



# HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the Meeting of Hailsham Town Council held at the Hailsham Civic Community Hall, Vicarage Lane on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2025 at 7.00pm.

HTC/25/2 /119 **Present:** Councillors: A. Blake-Coggins, G. Blake-Coggins, C. Bryant (Chairman), B. Carpenter, D. Chapman, J. Crittenden, M. Laxton, C. Mitchell, K. Nicholls, A. M. Ricketts and G. White.

120 **Officers in Attendance**

Mr J. Harrison (Town Clerk), Mr. T. Lee (Operations Manager) and Mr D. Saxby.

121 **Public Question Time**

A member of the public addressed the meeting. He had attended other council meetings and was pleased with the way Hailsham Town Council conducted its business. He was, however, concerned about the number of councillors that attended meetings.

The Town Clerk read out a letter he had received from a member of the public. They were concerned about the use of public funds for the Stand Proud event held at the White Hart pub and questioned whether such funding provided value for money. Also, whether the drag act was suitable for a family day event.

Councillor Laxton said that the Stand Proud event was an inclusive event with over 300 people attending throughout the day. The drag act was sponsored by a local estate agent.

122 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received and accepted from Councillors A. Clarke, F. Clarke and Rusu.

123 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Bryant declared an interest on the agenda item referring to Linden Court as his sister attends there.

**Confirmation of Minutes**

124.1 Councillor Chapman said that he was no longer a member of the Assets Management Committee

124.2 **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Annual Meeting of Hailsham Town Council held on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2025, as amended, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

124.3 **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Meeting of Hailsham Town Council held on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

125 **Chairman's Update**

The Chairman reported that he had attended a very moving event at the boxing club, where a father spoke about the death of his son in a knife attack.

He had also attended a performance by the Hailsham Choral Society, a Bonfire Society fundraiser, the VE Day event and the Stand Proud event.

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Mitchell he was pleased to see the amount of voluntary work undertaken in the town. He had attended events organised by the Allotment Society and Hailsham Photographic Society.

126 **Town Clerk's Update**

The Town Clerk reported that staff were back in the Inglenook.

The Responsible Finance Officer was on long-term sick leave and would not be returning to work before the end of August, at the earliest. He was looking for RFO support and was talking to ESALC. The Finance and Governance meeting scheduled for later in the month would be postponed.

He spoke about the proposal to bring in legislation to allow hybrid remote meetings shortly. This would bring a number of problems that would need to be addressed. It may be that councillors would have to be issued with laptops to enable this to happen.

He was looking at introducing a meeting management system that would save officer time.

Finally, the Banking Hub was working well.

127.1 **East Sussex County Council Update**

Both county councillors had submitted written reports that had been circulated with the agenda. Councillor Fox was unable to attend the meeting. However, Councillor Carpenter thanked Councillor Fox for his work on opening the taxi rank in the High Street.

Councillor Murphy updated the meeting on his report.

Councillor Laxton asked if there was a funding structure in place for the graffiti wall. Councillor Murphy responded that Hailsham Town Council would be asked to take on the maintenance and cleaning of it.

Councillor Laxton suggested that it be an agenda item for the September meeting of the Assets Management Committee. Councillor Carpenter requested that a formal report be supplied, specifically on the costs.

127.2 **RESOLVED** to note the County Councillors' updates.

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## **Wealden District Council Update**

Councillor G. Blake-Coggins reported that he had been elected Chairman of Wealden District Council. His chosen charities for the year were Alzheimer's Research UK and Children's Respite Trust. He would be undertaking some fundraising activities for these charities; these were a parachute jump, wing walking and abseiling.

Councillor White said that Hempstead Lane roundabout had been resurfaced.

No further information was available on what would be devolved following the local government reorganisation.

The Sports Hub would be open in 2026.

Finally, Councillor White said that all Wealden District councillors would be given grants to spend in their wards. No further information was yet available.

## **Committee Recommendations to Council**

### 129.1 **Assets Management Committee – 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025 – Union Corner Hall**

129.2 Councillor Mitchell declared an interest as he is a Council representative on the Union Corner Hall Management Committee.

The Hall had gone from a surplus of £25,000 in 2020/21 to a loss of £2,000 last year, mainly due to a 61% increase in utility costs. The ongoing increase in utility costs means that the treasurer predicts that the Hall will be bankrupt in three years.

The Committee currently receive £1,000 per annum towards expenses from Hailsham Town Council; this figure has not increased since 1982.

The Committee has looked at ways of saving costs, including not having a cleaner.

There is a need to build a toilet/changing space. The estimate for this was approximately £17,500.

The Committee had recommended to Council to increase the sum of £10,000 from Ripley's money by a further £10,000 maximum in order to that work can be progress in a timely fashion to meet the required school holiday start date. This would have no overall budget implication beyond the use of CIL money.

129.3 **RESOLVED** to increase the sum of £10,000 from Ripley's money by a further £10,000 maximum in order to that work can be progress in a timely fashion to meet the required school holiday start date. This would have no overall budget implication beyond the use of CIL money.

129.4 Councillor Mitchell abstained from voting.

## **Standing Orders**

130.1 Copies of the Standing Orders had been circulated with the agenda.

Members were asked to consider an amendment to the Council's Standing Orders 9G and 9T.

130.2 **RESOLVED** to not ask for an amendment to a motion to be made in writing (9G) and that the recommended time for speeches should be 3 minutes (9T); and that the amendments stand adjourned until the next meeting.

131 **Confidential Business**

**RESOLVED** that the press and public are excluded during discussion on during the discussion on agenda item 12 as it concerns: the beginning of legal proceedings, terms and conditions of service or negotiations for contracts, (in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders No, 1E).

132.1 **Assets Management Committee – 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025 - Welbury Farm**

The Assets Management Committee had resolved to recommend to Council that the land at Welbury Farm is adopted with the commuted sum payment of £387,799.44 advise Wealden District Council of this position, conditional on the land being transferred and the Section 106 payment made to Hailsham Town Council within three months.

The Council/Assets Management Committee will then consult the public on any potential changes and uses of this land when it is adopted.

132.2 **RESOLVED** that the land at Welbury Farm is adopted with the commuted sum payment of £387,799.44 advise Wealden District Council of this position, conditional on the land being transferred and the Section 106 payment made to Hailsham Town Council within three months.

The Council/Assets Management Committee will then consult the public on any potential changes and uses of this land when it is adopted.

This was carried by 10 votes to 0 with 1 abstention.

132.3 Councillor Carpenter requested that his abstention from voting be recorded.

133.1 **Assets Management Committee – 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025 - Western Road Drainage**

The Assets Management Committee had resolved to recommend to Council to commission the £160mm land drain at a cost of £8,408.68 from the quoting contractor and to allocate for this project from existing CIL receipts.

133.2 **RESOLVED** to allocate £8,408.68 from CIL money for drainage work to the Western Road Recreation Ground, the funding for this project to come from existing CIL receipts.

134.1 **Assets Management Committee – 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025 - Harold Avenue Allotment Site Gates**

The Assets Management Committee had recommended to Council to commission the work to the Harold Avenue allotment gates at a cost of £4,800, to be taken from existing CIL receipts.

134.2 **RESOLVED** to allocate £4,800 from CIL money for the work to the Harold Avenue allotment gates.

This was carried by 10 votes to 0 with 1 abstention.

134.3 Councillor Carpenter requested that his abstention from voting be recorded

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.27pm.