

## **HAILSHAM ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

**1 MINUTES AND REPORTS** of the Hailsham Annual Town Meeting held at Hailsham Civic and Community Hall on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 7.30 pm.

**2 PRESENT:** 15 Hailsham Town councillors; 56 Hailsham electors; 5 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.

The Chairman introduced the Lord Lieutenant, Mr Peter Field and his wife, Margaret. The Lord Lieutenant would be presenting the Hailsham Hero Community Award.

**3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs B Holbrook, Glenn Moore, Ms A O'Rawe, J Puttick, C Tasane and A Willis.

**4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2017 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**5 MATTERS ARISING**

None.

**6 Hailsham Hero Community Award**

The Chairman said that the Hailsham Hero Community Award was for someone in the town who had undertaken some work for the community.

The Chairman read out the list of people nominated for this year's award. There was a particular mention for the lollipop lady who had worked for community for a number of years, who had passed away in the last year. This year, for the first time there were joint winners: Ron Lloyd and Janet Simes from Hailsham East Residents' Association.

The Lord Lieutenant congratulated them both and presented them with a trophy each.

**7 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.

## **8 East Sussex Highways**

The Chairman said that he had received one written question that was pertinent to East Sussex Highways. It was from Wayne Spicer, who asked:

“We live on the new housing Estate the grange/Welbury Meadows - the parking situation on Brunel Drive has over the past year has become increasingly dangerous with cars and industrial vehicles parked along the road only allowing single cars to pass and reducing visibility and increasing the risk of a head on collision - can anything be done to stop cars parking along the road and on the roundabout its only a matter of time before someone is injured. All houses have parking allocated but this isn't being used as people are choosing to park outside their houses instead of parking at the back or in the spaces to save time.

I look forward to hearing if there is a solution.”

The Chairman introduced Dale Poore from East Sussex County Council who responded that parking restrictions were about to be introduced in Brunel Drive which should help the situation.

Questions were raised on the poor condition of the High Street. Mike Egleton from the ESCC contractors, Costain Jacobs was also in attendance. He was aware of the situation in the High Street and the strong local feelings about it. He said it was getting worse and needed to be put right as a matter of urgency. Costain Jacobs would meet the costs of doing the remedial work. There was to be a meeting of the MASHH Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2018 where local councillors' views would be sought.

Mr M Osborne of Station Road raised the number of potholes in Hailsham. He was aware that money to fill potholes had been allocated and asked what percentage would be going to Hailsham. Mr Poore responded that £1.77 million had been allocated across East Sussex; he was not in a position to say how much of this would be spent in Hailsham.

Councillor Holbrook said that the potholes in Mill Road had been worsened by the construction traffic.

A member of the public said that there was a very large pothole near the cemetery in Ersham Road that had not been repaired within the 28 days period earmarked for repairs. Mr Poore said he would look into the situation the next working day.

County Councillor G Fox said that in his experience, ESCC officers were very responsive when reacting to reports of potholes. He suggested that, wherever possible, reports of potholes be made on-line.

Other comments were made about localised flooding in the High Street and the difficulty funeral directors had parking for services in Hailsham Parish Church.

Councillor N Collinson asked if the timings of the traffic lights could be looked at in the bottom end of the High Street. Mr Poore said that he would talk to the Highway Steward.

Councillor Mrs Van Der Geyten said that she had received complaints from elderly people who were being hurt whilst on buses when going over the raised areas in the High Street,

## **9 Electors Questions**

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

Question 1 from Trevor Powis

*I was very pleased to see the Town Council developing a Business plan, however I am disappointed to see the plan adopted by the Town Council. It states well the responsibilities of the council, however both in policy and spending it sets no priorities and shows little ambition.*

*Although it supports the Neighbourhood plan, it allocates no spending to realising it. There is not even budgeting for additional staff for the new Community centre, or allocation of funds for the infamous High Street bollards, even though they have been a council objective for some time.*

*It shows no potential for additional income from future building in Hailsham or how the extra revenues raised from those taxpayers would be used to provide additional facilities and infrastructure for the Town.*

*Will the Council revisit the plan to produce something more meaningful, perhaps taking the rather radical step of consulting with the electorate rather than making decisions on their behalf that I suspect are in fact not supported by the majority.*

*A dynamic business plan would be a great opportunity for the town, and one I feel we are missing.*

The Chairman responded that everything that is in the Plan is intended to be achieved, so will not need to be prioritised.

Mechanisms will be put in place to ensure that ambitions contained in the Neighbourhood Plan are not forgotten. Most of the Plan will be realised through CIL funding not Hailsham Town Council's usual budget.

There is a budget for additional staff to appoint a manager at the James West Community Centre. There is funding also for the new street bollards – it will be coming from Council reserves.

It is impossible to predict and therefore plan for additional facilities because it is not known how many houses will be built, and, therefore, how much CIL money will be paid per year, so this could not appear in Hailsham Town Council income.

Question 2 was from Kelvin Hinton.

*Now that Hailsham Forward is being established as a CIC what actions are the Town Council intending to take to review its relationship with Hailsham Forward and*

*to ensure that there is openness and transparency of the true costs met by the Town Council, in supporting Hailsham Forward through resources including staffing costs, and the public purse?*

The Chairman said that this was reviewed as part of the process of drawing up the business plan. The Council had resolved to allocate resources to a business development function and part of the way that is delivered would be through the partnership of Hailsham Forward. All Payments made by Hailsham Town Council are recorded and available.

Question 3 was from Kelvin Hinton

*Why is Hailsham Town Council opposed to the carrying out of public consultation on critical matters ahead of decisions being made given its comments on the importance of public involvement and the Town Council being the level of local government closest to the public?.*

The Chairman questioned what was meant by 'critical matters' or was it being suggested that Hailsham Town Council consults every time it makes a decision, which would slow down everything and be expensive in terms of officer time.

Virtually all council meetings are open to the public, giving people the opportunity to make their view known to the council.

Question 4 was from Kelvin Hinton

Why does the Town Council have a complaints policy but no policy or set of customer service standards? Is the Council opposed to the introduction of such a policy and standards which would allow the public to know what standard of service is/can be expected from the Council?

The Chairman responded that the Council has never resolved to adopt a customer service policy and as far as he was aware there is not an issue with the Council's customer services that warrant it.

Question 5 was from Kelvin Hinton

What role or contribution does the Council believe party politics has or should have in the organisation, administration and decision making of the Council?

The Chairman said that the Council had not adopted a policy on this, so it was impossible to say what the Council collectively thinks of this.

## **10. Open Questions**

The Chairman invited members of the public in attendance to ask questions.

Mrs T. Berry asked when would the town get a decent market on a Saturday?

Councillor Triandafyllou said that markets up and down the country were struggling. He suggested Mrs Berry attend a future meeting of the Communities Committee to put forward her ideas on how the Saturday market could be improved and get more stallholders to attend.

A member of the public asked why the children's swings in the South Road play area had been removed.

The Town Clerk replied that the swings had become dangerous and, therefore, had to be removed for safety reasons. The Council's Strategic Plan Committee had recommended replacing the swings; he was hopeful that this would happen before the summer.

A member of the public asked about public transport to and from the new doctors' surgery in Reef Way.

A representative from the local Clinical Commissioning Group said that they would be liaising with local transport providers.

- 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 9.09pm.