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**LEWES  
TOWN  
COUNCIL**

## *MINUTES*

Of the meeting of **Lewes Town Council** held on  
**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014**, in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lewes** at **7:30pm**.

*NB if a record of voting was requested, this is shown in a table appended to these Minutes.*

**PRESENT:** Councillors S Catlin (Wischhusen); M Chartier; J Daly; A Dean; I Eiloart; J Lamb; D Lamport; L F Li (*Deputy Mayor*); M Milner; R Murray; S Murray; R O’Keeffe; A Price; J Stockdale and Dr M Turner (*Mayor*)

*In attendance:* S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); M Larkin (*Mace Bearer*), Mrs E Tingley (*C’tee Administration*), Canon Richard Moatt (*Council’s Chaplain*)

*Observing:* Ms V McLachlan (*Finance Administration Officer*) and Mrs J Dean (*Customer Services Officer*)

Canon Moatt offered a few words of reflection, drawing attention to the contrast between the ease with which “mission action plans” could be written by organizations and individuals, and the difficulties of adhering to them successfully.

**FC2014/53**      **QUESTION TIME:** No questions were asked.

**FC2014/54**      **MEMBERS’ DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Cllr O’Keeffe declared an interest in the item related to Lewes Athletics Track as she lived in close proximity to the site.

**FC2014/55**      **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies had been received from Cllr Allsobrook who had a personal commitment and Cllr Dr Mayhew who was unwell. There had been no word from Cllr MacCleary (*NB – apology for absence due to a work commitment had been submitted, but was not received until after the meeting*).

**FC2014/56**      **MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- a) The Mayor welcomed Peter Masters, Chairman of the Lewes Athletic Club who would answer any questions arising during item 7 on the Agenda.
- b) Members had before them information describing the Royal Voluntary Services “Good neighbourly networks” scheme. This aimed to coordinate voluntary groups that support and help local residents with some of the basics of day to day living. They sought information on existing neighbourly activity and asked if any Members could help identify where it is taking place. Any information would be gratefully received.
- c) English Heritage had advised that, as part of their response to the centenary of the 1<sup>st</sup> World War, they were reviewing the designation of the Lewes Town War Memorial.
- d) The Rotary Club of Lewes would be holding a Musical Moments event with Heathfield Silver Band and Laughton Village Choir on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30pm at Ringmer Community College in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support and Teenage Cancer Trust and Rotary Charities.

**FC2014/57**      **MINUTES:**

The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2014 were received and signed as an accurate record.

*Continues...*

**WORKING PARTIES AND OUTSIDE BODIES:**

Members were reminded that anyone who may have attended a meeting of any recognized outside body which had covered issues that deserved attention by the Council, should ensure that TC was aware of this before the meeting, and preferably before the agenda deadline. Reports on all activities of the organization were not expected.

a] *Liaison Meeting with Friends of Lewes 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014*: The notes of this meeting (*copy in minute book*) were considered.

**It was resolved that:**

**FC2014/58.1** The minutes of the liaison meeting with Friends of Lewes, held on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014, are noted (*copy in Minute Book*).

**LEWES COMMUNITY ATHLETICS TRACK:**

Members considered report FC008/2014 (*Copy in Minute Book*) apprising Members of the background to a request by Lewes Athletic Club for financial partnership.

The report gave a brief history of the club since inauguration in 1984; succeeding the Lewes Athletics Committee, which started in the 1880's. Lewes had hosted events for many national sporting characters including representatives of Oxford and Cambridge Universities, years before the inception of the national Amateur Athletics Association.

The modern club had close, active, Twinning links with a club in the French village of Marolles, near Blois, and also addressed a number of wider community initiatives such as the South Downs National Park Authority's *Hike & Bike* programme, encouraging access to the Downs, alongside its own programmes for sportspeople of all ages.

The history of the Lewes Community Athletics Track was outlined in a letter from the club, appended to the report. The operation of the track had been managed by a joint group representing the Club; Lewes District Council; East Sussex County Council; Priory School; and Sussex Downs College, and funded by annual grants from those partners. The club was acting on behalf of that group; approaching all the partners to the original construction with a view to joint funding of the sum needed for repair and resurfacing. East Sussex County Council had agreed to lead in a bid to Sport England, and to commission the works. There was confidence that Sport England would contribute 50% (£75,000) and local partners had already agreed contributions amounting to £47,000. The balance of local contributions needed was therefore £28,000, and this sum was being sought from Priory School; Lewes District Council; ESCC, and Lewes Town Council. It was suggested that the Town Council might contribute £10,000. Mr Masters elaborated on one or two aspects; highlighting the 45,000 "individual uses" of the track each year, and the Club's work in developing life-skills as well as sporting talent. He confirmed that the bid to Sport England was due to be submitted in November, and that an answer was expected in February 2015.

There followed a general discussion, in which several members spoke enthusiastically in support of the Club and the future of such a valuable community facility. Comments noted the "great benefits for body; mind, and spirit", which was recognized even by non-sportspeople.

**Consequently it was resolved (unanimously) that:**

**FC2014/59.1** Lewes Town Council will contribute the sum of £10,000 towards the project to repair and resurface Lewes Community Athletics Track; which sum to be drawn from the General Fund.

**ANNUAL PLAN:**

Members considered a statement showing the current status of elements of the Council's annual plan for major works and initiatives, which were intended to be initiated and/or completed (where possible and practical), in the year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015. These were in addition to various projects and initiatives itemised

in the Council's budgets and accounts, and represented larger-scale activities deserving special recognition. There were some questions as to the status of other projects which were not included as part of this formal Council Plan, which were answered by TC; and some misunderstanding as to the timetable for development of subsequent years' Plans. It was confirmed that a Plan was a product of the budget cycle, which would normally begin late in October and result in recommendations to Council in December. Subsequently **it was resolved that:**

**FC2014/60.1** The report on current status of items in the Council Plan 2014/15 be noted.

**FC2014/61**

#### **UPDATE ON MATTERS IN PROGRESS:**

a) *North Street Quarter/Pells* – Members were advised that submission of the joint Santon/LDC planning application was expected by November, and it was anticipated that the South Downs National Park Authority planning department would arrange further member briefings. The required Transport Assessment had been submitted to ESCC and onward to the Highways Agency, and there was broad support for the aspirations toward “shared space” solutions across a wider area than the boundaries of the development site. Discussions were in progress with other potential developers of nearby town-centre sites. Proportions of affordable housing and artistic creative workspace were under close scrutiny and were understood to be flexible according to community demands.

b) *Devolution* – A Devolution Lead Group Meeting would be held with Lewes District Council on 9<sup>th</sup> October, preceded by an internal meeting to update everyone on latest cost estimates and background issues.

c) *Pells lake eco-system improvements* – The planted cages had been installed, and in doing so the contractor had noted problems of water quality and levels which would compromise the establishment of aquatic plants; which had been planned as the next phase. A specialist survey on water quality had detailed the cause of these problems and proposed solutions. The reduced in-flow from traditional water sources (identified in 2006 in an earlier survey) was now more pronounced, and aged mortar joints in the stone lining of the lake were allowing leakage to outstrip the rate of replenishment and kept the water at a level that was too low for adequate oxygenation. Works to address this would require the lake to be drained, and it was suggested that excess silt should be removed. This was classed as hazardous waste, and disposal could be very expensive, although there may be options to ameliorate this. Remedial measures included engineering and building works, plus installation of aeration equipment. It was anticipated that similar engineering works would be entailed in the flood defence works to the adjacent swimming pool wall and Pelham Terrace proposed by Santon; the developer of the North Street Quarter. These works were expected within two years, and it was suggested that there may be some beneficial synergy if lakeside remedial works took place at the same time. To this end, it was proposed and **agreed** that the lake problems be added to the remit of the existing Working Party, currently tasked with overseeing the Pells public realm improvements and play provision *etc.* and already working with Santon and other partners.

d) *Town Hall façade* – The consultant surveyors had prepared a specification for roof works and repairs to restore the weatherproof integrity of the building. Very detailed drawings were in preparation following a digital scan of the façade, and the District Conservation Officer had been consulted. Quantity schedules were being drafted which would lead to a detailed specification and programme of works; expected by the end of November.

e) *Malling Community Centre* – Sussex Police advised that a suspect had been charged

with the damage and arson committed at the Centre earlier in the year, and would appear in court in late November. The officer concerned reported that he had been extremely impressed with the attitude and behaviour of a group of local young people who had reported the offence; remained on-site until fire and police services arrived; recorded statements and remained prepared to support legal proceedings. This was recognized as extremely public-spirited and contrary to many popular stereotypes. Councillors recorded their thanks and appreciation to these young people, and TC would ask the police to pass these comments to those concerned.

f) *Allotment Services* – It was reported that over 32 tonnes of waste material had been generated over the past year at one allotment site. Much of this was material that could have been composted within individual plots, although it had become mixed at the collection point with some non-compostable items and a significant amount of detritus obviously originating from off-site. This was a trend noticed in recent years, which could potentially become extremely expensive as waste removal costs continued to rise. It was proposed that some “best practice” workshops or seminars would be offered to tenants, utilizing the Council’s working links with a number of exemplar bodies in the field of allotment management. Should this not improve the situation it may be necessary to comprehensively review the Council’s terms and conditions of tenancy. Should this become appropriate; a Working Party would be required to deal with the issues.

g) A request was made for advance-notice of items likely to arise at meetings under this heading of “Update on matters in progress”, to allow Members to brief themselves. TC reminded Members that the item was not intended to elicit debate but was routinely included simply as a placeholder for regular progress-reports, and allowed him to mention issues arising; often only hours before a meeting. To assist Members, he offered to list in the published agenda a heading for any updates which were anticipated, and to provide a supplementary listing of any late items arising at the commencement of each meeting. This could include dates of items in prospect.

**FC2014/62**

#### **NOTICE of ITEMS IN PROSPECT:**

- a) The next Members surgery would be held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> October, in the Corn Exchange from 10am – 12noon. Cllrs Catlin and O’Keeffe volunteered to attend.
- b) The All Saints Steering Group would meet on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October at 11:00am.
- c) A Devolution group meeting with Lewes District Council would be held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October.
- d) The next Planning Committee Meetings would be on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> October and 4<sup>th</sup> November at 7pm in the Yarrow Room.
- e) The deadline for Grant applications for the next cycle was Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November, with the assessment Panel meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> November and recommendations being considered by Council on 11<sup>th</sup> December.
- f) The next Council Meeting would be on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30pm with the deadline for submissions to the Town Clerk of proposed items for the agenda being 12 noon on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> October.
- g) Dates would be confirmed for meetings of various Working Parties and liaison groups.

**FC2014/63**

There being no further business the Mayor declared the meeting closed, and invited those present to join him in the Parlour for refreshments.

*The meeting ended at 8:35pm*

Signed:

Date: