

Minutes of the **ANNUAL STATUTORY MEETING** of **CROWBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL** held at the Council Offices, Pine Grove, Crowborough on Tuesday 16th May 2023 at 7.30pm

Present	Councillors	Alison Arthur	(also WDC)
		Peter Bucklitsch	
		Jane Clark	(also WDC)
		Suzanne Dixon*	
		Martyn Everitt	(also WDC)
		Martyn Garrett	
		Richard Jury	
		Kay Moss	
		Alan Penney	
		Matthew Street	
		Neil Waller	
		Natalie Whittle	
Also present		Caroline Miles	Town Clerk
		Melanie Street	Deputy Town Clerk

Four members of the public in the chamber

*Denotes non attendance

The retiring Mayor congratulated all returning councillors on their re-election and welcomed Cllr Jane Clark to the council.

ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR

Council received one proposed and seconded nomination for Town Mayor, Cllr Matthew Street

10093 RESOLVED to elect Cllr Matthew Street as Town Mayor.

Declaration of acceptance of office of Town Mayor

Cllr Street read the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and it was signed in the presence of the Town Clerk.

Cllr Street thanked the council for its support and pledged to serve to the best of his ability during the upcoming year. He also thanked the retiring Mayor, Mr David Neeves, for his service.

ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR

Council received one proposed and seconded nomination for Deputy Town Mayor, Cllr Natalie Whittle.

10094 RESOLVED to elect Cllr Natalie Whittle as Deputy Town Mayor.

Declaration of acceptance of office of Deputy Town Mayor

Cllr Whittle read the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and it was signed in the presence of the Town Clerk.

The Mayor thanked Cllr Martyn Garrett for serving as Deputy Mayor for many years.

The Deputy Mayor thanked the council for its support and promised to serve and work hard for the council during the next year.

PRAYER

The Mayor opened the meeting with a prayer

APOLOGIES

Cllr. Suzanne Dixon
Cllr. Johanna Howell (ESCC)
Cllr. Philip Lunn (ESCC)
Cllr. James Partridge (WDC)

The Mayor informed the council that Cllr Dixon had given her apologies for the meeting and was therefore not able to sign her Declaration of Acceptance of Office. If permitted by the council at the Annual Statutory Meeting, Cllr Dixon could sign the declaration before or at a later meeting fixed by the council.

10095 RESOLVED to allow Cllr Suzanne Dixon to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office before the Planning and Development Committee meeting on 22nd May 2023.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2023

10096 RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2023 as confirmed be ratified by the Chairman.

STANDING ORDERS

To review and adopt Standing Orders (attached to agenda)

Members reviewed the Standing Orders. A councillor asked whether the time for individuals to address the committee during the public participation section of the Planning and Development Committee could be increased from three to five minutes. Another member noted that Wealden District Council only permits members of the public to speak for two minutes when comments relate to an ordinary application, or three minutes on a major application. A further councillor stated that the three-minute timeframe ensures that comments are concise and that several people can speak as the overall time is limited to fifteen minutes. Public Participation is ultimately at the Chairperson's discretion which allows for flexibility if required.

10097 RESOLVED to adopt the Standing Orders as presented.

CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE

The council had previously resolved to adopt the Civility and Respect pledge, renewing it annually at the Annual Statutory Meeting. The Mayor read out each of the statements of the pledge for the council's considerations as follows:

1. Our council has agreed that it will treat all councillors, clerk and all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.
2. Our council has committed to training councillors and staff. Our council has signed up to Code of Conduct for councillors.
3. Our council has good governance arrangements in place including, staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy.
4. Our council will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.
5. Our council will commit to calling out bullying and harassment when if and when it happens.
6. Our council will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council e.g., via the Local Council Award Scheme
7. Our council supports the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.

10098 RESOLVED to adopt the Civility and Respect Pledge for the year 2023-24.

COMMITTEES

To agree Delegation Arrangements and Terms of Reference for Committees

10099 RESOLVED to accept the Delegation Arrangements and Terms of Reference for Committees

To agree the membership of committees

10100 RESOLVED to agree committee memberships as follows:

Allotments and Cemeteries

Peter Bucklitsch	Martyn Everitt	Richard Jury	Kay Moss	Matthew Street
Natalie Whittle				

Communications and Events

Alison Arthur	Martyn Everitt	Martyn Garrett	Kay Moss	Alan Penney
Matthew Street	Neil Waller	Natalie Whittle		

Environment

Alison Arthur	Jane Clark	Martyn Everitt	Martyn Garrett	Richard Jury
Kay Moss	Matthew Street	Natalie Whittle		

Personnel

Alison Arthur	Peter Bucklitsch	Kay Moss	Alan Penney	Neil Waller
Natalie Whittle				

Planning and Development

Suzanne Dixon	Martyn Everitt	Martyn Garrett	Richard Jury	Kay Moss
Alan Penney	Matthew Street	Natalie Whittle		

Sport and Recreation

Jane Clark	Martyn Everitt	Martyn Garrett	Richard Jury	Kay Moss
Matthew Street	Natalie Whittle			

A member noted that the council had previously agreed that it may be helpful to have the committee chairpersons sitting on the Finance and General Purposes committee. Therefore, it was agreed to consider this item later in the meeting.

Standing Orders were suspended.

The Annual Statutory Meeting was adjourned for the election of Chairman and Deputy Chairman of each of the Standing Committees and membership of associated working groups.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

The membership of the Finance and General Purposes Committee was considered.

10101 RESOLVED to agree the membership of the Finance and General Purposes Committee as follows:

Finance and General Purposes

Peter Bucklitsch	Suzanne Dixon	Martyn Everitt	Martyn Garrett	Kay Moss
Matthew Street	Neil Waller	Natalie Whittle		

WORKING GROUPS

To agree membership of the Vision Document Working Group

A member of the public, Mr George Moss, had indicated he was willing to serve on this working group.

10102 RESOLVED to agree the Vision Document Working Group membership as follows: Cllrs Alison Arthur, Peter Bucklitsch, Martyn Everitt, Kay Moss, Matthew Street and Natalie Whittle and, member of the public, Mr George Moss.

APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

To appoint representatives to Outside Organisations for 2023/24

There are currently two councillor vacancies in the Jarvis Brook ward. Therefore, it was agreed to postpone deciding a representative for the Jarvis Brook Community Association until the next Full Council meeting in order to give the newly co-opted ward members the opportunity to represent the council on this body if they wished to do so.

10103 RESOLVED to appoint representatives to outside bodies as follows:

ORGANISATION	No. OF CTC MEMBERS	2023/24 REPRESENTATIVES
Ashdown Forest Liaison Panel	1	Martyn Everitt
Citizens Advice Bureau	1	Jane Clark
Clued-Up Info	2	Martyn Everitt Kay Moss
Community Safety Action Group	1	Kay Moss
Crowborough Community Association	1	Jane Clark
Crowborough Community Forum	1	Jane Clark
East Sussex ALC Ltd	2	Martyn Garrett Natalie Whittle
Crowborough Fair Trade	3	Alison Arthur Martyn Everitt Kay Moss
Green Transition Crowborough	2	Alison Arthur Martyn Everitt
Jarvis Brook Community Association	2	<i>Decision postponed</i>

Parish Planning Panel	1	Kay Moss
Sir Henry Fermor School Trustees (3-year appointment from 2022)	2	Martyn Garrett Alan Penney
Smith and Fermor	1	Peter Bucklitsch
Strengthening Local Relationships	3	Martyn Everitt Richard Jury Kay Moss
Tackling anti-social behaviour in Crowborough	1	Kay Moss
Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee	1	Martyn Everitt
Wealden District Association of Local Councils	2	Martyn Garrett Kay Moss
Wealden Dementia Alliance	1	Kay Moss
Wealdlink	1	Martyn Everitt

The council expressed its thanks to Mr John Coleman who had faithfully served as the council's representative on the Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee for many years.

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

The Town Mayor's engagements

The engagements were noted. The Mayor thanked the retiring Mayor for attending these events.

COMMITTEE MINUTES

To note the acts and proceedings of the following committee meetings

The following committee minutes as listed below were noted:

Allotments & Cemeteries – 7th February 2023
 Communications & Events – 21st February 2023
 Environment – 17th January 2023
 Finance & General Purposes – 28th February 2023
 Personnel – 31st January 2023
 Planning & Development – 13th March and 3rd April 2023
 Sport & Recreation – 7th March 2023

TO ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

A member noted that the council had not yet received a copy of the up-to-date accounts from the Crowborough Community Association and requested that this is followed up.

A member asked why the council met at 7.30pm and not 7pm. A longstanding member of the Council noted that this was to ensure working members, especially those commuting, could make the meeting on time and it was their opinion that this was in place so as not to discriminate against councillors who worked.

A member enquired about the consultation on the Infrastructure Levy which the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has live until 19th May 2023. They asked how the council will respond to this. The Clerk shared the procedure for council decision making which is done at council meetings and may result in the Clerk being asked to give a response on behalf of the council, or delegated powers being given to the Chairperson to respond on behalf of the committee. In some cases, councillors may have an opportunity to submit personal responses. Due to the deadline constraint the Clerk had sought individual comments from members which would then be collated and sent to NALC but had not received any response.

If the councillor would like to forward their personal response to the Clerk, she will send it to NALC.

TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

The Mayor reminded all newly-appointed representatives to outside bodies to kindly provide their written reports to the Clerk at least one week prior to the meeting.

TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

East Sussex County Councillor Johanna Howell had provided a report which had been made available to councillors at the meeting. There were no questions arising.

A member noted that local social media posts had suggested that the new Wealden District Council would introduce car parking charges in the town. They asked the newly elected Wealden District Councillors to either confirm or deny this.

A member noted that local social media posts had suggested that the new Wealden District Council would double the fee for the collection of residential green waste. They asked the newly elected Wealden District Councillors to either confirm or deny this.

A member asked the newly elected Wealden District Councillors to confirm that the planned learner pool for Goldsmiths Leisure Centre will still go ahead.

One of the Wealden District Councillors spoke and asked if it would be satisfactory to answer these questions in a written report to the next Full Council. It was agreed that this would be acceptable.

The Mayor reminded all newly elected District Councillors to kindly provide their written reports to the Clerk at least one week prior to the meeting.

GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

10104 RESOLVED that Crowborough Town Council meets the eligibility criteria to exercise the General Power of Competence.

FINANCE

To note the payments made in March and April 2023

The payments were noted.

To approve the bank reconciliation as of 31st March 2023

10105 RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliation as of 31st March 2023.

To approve the Asset Register as of 31st March 2023

The Finance and General Purposes Committee had reviewed the Asset Register and recommended it to Full Council for approval.

10106 RESOLVED to approve the Asset Register as of 31st March 2023.

To approve Section 1 and 2 of the draft Annual Governance and Accountability Return 22/23

The Finance and General Purposes Committee had reviewed Sections 1 and 2 of the draft Annual Governance and Accountability Return and recommended it to Full Council for approval.

10107 RESOLVED to approve Section 1 of draft Annual Governance and Accountability Return 23/24.

10108 RESOLVED to approve Section 2 of draft Annual Governance and Accountability Return 23/24.

To note the latest report from Basepoint

The report was noted.

To note the Income and Expenditure reports against budget and the Earmarked Reserves (EMR) position

The Income and Expenditure reports and Earmarked Reserves were noted.

To approve the Risk Management Policy and Register

The Finance and General Purposes Committee had reviewed the Risk Management Policy and Register and recommended it to Full Council for approval.

10109 RESOLVED to approve the Risk Management Policy and Register as presented.

TO NOTE THE RESPONSE FROM EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

To note the response from ESCC in respect of the Council's comments regarding road surfaces and road safety in Crowborough

The response was noted.

TO AUTHORISE THE SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

Grants of Exclusive Right of Burial

10110 RESOLVED to authorise the following Grants of Exclusive Right of Burial:

CERTIFICATE	NAME	GRAVE SPACE
Q1174	Jane Siegle & Sally Lunney	GRH24
Q1175	Sylvia Caldecutt	GRH10

PINE GROVE

To note the report on Pine Grove

The report was noted. A member asked if there were any other options being considered for the drainage issues. The Clerk informed council that a second company had been invited to inspect the drains but had drawn the same conclusion, that the issues were caused by paper towels. All paper towels have been removed from the public toilets and from the Basepoint toilets which also feed into this drain.

CLUED-UP

To note the bi-annual monitoring report from Clued-Up

CLlr Kay Moss declared an interest in this item as she is a trustee of Clued.Up Info.

The report was noted.

As item 23.1 contained a confidential report for discussion, the Mayor moved that item 24 be heard next.

URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING AND/OR INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

The Mayor asked members to remain after the conclusion of the meeting to allow a new photograph to be taken.

WOLFE COTTAGE

10111 RESOLVED pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the press and public from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reasons of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and they were asked to leave.

Four members of the public left the chamber.

The Clerk informed the council of work that will be taking place. It was decided to review this item again at the next Full Council meeting on 27th June 2023.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm