HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL
STRATEGY COMMITTEE

MINUTES
of the meeting of the Strategy Committee,
held at the James West Community Centre, Brunel Drive, Hailsham
On Monday 29th July 2024 at 7.00 p.m.

StC/24/02/01 **Public Forum**
None presented

02 **Present**: Cllrs; G. Blake-Coggins, C. Bryant, D. Chapman, P. Holbrook (Chair), M. Laxton, C. Mitchell, K. Nicholls and A-M Ricketts (Deputy-Chair).

03 **Officers Present:** J. Harrison (Town Clerk)

04 **Apologies For Absence:** received and accepted from Cllr A. Clarke

05 **Declarations of Interest:**
None given

06 **Confirmation of Minutes**
RESOLVED to accept the Minutes of the meeting of the Strategy Committee held on Monday the 25th March 2024 as a correct record and that they are signed by the Chairman.

07 **Progress Against the Town Council's Strategic Plan**

The committee considered the report by exception. John Harrison highlighted and the committee discussed the following:

07.01 **Specialist Markets**

Cllrs A. Clarke, A-M Ricketts, and HTC Officers K. Giddings and K. Butcher has met with WDC in the last few months to talk about the trading rules for the market. Advised they could not 'relax' the rules, but we could try to book other traders if no complaint is received. Restrictions on food stalls are still an issue. Kayley has found some buskers for the future markets to make them more attractive.

Various means of improving the street market were discussed; HTC has previously commissioned an independent survey, and a market manager had previously been engaged to run the market. There is currently a market manager running the market very successfully in Herstmonceux, although they do not have the same restrictions that the Hailsham market has. The market is currently run at a loss and for some members is not seen as a cost-effective venture. Staff availability to work the markets every weekend. A review of the market had come out of the recently commissioned 'Visioning Day'.

These matters to be discussed more fully at the next Communities Committee meeting as they have been extensively at previous meetings.

HTC made the decision to reduce the markets to fortnightly, after this had been referred to 'full council' by the Communities Committee. This is to be reviewed by a Working Group after twelve months. A complaint had been made by some market stall holders which would be fed into the review process via the committee and the working group.

07.02 **Playgrounds**

DRAFT

New ‘Teen swing’ had recently been installed at the Stroma gardens playground. Quinnel Drive playground improvements on hold until spring 2025 as Cemetery toilets prioritised and because ground had been affected by poor weather.

07.03 **Upgrade to HTC land/future CIL projects**

Bike repairs café – next meeting with Hellingly and WDC to be arranged.

Adult Gym – refurbishment has been agreed, but delivery of equipment is delayed by ten days and being chased by HTC’s Works manager.

Common Pond footpaths work mostly completed, some additional work to be completed on other side. There is ongoing issue with goose waste.

07.04 **Brunel Drive land adoption**

Councillors questioned why the delay in transferring the land had taken so long. The S106 amounts to be paid by the developer to WDC and transferred to HTC has been calculated by WDC. Committee RESOLVED to send a letter from a lawyer asking the developer to progress the situation.

There would be a need to review the layout and use of the Community centre once the land had been adopted. Assets Management Committee had previously resolved to look into converting the land to a Country Park and increase parking on site. WDC had advised it would be necessary to apply for planning permission.

07.05 **Ersham Road Triangle**

Land exchange documents for the ‘new’ village green have been received from WDC some time ago, with the advice to ensure both land transfers occur at the same time. ESCC are not yet in a position to have HTC’s land transferred to them.

A MASHH meeting had been held recently which included two new project managers who will progress the work on the various projects. The new contractor is in place and they will have completed the detailed design by the end of this calendar year. Drainage surveys are taking place from 12-23 August, they are working with UKPN on moving the substation, are looking at a set of parking options that they have asked to be forwarded to HTC for comment, and it has also suggested that they build charging points into the parking provided.

The government funding for the A22 interventions has been confirmed on the basis of the outline business case, but the detailed business case is now required. ESCC are happy that the MRN funding remains approved.

ESCC had advised that they would check the optimum time for the land exchange .

07.06 **Square Youth Café**

The Square youth café is now closed, services running from the new Station premise. The August Assets Management Committee meeting will consider what agreements will be in place for the CIC’s relationship with the Town Council.

Cllr Mitchell advised he has some questions about the roof quotes to be answered.

The committee were asked if the Hailsham Youth Service were now no longer held responsible for the maintenance of the old Square Youth Café, to be raised at the next Finance and Governance Committee.

DRAFT

Safe Hub and similar services will be relaunched in the Manse once it is operating, support group and individual work and other health & wellbeing related services.

Youth Service are currently working with police and YOT team. Project work with school the has now finished, but HCC have been approached to have regular safeguarding meetings.

Friday Night Project – numbers are down, so HYS are reviewing the activities on offer and plan to relaunch.

'Station' base for the Youth Service has now been purchased, work has gone into the upgrading fire alarm and security system and that electrical systems are safe. Refurbishments to take place over the summer including carpets, painting. Scaffolding is up for the roofing work & contractor appointed. New disabled access gateway to be put in place. Queries about the scaffolding and its proximity to the playground and request to ensure appropriate safety measures are in place. New Facilities and Operations Manager to start on the 27th and related matters will fall into his remit.

07.07 **Noticeboards** – AMC March recommended ClL expenditure on noticeboards for County Park, Maurice Thornton, James West Centre and Western Rd Rec. Installation is pending, possible before the cemetery work. Agreement was that the notices etc would be posted by Council members for each ward.

07.08 **Post Office** – new manager has been doing a lot of work on promoting the service. Banking help facility was stopped on the advice of Post Office Regional Manager.

07.09 **Neighbourhood Plan** – The council now has a fully costed plan for the renewal of the Neighbourhood Plan in line with the new WDC Local Plan. There is likely to be a need to approach Council for additional funding. Application for government funding of £10K has been made. We have a costed plan running to the end of this financial year, so may need to approach council for additional funding this year as well as adding to the budget for next. Effect of new national government's planning laws remain to be seen, as may affect levels of housing etc in the WDC local Plan.

The Committee were advised that Cllr K. Williams of WDC may wish to come to an HTC meeting to advise of any changes to the WDC Local Plan.

08 **Confidential Business**

RESOLVED that the press and public are excluded during the discussion on the next item of the agenda as they concern employment issues and the terms of tenders and proposals and counter proposals in negotiation for contracts, or are otherwise confidential information.to go into confidential business.

09 **Progress against the Town Council's Strategic (Confidential Items)**

The Committee noted ongoing issues highlighted regarding theprojects on this part of the strategic plan. The committee expressed concern over the fact that meetings have not been held for some time and therefore time had been lost in the project.

The consultancy company appointed for the project had just appointed a new project manager to work on the project, a meeting with them was to be arranged as soon as possible. It was also time to re-elect a chair for the joint working committee which this year should be a Hailsham Councillor.

10 **Maintenance Plan**

The revised maintenance plan would be commissioned in the new financial year via the contract to hire a surveyor to assess the HTC main buildings and assets and the arrival of

the Operations and Facilities Manager.

The committee received and noted an update on progress against the Maintenance Plan.

11 **Strategic Plan**

The committee considered the 'Visioning Day' report received from CHRGS and the recommendations that came from it. The committee considered the following points:

- This should be delegated to the individual committees, develop the relevant parts of the council's Strategic Plans.
- The committee were asked to acknowledge how much work the council had put into achieving its objectives in the current plan.
- Some important and 'thorny' issues have been identified in the CHRSG Visioning Day such as reviewing the Market and HTC's input into Hailsham Forward.
- The new plan has to be more SMART and targeted than the current, for e.g. specific years and costs attached to key projects and tasks.
- The council should aim for the new plan to starts at the next council year, therefore May 2025.
- All Staff are involved in implementing the plan and therefore need to be involved in the process in order to ensure 'buy-in' from all staff.
- Should there be an element of public consultation in the Town Council's new Strategic Plan – how to achieve this is to be determined. Consultation is best achieved once the plan and budget has been determined.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.23pm

CHAIRMAN

DRAFT