

**MINUTES of the ORDINARY MEETING of the TOWN COUNCIL held in the NEW MILLENNIUM CHAMBER, MANOR HOUSE, CHURCH STREET, LITTLEHAMPTON on THURSDAY 24 JANUARY 2019 at 6.30pm**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs B Blanchard-Cooper (Mayor), Ayres, C Blanchard-Cooper, Buckland, Calvert, Chester, Gammon, Northeast, Squires, Tandy, Dr Walsh KStJ and Warren QVRM

**2018/2019**

**60. EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

The Chair and Clerk outlined the evacuation procedures.

**61. FILMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND MOBILE PHONES**

The procedures were noted.

**62. APOLOGIES**

There apologies from Councillors Baker and Purchase.

**63. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda. The standing declarations were noted, and no further declarations were made.

**64. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22nd November 2018 (previously circulated) were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

**65. TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT and URGENT ITEMS**

**65.1** The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting, he observed that his diary was busier than last year and before highlighting some key activities he spoke about the antisocial behaviour that continued to be an issue in the Town. Expressing his sadness about this, he urged everyone to continue reporting all criminal and antisocial behaviour to the Police as and when they saw it.

### **65.2 Christmas Light Switch On**

The Mayor reported that he had received positive feedback regarding the Christmas lights display and thanked all the staff that were involved in supporting the display and switch on event for the Town to enjoy.

### **65.3 The Pancake Olympics**

The Mayor reminded everyone that this year's event would be held on Saturday 2nd March 2019 and he asked Councillors to contact the Events Team if they were available to act as competition judges on the day.

### **65.4 Town Merit Awards**

The Mayor invited Councillors to make nominations of groups and individuals for this year's Town Merit Awards. It was noted that these would be presented at the Annual Town Meeting on Thursday 21st March 2019. This was an opportunity to recognise those, who in the opinion of the Council, had made a significant contribution to the Town. It was noted that the deadline for returning nomination forms was 28th February 2018.

### **65.5 Mayoral List**

The Mayoral list was circulated to Member's (copy attached to the minutes) and set out the range of functions that the Mayor had attended since the last Full Council meeting. The Mayor invited Members to join him at his main fundraiser "Curtain Up, the Sequel!" on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and to St Mary's on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2019 for the Civic Service.

## **66. PUBLIC FORUM**

There were five members of the public present.

**66.1** Regarding the decision made on temporary toilets for events by the Community Resources Committee, Mr Terry Ellis expressed concerns regarding the potential lack of toilet facilities particularly for the disabled and infirm who attended the Armed Forces Day event. He asked if it was possible for toilet provision at this event to be reconsidered.

**66.2** It was noted that following a thorough discussion by the Committee, it was considered that as this was a day time event, the existing provision would be sufficient. This was unlike other events, such as Screen on the Green, where better provision was needed as the public facilities would be closed.

**66.3** Councillor Buckland addressed the Council from the public gallery, as Vice-Chairman of the Veterans Breakfast Club. He was pleased to inform Members that the Club had been open for one year. In this time the organisation had gone from strength to strength and was exploring new projects for the future. On behalf of the club, he presented a gift to the Mayor as a thank you for his support.

**67. CORRESPONDENCE OR ISSUES IN RESPECT OF THE DISTRICT OR COUNTY COUNCIL**

There were none.

**68. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES – (NON-EXEMPT)**

**68.1 Recommendations from Committees**

Council considered a report (previously circulated) which drew together the recommendations from the last cycle of Committee meetings that needed to be approved by Council. There was one from the Property and Personnel Committee, two from the Policy and Finance Committee and one from the Community Resources Committee.

**68.1.1 Property and Personnel Committee: Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018  
Minute 41.3 - Local Government Pension Scheme Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP)**

Council was asked to adopt an Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP) in respect of the Local Government Pension Scheme. It was **RESOLVED** that:

***The Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure be approved and adopted.***

**68.1.2 Policy and Finance Committee: Monday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018  
Minute 55.2 - Communications Strategy Review**

Council had before it the Communications Strategy which had been revised following a review by the Communications Manager and the Policy and Finance Committee. Members thanked the Communications Manager for the excellent report and it was **RESOLVED** that:

***The revised Strategy be agreed and adopted.***

**68.1.3 Minute 55.7 - Governance Update**

Council was asked to approve changes to the Scheme of Delegation to Committees (Appendix 2 attached) to provide clarity regarding the formation of a Complaints Panel. The Town Clerk explained that the complaints policy had also been updated to address the anomaly in the complaints procedure. It was noted that a Complaints Panel, when formed, would reflect the political balance of the Council and make provision for the nomination of a representative from minority groups if appropriate. Members therefore unanimously **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) The forming of a Complaints Panel be removed from the matters delegated to the Governance and Audit Committee.***
- 2) The Complaints Panel Procedures was the only way to select a Complaints Panel (appendix 3 attached to the report).***

- 3) **A minority group member be included on any complaints panel or where there was no overall control, that at least two parties be represented on the panel.**

**68.1.4 Community Resources Committee: Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018**

**Minute 44.8 - Our Town Littlehampton Initiative**

Council was asked to support a recommendation that the Town Council joined this initiative. It was noted that if approved, staff would receive training to familiarise themselves with the scheme and that the effectiveness of the scheme would be monitored. Members were supportive of the proposal and it was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

**The Town Council participate in the Our Town initiative (appendix 4 of the report).**

**68.2 Committee Minutes (Non-Exempt)**

**68.2.1 Policy and Finance**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018 (previously circulated). Regarding Minute 55.4, Members' Allowances Review, it was clarified that the Members' Allowance was under review by Arun District Council (ADC) and a decision on Town Councillor allowances would not be agreed until ADC had reached a decision.

*Councillor Walsh declared a personal interest in the following matter as Vice-Chair of West Sussex County Council's Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee.*

**68.2.2** Regarding Minute 55.1, Health Care provision in Littlehampton, the response from the Department of Health was disappointing and observing that the local MP was to be requested to take this matter up, it was agreed that he be provided with a briefing on the current situation.

**68.2.3 Community Resources**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018 (previously circulated) with no matters arising.

**68.2.4 Planning and Transportation**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2018 (previously circulated) with no matters arising.

**68.2.5 Planning and Transportation**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019 (previously circulated) with no matters arising.

**68.2.6 Property and Personnel**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018 (previously circulated) with no matters arising.

### **68.2.7 Governance and Audit**

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

## **69. OFFICERS REPORTS**

### **69.1 Council and Committee Dates 2019/20**

Council received and considered a draft calendar of dates (previously circulated) for the 2019/20 meeting cycle. Whilst every effort had been made to avoid clashes with District and County Council meeting dates, Members were encouraged to let the Town Clerk know if this was not the case. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

***The Draft Council and Committee dates for 2019/20 be approved.***

*Councillor Dr Walsh KStJ declared a personal interest in the following matter as a member of the Littlehampton Harbour Board.*

### **69.2 Littlehampton Harbour Board Sub-Committee Request**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) that outlined the recent establishment of a sub-committee by the Board to channel the process of applying for a Harbour Revision Order (HRO). The Board had approached the Town Council asking it to nominate either a Town Councillor or Officer to join the sub-committee as a co-opted member. The willingness to engage the Town Council in this process was welcomed, however Members sought reassurance that in participating in the sub-committee, the Town Council's ability to participate in any subsequent consultation on a revised HRO would not be compromised. Councillor Dr Walsh KSt5J proposed that Councillor Buckland be nominated as the Town Council's representative as he had considerable knowledge of the Harbour and was the Ward Member. This was seconded by Councillor Chester. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

***Subject to reassurance about the Town Council's ability to participate in any future public consultation on a revised HRO, Councillor Buckland be nominated as the Town Council's representative on the Littlehampton Harbour Board Statutory and Governance Sub-Committee.***

## **70. FINANCE**

### **70.1 Full Budget Report 2019 – 2022**

The Council had before it a report (previously circulated) which set out the proposed Council Budget for 2019/20 and Projected Budgets for 2020/21 and 2021/22 (previously circulated). In addition to the precept Council was also asked to approve a number of recommendations that

aimed to provide clarity on the Town Council's payment approval process. The Mayor thanked the Deputy Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer for her expertise and work during the Budget process. The Chair of the Policy and Finance Committee was pleased to present the proposed Council Budget for 2019/20 which aimed to deliver improved key services to the Town, whilst also maintaining the Town Council's assets.

**70.2** Members went on to debate the proposed budget in more detail. A Member suggested that a 3% increase would be a burden for residents already struggling in the current economic climate and that the budget should only be increased by 1% to cover essential services. Members' attention was drawn to some major changes in the budget, including the decision to support community transport initiatives and other major project such as the new Keystone Youth facility. It was also observed that a 3% increase was comparatively modest and would reduce the likelihood of the Council having to draw further on its reserves and provide the flexibility to step in to support local services if Council so wished. It was noted that the budget would also go towards the ambitious work regarding community facilities and would continue to support Town traders, events, grants and the Museum. These views had also been expressed by the Committees when considering their individual budgets. It was also acknowledged that a 1% increase would represent a real-terms cut, which would significantly impact upon the Council's proposals for new projects such as at the Keystone Centre. The level of precept proposed for 2019/20 represented a 3% increase (£3.54 per annum) for Band D Council Tax payer, which was considered good value for money. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) *1) The budget for 2019/20 setting a Precept of £1,197,150 be approved.*
- 2) *2) The projected budgets for 2020/21 and 2021/22 be noted.*
- 3) *3) The level of the General Reserves (3.7, 3.8 of the report) be approved.*
- 4) *4) The existing procedure, as per Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, of authorising of Council expenditure (4.1 of the report) be approved.*
- 5) *5) The existing procedure, as per Financial Regulations, of authorising expenditure to a value not exceeding £200 on the Imprest Account (4.2 of the report) be approved.*
- 6) *6) Authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to spend Earmarked Reserves up to the amounts included in the approved EMRs, subject to the requirements of the Standing Orders,*

**Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation (4.3 of the report).**

- 7) **Authority be delegated to Town Clerk to spend external Grant monies as outlined in the grant application (4.4 of the report).**

**74. REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

There were none.

**75. EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were none.

The meeting closed at 7:25pm.

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**TOWN MAYOR**