

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Town Council held in the New Millennium Chamber, Manor House, Church Street, Littlehampton, BN17 5EW on Thursday 22 June 2023 at 6.30pm

Present:

Councillor Tandy – Chair
Councillor Billy Blanchard-Cooper
Councillor Alan Butcher
Councillor Jeffrey Daws
Councillor Maralyn May
Councillor Mike Northeast
Councillor George O'Neill
Councillor Dr James Walsh KStJ*
Councillor Christine Wiltshire
Councillor Amelia Worne

2023 to 2024

18. Evacuation Procedures

The procedures were noted.

19. Filming of Council Meetings, Use of Social Media and Mobile Phones

The procedures were noted.

20. Apologies

There were apologies from Councillors Lee and Tilbrook who were away, and Councillors Long and Woodman who had other commitments.

21. 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 at this point.

22. Minutes

The Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on 18 May 2023, previously circulated, were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

*Councillor Dr Walsh KStJ joined the meeting at 6.35pm.

23. Town Mayor Report and Urgent Items

The Mayor's engagements report, copy attached to the Minutes, had been circulated to Members before the meeting for information. The Mayor was pleased to report that his schedule had been busy. He also reminded Members that Armed Forces Day was on 24 June, and he looked forward to seeing everyone there.

24. Public Forum

There were two members of the public present.

24.1. Public Consultation: Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Scheme

A member of the public addressed Council on the matter of the above-mentioned consultation which had been launched by Arun District Council. Speaking of numerous issues with a block of flats in the parish, they urged the Council to come to the aid of residents who had had to put up with poor accommodation for many years and highlight the need for regular Council inspections to ensure the safety of residents.

The Mayor thanked them for their representation and empathised with their situation. He also observed that the Town Council's Planning and Transportation Committee would be considering a response to this consultation at its meeting in July.

It was therefore resolved that:

The representation be noted and considered for inclusion by the Planning and Transportation Committee in its response to the consultation.

25. Correspondence or Issues in Respect of the District or County Council

There was none.

26. Reports from Committees – Non-Exempt

26.1. Recommendations from Committees

There were none.

26.2. Committee Minutes – Non-Exempt

26.2.1. Planning and Transportation

Councillors Blanchard-Cooper, Northeast and Tandy declared personal interests in the following matter, as members of Arun District Council's Planning Committee. They confirmed that when considering the planning applications for Littlehampton, they would do so without predetermination, taking into account the papers that were at the meeting.

Council received and noted the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2023, previously circulated. Regarding minute reference 6.5., Road Markings, it was thought that Littlehampton had suffered more than most through a failure to maintain road markings. The quality of the road markings and the many potholes was a prominent issue for residents and it was acknowledged that Highways maintenance was the responsibility of West Sussex County Council. Members wished to explore how this might be addressed locally.

It was therefore resolved that:

West Sussex County Council be approached to take this matter forward.

26.2.3. Regarding Minute reference 6.4., Planning Application LU/299/22/PL, Land North of Littlehampton Academy, it was reported that residents remained concerned about these proposals. In particular, local residents sought a commitment to protecting the remaining green space and confirmation that the planned sewage pumping station would not emit odours or noise. In response the Mayor stated that at a presentation made to the June meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee by the developer, assurances had been given regarding the impact of the sewage pumping station. Acknowledging the concerns about protecting the remaining green space, he undertook to raise this at the District Council's Planning Committee the following week and to also seek confirmation regarding how the sewage pumping station would work.

Councillor Worne left the meeting at 6.53 pm.

26.2.2. Community Resources

Council received and noted the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2023, previously circulated. Members were again invited to attend the Armed Forces Day event on 24 June and encouraged to help with the questionnaire that was being used to collate feedback about the event.

26.2.3. Policy and Finance

Council received and noted the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2023, previously circulated. Regarding minute 8.2.2., the Public Realm, the Town Clerk reported that quotes for repairs to the clocktower were being sourced and that she was liaising with the District Council to take forward the necessary work.

Councillor Worne rejoined the meeting at 6.58pm.

27. Officer's Reports

27.1 Audit and Annual Return 2022 to 2023

27.1.1. Annual Governance Statement 2022 to 2023 - Section 1 of the Annual Return

Council received a report, previously circulated, seeking approval of the 2022 to 2023 Annual Governance and Accountability Return which was the Statutory Statement of Accounts for the Council. The Town Clerk explained that in doing so, the Council was firstly required to formally confirm that it was satisfied its business had been conducted in accordance with the law, regulations, and proper practices. This was evidenced by the Council responding positively to the eight assertions that formed the Annual Governance Statement. These assertions were supported by evidence which was tested by the Internal Auditor whose end of year report would also be published with the Annual Return.

Regarding the Internal Audit recommendations, it was noted that progress was being made to recover the outstanding debtors and that this was monitored by the Policy and Finance Committee. Regarding the level of money cover insurance, it was noted that the Council had instigated a system of additional checks to mitigate against the risk highlighted by the Auditor without the need to increase the level of insurance cover. Members were satisfied with the effectiveness of the system of internal control and commended the Responsible Financial Officer for his stewardship of the Council's finances.

Council therefore unanimously resolved that:

- 1. To the best of its knowledge and belief, with respect to the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2023, it has complied with all eight statements.**
- 2. The Mayor, as Chairman of the Council, and the Clerk be authorised to sign Section 1 of the 2022 to 2023 Annual Return on behalf of the Council.**

27.1.2. Statement of Accounts 2022 to 2023 - Section 2 of the Annual Return

Council received a report, previously circulated, which sought approval of the 2022 to 2023 Accounting Statement. The Town Clerk explained that this contained a summary of the of the Council's financial transactions during the year to 31 March 2023. The Internal Auditor had highlighted that the prior year value of fixed assets had been incorrectly stated on the 2021 to 2022 Return. This was because an incorrect value was used to reduce

the fixed assets following the disposal of the premises at 82 Wick Street. It was noted that this had been corrected and the value of Box 9 on the 2022 to 2023 Accounting Statement for the year ending 31 March 2022 re-stated as £3,029,666. Members considered that the Annual Statement of Accounts was an accurate reflection of the Town Council's finances.

Council therefore resolved that:

- 1. The Annual Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 be approved.**
- 2. The Mayor, as Chairman of the Council, be authorised to sign Section 2 of the 2022 to 2023 Annual Governance and Accountability Return on behalf of the Council.**

28. Reports of Representatives on Outside Bodies

- 28.1.** As a member of the Littlehampton Bonfire Society, Councillor Blanchard-Cooper reported that the Society had opened a temporary shop in the High Street to encourage donations and help with their fund-raising efforts. The shop was run by volunteers and the Society also continued to look for other avenues through which to raise funds.
- 28.2.** As the Town Council's representative on the Rampion 2 Community Liaison Group, Councillor Wiltshire updated members on the progress of the windfarm project. She reported that a development consent order for a scheme with a reduced number of turbines was expected to be submitted this Summer. If successful, the application process for a Development Consent Order would commence including a full public consultation. A decision was expected by the end of next year with construction set to commence in 2026 and an estimated completion date of 2029. Outlining some of the key changes to the scheme it was noted that whilst the number of turbines was reduced, their size had yet to be confirmed. This and the potential impact on the West Beach remained a concern and there would be much to consider when the Development Consent Order process got underway. This would also allow an assessment to be made of the implications for the operation of the A259 and to ensure that residents in the development area were not cut off. In this respect it was also suggested that Stagecoach be approached to see if there was potential to introduce another route like those recently brought into operation in a trial between Barnham and Chichester. It was considered sensible that this be raised with the Town Council's Planning and Transportation Committee.

It was therefore resolved that:

The Planning and Transportation Committee be requested to consider taking forward a request for additional bus services serving Littlehampton.

29. Exempt Business

There was none.

The meeting closed at 7.11pm.

Chair

Mayoral Events attended between 2023 and 2024-Councillor Freddie Tandy

#	Attendee	Date	Organisation	Event	Activities at event	Venue
1	M	19 May 2023	Littlehampton District Lions Club	Charter Dinner Celebration	Attend	The Boathouse at Littlehampton Marina
2	M	20 May 2023	Tori Productions	Frozen the musical	Attend	The Windmill Theatre - Littlehampton
3	M	31 May 2023	Ryan Patterson	Police Engagement Meeting	Attend	The Manor House
4	M	01 June 2023	WSCC Lieutenancy	WSCC Lieutenancy Briefing Meeting	Attend	Edes House, County Hall, Chichester
5	M	11 June 2023	Nautical Training Corps	79th Founder's Day Parade and Celebrations 2023	Attend	West Green - Littlehampton
6	M	14 June 2023	ADC	ADC Chairman Reception	Attend	ADC Building, Littlehampton
7	DM	19 June 2023	Littlehampton Shop Mobility	25th Anniversary of Shop Mobility in Littlehampton	Attend	1-5 St Martins Lane, Littlehampton, BN17 6BS