



An invitation

to all residents of this Ancient County Town of Sussex to attend

The **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING** for Lewes

on **Thursday 25th April 2019**, in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall**, at **8:00pm**

AGENDA

1. WELCOME

Introduction by the Mayor, Cllr Janet Baah

2. ELECTORS FORUM

An open discussion forum for parish Electors present at the meeting.

Cllr J Baah
Mayor of Lewes
9th April 2019

Please note: this is NOT a meeting of the Council, but an additional opportunity for local people to voice opinions, concerns, or suggestions about the town and its community.

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MINUTES

of the Annual Town Meeting for the civil parish of Lewes
held on **Thursday 19th April 2018**, in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lewes** at **8:00pm**.

PRESENT: Cllr M Chartier (Mayor) *Chairman for the meeting.*

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); Ms F Garth (*Asst Town Clerk and Civic Officer*); M Larkin (*Town Hall Keeper*)

There were **10** electors present, in addition to **6** Town Councillors among the assembly (who were also electors) and **1** East Sussex County Councillor.

ATM2018/01 WELCOME:

Cllr Chartier opened the meeting with a brief word of welcome. He re-emphasized that the Annual Town Meeting was not a meeting of the Town Council, but a general forum of the town's electors. He noted that if matters raised were more properly within the remit of either the District or County Council, or another body, they could nonetheless be discussed and appropriate notes recorded for onward referral.

ATM2018/02 ELECTORS' FORUM:

1 It was suggested that publicity for this meeting was capable of improvement. The Council website was criticized. Criticism that it was not up to date and did not publish meeting agenda was rebutted as inaccurate. A new, modern, website was being produced and would 'launch' later in the year, which would also offer links to Facebook and Twitter. A resident complained about the advertisement for the recent Mayor's seniors' tea, and for the current meeting.

2 A resident complained at the length of time waiting for a refurbishment of Malling Community Centre. The Mayor explained that the process was necessarily a lengthy one, and the condition of the Centre was not fairly attributable to the Council. He indicated other calls on Council resources and the balances that it had to achieve in prioritizing major projects. The project was more complex than a completely new building would be, and would cost a significant amount of money, which will need a mix of savings (Council 'earmarked' financial reserves) and grants from third parties; possibly supplemented by borrowing. Considering the scale of the project and the other work of the Council it was considered that it was progressing satisfactorily.

3 Complaints were raised about refuse vehicles; grass cutting; parking provision on Sundays for legitimate permit holders, and a question followed regarding apportionment of the costs of coastal defences. These were District Council matters, but TC was able to offer information on the LDC principles of charging some services directly at local level as Special Expenses, and the background to the coastal defence structures and their funding.

4 ESCC Cllr Daniels noted that he was pressing for a complete review of parking, but finding it hard to achieve his goal within the ESCC systems; he was promoting an area-by-area assessment. A resident suggested more car share schemes and bicycle parks might help people to reduce reliance on their cars.

5 Thanks were offered to the Town Council for its financial support to local bus services (CTLA and Compass) and it was asked if this was likely to continue. Councillors present who were closely engaged with this initiative advised that they would be promoting continued support, and that similar projects were under consideration, eg local 'dial-a-ride' service extension.

6 A resident asked where one could obtain a copy of the Council's financial reports. TC advised that annual accounts; the statutory governance and accounting return, and several other financial documents were all available on the Council's website, or copies could be requested at the Town Hall office. He was happy to provide e-mailed

copies on request.

7 An update on the status of the Lewes Neighbourhood Plan was requested, and this was given along with an outline of the anticipated timetable for the remaining (statutory) stages of consultation. Cllr Daniels asked how its effectiveness could be secured, and there was a question about the statutory Referendum and what would happen if the Plan was not accepted. It was impossible to predict how Neighbourhood Plans might be treated once adopted, as experience across the country had shown in recent years. There would always be an *ad hoc* response to any challenge; appropriate to the particular circumstances. If the Plan did not achieve greater than 50% positive support in a referendum, it would need to be reconsidered. Given the amount of scrutiny conducted by the public and technical commentators during its evolution, it was difficult to determine what might aid its success.

There being no further questions, nor other business for the meeting, the Mayor thanked those who had attended and closed the meeting.

Meeting closed at 8:30pm