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Town Clerk – Laura Chrysostomou

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held in the K2 Youth and Community Centre, Eldon Way, Wick BN17 7HE on Thursday 24 April 2025 at 6pm

Present:

140 members of the public including Councillor Lee – Town Mayor, Councillors Blanchard-Cooper, Butcher, Daws, Long, May, Tandy, Dr Walsh KStJ and Wiltshire.

2024 to 2025

1. Evacuation Procedures

The evacuation procedures were noted.

2. Filming of Council Meetings Use of Social Media and Mobile Phones

The procedures were noted.

3. Apologies

The meeting received and noted apologies from the representatives of several local groups and public sector organisations.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 25 April 2024 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

5. Town Mayor's Report

- 5.1. Welcoming everyone to the meeting and reflecting on his year in office the Mayor observed that the agenda for the evening mirrored how busy he had been. The question he had most often been asked was, where did he come from and this had made him consider carefully that origin was not as important as what the community of Littlehampton meant to him. Looking at the audience that had gathered to recognise that same community spirit he was also reminded of the countless individuals and groups that were active in the Town, especially those who supported young people and he looked forward to seeing the Town continue to grow through the new investment that was coming forward.

6. Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP) Presentation

- 6.1. The Mayor welcomed the BCRP Manager Chloe Jones to the meeting. Ms Jones proceeded to deliver a presentation explaining the role of the BCRP. By working in close collaboration with Sussex Police, Arun District Council, and other key partners, the BCRP aimed to deliver a coordinated response to local issues affecting businesses and the wider community.
- 6.2. A key component of this partnership was the DISC system, an online platform that enabled businesses to report incidents, identify repeat offenders, and share information. DISC not only supported responses to shoplifting and anti-social behaviour but also captured broader issues such as graffiti, rough sleeping, and vandalism in public spaces. Reports submitted through DISC were used to inform police and council responses and contribute to evidence that could lead to further enforcement or prosecution.
- 6.3. Regular engagement with the local Neighbourhood Policing Team, including joint patrols and intelligence sharing, also ensured that areas identified as problem hotspots were actively monitored. The BCRP also participated in multi-agency meetings, such as Operation Apprentice, where neighbouring BCRPs and partner agencies collaborated on crime-reduction strategies. Arun District Council monitored ongoing reports and could issue enforceable Behaviour Orders to repeat offenders. It was, however, noted that this process depended on consistent and accurate reporting from businesses to build a reliable evidence base. While not all incidents lead to immediate action, repeated reports helped identify patterns of behaviour, enabling targeted interventions.
- 6.4. The key benefits of the BCRP and DISC reporting system were:
 - Strong working relationships with Sussex Police and Arun District Council
 - Real-time reporting and intelligence sharing via DISC
 - Identification and deterring repeat offenders
 - Improved quality and consistency of business reporting
 - DISC training and crime prevention support for businesses
 - Enhanced partnership communication through awareness meetings
 - Safer, more welcoming town centre for visitors and communities
 - Clear evidence to support additional policing and local authority resources
- 6.5. Bringing her presentation to a close, Ms Jones highlighted that together, the BCRP and DISC empowered businesses to take an active role in community safety, helping to create a safer, stronger, and more resilient town. The Mayor thanked Ms Jones for her presentation.

7. Sports Awards and Commendations

7.1. The Sports Awards were given by the Littlehampton Sports Forum and the Town Council to recognise the achievements of local sportspeople and recognise the vital contributions of off-pitch community champions. Covering ten categories, the meeting celebrated seventeen winners. The Mayor handed over to Councillor Tandy as Chair of the Sports Forum to make these presentations.

7.2. Coach of the Year

- **Commendation: Sue Eason – Arun Tridents Swimming Club**
A long-serving and highly qualified coach, Sue had developed swimmers from entry-level to regional competition and continues to develop her own coaching skills while devoting countless hours, often four evenings per week and weekends.
- **Commendation: Stewart Lister – Littlehampton Tennis Club**
Coaching at Howard Lawn Tennis Club and local schools, Stewart had helped players of all ages, encouraging a lifelong love of tennis in a calm, inclusive setting.
- **Award: John Mills – Littlehampton Rugby Club**
In his second season coaching the men's team, John's structured sessions and commitment had driven the team to near-unbeaten success, attracting wider community interest and significantly growing the club.

7.3. Contribution to Youth Sport

- **Award: Littlehampton Rugby Club Minis, Coaching Team**
From parents to coaches, this dedicated group has grown the minis section from scratch, offering children aged 5–10 an engaging and supportive introduction to rugby.

7.4. Contribution to Disabled Sport

- **Award: Nikki and Jamie Dalby – Wick Dynamos Inclusive Football**
Leaders of two inclusive teams for neurodivergent and physically disabled young people. Their sessions provided safe, social sport, and participation had grown so much that expansion was now planned.

7.5. Sports Administrator of the Year

- **Award: Felix Gillett – Littlehampton Town Council**
Through his role with the Town Council and work with the Sports Forum, Felix has revitalised local sports networking and ensured the town's sporting successes and needs are recognised and supported.

7.6. Unsung Hero

- **Award: Charlotte Simpson – Freedom Leisure**

As Healthy Communities Manager, Charlotte quietly but powerfully supports Littlehampton families through active play and inclusive initiatives, making a tangible difference with humility and compassion.

7.7. Youth Sports Team of the Year

- **Commendation: Littlehampton Town Youth Football Club Under 12s White Team**

Playing up a year group and reaching the Sussex County Cup semi-finals, their success is a testament to their determination and excellent coaching from George Gaskin.

- **Commendation: Littlehampton Rugby Club Under 16s**

Starting the season with 15 players, now 22 strong and still growing. Praised for their attitude and camaraderie, this team embodies team spirit and dedication.

- **Award: Littlehampton Wave Life Saving Club**

Since 2019, this youth-led club has trained lifeguards, won national awards, and provided over 320 voluntary training hours. A standout moment: the unforgettable “Newfs in Action” event featuring Newfoundland rescue dogs and our own Mayor’s dramatic beach “rescue”.

7.8. Sports Team of the Year

- **Commendation: Norfolk Bowls Club**

A supportive, successful, and welcoming club, Norfolk Bowls combines athletic excellence with outstanding community spirit.

- **Award: Littlehampton Rugby Club**

League champions and Sussex Cup semi-finalists, the men’s team has achieved its best season ever, boosting the entire club’s visibility and growing its junior and ladies teams.

7.9. Young Sportsperson of the Year

- **Commendation: Elsie Huxtable – Arun Tridents Swimming Club**

Aged just 12, Elsie trains six nights a week and holds multiple Sussex titles, with an eye on national competition, she is an exceptional young talent.

- **Commendation: Dominic Armstrong – Littlehampton Badminton and Squash Club**

A dedicated and fast-rising star in badminton, Dominic is already competing at Under-17 level and showing remarkable progress.

- **Award: Clara Pahl – Howard Lawn Tennis Club**
With a 70% win rate and nine titles in the past year, Clara is the first player from Littlehampton to become a Sussex Champion in the club's 105-year history.

7.10. Sportsperson of the Year

- **Award: Lewis Jones – Arun Tridents Swimming Club**
A Para-swimmer in the S9 category, Lewis is on the Swim England Talent Pathway and has been invited to UK Sport's World Class Programme Confirmation Camp, an extraordinary achievement.

7.11. Mayor's Lifetime Contribution to Sport in Littlehampton

- **Award: Clive Harvey – Tuff Fitty Triathlon Club**
After 25 years as Chair (and previously Secretary), Clive's leadership has helped grow the club to one of the largest in the Southeast, while organising events and mentoring countless others in the sport.

8. To Hear Questions from The Public of Which Notice Has Been Previously Given

- 8.1. There was one written representation from a resident and services veteran who asked the Town Council to assist individuals affected by antisocial or discriminatory behaviour and that it signs the Forces Covenant.

In response the Town Clerk stated that while the Town Council could not take direct enforcement action, it would, with the resident's consent, refer the matter to relevant agencies including ward councillors, Arun District Council's Community Safety and Housing Teams, and Sussex Police. She also confirmed that the Town Council had signed the Armed Forces Covenant in June 2019 and supported veterans through events like Armed Forces Day and Remembrance Sunday and also provided grant aid to local veteran's groups.

9. To Hear Questions from The Public of Which Notice Has Not Been Given

There were none.

10. Reports From Representatives of Local Organisations

There were none.

11. Town Merit Awards

The public were invited to nominate residents and community groups who they believe deserved to be recognised for their contribution to the Town. The

final nominations were selected by a panel of Councillors and demonstrated the strong and vibrant community which was there for its residents and committed to the Town. The Mayor made the following presentations.

11.1. The Group Awards:

- **Arundel and Littlehampton Scout Band**
Recognising 35 years of musical contribution and youth engagement.
- **Edwin James Festival Choir**
Recognising over £150,000 raised for charities through music across 25 years.

11.2. The Individual Awards:

- **June Caffyn**
Respected councillor and Shopmobility volunteer for over 26 years.
- **Tim Bayliss**
Leader of the sea-swimming community, advocate for open-water safety and wellbeing.
- **Ian Neville**
Founder of the Armed Forces Veterans Breakfast Club and community transport organiser.
- **Alison Manester**
Leader of Girl Guides, known for her warmth, dependability, and community spirit.
- **Alan Gammon**
Former Mayor and champion of Shopmobility, nationally recognised for innovation and leadership.
- **Paul Wakeland**
Business leader, fundraiser, and key figure in the town's DISC and Radio Watch schemes promoting community safety.
- **Belinda Brighton**
Community advocate supporting residents at Chilgrove House well beyond her official role.

11.3. Mayors Lifetime Award:

- **Peter and Loreta Stojanovski**
Founders of the beloved Vardar Restaurant and leaders of Littlehampton's North Macedonian community for nearly 50 years.

12. Charter Of Friendship with Resen, North Macedonia

As a fitting close to the meeting, and looking ahead to welcoming a delegation from Resen, North Macedonia, to formalise a Charter of Friendship, the Mayor was honored to welcome the Ambassador of North Macedonia, Her Excellency Katerina Stavreska.

Addressing the meeting the Ambassador expressed her gratitude and thanks to the Town for the spirit of friendship that had been extended to the North Macedonian community. Congratulating all those who had received awards, she had been honored to join the proceedings. Finally, presenting the Mayor with a gift, she thanked him for his support in achieving this important milestone in the relationship between the two Towns.

- 13.** Bringing the meeting to a close, the Mayor thanked the Town Council staff for organising a wonderful event and everyone for their contributions.

The meeting closed at 7.03 pm.

Chair