

**MINUTES of the ORDINARY MEETING of the TOWN COUNCIL held in the NEW MILLENNIUM CHAMBER, MANOR HOUSE, CHURCH STREET, LITTLEHAMPTON on THURSDAY 27 JUNE 2013 at 6.30pm**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Bowyer (Town Mayor), Ayres, Belchamber MBE, Buckland, Emberson, Hulmes, Northeast, Neno, Squires and Dr Walsh KStJ

**2013/2014**

**20. EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

The Town Mayor outlined the evacuation procedures.

**21. 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.

**22. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Britton, Caffyn, Gammon, Long and Weston.

**23. 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. There were no declarations made at this stage of the meeting.

**24. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on (previously circulated) were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor.

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

**25.1 The Late Mr Stan Gamble**

The Mayor explained that the news of former Mayor Stan Gamble's death had been delayed pending confirmation of the funeral arrangements. These had now been received and it was noted that the funeral was to be private family affair with no flowers. Donations to the Chestnut Tree Home were invited should individuals wish to do so. Mr Gamble was Mayor of Littlehampton in 1983/84 and Council observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

**25.2 Armed Forces Day – 29 June 2013**

The Mayor urged Members to support the events organised by the Town Council to mark Armed Forces Day and asked Members to notify her if they wished to participate in the parade.

### 25.3 **Presentations**

The Mayor received the following presentations from Councillor Dr Walsh KStJ:

25.3.1 **Jubilee Stage by the Sea** – A certificate confirming funding support received from West Sussex County Council.

25.3.2 **Twining Charter** – A Charter commemorating the renewal of the founding Charter of the twinning partnership between Littlehampton and Durmersheim which began 25 years ago. The Mayor stated how much she had enjoyed her recent visit to Durmersheim and that she looked forward to returning the Town's hospitality later in the year.

### 25.4 **Insurance in Areas of Flood Risk**

The Town Clerk circulated details of a Government consultation which sought views on proposals to address the future availability and affordability of flood insurance. The deadline for responses was 8<sup>th</sup> August and the Town Clerk agreed to collate responses on behalf of Council. It was **RESOLVED** that:

**Members send their comments to the Town  
Clerk and the Consultation be noted.**

### 25.5 **Localisation of Council Tax Support**

The Town Clerk circulated a letter from the Chief Executive of Arun District Council confirming the decision of the District Council's Cabinet to provide the same level of support to Town and Parish Council's in 2014/15 as in the current financial year. Despite the uncertainty that remained over payments in future years Council welcomed the early notice of this decision. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

**The Contents of the letter be noted.**

### 25.6 **Joint Eastern Arun Area Committee (JEAAC):New Homes Bonus - Funds for Parishes**

Council received a report (copy attached to the minutes) from the Town Clerk which contained proposals to address an issue that had come to light regarding the distribution of allocated funds by the District Council to share amongst the parishes in their area. The Town Clerk reported that it had been brought to his attention that in Eastern Arun these funds had not been allocated or spent and that there were proposals to distribute these funds using the previously agreed JEAAC grants process. It was thought that, as in Western Arun, the Parishes should take the opportunity to discuss and agree allocations as before. It was therefore recommended that JEACC be asked to take this proposal into consideration and amend their previous decision accordingly at the meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2013. It was the strong view of Council that the funds should be used by Towns and Parishes for the benefit of their communities and that they should therefore have the opportunity to be fully involved in the decision on how the funds were allocated. It was noted that should the Town Council be successful in obtaining funds Members would be consulted on how the funds should be spent. Council therefore **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) Support the proposal asking JEAAC to amend the decision on this matter taken at their last meeting so as to allow the Eastern Arun parishes to agree a way forward as set out in the report attached to the minutes and in so doing ask its representative to vote accordingly/ second the motion.**
- (2) Instruct the Clerk, should this way forward be agreed, to liaise with other parishes to hold a meeting to progress this.**
- (3) Delegate to the Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor, authority to negotiate and agree an appropriate apportionment of the funds, having previously consulted Members on their thoughts/ideas for investing in a community initiative.**

## **26. PUBLIC FORUM**

There were four members of the public present.

- 26.1 Mrs Ann Thompson, Littlehampton Hospital League of Friends, asked what the rationale was for the proposed allocation of 15 houses on the hospital site as set out in the Neighbourhood Plan. She stated that the Hospital site should not even be considered as site for potential housing as it was protected by covenants.
- 26.2 The Clerk stated that it was understood that the Health Authority had plans for the provision of health facilities in the North of the Town and for the Health Centre. Funding for the latter was in part expected to come from the partial disposal of the hospital site. If that happened, it was thought that the desire of the community was that houses not flats be built. He went on to explain that the purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan was to set out the community's preferred options to accommodate the 200 houses that the Town had been directed to provide.
- 26.3 There was some discussion about options to protect the site during which it was reported that covenants on hospital land had lapsed on the creation of the National Health Service in 1947. It was also noted that funds from the sale of the site would have to be utilised in the provision of health facilities. In addition it was reported that the health centre building was nearing the end of its life, a wider range of medical facilities was needed and that if it were to be redeveloped, more land could be required. In conclusion, the Town Clerk stressed that the proposals set out in the Neighbourhood Plan were currently the subject of public consultation and he urged members of the community to come forward with their views. An open event had also been arranged for 10<sup>th</sup> July when Officers would be on hand to explain the Plan. Members of the community were encouraged to attend and the Town Clerk agreed to note the points made during the discussion. If Mrs Thompson was able to attend, he would discuss her concerns in more detail with her.

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

There were none.

## **28. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES – (NON-EXEMPT)**

### **28.1 Recommendations from Committees**

28.1.2 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 five recommendations for approval by the Council one from the Property and Personnel Committee and four from the Policy and Finance Committee.

#### **28.1.3 Property and Personnel Committee 10 June 2013**

##### **Minute 8.2 Official Orders**

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) seeking authority for the Amenity Team Leader to sign orders up to the value of £150. Council supported this and it was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

**The Amenity Team Leader be authorised to sign orders up to the value of £150.**

#### **28.1.4 Policy and Finance Committee 17 June 2013**

##### **Minute 6.2 DCLG – Your Council’s Cabinet – a Guide for Local People**

The Committee had considered the implications for the Town Council and the administration of its meetings if the public were permitted to film and record meetings. This had previously been discussed by the Performance and Publicity Overview Committee and there were concerns that filming council meetings was open to abuse. However, Members viewed it as an opportunity to raise awareness of the Town Council and encourage interaction with the public. They also wished to put guidelines in place to protect the privacy of members of the public and minimise disruption at meetings. Council therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) **The Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council or relevant Committee be delegated authority to agree permission to film / record meetings pending a report setting out the criteria which will be considered by Council in the Autumn.**
- 2) **Standing Orders be amended temporarily to permit this pending approval by Council of the criteria at a later date.**

#### **28.1.5 Minute 9.1 Arun District Council (ADC) Concessions, Market, Street Traders and Street Entertainers Strategy**

It had become apparent that the Town Council lacked a policy for concessions, markets street traders and entertainers. Members had been asked to consider endorsing ADC’s Strategy (previously circulated) with a view to recommending that it be adopted by Full Council. Members considered that it was important to have a policy that set out the Town Council’s aspirations for street trading activities and that it was consistent with those of the licensing authority. Members noted that the Town Council was a consultee on licensing applications and it was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

**Arun District Council's Concessions, Market,  
Street Traders and Street Entertainers  
Strategy be adopted.**

**28.1.6 Minute 10.2 Environmental Sustainability Policy**

A policy document had been drafted (previously circulated) which set out how the Town Council proposed to minimise the impact of the services it provides on the environment. To ensure that the Policy was followed consistently throughout the organisation, once adopted it would also be shared with contractors. It was **RESOLVED** that:

**The Environmental Sustainability Policy be  
adopted.**

**28.1.7 Minute 11.3 Investments**

The Committee considered a report which recommended placing funds with the Public Sector Deposit Fund. This was a Money Market fund which fell outside the current investment strategy and the Committee recommended that the Fund be added to the Council's Investment Strategy. Council was content with this proposal and it was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

**'Deposits in the Public Sector Deposit Fund'  
be added to the list of permitted investments  
in the Council's Annual Investment Strategy.**

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

**28.2.1 Policy and Finance**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2013 (previously circulated) with no matters arising.

**28.2.2 Community Resources**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2013 (previously circulated) with no matters arising.

**28.2.3 Planning and Transportation**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2013 (previously circulated) with two matters arising. Regarding Minute 13.1, Littlehampton Signal Box, Councillor Squires welcomed the news that the Signal Box had been Grade II listed and asked what had been put in place to protect the signal box. The Town Clerk advised that it was the responsibility of the owners to adhere to the conditions of the Listing.

28.2.4 Regarding Minute 9.1, Littlehampton Crown Post Office, Councillor Northeast considered that an opportunity had been missed by taking no further action regarding the Post Office in terms of the Neighbourhood Plan or registering the building as an Asset of Community Value.

28.2.5 It was reported that at a recent public meeting attended by representatives from the Post Office, traders and residents, there was overwhelming support for the retention of a Crown Post Office service in the Arcade. Concerns that a suitable retail venue could be found in the Town to host a post office counter

service remained and there was considerable dissatisfaction locally about the lack of consultation on the downgrading of post office services and the decision to move the post office out of the Arcade. Councillor Northeast urged Members to think again and show support for the views of the community and proposed that the Mayor write to the Secretary of State and the Chief Executive of Post Office Ltd and that the Planning and Transport Committee review its decision in terms of the Neighbourhood Plan and registering the building as an Asset of Community Value (ACV).

28.2.6 During the ensuing discussion Members revisited the options in terms of supporting the case for the retention of a Crown Post Office service in its present location. It was understood that the Post Office did not own the premises in the in the Arcade and Members noted that registering the building as an ACV protected the building only, not the purpose for which it was used. However, Council wished to support the community in its efforts to preserve the service in its current location and it was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) ***The Mayor write to the Secretary of State and the Chief Executive of Post Office Ltd, with a copy to the Town Centre Regeneration Manager, setting out the opposition to the planned changes to the provision of Post Office facilities in the Town as outlined in point 28.2.5 above.***
- 2) ***The Planning and Transport Committee be requested to review its decision in terms of the Neighbourhood Plan and registering the building as an Asset of Community Value.***

#### **28.2.4 Property and Personnel**

Council received the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2013 (previously circulated) with three matters arising. Regarding Minute 8.3, Street lighting, the Town Clerk agreed to provide those members of the Town Council who were also County Councillors with a summary of the current position and copies of the Town Council's correspondence on this matter. Regarding Minute 12.1.3, Church Street, the Town Clerk reported that phase one of the works was now in progress and that Members would be fully involved in the development of plans for the proposed community facility in due course. Regarding Minute 12.1.5, Stage by the Sea, the Mayor reported the project was now on track and completion was expected by autumn. It was hoped that the bandstand would be used to stage an event in the run up to Christmas and proposals for a formal opening at Easter 2014 were being developed.

### **29. OFFICER'S REPORT**

#### **29.1 Statement of Accounts - Annual Return 2012/13**

Council considered a report (previously circulated) setting out the 2012/13 Annual Return, which formed the Statutory Statement of Accounts for the Council as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013. The absence of the Church Street premises on the list of fixed assets was questioned and the Town Clerk stated that this was because the purchase had not been concluded within the 2012/13 financial year. In response to a question about the expenditure on the Stage

by the Sea Project, the Town Clerk agreed to provide a detailed breakdown of grant funding and expenditure on the Project to Members. 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. **The Internal Auditors Report be noted**

29.2 **Statement of Accounts- Unaudited**

Council considered a report (previously circulated) setting out the detailed Statement of Accounts for 2012/13. It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

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

There were none.

31. **MASTERPLAN – NORTH LITTLEHAMPTON**

- 31.1 It was reported that the Steering Group had recently met and that the County Council had produced a timetable for the completion of the highways works to implement the Lyminster by pass scheme by April 2017.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm.

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**TOWN MAYOR**