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**LEWES
TOWN
COUNCIL**

MINUTES

Of the meeting of **Lewes Town Council** held on
Thursday 6th November 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 L Allsobrook; S Catlin (Wischhusen); M Chartier; I Eiloart; D Lamport; L F Li (*Deputy Mayor*); J MacCleary; M Milner; R Murray; S Murray; R O’Keeffe; A Price; and Dr M Turner (*Mayor*)

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); Mrs F Garth (*Civic Officer & Asst. Town Clerk*); L Symons (*Mace Bearer*), Mrs E Tingley (*C’tee Administration*), Canon R Moatt (*Council’s Chaplain*)

Observing: Mr B Courage (*Town Ranger*) and Vanessa Schaez (*Work experience student from Waldshut-Tiengen*).

Before the meeting commenced, Canon Moatt offered a short reflection on how the recent Bonfire events had evinced the best aspects of a community coming together and working as one.

FC2014/64 **QUESTION TIME:** No questions were asked.

FC2014/65 **MEMBERS’ DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were none. (It was determined that membership of Lewes District Council did not entail any relevant interest in the matter of devolution of assets and services)

FC2014/66 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies had been received from Cllr J Daly who had a charity commitment, A Dean and J Lamb who had work commitments, Dr G Mayhew who had a lecture commitment and J Stockdale who was on holiday.

FC2014/67 **MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- a) The Mayor welcomed Vanessa Schaez who was visiting from the council of Waldshut-Tiengen for work experience for two weeks.
- b) The Mayor thanked all those who had helped support the street-cleaners “thank you” breakfast after the bonfire celebrations.
- c) Thanks were also given to those who had supported the “Day of the Battle” and “Winter of the World” events at the All Saints Centre on 25th and 26th October.
- d) The traditional Royal British Legion Remembrance parade would be held on Sunday 9th November, followed by a service at St John sub-Castro. Members and civic guests should assemble in the Town Hall Foyer at 2.15pm. Robes and hats would be worn.
- e) Members and staff would attend the War memorial on Armistice Day; Tuesday 11th November, at 11.00am for a short service and to observe the national two minutes’ silence. Anyone who wished to attend should assemble in the Town Hall Foyer at 10.50. Robes would not be worn on this occasion.
- f) Notification had been received from English Heritage that the War Memorial heritage listing had been upgraded from Grade 2 to Grade 2-star. The reasons stated in the formal record included:

“Historic interest: as an eloquent witness to the tragic impacts of world events on this community, and the sacrifices it made in the conflicts of the 20th century and; Sculptural interest: by Vernon March, a sculptor of considerable renown notable for the vigour of his figures, whose premature death

Continues...

makes his war memorials his main legacy. That in Lewes is the finest of his memorials in England. The tight composition and verticality of its design are particularly well suited to its constricted site”.

g) The Civic Carol Service would be held on Wednesday 17th December at 7.30pm at St. Anne’s Church.

h) The Mayor was to host a Christmas Dinner on Thursday 18th December in the Council Chamber. Invitations would be issued shortly.

FC2014/68

MINUTES:

The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 2nd October 2014 were received and signed as an accurate record.

FC2014/69

WORKING PARTIES AND OUTSIDE BODIES:

Members are reminded that anyone who may have attended a meeting of any recognized outside body which has covered issues that deserve attention by the Council, should ensure that TC is aware of this before the Council’s next meeting, and preferably before the agenda deadline. Reports on all activities of the organization are not expected.

a) *Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) meeting 7th October 2014:* It was reported that several members of the group had attended an Eco-system Workshop which had been very interesting and informative. Notes from the day would be distributed to the NPSG in due course. Several new members had recently joined the Steering Group. The Minutes of this meeting (*copy in minute book*) were received and noted.

It was resolved that:

FC2014/69.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held on 7th October 2014 are noted (*copy in Minute Book*).

b) *Meeting with Lewes District Council (LDC) re Devolution of assets/services, 9th October 2014:* Members considered notes of this meeting. These (*copy in minute book*) were received and noted. LTC members had, the previous evening, considered the latest cost data for routine grounds maintenance provided by LDC, and reviewed projects and major repairs/improvements likely to arise in the foreseeable future. Notes on these had been provided by the Parks Dept. Having considered the implications of these plans with particular reference to Malling Recreation Ground, LTC members sustained their interest in ownership of that site and recommended this to the Town Council, although they suggested that the area of the redundant rail track and its associated bridge structures might deserve further consideration; perhaps to form a later tranche. With this in mind, Members agreed that the boundary of the site in that location should run to the line of existing post-and-rail fencing. With regard to buildings, it was accepted that LDC’s property review was not complete and LTC representatives had simply reiterated their position, pending the conclusion of that process:

- LTC remains interested in a “first refusal” option on 2 Fisher Street, Lewes.
- LTC would be interested to discuss transfer of the Market Tower, as it had a vision for the building that had been developed as a legacy from the 2009 Tom Paine festival.

LTC representatives had also confirmed that they would be keen to engage with any proposals related to community centres such as St Mary’s Social Centre in Christie Road or the Landport Youth Centre.

After discussion it was resolved that:

FC2014/69.2 The record of the meeting with Lewes District Council on 9th October 2014 *iro* devolution of assets/services is noted (*copy in Minutes Book*).

FC2014.69.3 Lewes Town Council agrees to pursue the transfer of the 50% interest in Landport Bottom currently owned by Lewes District Council, and also Malling

Recreation Ground (with boundaries as agreed at the meeting [*copy in Minute book*]).

c) *All Saints Steering Group Meeting 10th October 2014*: The minutes of this meeting were received. TC reported that, since the meeting, it had been announced that Lewes Cinema would no longer operate in the town. A planning application for the cinema proposed at the old Harvey's depot in Pinwell Road was due to be considered shortly by the planning authority. These factors affected the demand for future operation of community cinema at All Saints, and it was anticipated that the ASC Steering Group would meet again early in the new year when more detail could be established.

It was resolved that:

FC/2014/69.4 The Minutes of the meeting of the All Saints Steering Group held on 10th October 2014 (*copy in minute book*) are noted.

FC/2014/69.5 The recommendations arising from the meeting of the All Saints Steering Group held on 10th October 2014 are agreed as:

- i) Continuation of the *Film@AllSaints* operation to the end of the current season in July 2015, and to review continuation and/or further development as circumstances dictate.
- ii) To approve the purchase, jointly with Lewes Film Club, of a replacement projection screen; the cost to be funded from the existing approved budget for repair and replacement of equipment.

d) *White Ribbon anti-domestic abuse initiative*: Cllr A Price reported that White Ribbon Day would be held on 25th November and there would be events around the town. Lewes Rugby Club were to hold a rugby match on 22nd November and players would wear white ribbons. The beer pumps in the club would also have ribbons tied to them. Cllr Price reported that he had completed an online training course and achieved a high score of 90%. In answer to a question, it was confirmed that the White Ribbon initiative was specifically aimed at reduction of abuse of females by males. Other charities dealt with other aspects of domestic abuse.

FC2014/69.6 Cllr Price's report on the White Ribbon scheme was noted and thanks recorded to him for all his efforts in the cause of reducing domestic abuse.

e) *Lewes Chamber of Commerce*: Lewes Late Night Shopping event would be held on Thursday 4th December. Money raised this year would be donated to St Peter & St James Hospice and Lewes food banks. The Chamber was also holding a quiz night for businesses on 10th December with proceeds going to Raystede and Lewes food banks.

It was resolved that:

FC2014/69.7 The oral report on activities of Lewes Chamber of Commerce is noted.

FC2014/70

TREE SURVEY:

Members considered report FC009/2014 (*copy in Minute Book*) providing background regarding professional inspection of trees on Council land.

The report provided background on Council owned areas of land in the public domain, on which were situated a significant number of mature trees.

In accordance with professional good practice recommendation, inspection of these trees and any subsequent recommendations for works conformed to simple principles in order of importance: public health and safety; good arboricultural practice, and the visual or amenity function of the trees. Sites were routinely inspected by the Town Ranger, with particular attention following severe storm or high winds. The District Tree & Landscape Officer was also extremely helpful as an independent advisor, but every 3-5 years a specialist professional survey was advisable.

The Lewes Priory Site had a responsible tenant, and operational management of Landport Bottom was carried out by Lewes District Council. The Town Council's remaining sites were due for inspection, and this was conventionally done during Autumn/early Winter. The schedule of works recommended following inspection was usually stated in terms of priorities for action within 3; 12 and 24 months. Works of this nature must avoid interference with nesting birds *etc*, and in many cases must be preceded by an ecological survey and investigation into the presence of bats. It was anticipated that surveys would cost between £1,500-£3,000 in total although any advised works could not be estimated beforehand. Consequently **it was resolved that:**

FC2014/70.1 Lewes Town Council will commission a comprehensive specialist survey of trees on its land, with works funded from the existing reserve earmarked for Open Spaces (shown as R3 in the published accounts).

FC2014/71

LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME:

Members considered report FC010/2014 (*Copy in Minute Book*) apprising Members of the proposed successor scheme to the Quality Parish initiative.

Lewes Town Council (LTC) is an accredited Quality Parish under the prevailing scheme, which was introduced in 2003; revised significantly in 2008, and scheduled for replacement in 2015. LTC is due for re-accreditation in 2015. A new scheme; the Local Councils Award Scheme, was being developed. The scheme was created in 2014 and was to be managed on behalf of local councils by the Improvement and Development Board (IDB). Under the new scheme, Council can apply for an award at one of three levels:

The Foundation Award would demonstrate that a council meets the minimum requirements for operating lawfully and according to standard practice.

The Quality Award demonstrates that a council achieves good practice in governance, community engagement and council improvement.

The Quality Gold Award demonstrates that a council is at the forefront of best practice and achieves excellence in governance, community leadership and council development.

NALC was currently identifying pilots through County Associations (not in Sussex or Surrey), and guidance would be adjusted in response to those. Existing Quality councils were to be offered a quick, low cost route into the new scheme when launched in late January 2015.

It was recommended that LTC registers for the 'continuation mode' Foundation Award, as the (draft) additional criteria for the new Quality Award cannot be accommodated before the incoming administration following May 2015 elections, and the scheme was still evolving. In answer to a question, TC confirmed that he held a copy of some draft material on the criteria, and some members expressed interest in visiting the office to peruse this.

After a general discussion **it was resolved that:**

FC2014/71.1 Lewes Town Council will register for Foundation status (as a currently-accredited Quality Council) upon the launch of the new Local Councils Award scheme.

FC2014/72

UPDATE ON MATTERS IN PROGRESS:

a) *North Street Quarter/Pells* – Members were advised that the Santon/LDC Planning application should be submitted to the SDNPA by the end of December. The transport plan had been considered by the Highways Agency. It was hoped to get close to the 40% policy target for affordable housing (according to national criteria) and would include units designed for local young people. There had been

discussions regarding future joint use of Springman House by emergency services. Calculation of values for section 106 agreements was underway. Should the final assessment, following consultations with the community, result in a significant area of creative workspace being available at “subsidised” levels of rent, it was proposed that a local community organization would be asked to act as the managing body for those premises. The developer intended to invite Members to a meeting to allow a privileged view of the plans before submission of the application.

b) *Building repairs/refurbishment* – Surveys of the Town Hall were understood to be complete, and cost estimates and timetable proposals were expected to follow shortly. A planned inspection of Malling Community Centre by the Working Party had unfortunately been cancelled, and would be rescheduled.

c) *Baxter Prints installation* – The prints would be in place before Christmas, assistance had been offered from a volunteer who holds a qualification in curation of such collections.

d) *Internal Audit* – Members had a copy of the Auditors Interim report for the 2014/15 year. Council **noted** the report, which raised no concerns and was complimentary toward the Council’s systems of control. It was requested that in future that the Internal Audit report be listed as a separate item on meeting agenda.

e) *Malling Community Centre arson attack* – Sussex Police had advised that the suspect had been found guilty of the damage and arson committed at the Centre. A compensation order had been made of £700.

g) *SAS “Skeleton 180” project* – The bones had now gone to Edinburgh for further inspection.

FC2014/73

NOTICE of ITEMS IN PROSPECT:

a) The next Planning Committee Meeting would be on Tuesday 25th November at 7pm in the Yarrow Room.

b) The deadline for Grant applications for the next cycle was Friday 14th November, with the assessment Panel meeting on 26th November and recommendations being considered by Council on 11th December.

c) The next Council Meeting would be on Thursday 11th December at 7.30pm with the deadline for submissions to the Town Clerk of proposed items for the agenda being 12 noon on Monday 1st December.

g) Dates would be confirmed for meetings of various Working Parties and liaison groups.

FC2014/74

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 9:05pm

Signed:

Date: