpose of permitting members of the public present to address the Assembly, or ask questions (on matters relevant to the responsibilities of the Town Council) at the invitation and discretion of the presiding Chairman.

None were presented.

HTC/12/11/309 **Present:** Councillors: Mrs. S. J. Bentley (Chairman), W. A. Bentley, J. L. Blake, B. F. Burchmore, Ms C. V. Collinson, N. A. Collinson, N. S. Coltman, R. T. Grocock (Vice Chairman), Mrs. S. E. Henstock, Mrs. B. Holbrook, P. S. Holbrook, S. McAuliffe, B. Marlowe, Ms A. O'Rawe, G. G. Rowe, Mrs. M. Rowe, Mrs. D. M. Ryan, M. J. Ryan Mrs. M. Skinner, S. Towner and C. Triandafyllou.

310 **Officers in Attendance:** J. Harrison (Town Clerk), M Caira (Deputy Town Clerk), D. Saxby and T. Hall.

311 **Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillors Mrs. M. Burt, Mrs J. Cook and W. F. Crittenden.

312 **Declarations of Interest**

None presented.

313 **Confirmation of Previous Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes and Reports of the meeting of Hailsham Town Council (Ref: HTC/12/10/293-308) held on 13th March 2013 were confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

314 **Matters Arising**

The Chairman apologised to Councillor Blake for stating at the last meeting that the Old Mill was in Hailsham when in fact it was in the parish of Hellingly, when

discussing the police report.

She confirmed that the Town Clerk had written to the Head of Building Control at Wealden District Council about the PCSO's report on the Old Mill.

Committee and Panel Reports

315 **RESOLVED**, after consideration in accordance with Standing Order 18(e), to receive the following reports of Committees, to approve and adopt the recommendations contained therein and the actions taken as reported therein.

F. Planning and Development Committee (12th March and 2nd April 2013)

G. Hailsham in Bloom Committee (27th March and 17th April 2013)

H. Business Development Committee (7th March and 11th April 2013)

I. Finance and Budget Oversight Committee (10th April 2013)

J. Staff Administration Panel (15th April)

316 Planning and Development Committee – 2nd April 2013

Minute 274 – Neighbourhood Plan

Councillor M. Ryan stated that the decision on this minute was dependent on agenda item 5 – Neighbourhood Plan.

Neighbourhood Plan

317.1 Councillor M Ryan introduced this item and referred members to the report circulated with the agenda and as appendix HTC/12/11/317A. He recommended that Hailsham Town Council does not undertake a neighbourhood plan for Hailsham.

317.2 Members who participated in the debate were in agreement with this but some wanted a neighbourhood plan for the town centre.

317.3 **RESOLVED** that Hailsham Town Council will not complete a neighbourhood plan for the whole of the parish but will refer the item to the Business Development Committee to look into completing a business, economy and town centre focussed Neighbourhood Development Plan working with the Planning and Development Committee and Hailsham Forward as appropriate.

Land West of Goodwin Close

318.1 Councillor Towner declared a personal interest in this agenda item as he is an acquaintance of the owner of the Park Lane Group.

318.2 Members debated the officer's report circulated with the agenda and as Appendix HTC/12/11/318A to these minutes. There was consensus that the offer from the developer for Hailsham Town Council to take on the transfer of a portion of land near Goodwin Close for a commuted sum was not adequate to cover the costs of the management plan as circulated.

318.3 **RESOLVED** to reject the offer of the land attached to the development of nine

houses on land west of Goodwin Close with the commuted sum as offered.

318.4 Further discussion ensued in respect of clarification of the Town Council's policy regarding the size of land and amount of commuted sum that it would accept.

318.5 **RESOLVED** to adopt a policy whereby Hailsham Town Council does not accept pieces of land less than one acre (therefore 4046.9m²) unless the amount of commuted sum offered is equivalent to that for one acre (£26,084) Or the piece of land includes an additional facility which would bring significant benefit to the community (e.g. a community facility, community centre, play facility).

Festivities and Events

319.1 The Deputy Town Clerk introduced this agenda item. He referred members to the officer's report and the options contained in it. Much discussion ensued.

319.2 Regular Town Market

This part of the agenda item was deferred to the following agenda item (4 Market Square).

319.3 Summer Fete/Charter Market

RESOLVED to support Hailsham Festival of Arts and Culture and provide funding for community based activities within the festival.

319.4 Christmas Event

RESOLVED to continue discussions with Hailsham Forward on the organisation of a Christmas event 2013.

4 Market Square

320.1 The Town Clerk introduced this item; much discussion ensued.

320.2 **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk provide detailed proposals to the Council meeting following the Annual Meeting for 4 Market Square to be used as business start up/local market venue.

Town Council Meetings for 2013-2014

321.1 The Town Clerk's report as circulated with the agenda and as Appendix HTC/12/11/321A to these minutes was discussed.

322.2 **RESOLVED** that:

- a) the meeting day would remain as Wednesday
- b) the meetings would be on a bi-monthly basis
- c) there would be an additional meeting in January with the single purpose of agreeing the precept, and
- d) the Annual Electors' Meeting and Council Annual Meeting would also be an additional date with the two being combined into one meeting in May.

Councillor McAuliffe thanked the Town Clerk for his work on this matter.

Councillors' Questions/Information Forum

323 Eastbourne District General Hospital

Councillor G. Rowe said that he had been made aware of a rumour that the trauma unit at Eastbourne District General Hospital would be closed. He asked if members were aware of the view of Charles Hendry MP on the provision of services at the hospital.

324 New Telephone System

Councillor N. Collinson enquired about the new telephone system that had been installed in the Council offices. He was informed that staff were pleased with it.

325 Speed Watch

Councillor N. Collinson asked for volunteers for the community speed watch.

326 Hailsham Forward

The Deputy Town Clerk informed the meeting that the Hailsham Forward pop-up shop in Vicarage Field was open on Thursday to Saturday until the middle of May and asked members to visit.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.18pm.

CHAIRMAN

COMMITTEE: Hailsham Town Council

DATE: 24th April 2013

REPORT BY: Karen Moralee and Councillor Michael Ryan on behalf of the Planning and Development Committee

PURPOSE: To consider whether to undertake a neighbourhood plan for Hailsham

RECOMMENDATIONS: To propose that the Town Council does not undertake a neighbourhood plan for Hailsham

BACKGROUND:

The planning system has undergone significant reform recently and the Localism Act in 2011 introduced a new concept called “neighbourhood planning.”

A neighbourhood plan will allow communities some freedom to make some decisions in relation to developments. The aim of a neighbourhood plan is to give a greater say in certain aspects of development. Some examples would be allowing communities to have an input in the design and size of dwellings proposed in a new development, although local evidence would need to back up any requests on design and not conflict with the Local Plan (Core Strategy/Strategic Sites).

A neighbourhood plan would also give the Council a community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) of 25%. CIL is a new locally set charge proposed by the Government to fund infrastructure and is in part replacing the Section 106 agreements. Without a neighbourhood plan in place the Council will be entitled to 15% CIL. There is a cap of £100 per council tax eligible dwelling on the 15% CIL but no cap with the 25% CIL. Either way, both CIL amounts are paid directly to the Town Council.

Allocation of CIL money is determined by Wealden District Council. The CIL money is pooled centrally to be spent on District wide priorities. These priorities are then published on what is known as the Regulation 123 list and determine what the CIL will be spent on. (The 15% or 25% however is top sliced and would come directly to the Town Council).

To receive the 25% CIL from a development, a neighbourhood plan must be in place at the time that the first planning permission (outline) is granted. Wealden District Council has advised that a Neighbourhood Plan may take 18 months to 2 years to put in place. Therefore to receive the 25% CIL contributions from any of the developments in the 1,300 houses agreed in the Core Strategy, a Neighbourhood plan would have needed to be in place before any outline planning permission was granted for these sites. A planning application has recently been submitted for the North Hailsham site.

A neighbourhood plan must be in line with the Local Core Strategy and National Planning Policy and it cannot reduce the amount of development allocated for an area. It can however allocate more development although does not need to include any provision for additional housing. It must also be in general conformity with strategic policies in the Core Strategy. A neighbourhood plan can be very simple or complicated – that is the choice of the Council. There are some formal procedures that need to be undertaken in order to have the Neighbourhood Plan adopted but there is no set ‘size’ or ‘complexity’ for the plan itself. It could for example contain a single policy as long as it conformed to the test of ‘soundness’.

The stages involved in producing a plan are:

- The neighbourhood area for the plan is defined, aided by Wealden District Council
- The content of the plan is prepared with the support of Wealden District Council who will advise whether the plan is in line with the Local Plan
- An independent examiner checks the plan to see that it meets the current basic standards to go through an examination. The examination report may contain requirements for modifications in the plan
- A public consultation takes place and takes a minimum of 6 weeks. The consultation needs to have involved a large section of the community so various groups would need to be approached.
- A referendum is organised and the community will have the final say as to whether they are in favour of a plan or not. If the majority of those who vote are in favour of the plan then it comes into force
- When a neighbourhood plan is approved it becomes a statutory document. Wealden District Council are still the decision maker but are obliged by law to take the plan into account when considering development in the neighbourhood

Councils can work with other Councils in writing a plan and if the Town Council agreed to undertake a plan Hellingly Council could be approached to see if they are willing to write a joint plan and contribute to the costs.

Council resolution – February 2012

The issue of the Hailsham Plan/Master Plan was considered at the meeting of Hailsham Town Council 15th February 2012. During which it was resolved:

*(Minute Ref. HTC 11/9/318.3) **RESOLVED** to delegate the formation of the Hailsham Plan to the Planning and Development Committee, and the Committee to consider the involvement of Hellingly Parish Council in the formation of the Hailsham Plan.*

This resolution was passed before the specific details of Neighbourhood Plans, what they encompass, their processes and implications, had become known. The announcement regarding the specifics of the 'meaningful proportion' of the CIL and it's direct link to having an Neighbourhood Plan in place was made by the Government on 9th January this year. The issue and the need for council to decide whether it wishes to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan has therefore become more focussed.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Below are examples of the differences in CIL payments for 15% and 25%

Without a Neighbourhood Plan

CIL payment of 15% with a cap of £100/Council Tax eligible dwelling on a development of 1,000 houses

- A development comprises 1,000 properties
- The volume of affordable housing within the development is 35% (average WDC figure)
- Therefore there are 650 houses that the developer must pay CIL to WDC in order to build. A 90m² per dwelling (average m² for new builds) at a CIL rate of £110/m²
- The CIL given to WDC by the developer is therefore 650*(110*90)=£6,435,000

- Without an NP, HTC would receive 15% of this i.e. £962,250 **BUT**, because there is a cap of £100 per Council Tax eligible dwelling that already exist in Hailsham, (approx 7,500 according to Office of National Statistics data) the actual amount given to HTC is $100 \times 7,500 = \text{£}750,000$

With a Neighbourhood Plan

CIL payment of 25% - no cap

- A development comprises 1,000 properties
- The volume of affordable housing within the development is 35% (average WDC figure)
- Therefore there are 650 houses that the developer must pay CIL to WDC in order to build. A 90m² per dwelling (average m² for new builds) at a CIL rate of £110/m²
- The CIL given to WDC by the developer is therefore $650 \times (110 \times 90) = \text{£}6,435,000$
- With an NP, HTC would receive 25% of this i.e. **£1,608,750**

The Town Council has £19,500 set aside to undertake a "Town Plan". To undertake a plan, the Council would have to employ a consultant from an experienced company such as Action In Rural Sussex to write the plan.

The exact cost for a plan is unclear at the moment however Action In Rural Sussex has advised that Herstmonceux Parish Council has recently submitted a plan and the cost of this was £25,000, and that therefore for a Town the size of Hailsham, with more complex issues the cost would be higher than this.

There is a grant of **up to** £7,000 available from the Government per neighbourhood area.

Once a neighbourhood area is designated, Wealden District Council can also apply for £5,000 from the Government on the Town Councils behalf. After that there is further additional funding of £20,000 once the plan a) gets to the examination stage and b) is adopted. David Philips from Wealden District Council has advised that at the moment the District Council has agreed to pass the initial £5,000 directly to Town and Parish Councils but with the latter stages of the neighbourhood plan process they will be using some of the other funding (£20,000) to cover the costs of holding the examinations and the hosting and arranging of the referendum.

CONCLUSION:

To receive the 25% CIL from a development, a neighbourhood plan must be in place at the time that the first planning permission (outline) is granted. One main benefit from having a neighbourhood plan would be to collect the 25% CIL from the 1,300 developments proposed in the Core Strategy in Hailsham. However a planning application has already been submitted for the North Hailsham site and it is likely a planning application will shortly be submitted for the East Hailsham site.

Without a plan, the Council will still receive 15% of CIL payments for any new development, but at a cap of £100 per council tax eligible dwelling.

Wealden District Council needs to fund infrastructure improvements from the CIL they receive from developers. If they give the Council 25% of that sum, they may argue that they need top-up payments or contributions from the Council to fund critical needs of the town. However, this does mean that additional CIL monies can be directed solely toward Hailsham as the Council would hold the funds and be in a position to contribute as it sees fit. This could include almost anything as CIL income can be spent on 'measures that mitigate the effects of a development' which is very broad brush terminology.

It is worth bearing in mind that an approved neighbourhood plan is a strategic document which Wealden District Council would have to adhere to in relation to the infrastructure improvements identified for the Town in the plan.

It is also important to remember that to be adopted; a neighbourhood plan must be in line with National Planning Policy and not conflict with the strategic policies of the Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan and any requests on the design/size of buildings/number of bedrooms must comply with strategic sites local plan and be backed up by local evidence.

Members must determine whether the time and cost of a neighbourhood plan justify the rewards.

Further information in respect of this report can be obtained from Karen Moralee. Tel: 01323 445 738, Email: karen.moralee@hailsham-tc.gov.uk

Report to: Hailsham Town Council

Date: 24th April 2013

By: John Harrison, Town Clerk

Title of report: LAND WEST OF GOODWIN CLOSE

1. PURPOSE:

To consider a request to take on the transfer of a portion of land attached to a development of nine houses and consider the council's policy considering land transfer and commuted sums

2. BACKGROUND.

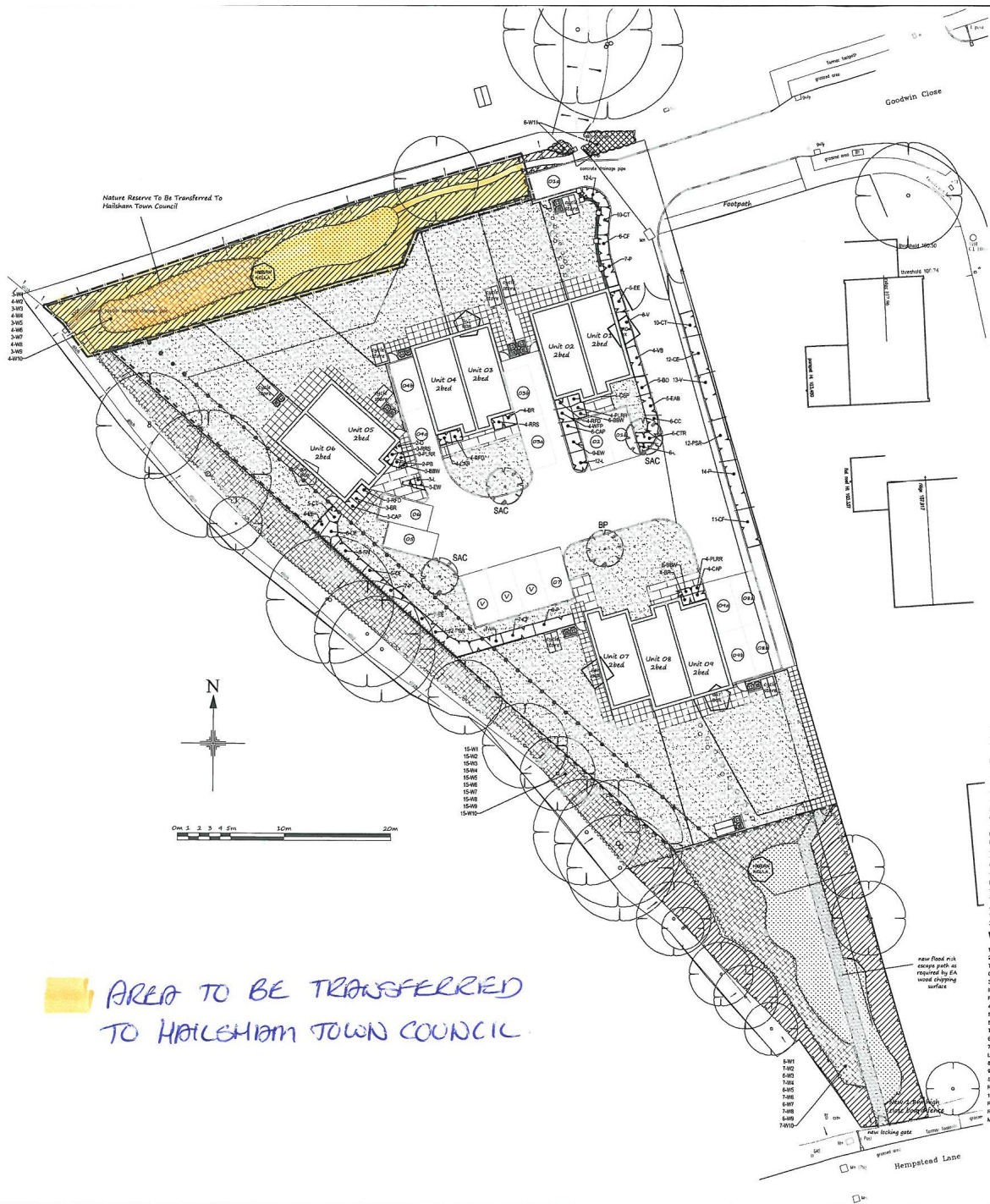
The Town Clerk has received the offer of a piece of land coming with a nine house development on Land West of Goodwin Close that has planning permission from development company "The Park Lane Group" (Planning Application No. WD/2012/1586/F)

The land is that shaded in yellow in the plan below.

The Planning Permission for the development was granted subject to a Planning obligation that has been entered into between The Park Lane Group and Wealden District Council.

The developers are therefore legally bound to offer us this land, and have offered the commuted sum of £2258.35 (based on £9.61 per m2 with this tract of land being 235m2). This amount is set by the Planning Authority's Planning Obligations.

A Management Plan for the land has also been drafted and is also attached as an appendix to this report.



3. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Previous policy (set in 2007) has been to accept no less than £26,084 for any piece of land (the commuted sum for an acre of land, which is 4046.86m²) whether the land offered is an acre or less.

This is far more than the developers offer for this piece of land, although their figure works out at £9.61 per m² than the £26,084 does (which equates to £6.45 per m²).

4. CONCLUSION.

Council is asked to consider:

- (i) Whether to take on this piece of land as requested, for the commuted sum of £2,258.35

(ii) An update to the current policy regarding what sizes of land council will consider taking on under development Planning Obligations and with what levels of commuted sum

For example, council may decide to formally adopt a policy of:

- Not taking on any land less than 75% of an acre (which equals 3035.23 m²)
- For a minimum of the commuted sum for a whole acre (£26,084)
- Unless the land is offered with an additional facility which would bring significant benefit to the community (a community facility, community centre, Play Space etc).

The adoption of such a policy would enable the Officer Team to respond to requests outside of the policy immediately.

Report to: Hailsham Town Council

Date: 24th April 2013

By: Mickey Caira, Deputy Town Clerk & Business Enterprise Manager

Title of report: Festivities and Events

1. PURPOSE:

To consider the current position of Festivities and Events in Hailsham Town Council since the last report submitted in February 2013, and what possible options the Council wishes to pursue taking into account the up to date position.

2. BACKGROUND.

The current position

The Council considered a report of the Town Clerk in February 2013 and resolved that:

- a) Hailsham Forward be asked to assume responsibility for the regular market and reporting to the Business Development Committee and full council.
- b) Hailsham Town Council to maintain responsibility for the summer fete.
- c) defer a decision on responsibility for longer term festivity events and enter into talks with Hailsham Forward/ the Hailsham and District Chamber of Commerce on the future of the Christmas market, and liaise with HTC festivities group
- d) Councillor S. McAuliffe to maintain responsibility for the Christmas lights with future plans being relayed to the Council and the HTC festivities group.

Since this meeting officers of the Council have started to take the above decisions forward but have encountered issues that need referring back to the Council. The Business Development Committee on 11th April 2013 resolved to recommend that a report is submitted to the next Council meeting seeking a way forward for the organisation of events for the forthcoming year, in response to debating the current position on the organisation of the events.

Regular Town Market:

The Council's outline proposal for the regular town market is for it to be held on Vicarage Field, once a month with an emphasis on a quality market selling local produce. The owners of Vicarage Field have agreed to this subject to the market being managed "professionally" Hailsham Forward has agreed to take this on as one of its short term objectives, but to date has not found a professional market manager to run the market. As there is limited space for stalls on Vicarage Field professional market companies do not consider it commercially viable. Hailsham Forward will continue to pursue this to try and engage a professional market manager.

Options for establishing a regular town market:

- a) Allow more time for Hailsham Forward to try and source a professional market manager.
- b) Support Hailsham Forward in sourcing a professional market manager, providing funding from the Council's revitalisation budget, if required, to help establish a

commercially viable market over a period of time.

- c) Hailsham Town Council manages the market itself (subject to the agreement of the owners of Vicarage Field). This will require the Council to either redeploy officer resources and responsibilities to free up the time to manage a market or allocate the budget to employ a dedicated market manager.

Summer Fete/Event:

For a number of months the informal events committee has been negotiating with Hailsham Cricket Club to use Western Road Recreation Ground on a Saturday for a summer fete. The Cricket Club have been unable to free up a Saturday without compromising their league conditions and a Sunday has been put forward. The committee have considered that a Sunday is not viable with the unavailability of volunteers to organise and manage the proposed event.

Options for organising a summer event for 2013:

- a) The Council organises and funds a summer market event (Charter Market) itself in the town centre.
- b) The Council works in partnership with Hailsham Forward to organise a summer event, providing funding from its allocated budget.
- c) The Council organises an event to tie into the Hailsham Festival of Arts and Culture in September 2013, providing funding from its allocated budget.
- d) The Council considers doing nothing for this summer, saving the budget allocated for the event.

Note: plans are already underway for a summer fete in 2014 and Hailsham Cricket Club have been approached to try and secure a date before their league commitments are made for a suitable date on a Saturday.

Christmas Market 2013:

The responsibility for the organisation of a Christmas event/market has not been established and there appears to be some confusion on who will take the responsibility and how it will be resourced. Hailsham Forward has confirmed that it would like to organise the event, on its own or in partnership with the Council and Chamber of Commerce. The Council resolved in February to enter into talks with Hailsham Forward with a view to establishing the responsibility and funding of a Christmas event, the discussion at the Council meeting included the condition that Hailsham Forward were required to have set up a successful regular town market before the Council would consider providing funding for the event. As stated above Hailsham Forward have not been able to establish a regular town market to date and will not be able to do so in the near future. Hailsham Forward will therefore not be able to meet this condition and the Council needs to consider how it wants to take this forward.

Options for organising a Christmas event for 2013:

- a) The Council organises and funds a Christmas market event itself in the town centre.
- b) The Council works in partnership with Hailsham Forward to organise a Christmas event, providing funding from its allocated budget
- c) The Council considers doing nothing for this summer, saving the budget allocated

for the event.

Longer Term management of Hailsham Festivities and Events:

The Council may wish to consider the longer term management and funding of festivities and events beyond 2013 at this stage; this will help in the planning of events and avoid the uncertainty that currently exists.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Budgets for Festivities and Events

For 2013-14

£4000 has been allocated to the Charter Market
£5000 has been allocated to the Christmas Market
£3000 will be brought forward from 2012/2013 budget
Therefore totalling £12,000

4. CONCLUSION.

1. Council is asked to consider whether it wished to continue to fund festivities and events for the current municipal year.

2. If council does wish to continue funding events, is asked to consider which of the options for their planning and delivery (as above), or combination of them, is most desirable.

Report to: Hailsham Town Council

Date: 24th April 2013

By: John Harrison, Town Clerk

Title of report: 4 Market Square

1. PURPOSE:

To consider a request to rent the vacant premise on 4 Market Square and other potential options for the property.

2. BACKGROUND.

Cross Roads Care gave notice to Hailsham Town Council to terminate the tenancy of the premises at 4 Market Square in November 2011. This termination was effective from February 2012.

An inspection by HTC staff has shown the property to be in a generally good state of repair. Under the terms of their tenancy agreement, Cross Roads Care were required to repaint the interior of the building. This work, including replastering as now been undertaken by the HTC Works Team.

The property consists of a large ground floor open space, with a small kitchen and toilet at the rear, and open plan second floor accessible by an open staircase. A functioning Air-conditioning unit has been left by Cross Roads Care on the ground floor. There is also a good sized basement.

A few local companies have over the past year shown some interest in the building but have either not made definite offers for the premise or have eventually decided not to pursue leasing the building.

The building has also been kept vacant as a 'fall-back' position for the Hailsham Works project in the event that the leasing of Cortlandt Stable Block did not come to fruition. This lease is currently being drawn up – Hailsham Town Council will be renting that building in the very near future.

The current use classes for the building are Ground Floor – B1 (Business) and the Top Floor – A2 (Financial and Professional Services).

Therefore it may be necessary to apply for 'change of use' permission depending on the ultimate aim for the building.

3. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The rateable value for the premise is currently £6000 (20% of that for charities). (Source: Valuation Office website)

The rent we would be looking to achieve for the building would be circa £8500 per year.

The current empty property rates being paid for the premise are £2,826 per year.

4. CONSIDERATIONS.

Council is therefore asked to consider options for the vacant building at 4 Market Square:

1. The East Sussex Association for the Blind has expressed an interest in renting the building to open as a Charity Shop. As this would be a new venture for them, they have requested that council considers offering the lease for twelve month period in the first instance, with a view to extending if the venture is successful.

2. Computer for Charities have also expressed an interest in using the premise as a shop/'High Street Presence' in order to sell reconditioned computer equipment and possibly also to offer a training programme. However, for funding reasons, Computers for Charities have stated that they will not be in a position to implement this for at least another six months.

3. Council could consider offering the premise for lease via a commercial agent.

4. Council may wish to consider utilising the building for its own purposes and exploring options in more detail. Options for this could include:

(i) Consider offering the property for rent by the hour/ morning and afternoon sessions etc as a community facility for meetings, training, community groups and clubs, commercial enterprises, meetings, small conferences, while also using the building as an extended meeting space itself.

At present there are community facilities/meeting rooms available in Hailsham in:

Union Corner Hall, Fleur De Lys Meeting Room, Summerheath Hall, Whitehouse School
Grovelands School, Marshlands Primary School, Hailsham Community College , The Charles Hunt Centre ,
Hailsham Pavilion , Hailsham East Community Centre, The Maurice Thornton Pavilion.

(ii) Look into the feasibility of using the premise as an expanded Museum Facility – either moving the current museum into the building or opening as an expanded Museum/Heritage facility. The current Museum is open from May to September on Fridays and Saturdays from 10.00-12.30pm and is staffed by volunteers from the Hailsham Historical Society.

(iii) Consider offering the premise as a flexible market stall/pop-up shop where sellers of local produce or local traders etc who might otherwise have had a market stall or be thinking about establishing a shop, sell from the premise on a short-term basis (i.e. one or two months we have a particular seller, next month another etc) – we could offer to rent them the space at a cheap monthly/twice monthly rate and keep it rotating on a regular basis.

(iv) Look into opening the premise as a community café.

Any combination of these uses could also be considered. However Council should bear in mind the resources that will be required to establish any of these options, in terms of officer and staff time to implement as well as continuous input that will be required to manage & co-ordinate.

Council is also asked to consider the costs in terms of rates and potential rent not paid in deciding to use the premise for any of these options.

5. CONCLUSION.

Council is asked to consider the options for the building and make resolution for the Town Clerk to pursue one of the options above, or another considered

use for the building.

Report to: Hailsham Town Council

Date: 24th April 2013

By: John Harrison, Town Clerk

Title of report: TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS FOR 2013-2014

1. PURPOSE:

To consider the timetable for Town Council meetings for 2013-14, including the day of the meetings, frequency and venue.

2. BACKGROUND.

At the meeting of Hailsham Town Council in January 2013 and then again in February 2013 the issue of the days of Hailsham Town Council meetings was raised. It was agreed to revisit this issue once the Mayor/Chairman has raised the issue of availability and costs of the Community Civic Hall with Wealden District Council, as minuted (Ref HTC12/9/288.1 and 288.2) :

The Days for Hailsham Town Council Meetings

Members were asked to consider whether an alternative day of the week was preferable for meetings of Hailsham Town Council for the ensuing Council year.

The Chairman said that she had approached the Chief Executive and the appropriate officer of Wealden District Council to arrange an urgent meeting to discuss the cost and availability of using the Hailsham Civic Community Hall as the venue for Hailsham Town Council meetings.

RESOLVED to defer a decision on the days for Hailsham Town Council meetings until the costs and availability of Hailsham Civic Community Hall were known.

Wealden District Council has since confirmed the cost for hiring the Civic Community Hall as £20 per hour. Therefore for a three and a half hour booking (7.00pm until 10.30pm) the total cost would be £70.00 per meeting or £60 for three hours (7.00pm until 10.00pm).

3. CONSIDERATIONS

Discussions with Wealden District Council (18th April 2013) has revealed that:

- The Civic Community Hall is unavailable from October 2013 through to March 2014 except for Fridays and Weekends,
- Is unavailable on Wednesdays for the next six months
- Is also generally booked for many Thursdays due to prior bookings.

Council is asked to consider and resolve the following:

- (i) **Whether council wishes to hold as many full town council meetings at the Civic Community Hall as it is able**

Alternative options would be to remain at the Fleur-De-Lys for the coming year or seek an alternative venue (for example the Diplocks Community Hall, which would cost £12 per hour) Council is asked to consider the availability of the venue, the size of the venue, the suitability of the Fleur-de-Lys Meetings rooms and the affect on the timetable on availability of the Civic Hall.

- (ii) **The preferred day of the week for the full council meetings**, again bearing in mind the availability of the Civic Community Hall.

- (iii) **The preferred timetable and frequency for full council** meetings, again considering the availability of the Civic Community Hall

For this consideration, three options are suggested:

1. Meeting once per month, therefore 11 meetings per year, with no meeting in August. (Essentially maintaining the status quo)
2. Meeting every six weeks, therefore eight meetings per year.
3. Meeting every two months therefore six meetings per year.

For meetings every month or every two months, the basis of holding meetings in the final or third week of each month has been maintained. This is not possible for the six-weekly meetings pattern.

The options at presented recognise the legal requirement for council to hold its AGM during May each year and the necessity of holding a meeting in January to agree the precept. As an alternative it could be possible to hold a separate meeting in January with the sole purpose of agreeing the following year's precept.

4. FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

In agreeing the frequency and therefore number of meetings per year council should consider the effects on decision making processes and the ratification of committee decisions.

Fewer and further apart meetings will allow for greater preparation and more thorough research for significant agenda items which may facilitate more informed decision making and prevent issues being deferred to future meetings.

However, this will also mean that decisions that must be made or ratified by council could be delayed as council meetings will be further apart. This may also result in longer agendas as the number decisions that must be made by council are factored into fewer meetings.

Solutions to these issues should be sought and investigated.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Booking of the Civic Community Hall on the basis that it will be required for three hours (7.00pm until 10.00pm) for a full council meeting will therefore cost £60 per booking (without being able to determine what the may be for the 2014-2015 financial year).

Therefore the full cost to council for each timetable option will be:

1. Meeting once per month, therefore 11 meetings per year = £660.00
2. Meeting every six weeks, therefore eight meetings per year = £480.00
3. Meeting every two months, therefore six meetings per year = £360.00

The Diplocks Community Hall would be charged at £12 per hour, therefore costs would be:

1. Meeting once per month, therefore 11 meetings per year = £396.00
2. Meeting every six weeks, therefore eight meetings per year = £288.00
3. Meeting every two months, therefore six meetings per year = £216.00

4. CONCLUSION.

Council is asked to consider and resolve:

1. **Whether to hold full council meetings at the Community Civic Hall as much as it can, remain in the Fleur-De-Lys or find an alternative venue**
2. **The preferred day of the week for full council meetings**
3. **The preferred timetable and frequency of meetings:**

- **Option One, meeting every month;**
- **Option Two, meeting every six weeks;**
- **Option Three, meeting every two months**

