

Minutes of a meeting of the 119<sup>th</sup> **ANNUAL ASSEMBLY** of the Local Electors of the Parish of Crowborough held at the United Church, Croft Road, Crowborough on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 7.30pm

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Town Councillors Present:

Alison Arthur *	Richard Jury	Natalie Whittle
Jane Clark *	Kay Moss	
Suzanne Dixon	Beverly Pashley	
Martyn Everitt *	Simon Ryder	
Martyn Garrett	Matthew Street	
Paul Goddard	Neil Waller	

\*Denotes those also WDC Councillors

WDC Councillors present: Cllr Gareth Owen-Williams  
Cllr James Partridge  
Cllr Andrew Wilson

ESCC Councillors present: Cllr Johanna Howell  
Cllr Philip Lunn

Also in attendance: Caroline Miles Town Clerk  
Mia Kelly Events Manager  
Tracie White Minute

38 members of the public

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Crowborough Town Councillors, ESCC Councillors and WDC Councillors held 'surgery time' prior to the formal meeting, in order to enable residents to ask them questions individually.

### **CIVIC AWARD**

The Town Mayor presented Sheila Williams with a Civic Award for her lifetimes work for the guiding movement in Crowborough and thanked her for her hard work and dedication to the Girlguiding movement.

### **MAYORS CHARITIES – PRESENTATION OF CHEQUES**

The Mayor welcomed all those present and thanked them for attending.

The Mayor presented representatives from his two chosen charities (The Friends of Crowborough Hospital and 1<sup>st</sup> Crowborough Scouts) with cheques for the monies raised during his Mayoral term of office. Each charity received a cheque for just over £3,100.

## **TO NOTE THE PRESENTATION FROM THE FRIENDS OF CROWBOROUGH HOSPITAL**

Cllr Kay Moss and Geneveive Gresset, Trustees of the Friends of Crowborough Hospital gave a presentation outlining the work that takes place.

The Friends have an army of volunteers that fundraise to run a variety of projects such as the Social Day Centre, Two do Tea, the Hospital Fete, the Hospital shop, the Breast-feeding Café, the Dignity Project, Refurbishment projects and many more.

The charity has been running for sixty years as The Friends of Crowborough Hospital and many more years prior as the League of Friends.

In 2023, donations and legacies raised £164,000 and the Hospital Fete raised £15,000.

The Mayor thanked Kay Moss and Geneveive Gresset for the informative talk.

## **APOLOGIES**

Cllr Peter Bucklitsch  
George Moss

## **TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1st MARCH 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 were approved.

## **TO NOTE THE RECEIPT OF THE TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT**

The Town Mayor's Report was noted and received by the meeting.

## **TO NOTE THE RECEIPT OF REPORTS FROM NUS GHANI MP, EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCILLORS, WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCILLORS AND CHAIRMEN OF CROWBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

The reports were noted and received by the meeting.

## **TO NOTE THE RECEIPT OF REPORTS FROM GROUPS WITH TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATION**

The reports were noted and received by the meeting.

## **OPEN FORUM – QUESTIONS FOR COUNCILLORS**

Questions were invited from those present.

- Q: Was disability considered when planning Jarvis Brook play park and what was the town council doing to minimise vandalism whilst refurbishment works are taking place?
- A: The council acknowledged that disabled friendly equipment had been installed in several of its' play parks and this would include Jarvis Brook playpark. With regards to the vandalism of the turf, it has already been re-laid. The site is surrounded by HERRIS fencing, there is not more that can be done to prevent further vandalism.
- Q: Why did the WDC council spend funds taking the planning application for Palesgate Lane to the High Court, only for the application to be approved within three years? What can be done about the disruption being experienced by residents?
- A: Unfortunately, no-one on the panel was able to answer the question with regards to planning as it was before their time. The ward member has been meeting regularly with Dandara and the site foreman to talk about the issues being raised by residents. There have been unexpected difficulties with the development as the ground condition is worse than expected. Drainage issues should be addressed when the attenuation ponds are built. The ward member will continue to visit and liaise with the foreman.
- Q: Is it possible for CiL funds to be spent to improve the splash end of Palesgate Lane to make it more accessible.
- A: The area is privately owned which means that it is not possible for ESCC to make improvements.
- Q: Why are hedges and existing trees always removed when new developments are built?
- A: WDC members are working hard with planners to ensure that the minimum of disruption occurs to natural habitats going forward.
- Q: Has an ecological study been done on the Ghyll and will reparation works be undertaken as drainage from the site has turned the stream sludgy with mud at various points.
- A: Part of the planning process is that the environment officer is involved to monitor the environmental impact. The ward member will look into this further.
- Q: I have a footpath across my private land where the surface is unusable in winter. How do I access CiL money to have it upgraded to year-round usage?
- A: Details are available on the WDC website in the Infrastructure Funding Statement section. Failing that, speak to your local ward councillor.
- Q: Where can I see the responses to the Vision Document Questionnaire? How many people responded?
- A: The vision document is still being worked on with seven specific areas being looked at. Numbers of replies are yet to be confirmed.  
One of the aims identified by the document is the need to obtain the views of young people within the town. To meet this need, a Youth Ambassador Board is being assembled with youth members from Beacon Academy and throughout the town.

Q: £250 has been allocated for the Twinning Association in 2024 despite the Twinning association being closed.

A: The funds will be returned to General reserves or for use elsewhere.

Q: There is a long-term recommendation in the Business Plan for a tourist museum. What does long term mean and how realistic is this?

A: Long term is five years plus. The museum is a suggestion at this stage, the viability of which will need to be looked at in further detail.

Q: Why are some of the potholes patched and others in the same vicinity not repaired?

A: Some of the potholes are repaired temporarily as the inclement weather can prevent a long-term surface being applied. Unfortunately, there are insufficient funds available for all the repairs required so they must be addressed on a priority basis. Contractually, they are only addressed if they have been logged.

There is a budget of £58 million pounds for roads yet £300 million is required to fully resolve the problems.

Q: Why has the roundabout at the top of Western Road been sited in such a poor location?

A: The roundabout has been sited there as part of the planning application for the development on Walshes Road, It was in response to criticism about the level of traffic turning right out of Western road due to the increase in road users.

Q: Why has the surface on Beacon road deteriorated so quickly?

A: The previous contractor was responsible for this work. A retention was held against the work.

Q: How much income will be generated from the new housing developments in relation to council rates?

A: This is currently unknown as the figures are based on the number of occupants per house, and whether they are entitled to discounts.

There being no further questions the Mayor closed the meeting and thanked people for attending.

The Mayor thanked the CTC Events Manager for organising the event and United Reform Church for hosting.

The meeting closed at 20:58hrs.