

Minutes of a meeting of **CROWBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL** held in the  
Town Hall, The Broadway, Crowborough on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2018 at 7.30pm

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Present	Councillors	Quentin Burch	
		Peter Ellefsen	Mayor
		Martyn Garrett	Deputy Mayor
		Richard Jury	
		David Larkin	
		George Moss	
		Chris Moss *	
		Kay Moss	(Also WDC)
		David Neeves	
		Alan Penney	
		Ron Reed	(Also WDC)
		Greg Rose	(Also WDC)
		Wendy Scrace	
		Matthew Street	
		Sandra Timms	
Neil Waller	(Also WDC)		
Also present		Clr Richard Stogdon	ESCC
		Clr Sylvia Tidy	ESCC
		Clr Jeanette Towey	WDC
		ACI Anita Turner	Sussex Police
		Insp. John Gross	Sussex Police
		Andy Beams	Town Clerk, CTC
		Kevin Back	Community Warden, CTC
		2 members of the public	

\*Denotes non attendance

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Deputy Mayor Martyn Garrett opened the meeting with a prayer.

#### **APOLOGIES**

Clr Chris Moss, Clr Steve Isted (WDC)

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Clr Matthew Street declared a personal interest in agenda item 16.1.

#### **MINUTES**

##### Minutes of the meetings held on the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2017

Clr Peter Ellefsen pointed out a clarification to the minutes regarding MacConvilles level of authority being limited to the Pine Grove project only. Members noted this change and

**8285 RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meetings held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2017 as confirmed be signed by the Chairman.

Standing orders were suspended.

#### **SUSSEX POLICE ADDRESSED THE COUNCIL**

Acting Chief Inspector Turner thanked Members for the invitation to the meeting and outlined her role. She had been reviewing the crime statistics both in Crowborough and at a national level, and found that the increase seen locally is being mirrored across the country.

ACI Turner accepted that while the new police model is not universally popular, it had allowed resources to be used to target areas where problems were reported. This had led recently to a number of arrests following incidents across Wealden.

ACI Turner was pleased to see the Council had appointed a Community Warden, and that there was a close working relationship with local officers. She was also keen to make sure that Crowborough Police Station remained open, but could not commit at this time to any increase in the opening hours to mirror Hailsham for example.

The police were also looking at what prevention work can be done to take a proactive approach and help people feel safer in their communities.

Inspector Gross added that the police were keen to listen to the views of residents and that they would, wherever possible, tweak their resources appropriately to respond to incidents. He was keen to ensure the police had flexible resources and a sustainable plan for the whole of Wealden.

Cllr Ellefsen thanked the police on behalf of the Council for attending the meeting.

Standing orders were reinstated.

#### **TO RECEIVE REPORTS OF MEMBERS**

Cllr Ellefsen circulated a written report with the agenda regarding Ashdown Forest Conservators and the CCA Board, which Members noted.

Cllr Alan Penney informed Members of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Crowborough becoming a Fairtrade Town. To mark this occasion, and as part of Fairtrade fortnight 26<sup>th</sup> February to 11<sup>th</sup> March, a Fairtrade open day was being arranged for Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March at the Town Hall

**TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS**Wealden District Council

Cllr Neil Waller informed Members of the cabinet meeting on 31 January to discuss the budget, which proposed a £5 raise on a Band D property. WDC had made an investment of £12.5m in the Vicarage Fields shopping centre in Hailsham as part of their plans to maximise their returns. Civil Parking Enforcement was also due to be discussed at cabinet, with discussions ongoing with the police and Town and Parish Councils. The local plan is due for approval by WDC in April, followed by public consultation in the summer. Plans are in place to introduce a £1 per week charge for garden waste collection.

Cllr Kay Moss reported that some WDC Members had attended an update on Universal Credit, which is due to be rolled out in Crowborough on 6<sup>th</sup> June. The nearest job centre for local residents is in Haywards Heath, which creates problems in terms of both the cost and the time taken to travel if an appointment is needed. WDC have contacted the DWP to express their concerns, and Cllr Moss suggested the Town Council should also write.

Cllr Jeanette Towey pointed out the main issue was for those claimants who needed job coaches, and informed Members she had raised the issue with Nus Ghani MP.

East Sussex County Council

Cllr Sylvia Tidy agreed with the concerns about the job centres, and agreed she and Cllr Stogdon would also write to the DWP. ESCC cabinet had been held today and the budget was due to be presented to Full Council on the 6<sup>th</sup> February. An additional 1% had been agreed for children's services which relieved some of the pressure on the 18/19 budget, but 19/20 was still going to be difficult.

Cllr Richard Stogdon reported that grass cutting was to be reduced to two cuts per year, rather than the one first feared. The waste collection sites at Wadhurst and Forest Row were under threat of closure, although there were no plans for changes at Crowborough. Concerns regarding additional traffic movements and the associated increase in nitrogen deposits may impact on the threatened closures.

**TO ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

Members agreed with the suggestion to contact the DWP regarding the issues for residents relating to the absence of job centres in Wealden. The Town Clerk suggested contacting Wealden CAB first, to see what action they were already taking and to ensure a co-ordinated approach. Cllr Kay Moss agreed to forward the travel figures she had found during her research into the problem.

**8286 RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk contact Wealden CAB and subsequently write to the DWP outlining the concerns regarding residents having to travel to Haywards Heath job centre.

Cllr Richard Stogdon raised a question about the process for the Mead House planning application. He understood a meeting was due to be arranged, including the County Councillors, but had heard nothing more as yet.

Members with knowledge of the application confirmed that there was likely to be a protocol meeting arranged once the new/revised application was completed, and prior to the application going to WDC's Planning Committee.

Cllr David Neeves raised the vandalism issue of the Christmas tree. Cllr Ellefsen confirmed that now a crime number had been received, the Community Warden had been asked to follow up on what action the police had taken.

### **TO RECEIVE SUCH COMMUNICATIONS AS THE TOWN MAYOR MAY WISH TO LAY BEFORE THE COUNCIL**

Members noted the list of the Mayor and Deputy Mayors' engagements.

### **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The acts and proceedings of the following meetings were received by the Council.

- Communications & Events – 20<sup>th</sup> September 2017
- Environment – 26<sup>th</sup> September 2017
- Finance & General Purposes – 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017
- Planning & Development – 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 13<sup>th</sup> November, 27<sup>th</sup> November, 4<sup>th</sup> December and 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017
- Sport, Recreation & Cemetery – 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

8287 Members noted the recommendation of the F&GP committee and **RESOLVED** to amend Financial Regulations 3.1, 3.2 and 5.2 as suggested by the internal auditor.

### **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

#### Payments for period 15<sup>th</sup> November 2017 to 16<sup>th</sup> January 2018 inclusive

Cllr Kay Moss pointed out the two duplicated payments appearing on the list at the end of December. Members noted this and the payment list.

#### Bank reconciliations for June, September and December 2017

Members noted the reconciliations which confirmed the balances agreed to the bank statements for the three periods.

Cllr Richard Jury, who had signed the reconciliations, pointed out to Members he had not physically checked every item on the bank statement. The level of detail of this checking is to be reviewed and agreed by the F&GP committee as part of their wider review of the Financial Regulations.

Regular Payment list

Members noted the list of regular payments paid by direct debit. This list would be reviewed and presented annually to the Annual Meeting in future.

PWLB loans early repayment

Members were reminded of the decision previously taken to defer the early repayment of some of the loans due to the cash flow uncertainty of the Pine Grove project. Members agreed to defer the decision again and review at the next meeting of the Council.

**TO AUTHORISE THE SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

**8288 RESOLVED** to authorise the following grants of exclusive right of burial:

<u>CERTIFICATE</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>GRAVE SPACE</u>
1035	Edward John JARVIS	GRH113 and GRH114
1036	Claire SMITH	GRH115 and GRH116
1037	Neil David WEAVER	3505

**PRECEPT**

Members reviewed the precept recommendation from the F&GP committee and the alternate options calculated. Cllr Kay Moss asked for a recorded vote to be noted.

Members discussed the options, with a range of opinions being put forward with relevant justification. Proposals were then voted for in the order they were made.

Proposal 1 - made by Cllr Kay Moss and seconded by Cllr George Moss: an increase in the Band D equivalent precept of 0.22%

**FOR:** Cllrs Quentin Burch, Martyn Garrett, George Moss, Kay Moss and Alan Penney (5)

**AGAINST:** Cllrs Peter Ellefsen, Richard Jury, David Larkin, David Neeves, Ron Reed, Greg Rose, Wendy Scrace, Matthew Street, Sandra Timms and Neil Waller (10)

Proposal 2 - made by Cllr Matthew Street and seconded by Cllr Neil Waller: an increase in the Band D equivalent precept of 2.0%

**FOR:** Cllrs Peter Ellefsen, David Larkin, Matthew Street, Sandra Timms and Neil Waller (5)

**AGAINST:** Cllrs Quentin Burch, Richard Jury, George Moss, Kay Moss, David Neeves, Alan Penney, Ron Reed, Greg Rose and Wendy Scrace (9)

**ABSTAINED:** Cllr Martyn Garrett (1)

Proposal 3 - made by Cllr Greg Rose and seconded by Cllr Richard Jury: no increase in the Band D equivalent precept

**FOR:** Cllrs Quentin Burch, Richard Jury, George Moss, Kay Moss, David Neeves, Alan Penney, Ron Reed, Greg Rose and Wendy Scrace (9)

**AGAINST:** Cllrs Peter Ellefsen, David Larkin, Matthew Street, Sandra Timms and Neil Waller (5)

**ABSTAINED:** Cllr Martyn Garrett (1)

It was therefore

**8289** **RESOLVED** to agree no increase in the Band D equivalent Council tax precept for residents, resulting in a total precept demand of £1,325,373.

### **BUSINESS PLAN**

Members noted the report of the working group and agreed the recommendations.

### **COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

Members reviewed the proposal circulated by the Town Clerk with the agenda, outlining recommended changes to the committee structure and associated support officers. There were mixed views among Members, with some seeing it as a dynamic proposal and others feeling there was no justification for change.

A vote was taken and as a result it was

**8290** **RESOLVED** to reject the proposed changes at this time, and to reassess upon completion of the business plan.

### **PINE GROVE**

#### Update from the working group

Cllr George Moss circulated a written report outlining the current situation with the project. The lease was yet to be signed, although the outstanding details had been verbally agreed, confirmation was awaited from the parent company.

Tenders had been received back and talks were progressing with the preferred contractors, with the aim to work together on value engineering items and costs to meet the Council's budget.

A proposed timeframe for the next couple of weeks was put before Members, with a further Full Council meeting to be convened to confirm all the details once received.

Cllr Sandra Timms thanked Cllr George Moss on behalf of the Council for all his work and expertise he had brought to the project to date.

Funding Town Hall move

A written report was circulated with the agenda, making recommendations as to how the Town Hall move to Pine Grove would be funded.

- 8291 RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations put forward for funding the Town Hall move.

ESCC loan repayment structure

The Town Clerk circulated a reminder of the proposal from ESCC for the loan repayments. These allowed for a one year repayment holiday, followed by two years of interest only payments.

- 8292 RESOLVED** to accept the proposed repayment schedule from ESCC and the Town Clerk to advise ESCC accordingly.

**SLR MEETINGS**

Members discussed the current format and frequency of the SLR meetings and agreed that changes should be made to make them more frequent and to cover more areas than just highways. Members agreed to refer the details back to the Environment committee to expand on their initial suggested changes.

**CHARITABLE ACCOUNTS**

The Town Clerk circulated a report with the agenda outlining the actions recommended by the internal auditor in respect of the charity accounts. Members acknowledged there would need to be a meeting of the charity trustee's to agree the changes, noted the report and

- 8293 RESOLVED** to authorise the Town Clerk to make the necessary arrangements with the Council's solicitor.

**GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS (GDPR)**

The Town Clerk circulated a report with the agenda outlining the current situation. There was still some conflicting information, especially with regard to the appointment of the Data Protection Officer (DPO), and it was hoped that the position would become clearer in the coming months.

The Town Hall staff continued to work on preparations for the change in regulations, and it was recognised that Member training was needed before the changes in May.

Members agreed with the Town Clerk's advice to delay appointing the DPO until as late as possible to benefit from the most comprehensive advice.

**URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING**

None - the meeting closed at 9.37pm.