

MINUTES of the ORDINARY MEETING of the TOWN COUNCIL held in the NEW MILLENNIUM CHAMBER, MANOR HOUSE, CHURCH STREET, LITTLEHAMPTON on THURSDAY 28 JUNE 2012 at 6.30pm

PRESENT: Cllrs Gammon (Mayor), Ayres, Belchamber MBE, Caffyn, Emberson, Hulmes, Long, Neno, Northeast, Scrivener, Squires, Dr Walsh and Weston

2012/2013

17. EVACUATION PROCEDURES

The Chair outlined the evacuation procedures.

18. MOBILE PHONES

Members and the public were reminded that the use of mobile phones (other than on silent) was prohibited at Town Council and Committee meetings.

19. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Bowyer and Britton.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declaration of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda.

21. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 24 May 2012 (previously circulated) were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

22. TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT and URGENT ITEMS

It was with great sadness that the Mayor reported on the recent loss of two Community members:-

22.1 MISS DOROTHY CLEVITT MBE

Miss Dorothy (Dot) Clevitt had been a stalwart member of the community and in December 2000 her work was recognized and Dot was awarded an MBE in the New Years Honours List for her services to the community.

Dot was a founder member of the Littlehampton Bonfire Society and the Littlehampton Twinning Association and for many years worked tirelessly with the Littlehampton Boys Club. She was also an active member on a number of other local voluntary community groups/organisations. Dot loved Littlehampton with a passion and will be sorely missed by all who had the good fortune to know her.

22.2 **PETER MOOR OBE QPM CPM FCMI**

Peter became a West Sussex County Councillor in 1997 - 2009. He took a great interest in local affairs and was fundamental in establishing the CVS in Littlehampton and was the Founder Chairman of this organisation. Peter fought hard and vigorously for the Voluntary Sector and his work will leave a lasting memory with all his colleagues.

22.3 The Council's thoughts went out to the family and friends of both Dot and Peter and they were thanked for their support and commitment to the community.

22.4 The Mayor circulated a list of her engagements to date and referred to the recent floods in the Town. She gave thanks to all those organisations and individuals who had helped with the flood relief effort.

23. **PUBLIC FORUM**

There were nine members of public present.

23.1 Mr Alan Humphrey referred to the history of the Town Show, the details of which he had circulated to Members. He referred to the continuing growth of the Show and how well it was received by the Townsfolk. He did not understand why the Show was being moved. He understood that this was to try to get more young people to attend, but referred to the number of entries from young people

23.2 He stated that at the last Community Resources Committee, Cllr Bowyer had referred to the vegetable show as being rubbish. He totally rejected this and asked for this statement to be retracted and for an apology to be made. He also referred to the Annual Town Meeting and how the 70+ people attending had voted for the date to be referred back to the Council. He stated that Cllr Bowyer had dismissed these as not being representative of the Town and again asked for an apology and retraction of this statement.

23.3 Mrs Carol Humphrey stated that the Town Show would not fit into Southfields Jubilee Centre and asked for clarification of the funds that would be set aside for a separate event in 2013

23.4 Mrs Margaret Boulton, of Littlehampton in Bloom, stated that she was disappointed by recent proposed changes in the Town, referring to the proposed closure of the Windmill Theatre and possible relocation of the Littlehampton swimming pool. She was particularly disappointed by the proposal to move the Town Show. Many people had grown used to the date, entries were drawn from all parts of the community and many organisations attended. She asked for the date to be retained as per past years.

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

The Clerk had received an update on cuts in bus services across the County from WSCC. None of these had a direct impact on Littlehampton.

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

25.1 **Recommendations from Committees**

25.1.1 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 were four recommendations for approval by the Council of which two were covered elsewhere on the agenda.

25.1.2 Property and Personnel Committee: 11th June – Southfields Jubilee Centre
Council supported the proposal for caretaking and cleaning at the Centre and **RESOLVED** that:

- (1)The staff structure be amended to bring together the Caretakers and Amenity Team under the oversight of the Services Officer**
(2)The appointment of caretaker / cleaner resources within the options set out in 3.4 of the Committee report for the maximum of 14 hours per week (probably 12) be approved and delegated to the Town Clerk.

25.1.3 Community Resources Committee: 31st May 2012:- Town Show Date

Council considered a recommendation from the Committee proposing that the horticultural element (Town Show) part of the Town Show & Family Fun Day be transferred to the new Southfields Jubilee Centre on the second Saturday in September with the Family Fun Day moving to the third Saturday of August. A wide ranging debate ensued where the following points were made opposing the recommendation:-

- The views of the speakers at this meeting and the Annual Town Meeting should be adopted
- It would be harmful to both elements if they were split.
- Apart from the marquee, there were very few savings to be made by splitting the event.
- There was concern that there was an agenda against the Town Show and Family Fun Day, which was disappointing given the great success that the event had become.
- There was no logical reason for this proposal
- The Town Meeting had been an excellent opportunity to gauge public opinion.
- The Town Show had originally been arranged in September for good reasons.
- The Town Show had been held in a range of venues, of which the Rosemead option had easily been the best.
- The Centre was too small.

Councillor Dr Walsh proposed an amendment to the recommendation such that both events remained on the second Saturday in September. This was duly seconded and it was requested that a recorded vote be taken.

25.1.4 The Chair of the Committee responded by stating that whilst he sympathised with the points raised, the proposal stemmed from a desire to reduce the cost of the event. He was unsure about whether the Centre would accommodate the Town Show and suggested that the resolution be amended to incorporate the wording “subject to the completion and suitability of the Centre”.

25.1.5 The amendment that both events remain on the second Saturday in September was voted upon thus:

Against	For	Abstained
Cllrs Gammon Hulmes	Cllrs Weston Belchamber MBE	Cllr Neno

Caffyn	Northeast
Emberson	Squires
Long	Dr Walsh
Ayres	
Scrivener	

- 25.1.6 Cllr Gammon proposed an amendment to the original proposal which was duly seconded adding to the recommendation the statement “subject to the completion and suitability of the Centre”.
- 25.1.7 It was stated that the sizes were known and the Town Show Committee had stated that it would be too small. It was also commented that this was clearly an attempt to be rid of the Show and that if this went ahead the volunteers who ran the event would walk away from it. It was stated that the amendment was an attempt to muddy the waters.
- 25.1.8 In response to these points it was argued that the Show was working well, but that the Council needed to cut costs. A recorded vote was requested on the amendment.

For	Against	Abstained
Cllrs Gammon	Cllrs Belchamber MBE	Cllrs Long
Hulmes	Northeast	Scrivener
Caffyn	Dr Walsh	Weston
Emberson	Squires	Neno
Ayres		

In the light of this it was therefore **RESOLVED** that

The Town Show (horticultural etc) be moved to Southfields Jubilee Centre on the second Saturday of September (subject to the completion and suitability of the Centre), with the Community Family Fun Day being held on the third Saturday of August 2013.

25.2 Members' Code of Conduct

Council considered a report (previously circulated) which, following discussions at the Policy and Finance Committee, proposed a new Code of Conduct and associated arrangements. The Clerk stated that the Code was different from that adopted by the District Council but was to protect Councillors from complaints.

- 25.2.1 In response to a question the Town Clerk explained that the outcomes arising from the new legislation included personal; personal and prejudicial as well as Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI). He believed that the District Council's Code was certainly not a refinement and left Members more open to allegations of misconduct. Whilst the County model / LTC draft Code was lengthier, it clearly stated what Members should and shouldn't do, which would greatly reduce complaints.
- 25.2.2 The reasons for exclusion from an item where a member had a personal and prejudicial interest (other from public question time) were principally to stop any involvement in the decision making process. The Clerk emphasised that

for a DPI, the Member would be excluded from all of the discussion and would not be allowed to participate, even at Public Forum/Question Time. This meant that Cllr Hulmes was correct in saying that a Member would have a lesser right in terms of attending meetings etc than other members of the public. However, other members of the public were not in a position to make decisions, nor did they have such a position of influence. These types of interest would also only occur very infrequently.

25.2.3 The rules on pecuniary interests were to inspire public trust and confidence in the workings of local government and dispensations would only be made in exceptional circumstances.

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25.2.5 Other observations by Members included the belief that the District Council would need to review their code in the near future and that District Councillors had not been fully briefed on the Code. It was commented that it was unfair that the public could make accusations against members without that Member being aware or able to respond, but the Clerk advised that he understood that under the new Code, Members would be informed of complaints/accusations. Council **RESOLVED** to:-

- (1) **Adopt the new Code of Conduct as set out in Appendix 1 of the report**
- (2) **Adopt the Dispensation Scheme as set out in Appendix 2**
- (3) **Approve the temporary delegation of Standards matters to the Audit Committee as set out in paragraphs 3.12 to 3.15 of the report**
- (4) **Otherwise note the report.**

25.3 Committee Minutes (Non-Exempt)

25.3.1 Policy and Finance

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2012 (previously circulated) with no matters arising.

25.3.2 Community Resources

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 31 May 2012 (previously circulated) with no matters arising.

25.3.3 Planning and Transportation

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 May 2012 (previously circulated) with one matter arising. Cllr Northeast referred to the Flooding in the Town and stated that although a fantastic relief effort had been made, there had been little help for residents when the floods were rising. He personally had been unable to obtain sandbags and asked whether the Town or District Council should provide these, together with sand for residents to fill their own. The Clerk hoped that the Flood Plan would be reviewed, to include a community response plan. An article would be included in Progress on lessons learnt. The Mayor was congratulated for her assistance at the Floods. Cllr Belchamber MBE referred to a previous flood, whereby Southern

Water installed larger drains in the Town. He believed that they should be approached for a solution to the issue.

25.3.4 Property and Personnel

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2012 (previously circulated) with one matters arising where it was noted that the shelters on either side of the Arun Footbridge would be removed in the Autumn and replaced by benches.

25.3.5 Performance and Publicity Overview

There have been no meetings of this Committee since the last Council meeting.

26. OFFICER'S REPORTS

26.1 Annual Review of Corporate Risk Assessments

Council considered a report (previously circulated). Members were concerned that risks should be minimised and the Clerk stated that this had been addressed where possible, with no risk rating above 3. Some typographical/spelling errors were noted that would be rectified. It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Annual Review of the Council's Risk Registers be endorsed.

26.2 Statement of Accounts - Annual Return 2011/12

Council considered a report (previously circulated) setting out the 2011/12 Annual Return, which forms the Statutory Statement of Accounts for the Council as at 31st March 2012. Council were satisfied with the Annual Return and therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1. The Annual Return - Statement of Accounts be approved and the Mayor be authorised to sign accordingly.**
- 2. The Annual Governance Statement be approved and the Mayor and Town Clerk be authorised to sign accordingly.**
- 3. It was recorded that there are no potential conflicts of interest between Members and the Council's Auditors Mazars**
- 4. The Internal Auditors Report be noted**

26.3 Statement of Accounts- Unaudited

Council considered a report (previously circulated) setting out the detailed Statement of Accounts for 2011/12. It was **RESOLVED** that:

The unaudited Statement of Accounts be approved and the Mayor and RFO be authorised to sign the Balance Sheet accordingly.

26.4 Rosemead Youth Shelter

Council considered a report (previously circulated) which outlined the vandalism of the shelter and the costs of repair. There were concerns that the

removal of the shelter would displace the young people to the children's' play park and also that the Police were not able to effectively police the shelter. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

1. **The Youth Shelter be repaired as set out in the report**
2. **Policing of the site with the local police to address the concerns of Members arising from the report.**

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

Cllr Caffyn reported on Wick Information Centre, who had enjoyed their Queens Jubilee party. Seven volunteers were presented with certificates for their assistance at the Centre. The Centre hoped to come to an agreement with Homelink next year over produce and flowers.

28. **MASTERPLAN – NORTH LITTLEHAMPTON**

The Clerk had nothing to report.

29. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Members of the public and accredited representatives of the press be excluded under Section 100 Local Government Act 1972 due to the confidential nature of the business to be conducted.

The meeting closed at 8:05pm.

TOWN MAYOR