



HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of Hailsham Town Council, held at, Hailsham Civic Community Hall, Hailsham, on Wednesday 26th September 2018 at 7.30 p.m.

Public Question Time

Before the beginning of the formal business of the meeting, fifteen minutes had been set aside to allow members of the public to address the Council or ask questions (on matters relevant to the Town Council), at the invitation and discretion of the Chairman.

Two members of the public spoke about his misgivings over the planning permission granted for dwellings in the Old Court House by Wealden District Council and Councillor Collinson's role in the process. Councillors Tasane and Puttick also spoke on the issue and expressed their concerns about the scheme, the fact that it had been delegated to officers rather than brought to the Planning Committee at Wealden District Council and the concerns raised by a number of local residents.

Councillors Collinson and Coltman clarified the situation, advising that they had both 'signed off' the application being delegated to officers because there had been no material planning reasons for the application to be considered by committee at Wealden District Council. Councillor Collinson also advised that he had tried hard to get the application onto the committee agenda but had been unable to do so.

Councillor Mrs Van Der Geyten thanked staff, councillors and members of the public who had attended the funeral of the unknown woman at Hailsham Cemetery earlier in the week.

HTC/2/18 /156 **Present:** Councillors: Mrs. B. H. Beckett, F. Berry, G. Blake-Coggins, T. Burns, N. A. Collinson, Mrs C V Collinson-O'Toole, N. S. Coltman (Chairman), Mrs. S.P.M. Cottingham, G. De Jongh, R. T. Grocock, Graham Moore, M. Pickney, S. Potts, J. Puttick, C. A. Tasane and Mrs. S. Van Der Geyten.

157 **Officers in Attendance**

Mr. J. Harrison (Town Clerk), Ms M. Foster, Mrs K. Giddings Mr. D. Saxby and Mr. T. Hall.

158 **Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Mrs. A. Clarke, Mrs. B Holbrook, P. Holbrook, Mrs. M. Laxton, Glenn Moore, Ms A. O'Rawe and C. Triandafyllou.

159 **Declarations of Interest**

None were received.

160 **Chairman's Update**

The Chairman congratulated Councillors Mrs Beckett and Pinkney on their forthcoming marriage.

He said that Hailsham Town Council was still prepared to take over the running of the Post Office in the event that no other interest is shown to ensure that it stays in the town.

The Chairman said that the official opening of the James West Centre would take place on 13th October 2018.

161 **Confirmation of Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes and reports of the meeting of Hailsham Town Council held on 18th July 2018 (Ref HTC/18/128-156), as printed and circulated, may be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

162 **Committee Recommendations to Council**

Members were asked to consider the following recommendations made by committees, which were outside of their terms of reference or were otherwise resolved as recommendations to full council:

163 **Communities Committee – 28th August 2018 – Christmas Lighting Contract**

RESOLVED to defer this item until January 2019 to sample the lighting scheme in Christmas 2018.

164 **Neighbourhood Plan Committee**

RESOLVED to:

a) note the Town Clerk's report on screening assessments, and

b) approve the Neighbourhood Plan Committee's delegated authority up to the next Town Council meeting.

Wealden District Council Local Plan Response

165.1 The appointed Sub-Committee's draft response to Wealden District Council's Local Plan had been circulated with the agenda.

165.2 **RESOLVED** to agree the Sub-Committee's response to Wealden District Council's Local Plan, as circulated with the agenda and to submit it to Wealden District Council.

Plan for Festivities and Events

166.1 Members were asked to consider the Communities Committee's costed plan for future festivities and events, as set out in the officer's report circulated with the agenda.

166.2 **RESOLVED** to agree the Communities Committee's plan for future events at a total cost of £20,325. £15,825 of this would come from the Festivities Budget and the remaining £4,500 coming from the Revitalisation Fund.

166. Councillor Berry requested that his abstention from voting be recorded.

Access for All Sub-Committee

167.1 Councillor De Jongh spoke and referred members to the report circulated with the agenda. He said that the purpose of the proposed Sub-Committee would be to make recommendations to the Council's Strategy Committee on issues regarding access and inclusivity of Council services and more generally to consider these issues within the parish.

Members expressed reservations about constituting another sub-committee when the Council should take access and inclusivity into account in all its decisions and actions.

167.2 **RESOLVED** that, where relevant, all Council committee reports should have an equality impact assessment included as a matter of course.

Remshalden

168.1 The Mayor had received a letter from the Remshalden Twinning Committee following the trip by their scouts to Hailsham.

They saw the visit as a stepping stone towards building a friendly relationship between our towns. The Mayor had been invited to visit Remshalden.

168.2 **RESOLVED** to include the Mayor of Remshalden on the Mayor's Christmas card list along with the Mayor of Gourney-en-Bray; and for him to write to them separately.

Committee Membership

169.1 A suggested revised schedule of membership of committees, sub-committees and working groups had been circulated with the agenda.

169.2 **RESOLVED** to agree the revised schedule of membership of Hailsham Town Council committees, sub-committees and working groups for the remainder of the 2018-19 year.

Grass Cutting Schedule for 2019-20

170.1 Members were asked to consider a report received from East Sussex County Council regarding the urban grass cutting schedule for 2019-2020.

170.2 For the 2018/2019 grass cutting Hailsham Town Council had taken the decision to pay for one additional cut at the value of £2729. East Sussex County Council had advised this option is no longer feasible for the following reasons;

First, there are no environmental advantages to cutting the grass three times a year, as it does not allow any wildflowers to develop or wildlife to create habitats within the verge and secondly by having a difference in the amount of grass cuts for individual parishes it makes challenging for our sub-contractors to schedule the grass cutting across the County. Therefore, to be fair to all parishes, this option will no longer be offered.

Two other options were available from East Sussex County Council:

- For Hailsham Town Council to pay for four additional urban grass cuts to enhance the service provided by the County Council. To enable the provision of a service of six cuts this would cost Hailsham Town Council in the region of £10916 per annum.
- A financial contribution to Hailsham Town Council to carry out the two urban grass cuts based on current ESCC contract rates which will be in the region of £5458 per annum. This can be provided to the community as a basis to commission and employ your own grass cutting services using a local contractor.

The final option also available is to not go with either of the above and East Sussex Highways will carry out two cuts per season, managing the urban grass for safety reasons only.

A deadline of 19th October 2018 for a response was given.

- 170.3 **RESOLVED** that Hailsham Town Council would pay for four additional urban grass cuts to enhance the service provided by the County Council. To enable the provision of a service of six cuts this would cost Hailsham Town Council in the region of £10,916 per annum.

Confidential Business

- 171 **RESOLVED** that due to the special and confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, and possible disclosure of personal or legal information not in the public interest at the present time, the following items of business be transacted following the temporary exclusion of members of the Public and Press, in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders No. 1E:

15 Hailsham Post Office

16 Cemetery Staff

The reason for exclusion is:

(b) terms of tenders, and proposals, and counter-proposals in negotiations for contracts and engagement, terms of service, conduct and dismissal of employees.

Hailsham Post Office

- 172.1 The Town Clerk updated members on latest developments in respect of the post office.
- 172.2 **RESOLVED** in principle to enter a short-term licence agreement for the premises at 10 High Street to cover costs for business rates and utilities and part rent at a cost in the region of £650 per month for a period of 4 months.
- 172.3 This was agreed by 9 votes to 4. Councillor Mrs Van Der Geyten requested that her abstention from voting be recorded.

Cemetery Staff

173.1 The Town Clerk referred members to the officer's report circulated with the agenda.

The previous Cemetery Superintendent had resigned from his post in December 2017. Since then the outcome of the independently commissioned Cemetery Administration Review had been impending which meant that no decision on the recruitment of a replacement had been taken.

Since then, the Council's Grounds Maintenance Operatives had fulfilled most of the role of the Cemetery Superintendent.

The outcome of the Cemetery Administration Review had not suggested any significant changes to the role of Cemetery Superintendent or any other staffing structures for the Cemetery; officers felt that the time was now right to fill the role permanently.

173.2 **RESOLVED** that the role of Cemetery Superintendent is offered for recruitment internally in the first instance on a permanent basis, with all staff being offered the chance to apply for the post.

That, if any member of staff is interested and successfully recruited to the role, to then recruit to the vacant role by advertising the vacancy through the usual means.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.33 pm.

CHAIRMAN