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Town Clerk – Laura Chrysostomou

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Town Council held in The New Millennium Chamber, Manor House, Church Street, Littlehampton BN17 5EW on Thursday 4 December 2025 at 6.30pm.

Present:

Councillor Tandy – Chair
Councillor Lee – Vice Chair
Councillor Woodman
Councillor Daws
Councillor Tilbrook
Councillor Wiltshire

In attendance:

Sofia Chittenden – Communications and Marketing Manager
Felix Gillett – Community Resources Officer
Julia Edge – Museum Curator
Rachel Marshal – Events Manager

2025 to 2026

30. Evacuation Procedures

The evacuation procedures were noted.

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

The procedures were noted.

32. Apologies

There were apologies from Councillor Blanchard-Cooper, Councillor Woodman attended as their substitute.

33. 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. Councillor Woodman declared a personal interest across the agenda

as a member of Arun District Council and, specifically for agenda item 8.1, as a volunteer at Fare Divide, whose service funding agreement was discussed within the report.

34. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2025 previously circulated, were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

35. Chair's Report and Urgent Items

The Chair reminded members and encouraged them to attend Small Business Saturday, which was scheduled for 6 December 2025. A range of activities and discounts would be taking place. Some of which were rescheduled from the postponed Christmas Light Switch-On.

36. Public Forum

There were three members of the public present, and no written representations.

The General Manager and Volunteer Co-Ordinator at Arun Community Transport spoke about the group's aspirations ahead of the review of its service funding agreement. He stated they were an active group and hoped to continue and expand their involvement in the wider community through events. The Chair thanked them for their comments.

The Worthing Road allotments site representative requested a follow-up regarding repair of the site's fence and updates on general maintenance. They were assured that the previous updates would be recirculated and that progress to general maintenance within the schedule of works would be investigated.

37. Officer's Reports

37.1. Service Funding Agreements

- 37.1.1. The Community Resources Officer presented a report, previously circulated, which detailed the Task and Finish Group's recommendations for Service Funding Agreements (SFA). The funding was focused on delivering services that were vital to residents and whose absence would have been significantly detrimental to the town. These agreements, if approved, were scheduled to take effect from 1 April 2026. Groups were informed that if successful they would not be eligible for Grant Aid Funding. It was also highlighted that a two-year agreement term - shorter than the typical three years – had been proposed for one organisation to allow for flexibility alongside the development of a new project and capital investment opportunity.

37.1.2. Members noted the increase from the current SFAs total of £12,000 to the proposed £31,000. This increase had been incorporated into the budget setting reports to be discussed later in the agenda. The recommended recipients, agreement terms, and annual amounts were unanimously agreed by Members as detailed in the report.

It was resolved that:

1. The recommendations regarding the Service Funding Agreements for Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice Bureau, Arun Community Transport, Fare Divide, Home-Start Arun, Littlehampton and District Foodbank, Littlehampton District Lions Club, Littlehampton Sportsfield, Shopmobility, Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester be approved and considered as part of the 2026 to 2027 budget discussions and beyond.
2. The meeting notes of the Service Funding Agreement Task and Finish Group be noted.

37.2. Sports Funding

37.2.1. Members had before them a report, previously circulated, which proposed funding awards to local groups with the intention of benefiting the community and widening participation. Each application had been thoroughly assessed by the Sports Funding Selection Panel, which comprised members from the Grant Aid Panel and the Sports Forum Executive Committee.

37.2.2. The demand from local groups was higher than expected, exceeding the £2,000 funding available. As a result, the Committee was asked to approve the use of £924 from the Sports Forum earmarked reserve to support the panel's recommendations. This brought the total proposed funding to £2,924, which would be divided among five groups in the amounts detailed in Appendix 1 of the report. Applicants confirmed that their service could still be delivered without receiving the full amount of funding requested.

37.2.3. The report also proposed that due to the high level of interest from groups this year, the Sports Grant Funding budget for 2026 to 2027 and onwards should be set at £4,000 per annum in the forthcoming budget discussions. Members welcomed the wide-ranging interest and supported the continued contribution of these groups to the health and wellbeing of the community.

It was therefore resolved that:

1. The recommendations regarding Sports Funding for Howard Lawn Tennis, Littlehampton Badminton and Squash Club, Able Kicks SEND Football Coaching, Littlehampton Rugby Club, Wick Dynamos and Diamonds Junior Football Club be approved.
2. £924 from the Sports Forum earmarked reserve be used towards the 2025 to 2026 funding awards.

3. The Sports Funding budget be set as £4,000 for the next financial year, 2026 to 2027.
4. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

37.3. Museum Periodic Report

The Committee received a report, previously circulated, which contained further information regarding The Body Shop Sculptures, the Project Time Machine Officer Post, details of a heritage fund grant application, as well as acquisition proposals and updates on recent activities and engagements with the museum. The Committee proceeded to discuss these proposals in more detail.

37.3.1. Body Shop Sculpture

The decision on accepting one of the available sculptures was deferred at the previous meeting. This report provided further details on the financial implications of the decision, alongside various cost, display and restoration options. While the sculpture would be a donation, costs associated are regarding the restoration work and transport. The Committee agreed to accept the option of the whole woman seated on a block, preferably siting on the "S" block. Due its clear historical significance, Members were keen to see it incorporated into the museum's future exhibitions.

The acquisition of this sculpture is dependent on the transfer of ownership to the Littlehampton Museum. Information regarding this was not available at the time of the meeting and would be investigated further by officers. If ownership could not be transferred to the Museum, the sculpture could not be acquired.

37.3.2. Continuation of the Project Time Machine Officer

The Committee proceeded to consider the continuation of the Project Time Machine post for six months, January to June 2026, on a part-time basis to provide continuity between projects and funding applications, ensuring the team is suitably resourced to prepare for the commencement of the Project Time Machine continuation project.

37.3.3. Heritage Fund Grant Application

A National Lottery Heritage Fund application had been prepared by the Museum team. The funding would be a continuation of Project Time Machine and would focus on building solid foundations for the next 100 years. The report provided details of the purpose of the grant and sought approval to proceed with the application, consistent with standing order 13.d. It was proposed that £7,320 of Museum Earmarked Reserves could be used to match this potential funding.

37.3.4. The Committee considered the acquisitions attached to the report as Appendix 2, and the engagement figures detailed in Appendix 3.

It was therefore resolved that:

1. Subject to the transfer of ownership to the Littlehampton Museum, The Body Shop sculpture of a women sitting on a block be restored and transported to the museum for an approximate total of £1,155 (£300 from the Collections Management budget, £500 from the Exhibitions EMR and £355 from the Events EMR).
2. The use of the following Earmarked Reserves: £1,317.44 from a Continuing Professional Development Grant, £546.92 from the Places of Science Grant, and up to £10,000 from the Community Resources Initiatives, to continue the Project Time Machine post be approved.
3. The grant application for the National Lottery Heritage Fund for £127,913 and use of £7,320 from Museum reserves to match this towards the Heritage Fund Project be approved.
4. The recommended acquisition of items as set out in Appendix 2 be approved.
5. The engagement figures in Appendix 3 and contents of the report be otherwise noted.

37.4. Events Periodic Report

37.4.1. The Events Manager presented a previously circulated report which detailed outcomes of Remembrance Sunday and updated members on the postponement of the Christmas Light Switch-On due to unsafe weather conditions. Officers were working with contractors, entertainers, and businesses to defer as many activities as possible to the upcoming Small Business Saturday.

Following previous discussions regarding the focus and impression given by 'Armed Forces Day', the report provided alternative names that aligned with the Ministry of Defence's funding criteria and Members' previous comments. Councillor Lee proposed the event's name be changed to 'Armed Forces, Families and Veterans Day' which was seconded by Councillor Wiltshire. The purpose of the change was to expand its opportunities and reach, and to state its valued contribution more clearly to the wider community. It was emphasised that Armed Forces Day was well attended and highly praised by residents in the recent event survey. The target audience of veterans, those currently serving, community groups, support services, and families had been reflected in previous years attendance. The Chair highlighted there could be unknown cost implications to rebranding the well-established event. The Committee voted in favour of changing the event's name.

It was resolved that:

1. Armed Forces Day event be named 'Armed Forces, Families and Veterans' going forward.

2. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

37.5. Events Support Funding

- 37.5.1. The Committee had before them a report, previously circulated, which proposed the adoption of a formal policy and procedure to govern a new Events Support Fund, as discussed at the previous meeting. The draft policy appended to the report outlined eligibility criteria, the application process and evaluation criteria. It was highlighted that, within the process, community groups and charities would be the primary focus and any for-profit organisations would still be supported, though not monetarily. Members were asked to approve this draft document.
- 37.5.2. Mindful of the growing amount of funding opportunities, the Chair highlighted the need for a singular funding panel, to input into all community grants. This would be investigated by officers, any amendments required in the policy to reflect this would be made at the Town Clerk's discretion.

It was resolved that:

1. The draft Event Support Funding Policy be approved and the inclusion of £2,000 per annum in the budget to be met from earmarked reserves be agreed.
2. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

37.6. Quarterly Business Plan Progress Report

- 37.6.1. The Committee considered a previously circulated report providing an update on the progress made towards achieving the business plan goals reviewed and agreed by Council in October, as they related to the Committee's work.

It was resolved that:

The report and action plan updated be noted.

38. Finance

38.1. Committee Budget Monitor

- 38.1.1. Members considered a report, previously circulated, highlighting significant variances from budget income and expenditure relating to the Community Resources budget for 2025 to 2026. It was welcomed, observing that the budget had been tightly controlled by officers.

It was resolved that:

The report be noted.

38.2. Venue Hire Fee Charge Proposals 2026 to 2027

38.2.1. The Committee considered a report, previously circulated, setting out proposals for room hire charges for the forthcoming financial year. The report included the current prices to compare against increased price examples for both Southfields Jubilee Centre and K2 Youth and Community Centre. The report contained research undertaken by officers that mirrored the Committee's aim to ensure that the prices of the Town Council's venues remained competitive against other comparable facilities in the area.

It was resolved that:

1. The level of room hire charge be increased by 7.5% for 2026 to 2027.
2. Authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to apply discounts and offers on an individual basis and as appropriate to further the Town Council's Community Centre's Action Plan objectives.

38.3. Committee Draft Budget Proposals 2026 to 2027, 2027 to 2028 and 2028 to 2029

38.3.1. Members considered a report, previously circulated, setting out proposals for this committee's budget for the next three years. The Town Clerk explained the background to the budget setting process and how the precept calculation was impacted by annual changes in the number of households from which council tax was collected. The projected increase in the Council's overall budget for 2026 to 2027 was currently 6.20% modelled on last year's household figures. It was noted that the current projected precept figure for 2026 to 2027 was subject to change as the December budget setting progressed.

38.3.2. The Committee budget had been drafted to take into consideration estimated increases in costs for the coming year and projected forward to 2029. Members proceeded to review the Community Resources budget proposals in more detail and the following points were noted:

- The overall Community Resources Committee budget had increased by 9.79%. This increase was largely due to agreed increases in Grants and Service Funding Agreements and replacement furniture for Southfields Jubilee Centre, the latter of which would be met from the Capital Receipts Reserve.
- Funding for the youth service contract had been increased to account for inflation.
- North Littlehampton Community Centre reserves would be reduced due to the amount earmarked in previous years being sufficient and the extended timelines allowing more time to build reserves.

It was resolved that:

1. The draft Committee budget for 2026 to 2027 and the projected budgets for 2027 to 2028 and 2028 to 2029 be approved and recommended to the Policy and Finance Committee.
2. The Committee's Earmarked Reserve position be noted.
3. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

39. Exempt Business

There was none.

The meeting was closed at 19:27 pm.

Chair