

HAILSHAM ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

1 MINUTES AND REPORTS of the Hailsham Annual Town Meeting, held at Hailsham Civic and Community Hall on Tuesday 20th April 2017 at 7.30 pm

2 PRESENT: 19 Hailsham Town councillors; 98 Hailsham electors; 7 officers of Hailsham Town Council.

The Town Mayor/Chairman of Hailsham Town Council, Councillor N. S. Coltman opened the meeting by welcoming members of the public and councillors.

The Chairman introduced and thanked representatives from the various stakeholders who were in attendance and had stalls providing information on their services.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs B Beckett, Mrs M Burt, Mrs L Collinson, Mrs S Cottingham and M Pinkney. Councillor J Puttick would be arriving late.

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 19th April 2015 were agreed as a true and accurate recording.

5 MATTERS ARISING

None.

6 Hailsham Hero Community Award

The Chairman said that Hailsham could, quite rightly, be proud of its facilities but it was the people who made the town what it is. The Hailsham Hero Award was for someone in the town who had undertaken some work for the community.

The Chairman read a list of those people who had been nominated. Those nominated had been discussed by the Award Panel, made up of councillors. He was delighted to announce the winner was Mr Malcolm Richards who founded and ran the Hailsham Foodbank in George Street.

Mr Richards was given a trophy and received a round of applause. He thanked all the volunteers who worked for the Foodbank.

7 Town Council Grants

The Chairman read out the list of grant recipients and the amount awarded.

8 HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL: ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairman said that copies of the report had been made available prior to the meeting.

It had been a busy year for the Council, with many new and on-going projects such

as the Neighbourhood Planning Committee. He thanked members of that Committee, particularly those members of the public that gave up their free time to work for the benefit of the people of Hailsham.

He thanked all the members of community organisations and charities, as well as all the individual volunteers for all their commitment to the town.

The Chairman thanked the officers of the Council.

Finally, he said that it was a privilege and an honour to be the mayor of such a great town.

9 Electors' Written Questions

The Chairman asked the Town Clerk to read out the written questions received.

9.1 The first question was from Ms C Buckingham.

“Given the Substantive rise in antisocial behaviour across our community, with car thefts, drug taking, kids on bikes in the High Street intimidating residents and rubbish and litter strewn in public places, why did the majority of the Town Council vote not to employ a community warden who had the powers to fine the offenders and deal with them. Are councillors actually in touch with what we want in our town I think not!”

The Chairman said contrary to popular belief, Hailsham has one of the lowest crime rates in the country. Community wardens would have no powers.

9.2 The second question was from Mr R Latter.

“I see from the minutes of committee and Full Council meetings that there is an increase of 4% in Hailsham Council Tax.

Is the Council satisfied that there is sufficient funding available to carry out services and routine maintenance without drawing on contingency funds?

If any cuts in services are proposed, what public discussions have taken place and where is the information available.”

Councillor Triandafllou said that there was a £4 increase a year increase per person for the precept. The Council would not be drawing on Contingency Funds and there were no planned cuts in services.

9.3 Question three was from Mr D Taylor.

“You advertised that survey was available, asking for constructive feedback concerning the Christmas Market.

- a) Please tell me how many people wrote or e-mailed their comments.
- b) Please give a summary of the different aspects of their comments.
- c) What action has been taken in light of the feedback to ensure the event is better attended by public and traders, and that the event will cost

- substantially less out of this year's council budget?
- d) How many residents attended the market event and how is this measured?
 - e) What were the total expenditure and income figures?"

Councillor Ms O'Rawe said that 10 people had written in and about 40 had emailed. Most of the comments were that there were too many food stalls and not enough stalls selling gifts. There was some concern expressed about the loudness of Hailsham FM who were broadcasting live from the event. Costs were not yet known

9.4 Question 4 was from Mrs W Taylor.

"You produce a booklet called 'Our Hailsham'. Please could you respond to the following:

- a) What does it cost to produce the three editions per year?
- b) How much is the charge for distribution and who is the distributor?
- c) Are the quotes for distributing and who decides the best provider, and is it a consistent delivery within the parish boundary?
- d) What revenue is raised from the adverts, if any?"

Councillor Grocock replied that the cost of producing the 'Our Hailsham' Newsletter was £3,534 per year. He said quotes for the distribution were sought and received. There had been no advertising in the newsletter for the past two years.

10 Other Questions

10.1 A member of the public asked about illegal parking in Hailsham.

The Chairman said the Town Council was determined to retain the levels of free parking in Hailsham, thus providing no excuse for illegal and antisocial parking. Decriminalisation of car parking in Wealden was a long way off.

10.2 A member of the public said that although he was pleased that there were public toilets in North Street, these were no substitute for the more central ones that used to be in Vicarage Fields. Why were they allowed to be demolished?

The Chairman said that neither Vicarage Fields or the public toilets belonged to Hailsham Town Council and, therefore the Council had no control over what had happened.

10.3 Mr D. Dwyer asked about the temporary one-way system that allowed traffic out of the town whilst George Street was being refurbished.

Mr Derek Carter said that the engineers had responded to a number of comments saying that the original scheme would cause problems.

10.4 Mr Hopkins said that he was aware of rumours that the north end of the High Street was going to be taken out of the conservation area.

The Chairman responded that these rumours were untrue.

10.5 Mr Cunningham asked what the car parking plans were for the future.

Mr Nigel Hannam from Wealden District Council said that there were no specific plans for adapting the car parks in Hailsham, but they were looking at the infrastructure generally.

- 10.6** Mr K Hinton said that Hailsham Town Council appeared to have no objectives or goals and a business plan was urgently needed. Councillor Triandafyllou said that there was no five-year plan.
- 10.7** Mrs Spicer asked when the newly built sports facility at Welbury Farm. Councillor Grocock responded that Hailsham Town Council did not yet own this facility, although it was nearly ready to be handed over. The sports field was not yet ready for use.
- 10.8** A member of the public asked why the litter bins in Vicarage Field did not have closed tops, therefore allowing the birds to pull out the rubbish. The Chairman said that this was a matter for the owner of Vicarage Fields, although he sympathised with the situation.
- 10.9** Mrs M Kitcher asked why the Historical Society had not been notified of the reinstatement of the conservation area? Mr Kelvin Williams from Wealden District Council said he would look into this.
- 10.** Mrs King asked what was going to be done about cars parking at the bus stops.
10 The Chairman said that this was down to enforcement action.
- 10.** Mrs T Berry asked if there was any take up on the offer of two free weeks for stallholders at the market. The Town Clerk responded that he was not able to answer this.
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- 11** The Chairman thanked members of the public for attending. He thanked councillors and Council staff for all their hard work throughout the year.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.12pm.