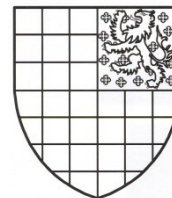


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**LEWES  
TOWN  
COUNCIL**

### **To All Members of Lewes Town Council**

A Meeting of **Lewes Town Council** will be held in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lewes** on **Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021**, at **7:30pm** which you are summoned to attend.

S Brigden, Town Clerk,  
30<sup>th</sup> September 2021

### **AGENDA**

#### **1. QUESTION TIME**

To consider any questions received regarding items on the agenda for this meeting.

#### **2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

To note any declarations of personal or prejudicial interest in items to be considered at this meeting.

#### **3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To consider apologies tendered by Members unable to attend the meeting.

#### **4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive any announcements from the Mayor.

#### **5. MINUTES**

To agree Minutes of the Council meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021.

*(attached page 3)*

#### **6. WORKING PARTIES & OUTSIDE BODIES**

To consider matters arising from working parties; members serving on outside bodies *etc.*

a) *Grants Panel 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021*

*(Report FC010/2021 attached page 16)*

b) *Open Council Working Party 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021*

*(Minutes attached page 18)*

c) *Buildings Working Party 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021*

*(Minutes attached page 21)*

d) *Pells land exchange Working Party 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021*

*(Minutes attached page 25)*

e) *Malling Community Centre Steering Group 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021*

*(Minutes to follow)*

#### **7. OUSE WATER QUALITY**

To consider a motion regarding river water quality in the Ouse

*(NOM010/2021 attached page 30)*

#### **8. LEWES PRIORY – Priory Trust World Heritage Site bid**

To consider the request of Lewes Priory Trust

*(Report FC011/2021 attached page 31)*

#### **9. POLICY on COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS**

To review continued precautions

*(oral report by Town Clerk)*

#### **10. UPDATE ON MATTERS IN PROGRESS**

*(oral report by TC/ Annual plan summary)*

#### **11. NOTICE of ITEMS IN PROSPECT**

*(oral report by Town Clerk)*

#### **12. TRANSFER of RESPONSIBILITIES to SUCCESSOR TOWN CLERK**

To agree transfer of responsibilities

*(Report FC012/2021 attached page 33)*

***For further information about items on this agenda please contact the Town Clerk BYE-MAIL at the above address***

### **PUBLIC ATTENDANCE –**

Members of the public have the right, and are welcome, to attend this meeting of the Council – questions regarding items on the agenda may be heard at the start of the meeting with the Mayor's consent.

Questions or requests to address the Council must be submitted by email to the Town Clerk at least 3 days in advance.

**Covid-19 risk arrangements:** Due to continuing risk in the rate and level of infections all attendees will be required to wear a face-covering, and seating will be arranged to ensure appropriate distance.

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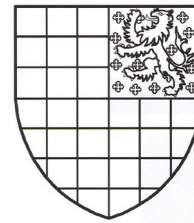
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**LEWES  
TOWN  
COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES**

Of the meeting of **Lewes Town Council**,  
held on **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021**, in the Corn Exchange, Lewes Town Hall at **7:30pm**.

**PRESENT** Cllrs Dr J Baah; M Bird; R Burrows; S Catlin (*Mayor*); G Earl; R Handy; J Herbert; J Lamb; Dr W Maples; DR G Mayhew; M Milner; R O’Keeffe; S Sains (*Deputy Mayor*) and R Waring.

*In attendance:* S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); Mrs F Garth (*Assistant Town Clerk & Civic Officer*) and L Symons (*Town Hall Manager*)

*Observing:* Ms L Chrysostomou (*TC designate*); Ms L Zeyfert (*All Saints Centre Manager*); B Courage (*Town Ranger*).

**FC2021/39**

**QUESTION TIME:** There were six members of the public present, and a question was posed on behalf of Lewes Operatic Society, regarding the Council’s position on continued measures to mitigate risk of Covid-19 infection and restriction of audience numbers within the Town Hall. The question prompted the suggestion that the item scheduled as item 11 on the agenda be brought forward and dealt with following necessary formalities, at which point an answer would be forthcoming – this was **agreed**.

**FC2021/40**

**MEMBERS DECLARATIONS of INTERESTS:** There were none.

**FC2021/41**

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Henman, who was working; Cllrs Makepeace and Wood, who were on holiday, and Cllr Vernon; who was detained on family business following a bereavement.

**FC2021/41.1** Reasons submitted for absence from this meeting are noted.

**FC2021/42**

**MAYOR’s ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

a) Councillors welcomed Laura Chrysostomou, the Town Clerk Designate, who had started her employment with the Council the previous day.

b) A request had been received from the LEWES WASPI group (Women Against State Pension Injustice) to display a small banner on the Town Hall on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September (WASPI day). This would simply say “WASPI Lewes Area” and would not be fixed – the building’s listed status made that problematic - but it could be draped from Council Chamber windows or fixed to the frame surrounding the Martyrs’ Steps viewing pane for the day. As background it was stated that the Government Ombudsman had found, some years earlier, that the Dept for Work & Pensions was guilty of maladministration in that they did not notify changes, despite their own research that showed the majority of women were not aware that their state pension age had increased by up to 6 yrs. There are approximately 6,500 women in the Lewes constituency, born in the 1950s, who have been affected by the changes to their state pension age. Councillors were happy to support this request.

c) Members noted that Cllr Dr Baah was now appointed to the South Downs National Park Authority Partnership Board, and the Council’s congratulations were offered.

**FC2021/43**

**MINUTES:**

**It was resolved that:**

**FC2021/43.1** Minutes of the Council meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021 were received and agreed as an accurate record.

**FC2021/44**

**POLICY on COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS:**

The Council had earlier decided to continue with some prudent measures to mitigate risk of Covid-19 infection (*Resolution FC2020/35.1 refers*). There was in place a temporary policy as set out in report FC007/2021 with regard to continued restrictions on visitors to Council buildings. This required the wearing of masks by all visitors and limited audience or visitor numbers to 50% of a room/hall’s normal capacity. This policy was to be regularly reviewed

following monitoring of published Covid-19 conditions, and the question by Lewes Operatic Society (LOS) prompted this to be brought-forward on the agenda.

Members were interested to know what effect the restrictions had on LOS and the Society's representatives offered their insight into this. Council considered the most recent Covid-19 infection rate statistics for the town (source: gov.uk ) and it was apparent that there had been a slight decline in risk, although acknowledged that with pupils returning to school and other factors this was likely to rise again. The local 'R-rate' (factor for exponential infection) had risen from between 0.8 and 1.0 at the time of the Council's decision to 1.0 – 1.2 the day before the meeting. A discussion ensued in which various views were expressed regarding a relaxation of the current restrictions on numbers. With the caveat that LOS would be asked to encourage the wearing of masks by their audience, **it was resolved that:**

**FC2021/44.1** The previously-agreed temporary policy on Covid-19 risk mitigation is revised to allow events at Council buildings with audiences/attendees numbering no more than **75%** of the maximum capacity of a room. This will be reviewed at the next meeting of the Council.

**FC2021/45**

### **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) Audit Panel 5<sup>th</sup> August 2021:** Council received the Minutes of this meeting (*copy in the Minute Book*) which had carried-out routine financial monitoring: Members had been furnished with detailed information (*copies in minute book*) following the end of the first quarter of the financial year and miscellaneous comparative values *iro* status compared with previous years. a Budget monitoring update showed actual expenditure and income values as posted to the Council's Sage accounting system for all transactions processed in the period. There was some discussion on salient points of detail, and TC responded with reference to the identified sources.

Ordinarily the Chairman would append his signature to the file of periodic bank reconciliations to verify the scrutiny already conducted, but this could be done in arrears at any point during the year. Scanned copies of the first-quarter reconciliations were shown on-screen and verified by the Panel.

There had followed a general discussion on various matters including: provision for equipping Mallig Community Centre (adequate funds remained in the earmarked Reserve); grant recipients who did not appear to acknowledge the Council's support (this would be taken into account by the Grants Panel); ethical banking (it had previously been agreed that the new Responsible Finance Officer would be asked to research this); environmental auditing (outside the remit of the Panel, which addressed statutory requirements, but could be addressed); structural repairs at the All Saints Centre (programme underway).

The Panel had considered information on the Council's financial status and management for the first quarter; and found no items of concern.

#### **It was resolved that:**

**FC2021/45.1** The Minutes of the Audit Panel meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2021 (*copy in the Minute book*) are received and noted

**b) Commemorations Committee 12<sup>th</sup> August 2021:** The Minutes of this meeting were received, and a number of recommendations considered. The meeting had considered:

1 *Lewes climate festival:* The plans were progressing well, and a successful event was anticipated, weather permitting, including musicians; presentations; performances and science experiments. There were some minor problems, such as the need to find an alternative provider for a cake stall. A poster had been produced, and copies would be provided to the Town Hall. An electronic version was also requested.

2 *Lewes arts council:* It was reported that Lewes District Council (LDC) was believed to be about to announce a revised focus on Tourism & Culture. It was agreed that the most appropriate way to progress aspirations for a Lewes Arts Council might be to await

developments in this regard and to offer LDC assistance, such as facilitating a Lewes sub-group.

3 *The Queen's platinum Jubilee 2022:*

a) *Celebratory event:* Preliminary discussions had been held with representatives of Lewes's bonfire Societies who were beginning to plan a weekend event in June 2022 involving local area street parties followed by processions through the town culminating in a firework display, possibly from the Martyrs' Memorial. This would be the finale to a day-long public event, likely to be on Malling Recreation Ground. The Civic Officer had proposed that a partnership in these events would be an ideal way for the Council to recognize the Jubilee, given its own limited staff resources. The cost of fireworks for a suitable display was estimated to be of the order of £15,000, and the Committee agreed to recommend this level of support to Council, to be included when 2022/23 budgets are set. It was noted that there should be a requirement for an environmental impact assessment. It was suggested that the Mayor might also host a "seniors tea" on the day, as had been popular for similar events in the recent past, and perhaps a schools art competition with a display of the work in the Town Hall similar to that held for the Queen's diamond Jubilee.

b) *"Queen's Green Canopy" initiative:* this was a national project although there was some confusion as to whether the intention was to plant single or multiple trees. It was acknowledged that multiple trees had a greater chance of survival, and it was suggested that a pair of Pomegranate trees might be planted in the Peace Garden. An alternative might be a Mulberry to complement the existing tree in Southover Grange Gardens planted in 1951 by the then Princess Elizabeth. The Civic Officer would investigate the costs and practicalities of these ideas

4 *Lewes war memorial centenary 2022:*

a) *"Roll of Honour" Book:* The town's Grade 2\* heritage-listed war memorial would reach its centenary in September 2022, and Council had earlier agreed the principle of a book to be published by the Council to coincide with this, to commemorate all those who lost their lives. This followed research commissioned from Cllr Dr Mayhew into those recorded upon, and those omitted from, the memorial - which had commenced with the start of the national period of commemoration of WW1 between 2014 and 2018, and now represented an impressive body of work comprising biographies of 389 individuals in total. It had become apparent at the outset that the names recorded included several individuals with tenuous or no actual links to Lewes due to the method of applications for inclusion that had applied following the end of the war, whereas many Lewes people were not recorded there. Material from the project had been displayed in the Town Hall in 2018 to much popular acclaim. Cllr Dr Mayhew had conducted extensive research in the 7 years since then and had also prepared a comprehensive introduction explaining the socio-political background to the period. Maps and photographs were still required to finish the work, and incidental issues to resolve such as Ordnance Survey permission for reproduction, but over 181,000 words had been written. It was estimated that a sum of £10 – 12,000 might be needed to produce a volume of suitable quality, but accurate details of costs would need to be established. Conventional production timescales for such projects suggested that to publish the finished book by September 2022, work should start without delay. Colleagues wished to record their thanks to Dr Mayhew for his work on this project and agreed to recommend to Council that a sum of £12,000 be reserved pending establishment of costs for production of a suitable book (attributing authorship and research credits to him), and that the Commemorations Committee be authorized to complete the project.

b) *Rededication:* The war memorial was upgraded by English Heritage to 2-star status in 2014. The principal reasons given 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 20<sup>th</sup> Century;*

*Sculptural interest: by Vernon March, a sculptor of considerable renown notable for the vigour of his figures, whose premature death 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.*

A rededication ceremony was proposed, in 2022, and this might be combined with the Queen's jubilee celebrations with invitation being extended to the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment and regimental band, who might also be prevailed upon to play at the evening public event. It was agreed that this idea should be recommended to Council.

5 *Black History Month:* It was suggested that for 2021 the Council should again purchase some BHM Society education packs (cost approximately £50 each) and offer these to interested local schools. Cllr Dr Baah and Mrs Garth had been invited to meetings at The Depot with a group, Diversity Resource International, who were planning events for BHM across three nights in October 2021. It was proposed that a closing event be hosted by the Mayor in the Town Hall on 23<sup>rd</sup> October and there would be events at All Saints Centre and the town library.

6 *Tom Paine Day:* This item was deferred in the absence of Cllr Milner, who had promoted it.

7 *Pells historic interpretation boards:* The Pells Local History Group had prepared the basis of some attractive historic interpretation material as part of their aborted (due to Covid-19) commemoration plans for the area. These could be designed in similar graphic format to the Council's existing 'lectern' style boards advising on wildfowl feeding, at a cost of around £1,000. The Group had initially approached the Council in 2019 to partner in this project, with two boards proposed – one at each end of the lake detailing different historic contexts - but it had subsequently been affected by Covid-19. It was proposed that production of two boards be supported.

8 *Public art project:* A project was proposed to sponsor a 'waste artwork' that commemorates Mary Ann Woodhouse and Gideon Mantell, as well as to recognise the connection between fossil fuels and plastics. The artwork would be an Iguanodon, that litter pickers can fill with plastic bottles and bottle tops. There is a similar idea here seen at Betwys-y-Coed in Wales: <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/383509724517837029/>

There were residents who had for many years been interested in creating a Mantell/Woodward commemoration, and would probably be happy to be involved, as might Litter Free Lewes/Climate Hub and possibly the Sussex Archeological Society. The Council could commission the work, with a specification that includes the outline above, but with input from the Mantell enthusiasts, Litter Free Lewes, Climate Hub and the commissioned artist(s). If young people could be involved in some way, this would be ideal: perhaps conducting the initial litter picks or, perhaps the commissioned artist may wish to work with them. Costs were unknown, but it was an attractive project that the Committee agreed should be pursued and Council would be asked to support further research into costs *etc.*

9 *Sussex Day:* It was proposed that the Council should purchase a Sussex Flag to be flown on Sussex Day each year (16<sup>th</sup> June – St Richard's Day). The Civic Officer was currently updating the Council's flag calendar – following the protocol approved by the Government Department of Media Culture & Sport. Sussex day had been recognized since 2013, and a flag could be purchased for approximately £100.

10 *Miscellaneous items:* The idea of a "tourist-cam" webcam installation was agreed as an interesting suggestion that could be investigated as a future project.

The Minutes were received and noted, and Council then discussed each recommendation:

*The Queen's platinum Jubilee 2022 celebratory event:* There was a protracted debate on the funding proposal, in which several members spoke. Views were expressed that fireworks were not consistent with a climate emergency and a celebration could be mounted that was appropriate, without the inclusion of fireworks, although it was acknowledged that this was a Lewes tradition that was deeply embedded and appealed to a broad cross-section of the local community. It was proposed that the funds recommended should be subject to the Council's process for assessing requests for 'major funding'. TC explained that this was not a grant application by third-parties but a proposal, originating from the Civic Officer, that the Council become a partner in the planned events. This meant that, effectively, the money was for use by the Council itself and a formulaic approach was not appropriate. If there were concerns regarding the nature of the proposed event, then individual Members should vote accordingly.

Following further discussion and questions regarding the basis of the cost estimate, a vote was called on the amended proposal that the matter be subject to the Council's 'Major Funding' assessment process. The proposed amendment was not agreed, and a further vote was subsequently taken on the substantive recommendation, and **it was resolved** (9 for:5 against) **that:**

**FC2021/45.2** A sum of £15,000 be included in budgets for 2022/23 for participation in the Lewes bonfire Societies' joint project for a Queen's Jubilee firework display, as described at Minute FC2021/45 b) 3a) (*copy in the Minute book*).

*Lewes war memorial centenary 2022; "Roll of Honour" Book:* Cllr Dr Mayhew recounted the background to this item and noted that all the relevant Minutes from inception of the project in 2014 were available on the website. The matter of the Roll of Honour (working title only) was first recorded in August 2014, when he had been asked to apply his expertise to research and some form of solution to what was seen then as 'missing' names from the War Memorial. The research was regularly reported to Council, culminating in December 2018 with a report that the research was almost concluded and there was currently an exhibition of photographs in the Baxter corridor to accompany lectures in the Council Chamber. To complete the project, it was agreed that a booklet similar to that produced for the 'Our Pictures' project, and an online version, would offer a suitable legacy for the project. The proposed date to complete was the 1922 centenary of the dedication of Lewes War Memorial. The Committee now recommended in-principle agreement to the production of a suitable book, containing photographs, maps, and biographies to honour 389 names. Research was needed into the costs of design and production, before a final commitment was made, but the estimate of around £12,000 was based upon previous experience and anticipated a print-run of 500–1,000 copies of a book that might also be sold with a cover price of up to £10. Councillors made various suggestions and asked questions, and it was noted that the book could go online once printed copies were all distributed or sold. Thanks were recorded to Cllr Dr Mayhew for his work on the project, which had involved an enormous amount of time and effort. It was subsequently **resolved that:**

**FC2021/45.3** A sum of £12,000 be agreed pending establishment of costs for production of a suitable "Roll of Honour" book, and the Commemorations Committee be authorized to complete the project, as described at Minute FC2021/45 b) 4a) (*copy in the Minute book*).

The further recommendations of the Committee were all agreed without comment - **it was resolved that:**

**FC2021/45.4** A rededication ceremony shall be planned for the town's War memorial in 2022.

**FC2021/45.5** Support be given to the Black History Month events planned, as described at Minute FC2021/45 b) 5) (*copy in the Minute book*).

**FC2021/45.6** Support be given to produce two historic interpretation bards at the Pells, funded from agreed revenue budgets, as described at Minute FC2021/45 b) 7) (*copy in the Minute book*).

**FC2021/45.7** In-principle agreement is given to develop a public "waste artwork" project as described at Minute FC2021/45 b) 8) (*copy in the Minute book*).

**FC2021/45.8** The Council shall purchase a Sussex Flag at a cost of approximately £100, to be flown on Sussex Day each year (16<sup>th</sup> June – St Richard's Day).

**c) Open Council Working Party 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021:** The Minutes of this meeting were received, and it was noted that the meeting had considered:

1 *Public Participatory Budget Pilot:*

Council had asked the Working party to consider ways to engage the public with the agreed Public Participatory Budget (PPB) pilot scheme, asking the community to help prioritize the list of projects (37 in total) contained in section 11 of the Lewes Neighbourhood Plan; all being eligible for funding from accrued Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts.

A sub-group consisting of Cllrs Catlin, Vernon, and Dr Maples had met to develop outline proposals along the lines of these discussions, and notes of their meeting were presented:

As a pilot scheme, it was recognized that the breadth of communications and outreach should not be disproportionate to the amount of CIL money available. Nevertheless, it was desirable



to engage across the spectrum of online, face-to-face, focussed and more 'casual' communication. Using a range of communications and discussion activity would give a better idea of what is scalable for future exercises (should the pilot be successful). Meetings/communications were proposed as:

*First set of resident participation:*

The first set of resident participation would involve using "Top Trump" cards/A5s (*see below*), as discussion facilitation, as well as additional information provided by interested members of the community before and during the event. The aim of these sessions would be to explore as many of the 37 potential projects/activities as possible and to come up with a resident-determined short-list of around 10 items:

1. Face to face 'World Café' event, at the Town Hall, with anticipated participation by 30 - 50 people, as soon as possible.
2. A Zoom 'World Café' event, within 24/48 hours of the face-to-face session.
3. Participants would be invited in the following ways: using Town Councillor networks, What's On notices in *eg* Lewes News, Council Website, FaceBook, a shared (f-2-f and online) small advertisement in the Sussex Express.
4. Eventbrite could be used to register participants. Communications would also provide the Town Hall phone number and reception email address to enable less-digitally-connected residents to attend.

*Second set of resident participation:*

The second set of resident participation would focus on a short list of CIL items and be more dependent on easy-to-grasp information in the form of Top Trump cards/A5s. During an approximately 21 day period immediately following the World Café events, residents would be able to 'vote' in the following ways:

5. Using drop-boxes (like the supermarket 'buttons' for good causes) at the Town Hall Reception, Town Hall Tuesday Market and Stall at Farmers' Market.
6. Using online voting using *eg* Survey Monkey
7. Residents will be encouraged to participate using similar channels to above.

*Using 'Top Trumps' -style cards:*

8. *Content* proposed is:
  - a. That each card includes: Name of project; Estimated cost of project; 'Considerations' (*eg* other organisations interested/constraining); 'Advocacy' statement, including short description; Ease of implementation ('traffic lights' format); Relevant image (where possible)
  - b. Asking a small number of volunteers from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering group to add short descriptive 'advocacy' content to the CIL list of possible projects.
  - c. That reasonable costings are estimated for each, in order to guide determination of Red/Amber/Green traffic lights
  - d. A sub-group of Open Council to work with TC to manage production and completion within a time-scale that ensures both physical and online versions of cards and other facilitations are ready in good time.
9. *Design* suggestions are:

Ideally, ask the local college Design & Technology students to design a simple, branded template; the timescale for this, however, may be challenging. Other suggestions welcomed.
10. *Production* proposals:
  - a. It was possible to obtain 50 packs for £250.
  - b. Members noted the need to follow Council's 'visioning' priorities and to use local, ethical producers where possible. Suggestions are welcome.

These ideas had been warmly received and it was agreed that Cllrs Vernon and Waring would prepare initial designs for 'Top Trump' cards accordingly, which would be assessed at a further meeting in time to allow a firm proposal with detailed costs to be submitted to the scheduled October meeting of Council. It was agreed that this would be during week commencing 20<sup>th</sup> September. TC would provide details of the CIL projects, although he reminded Members that costing was not possible in many cases – suggesting an 'order/scale-



of-costs' would be the most practical classification. He advised that the CIL fund currently stood at £74,000. Councillors and staff, with their partners, would be asked to act a 'guinea-pigs' to test the scheme at an appropriate point.

2 *Allotment representatives:*

The meeting had considered suggestions put forward by an allotment tenant for having more Tenant engagement across and between sites, through a system of representation at Council Allotment Group meetings – and a request for regular Allotment meetings. It was suggested that volunteers be representatives for each of the Council sites, initially by invitation and subsequently following an election process. These would have regular meetings established between the Representatives and the staff responsible for the allotments service and if there were an Allotments Working Party established at any time – that group. Meetings could take place at appropriately seasonal times, to address *eg*:

- › Allotment Show, *eg* making it more accessible/interesting to new growers, encouraging Tenant participation.
- › Supporting new Tenants.
- › Sharing good practice.
- › Revising Policy in line with good practice.

The Working Party considered such questions as the democratic dilemma posed by individuals as representatives, and the model of an Allotments Society (either pan-Lewes or site-for-site), which could have a number of inherent advantages for the Council and for tenants. Past attempts to promote formation of a Society had, unfortunately, proved unsuccessful. The Council's tenants tended to be independent, and the proposals for individual representatives being suggested may be unpopular. Regular engagement with a range of tenants was desirable, but the method needed further consideration. A Symposium might be held – possibly 'off-season' when tenants were less active on their allotments.

Working Party members were asked to crystallize their ideas on these issues for firm proposals to be drafted at the next meeting, which would be held during the week commencing 20<sup>th</sup> September.

3 *"Connecting Lewes" digital inclusion initiative:* The Council had expressed support for this initiative and the working party received an update on its progress. A steering committee meeting in July had addressed three themes: Age; Gender; and Health. Their recommendations in these areas were aimed at improving confidence in non-users of technology; de-mystifying and highlighting practicality, helping formation of peer groups; trusted helpers; training in a social setting (*eg* "cakes & computers" events); improving understanding of what is available by such as health-service providers *etc*

Cllr Lamb was thanked for his presentation and invited to return if/when the Working Party might assist.

4 *East Sussex Loneliness and Resilience initiative:* This was an initiative by East Sussex County Council, and it was suggested that Town Councillors might engage with a research group when approached. TC should expect an approach from ESCC officers shortly.

5 *Public consultations:* It was suggested that LTC might assist the public with the many consultations arising these days. A recent example was the East Sussex Bus Service Improvement Plan, and Cllr Makepeace suggested that rather than reply to the questionnaire people should instead send individual emails detailing their local concerns; she also asked how the Town Council might ensure that it reflects the views of constituents. It was accepted that elected Councillors should engage with their constituents in their own preferred manner and attempt to represent them in a balanced way. Each consultation would be unique and address its particular audience in a deliberately-selected way. If there were criticisms of a particular format at any time, they could be passed to the body responsible. Libraries were often a focal point for engagement in such areas. The Council was often consulted for a 'corporate' response when it always sought to collate the views of representative Members. The soon-to-be-recruited Communications Officer (CO) could be asked to highlight important consultations on social media platforms *etc*.

Members had asked that the CO attend the Working Party meetings, but TC explained that the deployment of a part-time officer's efforts was an operational management matter and this would not be guaranteed.

6 *Town Council website:* The Council's website had been operational since mid-2019 and a review was proposed. TC advised that this would be a matter for the new Communications Officer and was embodied in the agreed job description. The meeting then became rather distracted by a debate over a particular photograph which was unpopular with some Members. Some complaints had been raised in the past two years over the photograph heading the 'Committees' page on the site, commenting that it did not suitably reflect the diversity of the Council's membership. TC explained that a suitable replacement photograph had been attempted on several occasions since the original item was produced, but none had retained the desired attributes once formatted for the website. Members were free to attempt their own photography in this regard but TC stated that he would not give the matter any attention in his last few weeks before retirement, having many other priorities. Some Members became insistent, and suggested photographs such as the traditional civic group picture taken following elections could be modified, although it was subsequently acknowledged that it was significantly out-of-date and showed an incomplete group. The Civic Officer could be asked to invite all Members to a photocall to update that.

7 *Video recording of Town Council meetings:* It was suggested that video recordings of Town Council meetings could be made and streamed, and TC was asked if this was possible. TC explained that equipment and training would be needed and although he had no sense of likely cost it was relatively straightforward to arrange. He reminded members that if they wished to propose such an initiative, they must put a case to Council. Council could be asked for 'in-principle' agreement and to approve research of costs and practicalities, arising from the Minutes of this meeting.

*CONCLUSIONS:* The next meeting of the Working Party would take place during week commencing 20<sup>th</sup> September to allow proposals to be agreed for the Public Participatory Budget pilot scheme, and allotment tenant engagement. The Chair would include an item to agree recommendations that the Working Party should be established as a standing Committee. The Civic Officer will be asked to convene a photocall for an updated Council group picture for use on the website 'Committees' page.

Council would be asked for 'in-principle' agreement and to approve research of costs and practicalities of video recording/online streaming of Council meetings.

Council received these Minutes without comment. **It was resolved that:**

**FC2021/45.9** The Minutes of the Open Council Working Party meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021 are received and noted, and the conclusions agreed.

**d) Lewes Chamber of Commerce:** Council received an oral report from Cllr Lamb, the Council's representative on the Chamber of Commerce executive committee. He noted two items of possible interest to Councillors:

The Lewes Business Forum - an online meeting scheduled for 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Councillors were invited, and access details would follow in due course.

Christmas Late Night Shopping event – this would be 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021, and plans were underway in collaboration with the High Street Traders Association.

The Mayor thanked Cllr Lamb and asked that future reports, such as the Chamber's Annual Meeting be made as written reports to Council.

**It was resolved that:**

**FC2021/45.10** The oral report on a meeting of the Executive committee of Lewes Chamber of Commerce is received and noted.

**FC2021/46**

#### **USE of GLYPHOSATE HERBICIDE:**

A Motion (NOM007/2021 *copy in minute book*) was received, proposing that the Council should write to East Sussex County Council (ESCC) requesting they stop the use of Glyphosate and other pesticides by ES Highways and in their own property maintenance practices, making the case outlined in the Notice of Motion. This stated that:

Some Councils across the County and UK have banned the use of glyphosate and other pesticides (glyphosate is a herbicide, a category of pesticide, focused on killing unwanted plants). Lewes District Council only use it in extreme circumstances and use hot foam as an alternative. A national petition is currently being circulated <https://www.pan-uk.org/call-to-ban-urban-pesticides-to-save-insects-and-ourselves/>, in addition to petitions to the Council on behalf of Newhaven and, in 2019, Hastings.

ESCC has significantly reduced its use of glyphosate and other pesticides in recent years but continues a programme of herbicide application using glyphosate as part of a solution including other pollinator-damaging surfactants for pavement, road-edge and gutter spraying.

There are six main reasons for stopping this practice:

1. Glyphosate and the other spray solution ingredients, including surfactants that help the spray 'stick' to plants, have been shown in peer-reviewed scientific articles to damage and in some cases kill individual insects who are themselves sprayed or alight on or eat already sprayed plants and, in the case of some bee species, affect the hive potentially leading to hive collapse.
2. There is increasing evidence that glyphosate also damages soil invertebrates such as worms and beetles essential for soil health.
3. There is clear evidence that glyphosate damages, and in some instances kills, plants and animals in waterways. While good practice reduces the amount of glyphosate entering waterways, UK weather is not reliable enough to ensure a full 48 hours of sunshine, post-application. Because solution is not spot-sprayed only on plants, but is streamed along gutters, the solution may not be subject to plant uptake, and therefore remains on the surface of the road until it is washed away, into our waterways.
4. Glyphosate is generally accepted as a human carcinogen (World Health Organization report 2015) and is particularly dangerous for children and pregnant women. While the risk is relatively low compared with some other herbicides, Bayer/Monsanto has already lost several court cases where *eg* non-Hodgkin's lymphoma has been accepted to have been caused by exposure to glyphosate (both commercial and home use). This risk to human health is neither acceptable on moral grounds, nor financial grounds: the County/ES Highways are in no position to defend court cases that may follow continued use of a known carcinogenic substance in public spaces.
5. The current ESCC/ES Highways practices are simply breeding glyphosate-tolerant weeds. Glyphosate spraying is at best a short-term solution. Where only glyphosate is sprayed and no alternating weed-removal practice used, the efficacy of spraying reduces. The trajectory is: efficacy at a standard solution level for 2-5 years, then rapidly diminished efficacy, requiring either massively increased amount of glyphosate, or the use of a different weed removal practice.
6. There are well-established alternatives such as hot foam and acetic acid\*.

Council noted the proposals and some suggestions and comments were made.

\*It was agreed that point 6 should be extended to include mechanical removal of foliage *etc.*

**It was resolved that:**

**FC2021/46.1** Lewes Town Council will write to East Sussex County Council (ESCC) requesting they stop the use of Glyphosate and other pesticides by ES Highways and in their own property maintenance practices, making the case outlined in the Notice of Motion presented as NOM007/2021.

**FC2021/47**

**PROTECTION of BUS SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE:**

Council considered a Motion (NOM008/2021 *copy in minute book*) that called upon Council to write to the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) to seek assurance that Planning Officers will ensure adherence to the policies contained in the Lewes Neighbourhood Plan and the South Downs Local Plan regarding the continued provision of provision for a suitably-located bus interchange, to support both local and through-town services, in consideration of any development proposals for the existing central bus station.

Information supporting this proposal stated that bus services are a vital service for many members of the community who do not have access to cars or who wish to use the full range

of public transport. To run an effective bus service, the town of Lewes needs to continue to have a central bus station and routes through the town that ensure that passengers can access the service conveniently from both the centre of the town and the surrounding areas.

The motion called upon the Council to both oppose redevelopment schemes that would involve loss of a bus station as a transport facility and hub for the Town and asked the Council to ensure that it supports all attempts to retain bus routes through the town.

Planning proposals were currently being brought forward to convert the bus station and garage in Lewes to a residential property development leaving the Town without a long-term stopping, parking and turning facility and a central point for pick/up drop off that is within walking distance of other public transport hubs eg: the railway station; cycle routes into Lewes and within walking distances of all of the centre of town. Removing this facility would have a substantial negative impact on public transport both within the town and to other villages, towns and cities in East Sussex (Tunbridge Wells, Brighton) and on disabled, less well off, elderly and environmentally concerned members of our community.

As a council that has declared a climate emergency, it should support mass transport and public transport policies as an effective way of minimizing carbon and NO2 emissions, during the period that the transport economy transitions to electric vehicles. To support public transport, the council should take proactive steps to both protect public transport facilities and central arterial public transport routes.

Policies in the Lewes Neighbourhood Plan and the SDNPA Local Plan recognize that the existing central bus station will inevitably be the subject of development proposals, and allow for planning consent to be conditional upon alternative provision and integration with other central strategic sites:

The South Downs Local Plan states (p177)

*Bus Station – although the bus station performs a vital transport role and is well located in relation to many important parts of the town centre, it is not a vital asset. The bus station and garage are unattractive utilitarian features at an important entrance to the historic core of the town. It is the interchange function which it is essential to retain in the area rather than the longer term bus storage.*

Policy SD57 states (p181):

*j) Alternative uses on the bus station site are subject to the facility being replaced by an operationally satisfactory and accessible site elsewhere;*

*8.40 At the same time, there are still concerns over the long-term viability of operating the bus station in its current location. Therefore, the principle of redevelopment is acceptable, providing that attractive, operationally satisfactory interchange facilities for passengers are provided on a site elsewhere of equal convenience in this sector of the town.*

*8.41 Given the shared constraints and opportunities between the two sites, the National Park Authority believes it appropriate that the policy seeks a comprehensive approach to the redevelopment of the whole area. However it is recognised that planning applications will come forward separately, and the policy provides flexibility for this, while ensuring that when detailed proposals come forward they are consistent with other phases/ schemes.*

These policies mean that any developer should be prepared to integrate with other local developments such as the Phoenix/North Street development.

The Lewes Neighbourhood Plan, developed with enormous community assistance and input, reflects this position in:

Policy HC1 ‘Protection of Existing & New Community Infrastructure’ (p47):

*7.9 The existing bus station serves the centre of Lewes very well and will be retained until a suitable alternative town centre site can be found offering the same or better undercover waiting facilities.*

Policy AM2 ‘Public Transport Strategy’ (p117-118):

*- ensuring a bus station with public facilities continues to be provided in a central location.*

Policy SS2 ‘Social & Civic Spaces’ (p122):

*10.9 Lewes Town Council will seek funds from developers and others to:*

*[extract] — The transport hubs at the bus and railway stations need to become more enjoyable public spaces, supporting activities and events and providing a better welcome. The opening of The*

*Depot is a good example. However, a decision on the future of bus station provision in the town is awaited, so wishes for it to become an enjoyable space must at present remain aspirational.*

It was considered essential that these policies are strictly adhered-to.

Councillors spoke to confirm their fears that planning constraints may be inadequate, and to criticize the extant pre-application proposals for redevelopment of the site publicized recently. TC recounted a conversation he had with the SDNPA lead officer on major projects, and it had been confirmed that the policies referred-to were at the forefront of the officer's mind when discussing these proposals with the prospective developer. The developer had been strongly encouraged to approach the Town Council's Planning Committee before taking their ideas further.

**It was resolved that:**

**FC2021/47.1** Lewes Town Council will write to The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) to seek assurance that Planning Officers will ensure adherence to the policies contained in the Lewes Neighbourhood Plan and the South Downs Local Plan regarding the continued provision of provision for a suitably-located bus interchange, to support both local and through-town services, in consideration of any development proposals for the existing central bus station.

**FC2021/48**

**CYCLE STORAGE INITIATIVE:**

A Motion (NOM009/2021 *copy in the Minute Book*) proposed that the Council's Transport Committee be asked to investigate the purchase of parking storage facilities for bicycles for residents with no, or highly restricted, bicycle storage space.

It was stated that many of Lewes's residents live in terraced or apartment properties with narrow entry ways at the front, no front garden space and with no direct access to back gardens or no back garden at all. For these residents, having a bicycle might be desirable, but – because of the layout and facilities of their homes – is impractical.

Although there are some public bicycle racks, most of these were described as being of very poor design and poor quality and there are very few besides those in the main shopping areas. They are mostly not 'safe' for storing bicycles, making new and expensive bikes locked to them 'easy pickings' for thieves. In many other towns and cities, bicycle use is more actively encouraged through the provision of safe bicycle 'lock-ups' for residents who do not have the space to keep bicycles at home. Examples of effective resident bicycle storage including street parking schemes were depicted, with examples of costs. Although it was acknowledged that the Town Council could not expect to recoup its expenditure, it could lead to more people owning bikes in Lewes, more people cycling, less traffic, less pollution and a healthier town. The climate crisis was cited, and it was claimed that anything that could be done to reduce car use and encourage active travel must be done. Such a scheme would accord with Council's Visioning priorities, one of the highest of which was to do with cycling and supporting active travel. It was proposed that a budget of £100,000 should be set aside for the purchase of parking spaces and/or garages in appropriate areas around the town as and when they come on the market, and to set up the initial scheme.

There was some discussion on this proposal, and it was suggested that there could be helpful collaboration with the District Council, who were also looking at cycling provision. An additional element was proposed, to include a review of cycle stands, which was accepted and consequently **it was resolved that:**

**FC2021/48.1** Lewes Town Council's Transport Committee is asked to investigate the purchase of parking storage facilities for bicycles for residents with no, or highly restricted, bicycle storage space; and the general availability of cycle stands. This investigation to be conducted in a timely fashion in order to present findings and recommendations prior to the 2022 budgeting agreement.

**FC2021/49**

**RETENTION of INTERNAL AUDITOR:**

A report (FC009/2021 – copy in the Minute book) proposed retention of the current Internal Auditor. It was explained that:

1. The Council is subject to a statutory audit regime defined by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI2015/234).
2. All local councils are required at least once a year to confirm “in accordance with proper practices”, a review of the effectiveness of their system of internal control including a review of internal audit. Since 2003, when such regulations were first extended to Parish Councils, this has been reported as part of Lewes Town Council’s published accounts booklet and consistently been remarked as good practice by internal and external auditors.
3. It should be noted that the term internal auditor (IA) can be misleading, as this is an independent external consultant, commissioned direct by a Council – contrasting with the external audit currently carried-out by sector-appointed contractors.
4. The IA has a role in reviewing the effectiveness of control measures that the council decides to put in place and Lewes Town Council has been consistently fortunate to retain the services of IA’s who were extremely experienced in high-level local government financial management.
5. Both the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and The East Sussex Association of Local Councils (ESALC) maintain lists of “jobbing” internal auditors, but there is only one prospect registered who offers experience and qualifications appropriate to the work of a larger Parish: Mark Mulberry, of Mulberry & Co; principal of a professional accountancy and auditing practice who, coincidentally, manages ESALC’s own finances and who also provides audit services to other larger councils in Surrey and Sussex. Mr Mulberry has acted as IA for Lewes Town Council since the 2011/12 financial year and has developed a thorough understanding of the particular operating environment (LTC is one of only around 70 [out of circa 10,000] parish councils in England with a precept of over £1million).
6. Mr Mulberry is a Chartered Certified Accountant, Registered Tax Advisor; and Registered Auditor and principal of a private practice based in Surrey.
7. The practical plan for internal audit at Lewes is effected in two parts: the first concentrating on systems and procedures and the second on financial aspects. These are carried out in the autumn and spring respectively. As part of the process a written plan and other associated information are provided to ensure the council can fulfil its obligations. At the end of the process a comprehensive report is submitted to council, confirming that statutory declarations may be made with confidence.
8. Fees are charged based on time spent and, Lewes enjoys a significant discount off the normal commercial rate. In addition, there is a small charge for travel cost but not for travel time. Mr Mulberry’s fee is considered extremely reasonable and compares very favourably with other audit costs, such as the statutory external audit.

A question was raised as to whether the audit could be conducted remotely to minimize environmental impacts. TC advised that, although not always appropriate, this was possible for some elements and was becoming common practice – past years’ audits had been conducted remotely.

**It was resolved that:**

**FC2021/49.1** Mr Mark Mulberry, of Mulberry & Co., 9 Pound Lane, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1BX be retained as Internal Auditor to Lewes Town Council for the 2021/22 financial year.

**FC2021/50**

**NATIONAL RESILIENCE STRATEGY:**

Council considered a briefing from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) on its position regarding a government call for evidence on development of a National Resilience Strategy.

It was stated that the Covid-19 pandemic had stretched the capacity and resources of governments around the world. This demonstrated the importance of a resilient society with well-developed plans, capabilities, and response structures; able to react appropriately to the unexpected. A National Resilience Strategy is required to help frame such future responses and this needs to include strengthening Local Resilience Forums and examining in some depth how local communities can play their part. The call for evidence sought public views on how best to frame a Strategy supporting UK National Resilience and the objectives required for it, and a link was provided to the main consultation document. NALC would

respond to this call for evidence given many parish councils were already working with partners to support the community.

The main consultation questions were given, and the views of county associations and member councils was requested to help NALC inform its own submission. NALC asked for responses by 10<sup>th</sup> September. It was suggested and **agreed** that Members wishing to comment would submit these by email to TC by 7<sup>th</sup> September to allow a collated corporate reply to be forwarded.

FC2021/51

#### UPDATE ON MATTERS IN PROGRESS:

TC apologized that the tabulated update on progress with the annual plan of major work had not been distributed with the agenda as usual, nor subsequently. TC elaborated on various salient points as:

*Town Hall heating system replacement:* The Buildings Working Party would be convened shortly to address a recently-arisen issue affecting the Town Hall heating system replacement. Preliminary assessment of the electrical supply and distribution connections serving the Town Hall had established that to serve the proposed Air Source Heat Pump an upgrade would be required to the buildings' main supply. This had been submitted to UK Power Networks, who own and maintain the supply infrastructure in the South-East, and it was determined that a local substation would require an upgrade to deliver the new supply. The cost quoted for this was over £140,000, much of which was attributable to basic engineering work such as excavations and groundworks. The effect on the Council's project was therefore significant and it would be necessary to revisit the programme and funding options.

*Communications Officer:* An appointment had been made following recent interviews, and the new officer was expected to start work with the Council on 11<sup>th</sup> October.

*Malling Community Centre:* The Steering Group would be convened shortly to consider the matter of a proposed lease for catering provision.

FC2021/52

#### NOTICE of ITEMS IN PROSPECT:

*Members, asked to consider items from this meeting worthy of a Press Release, indicated:*

- > Support for the Lewes WASPI group
- > Glyphosate use by ESCC
- > Bus station policies
- > Arrival of TC Designate

*Dates to note etc for forthcoming meetings and events were:*

- > The Grant Panel would meet by Zoom at 3:00pm on Wednesday 15th September – applications will be sent to Panellists by DropBox link.
  - > The next Planning Committee would be Tuesday 21st September 7:00pm in the Council Chamber (**face-to-face meeting**)
  - > Pells Land Exchange Working Party would be rescheduled shortly **online**
  - > Open Council W/Party would meet Week commencing 20th September - TBC **online**
  - > Malling CC Steering Group would be convened shortly - details TBC **online**
  - > Buildings Working Party would be convened shortly– details TBC **online**
  - > The next Council meeting would take place on **Thursday 7th October 2021** at 7:30pm, with a deadline for agenda items to reach TC by noon on Monday 27th September.
  - > The next cycle of applications (Cycle 3 of 4) to the Council's grants programme has a deadline for applications (now online-only) of 19<sup>th</sup> November with an online meeting of the Grant Panel on Weds 1<sup>st</sup> December. Council decisions on 16<sup>th</sup> December.
  - > TBC – Landport Bottom Management Committee and others in due course
- There would be a Members' Surgery as usual, on the first Tuesday of the month – 7<sup>th</sup> September. Cllrs Dr Maples & Lamb would attend

There being no further business the Mayor closed the meeting; and thanked everyone for their contributions.

*The meeting ended at 9.30pm*

Signed:

Date: .....

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**Agenda Item No:** 6a)

**Report No:** FC010/2021

**Report Title:** Grants panel recommendations – 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**Report To:** Full Council

**Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021

**Report By:** S Brigden, Town Clerk

**Purpose of Report:** To propose payment of grants as recommended by the Grants Panel, following its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021 (the second of four cycles for 2021/22)

**Recommendation(s):**

- 1 That the grant payments recommended and shown in column **G** of the table appended to this report be approved.

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**Information:**

1 The Grants Panel met on 15<sup>th</sup> September and 7 applications were considered, with requests for support in the sum total of **£8,250**.

2 Assessing applications were: Cllrs Burrows; Catlin; Dr Maples; O’Keeffe and Sains. Apologies were received from Cllrs Henman and Herbert (working); Cllr Makepeace (on holiday) and Cllr Wood (unwell).

3 Using the system approved by Council, each panellist evaluated applications on their merits in five categories:

- ⊕ Closeness of match to Lewes Town Council’s grant scheme policy
- ⊕ Overall “robustness” of the proposal – general likelihood of success/sustainability
- ⊕ Financial planning exhibited - adequacy/prudence/appropriateness *etc.*
- ⊕ Scope and sustainability of the proposal – beneficiaries; scale; thoroughness
- ⊕ A personal (subjective) assessment, based on any special insight or considerations.

Where recommended awards are below the amount requested by the applicant, the details of the proposal were carefully scrutinized as to the appropriateness of the sum requested in relation to the overall scheme or project budget, and alignment with the Council’s published aims. Also considered were factors such as the balance or proportion of Council funding compared with other sources and the applicant’s own funds, and other detail elements.

4 **The recommended grant awards for this cycle are shown at column G, appended.**

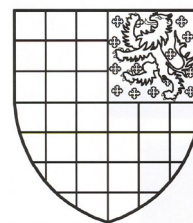
Recommended grant awards for this cycle amount to **£3,350** in total, which leaves a balance of £42,735 remaining in the miscellaneous scheme budget for the year.

Salient points, considered by panellists during their deliberation and influencing their final recommendations (noted/highlighted in column H below, where appropriate), fall into the areas of:

- ⊕ No other funding sought.
- ⊕ Sum requested disproportionate to own assets or contribution to scheme or project.
- ⊕ Sum requested from parish disproportionate to total cost of scheme or project.
- ⊕ Project or scheme mis-matched with parish council powers or LTC’s scheme policy.
- ⊕ Sum recommended is considered to be an appropriate/proportionate parish contribution.

S Brigden 16<sup>th</sup> September 2021





## **MINUTES**

of the meeting of the **Open Council Working Party**, held on **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021**, online via Zoom Meetings at 7:00pm.

**PRESENT** Cllrs Catlin; Henman; Dr Maples (*Chair*); Sains; Vernon and Waring

**In attendance:** S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*) Mrs F Garth (*Assistant Town Clerk & Civic Officer*) Laura Chrysostomou (*TC Designate*)

**OCWP2021/10** **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies had been received from Cllr O’Keeffe, who was attending a District Council Cabinet meeting, and Cllr Wood who was unwell. No message had been received from Cllrs Bird; Herbert, or Makepeace.

**OCWP2021/11** **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Cllrs Dr Maples declared that she is a Council allotment tenant, with regard to the item scheduled at 6b) on the agenda.

**OCWP2021/12** **QUESTIONS:** There were no questions.

**OCWP2021/13** **MINUTES:**

**It was resolved that:**

**OCWP2021/13.1** The Minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021 are received and agreed as an accurate record.

**OCWP2021/14** **REMIT of the WORKING PARTY**

Members noted the remit of the Working Party, which is:

To identify methods for improved public engagement and greater provision of information to residents of Lewes, to include:-

- › A review of information sharing and the methods used to share key events and policy developments.
- › Consideration of good practice on methods of online deliberation and social media, such as on key town-wide issues
- › Identifying ways to provide more joined-up support for community engagement in and around Council-owned buildings.

**OCWP2021/15** **BUSINESS of the MEETING**

*1 Public Participatory Budget pilot:*

A sub-group consisting of Cllrs Vernon and Waring were to develop designs for ‘Top Trump’ cards but had unfortunately not been able to meet since the last meeting. There was some discussion on the concept and principles of Community Infrastructure Levy; the fund that was to be subject to the public participation.

Cllr Vernon and Waring would endeavour to meet in the next few days. A timetable was agreed as :

- › Cllr Vernon and Waring would bring draft designs to a focussed meeting of the Working Party to be scheduled for Week commencing 4<sup>th</sup> October.
- › ‘Friends and family’ of Members would be used as guinea-pigs to test the impact of the scheme during week commencing 11<sup>th</sup> October.
- › The Working Party would meet again during week commencing 25<sup>th</sup> October, or earlier if possible, to refine proposals for Council on 11<sup>th</sup> November (deadline for Council agenda items was 1<sup>st</sup> November)

There was a question as to the timescale, and TC advised that as the CIL fund was a ring-fenced sum held on account, and this project was not directly linked to the annual budget process. What the project aimed to do was seek input from the

public on priorities for expenditure of that existing fund, related to the list of identified items in s11 of the Neighbourhood Plan. He recounted the timing of the incoming annual tranches of CIL received, which each had to be disbursed within 5 years or risk being reclaimed by the Planning authority. He advised that it was not necessary to define the amount to be spent, as the principle was to prioritize importance. Some Members felt that it was important to declare the amount available. Members were asked to consider practical points for consideration at the next meeting, such as recommended printers.

2 *Allotment representatives:* The meeting had previously considered suggestions put forward by an allotment tenant for having more Tenant engagement across and between sites, through a system of representation at Council Allotment Group meetings – and a request for regular Allotment meetings. It was suggested that volunteers be representatives for each of the Council sites, initially by invitation and subsequently following an election process.

The Working Party had considered such questions as the democratic dilemma posed by individuals as representatives and contrasting models such as an Allotments Society (either pan-Lewes or site-for-site).

Members had been asked to crystallize their ideas on these issues, and these were discussed. In essence these were:

- a) To canvass all allotment tenants regarding formation of an allotment society.
- b) To appoint (by selection or election) representatives from each site on an arithmetical basis according to the size of the site.
- c) To postpone a decision on representatives pending a series of open meetings across the next year year (3 or 4) to which all tenants were invited.
- d) To hold a Symposium for all tenants, to be held once clocks had reverted to Greenwich Mean Time for practical reasons, at which the general question of representation could be openly debated.

A question arose regarding practice at other Councils, and the TC Designate offered to source a role description for a volunteer site representative. The discussion continued and ultimately an informal vote was taken on these options **it was agreed that** the option to hold a Symposium later in the Autumn (shown as *d*) above).

3 *Working Party status:* It had been suggested that the Working Party should have a continuing remit beyond the tasks set by Council originally, and some Members wished to promote the recommendation that the Working Party should become a standing Committee. TC had advised that it was open to Members to take that forward and present a case to Council, and the Chair had undertaken to prepare an argument in favour of this. The reasoning was given as:

- > There will continue to be regular changes in how the community is reached.
- > The Communications Officer might find it useful to have a standing committee as a ‘sounding board’
- > Recent proposals at other levels of government such as ‘Citizens’ Assembly’ offer opportunities which, although addressed by the Communications officer, might also require strategic decisions to which a standing committee could have helpful input.
- > A standing committee would act as a conduit for supporting communication.
- > A standing committee could usefully scrutinize communications strategies on behalf of Council – currently subject to informal comment by individual Members.

There followed a debate in which Members stated that these points were not new, and already adequately addressed by the *ad hoc* nature of the Working Party. Many of the things mentioned were part of the routine functioning of Council and the engagement of individual Councillors, adequately addressed by Council at its regular meetings. TC was asked to comment and recounted the legal distinctions and the reasoning behind the original formation of the current Council structure, with a

minimum number of standing bodies and using 'task & finish' working groups to address matters when it was impractical for an issue to be considered appropriately at a Council meeting due to complexity or scale. The list of suggested benefits appeared to be no more than the principles already underlying the roles of individual Members and officers and Council corporately. It was commented that there was little evidence of adequate scrutiny of communications, although other Members considered the matter was properly covered, and it was acknowledged that once Council set a principle it was executed by officers with professional discretion. A Member suggested that the working party should focus on its original remit, which was not yet fully addressed. It was proposed and **agreed**, in accord with this view, that once the Participatory Budget project issues were addressed, the next general Working Party meeting should focus upon the main remit originally set and it should then be clear if there was any merit in a change in status.

**OCWP2021/16**

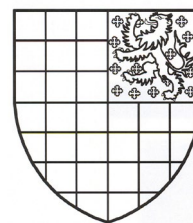
**CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. The next meeting of the Working Party will take place during week commencing 4<sup>th</sup> October to agree designs for the Public Participatory Budget pilot scheme.
2. Council will be asked to agree a Symposium for all allotment tenants (to be held once clocks had reverted to Greenwich Mean Time for practical reasons) at which the general question of tenant representation can be openly debated.
3. Once the Participatory Budget project issues were addressed, the next general Working Party meeting will focus upon the main tasks within the original remit and it should then be clear if there was any merit in proposing a change to a standing Committee.

**OCWP2021/17**

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed, and thanked everyone for their attendance. *The meeting closed at 8:25pm.*

Signed ..... date .....



## **MINUTES**

of the meeting of the **Working Party established to oversee repairs to the Council's buildings**, held on **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021**, online via Zoom Meetings at 11:00am.

**PRESENT** Cllrs Bird; Catlin; Earl; Lamb; Dr Mayhew; Milner; and (*not appointed to the Working Party*) Cllrs Dr Maples and Sains.

**In attendance:** S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*), Ms L Chrysostomou (*TC Designate*), L Symons (*Town Hall Manager*), B Courage (*Town Ranger*), Mr Ben Campbell (*Delta Green Environmental Design*)

**BRepWP2021/01 ELECTION of CHAIRMAN:** Cllr Dr Mayhew was elected to chair the working Party for the 2021/22 year.

**BRepWP2021/02 QUESTIONS:** There were none

**BRepWP2021/03 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies had been received from Cllr Waring, who was attending a meeting of the South Downs National Park Authority.

**BRepWP2021/04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were none.

**BRepWP2021/05 MINUTES: it was resolved that**

**BRepWP2021/05.1** The Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020 are received and signed as an accurate record.

**BRepWP2021/06 REMIT of the WORKING PARTY**

Members noted the remit of the working Party, which is:

*The Buildings Working Party is tasked with oversight of maintenance of the Town Hall; All Saints Centre, and Malling Community Centre and other buildings/ structures, meeting ad hoc. Currently mandated to administer the refurbishment of Malling Community Centre, and authorized to act for Council in that regard, the Working Party will otherwise formulate recommendations for Council as appropriate with regard to repairs; non-routine maintenance matters, or replacements/ refurbishments of major plant and equipment.*

**BRepWP2021/07 EXCLUSION of the PRESS & PUBLIC**

At this point the Chairman moved, **and it was resolved:**

**BRepWP2021/07.1** That in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted during the remainder of the meeting, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 *etc* any members of the press or public present be excluded and instructed to withdraw. The nature of that business is to consider commercially sensitive detail related to proposed works and contracts.

**BRepWP2021/08 TOWN HALL HEATING SYSTEM REFURBISHMENT:**

1. The meeting welcomed Ben Campbell of Delta Green Environmental Design, the Council's commissioned consultants; attending to advise.

2. Members of the working party had been furnished with a set of documents for reference and TC advised that he had originally anticipated the focus of the meeting would be a recently-arisen issue which significantly affected the project. Preliminary assessment of the electrical supply and distribution connections serving the Town Hall had established that, to serve the proposed Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP), an upgrade would be required to the buildings' main supply. This had been submitted to UK Power Networks (UKPN), who own and maintain the supply infrastructure in the South-East, and they had determined that a local substation would require an upgrade to deliver the necessary supply. The cost quoted for this was over £150,000, much of which was attributable to basic engineering work such as excavations and groundworks. Quotes had earlier been received from five potential installation contractors which were broadly in line with the expected range, but the

effect of this additional cost on the Council's project was significant, and it had been expected that the meeting would revisit the programme – TC having identified various funding options which might allow it to continue with only slight revision.

3. Air Source Heat Pumps consist of an outdoor condenser or heat exchanger unit, which extract ambient air and transfer the heat through refrigeration pipework to indoor plant. A system would be capable of providing 100% of heating demand within the building during mild temperatures (*eg* Autumn/Spring), but the flow temperatures which they generate (around 55°C) is considerably lower than required (around 80°C) to adequately 'drive' the existing internal heating system during colder periods, when the system would need topping-up by an additional boiler. As the existing heating system (cast iron radiators and distribution pipework) was to be retained, the chosen system would install a hybrid heating system, comprising an air source heat pump supplemented by gas-fired boiler plant, based upon the ASHP providing approximately 75% of the heating requirements.

4. Immediately before commencement of the meeting a further quotation had been received, in respect of the acoustic enclosure required by the proposed Air Source Heat Pump, and this was an impractically large structure and such a high cost as to completely alter the viability of the project as it currently stood. TC's advice now was that a comprehensive review of the project and the technical specification were called-for, as it now appeared that the total cost of the preferred option could be between £400,000 - 500,000.

5. Some Members robustly expressed their concern that these factors were not discovered earlier, but it was explained that this was the first practical opportunity to address the matter as necessary preliminary assessments of both the existing electrical supply system and the ambient sound levels in the area of the homes adjacent the rear yard had been delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Estimates had been included for these elements, but not of the order of cost now being quoted.

6. Members, some with technical professional backgrounds, questioned the high quotations and asked if they were likely to reduce if investigated with the providers. There were elements that appeared to be open to further competition, but it was reluctantly acknowledged that there were unlikely to be significant reductions, given the nature of the industry. Mr Campbell was challenged as to whether he might have foreseen the order of costs now quoted, and he stated that this was unprecedented in his experience. The costs were not quantifiable until completion of the surveys and it was unfortunate that UKPN's infrastructure in the centre of Lewes was inadequate for this type of installation. It was an unfortunate fact that since the original project estimates were presented many elements had increased in price, but the installation contractors and machinery costs were still acceptable; what could not be foreseen was the extremely high charge for upgrading a sub-station, groundworks, and the acoustic shielding.

7. A member questioned the cost of the acoustic enclosure, citing the likely cost to build a music studio as a comparator, and Mr Campbell explained that the self-supporting structure had to allow free passage of air to the air-source heat pump yet mitigate the sound transmitted via the same air. This was a technical conundrum that required specialized materials and construction, although he had been surprised at the size of enclosure determined by the acoustic requirements, and the cost. It was noted that the surrounding area was relatively quiet for most hours of the day, which demanded more insulation, and ASHP equipment was accepted to generate low-frequency sound which 'carried' and was the most difficult to mitigate.

8. Mr Campbell confirmed that the model of ASHP was the same as originally specified, and Members were reminded that this had been selected having taken account of such factors as the ecological impact and sustainability and future availability of the refrigerant used in its operation. The original report had shown the investigation of alternative locations for the equipment, but none were feasible.



There may be alternatives worthy of consideration if the project was to be reviewed, as the industry and the relevant technologies had continued to develop rapidly over the past two years. Members suggested that separation of multiple smaller ASHP units could be feasible, or the ASHP/boiler contribution could be profiled differently, placing greater load on boilers.

9. Original estimates had anticipated a simple upgrade of cable from a local substation but the supplier needed to effectively recommission the substation. In answer to technical questions regarding the existing electrical supply capacity, Mr Campbell advised that the capacity was inadequate for most of the options considered, and modern regulations prevented many of the 'workaround' suggestions being mooted by Members. He was asked if he had ever experienced such disruption or inflation of an ASHP-focussed project, and he confirmed that this was unprecedented.

10. It was agreed that a comprehensive review of the fundamental options for a more sustainable heating system was needed, and work on the project would reluctantly be halted until that was available. There was an acknowledged risk that the single functioning boiler at the Town Hall could fail and may be irreparable, but this was unavoidable. Members noted that recent global developments suggested non-gas options might be more attractive now. Mr Campbell agreed that his company could produce a new report in 4 - 6 weeks. The Working party **agreed** that it should meet again in mid-November once this was available.

11. Mr Campbell was thanked for his report and advice, and he was invited to contact Cllr Milner if it was thought his technical input might be helpful – either his own or his professional colleagues.

**BRepWP2021/09**

#### **INSURANCE RISK ASSESSMENT SURVEYS:**

The meeting received reports recently submitted by Zurich Insurance Risk Engineering on the Town Hall and All Saints Centre.

These had been prepared following visits in August and September 2021 by the Council insurer's technical Risk Analyst and were comprehensive assessments of risks perceived in the buildings and operations. The surveyor's reports – intended as advisory, but ultimately relevant to an underwriter's evaluation of premium - were detailed and broadly complimentary. The executive summaries confirmed that:

In the case of the All Saints Centre – two items were noteworthy: one was classified as 'advisory' and related to the provision of a lightning conductor. This should accord with the standard BS EN 62305 - Protection against Lightning, and subject to scheduled, annual, testing and maintenance by a specialist, or suitably qualified electrical contractor. This was straightforward and should be accommodated within routine maintenance budgets.

The other was classed as 'important': the implementation of a Hot Work permit scheme. Significant fire risks are associated with hot work processes such as welding and cutting, grinding and the use of bitumen boilers - which may be undertaken in connection with structural alterations and routine maintenance work.

These risks may be further aggravated by contractors who are not familiar with the premises, and who may not be aware of the potential risks. A Hot Work Permit Scheme should control all hot work - whether done by contractors or own employees – and is fundamentally a specific project risk-assessment. The surveyor had kindly provided a template and link to Zurich's approved protocol. There was no direct cost associated with this recommendation and it would be incorporated into the building's management immediately.

The report in the Town Hall cited three 'advisory' items – lightning protection (as for All Saints); Police response to intruder alarms (not available in this area – our alarms are monitored by the system provider); review of Fire Risk Assessments (to be scheduled). Four 'important' notes were:

A Hot Work certification protocol (as for All Saints); regular inspection and cleaning

of kitchen extraction ducting (could be included with existing service contractor); electrical installation minor defects (previously identified by our own electrical contractor and scheduled for repair/replacement) and the need for a Rebuilding Cost survey for insurance purposes (not done since purchase of the building in 1998/9). This last would require a Chartered Surveyor to be commissioned specifically, as the present Building Sum Insured may not reflect the current rebuilding costs, having risen annually according to a theoretical formula.

**BRepWP2021/10 GENERAL DISCUSSION:**

A question arose as to maintenance of box-tombs in the churchyard of the All Saints Centre, showing encroachment of ivy and couch-grass. It was believed that Lewes District Council had commissioned a survey of repairs needed but no work was apparent. TC recounted the principle of responsibility for maintenance of a closed churchyard (distinguished from de-consecration) and the fact that the responsibility had been passed-on to the District Council under statutory provisions in the early 1980's. The Town Ranger would enquire of District Council officers regarding the position.

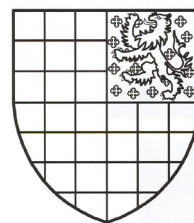
**BRepWP2021/11 CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Working party would recommend to Council that the Town Hall heating project be put on-hold and revisited in light of the unforeseen cost implications described above.

Further, it would recommend that Chartered Surveyors be sought and asked to quote for a valuation of the Town Hall rebuilding cost of for insurance purposes.

**BRepWP2021/12** There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed, and thanked everyone for their attendance. *The meeting closed at 12:45pm.*

Signed ..... date.....



## **MINUTES**

of the meeting of the **Working Party** formed to assess proposals for an exchange of land at The Pells held on **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021** online via Zoom meetings at **3:00pm**.

**PRESENT** Cllrs Catlin (*Chair*); Dr Mayhew; O’Keeffe and Sains.

**In attendance:** S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); Ms L Chrysostomou (*TC Designate*); B Courage (*Town Ranger*)

**PellsXchWP2021/06 ELECTION of CHAIRMAN:** Cllr Catlin was elected as Chair of the Working Party for the 2021/22 year

**PellsXchWP2021/07 QUESTIONS:** There were none.

**PellsXchWP2021/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies had been received from Cllr Henman, who was working, and Cllr Wood who was unwell.

**PellsXchWP2021/09 DECLARATIONS:** There were none..

**PellsXchWP2021/10 MINUTES:** the previous meeting had been declared inquorate, but previous Minutes from 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020 were received and agreed as an accurate record..

**PellsXchWP2021/11 REMIT of the WORKING PARTY:** Members noted the remit of the Working Party, set by Council at its meeting on 21st June 2018 (Minute FC2018/28 refers):

A land-swap proposal had been made by Lewes District Council (LDC) in respect of land held by the Town Brook Trust, to better-align boundaries with the proposed North Street Quarter development, and the Working Party was set up to consider the matter in detail, and to bring recommendations to Council in due course.

**PellsXchWP2021/12 EXCLUSION of the PRESS & PUBLIC:**

At this point the Chair moved, and **it was resolved that::**

**PellsXchWP2021/12.1** “In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted during the remainder of the meeting, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 etc. any members of the press or public present be excluded and instructed to withdraw. The nature of that business is to consider commercially-sensitive detail related to proposed contracts.”

**PellsXchWP2021/13 BUSINESS of the MEETING:**

1. The background to this matter was that a land-swap proposal had been made in early 2018 by Lewes District Council (LDC) in respect of land held by the Town Brook Trust – The Pells swimming pool and recreation ground - to better-align boundaries with the proposed North Street Quarter development. A plan is appended to illustrate this. The Working Party was set up to consider the matter in detail and after careful consideration of detail, confirmed its view regarding the overall potential increase in land area; the inherent benefits of some of the land, and the opportunity to tidy boundary lines.

2. A conditional agreement was recommended, provided there was no cost to the Council (as Town Brook Trust); no technical reasons were discovered regarding the vestigial Brook, and valuations adequate to satisfy the Charities Act regulations supported the exchange.

3. Agenda and Minutes of these meetings (18/9/2018; 24/4/2019 and 25/2/2020) are published on the Council’s website and show all relevant reports, plans *etc.* Final recommendations were agreed by Council on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020, and the relevant Minute extract (FC2019/109.7) reads:

“The Council (as Town Brook Trust) agrees to the three land areas

proposed at the Pells (*plans in Minute book*), subject to agreement with Lewes District Council that:

> All associated costs of valuation; technical assessment; legal transfer, and boundary relocation (enclosure) costs shall be met by Lewes District Council, and no cost shall fall to the Town Council

> Independent specialist valuation of the land areas concerned is undertaken.

> ‘Area B’, containing the historic Town Brook, shall be cleared of existing industrial debris and general detritus and the profile of the vestigial watercourse retained, with fencing to both boundaries retained (as now) including reinstatement when development adjacent to the area’s Eastern boundary is completed.”

4. That position was relayed to LDC immediately and the matter had remained with them since then.

5. LDC had recently submitted proposals (*plans appended*) including draft Heads of Terms for exchange and an independent valuation report. Details were considered subject to business confidentiality although there were general aspects to which Council’s attention had been drawn by TC:

- LDC had discovered, in carrying-out detailed work on the title boundaries, that one of the parcels of freehold land which LDC had proposed to swap (Area B) takes in part of the Lease demise of another property holding. It was therefore not possible to include this land parcel in the exchange and the Heads of Terms related to the LDC owned parcels A and C only.

- The area of land owned by the Town Council which would be transferred (Area D) is less than the original area valued

- There is a proposed ‘balancing payment’ payable by LDC to the Town Council as part of the exchange, in addition to LDC’s two land parcels, to account for the difference in area. This is a modest but useful sum.

- The valuation report noted the date of valuations as October 2019, and it was not immediately clear if the subsequent sale of the North Street development land (and attendant change in development prospects) had material implications for either value or the proposals in general terms, and this should be established.

6. The working party considered the valuation report and Heads of Terms, and debated the points raised. There were questions as to the desirability of asking for a revised valuation on the grounds of updated values and/or certain assumptions underlying the assessment (*eg* current planning position and the costs used as a basis for the likelihood of development and sale of homes on the transferred land).

7. TC suggested that LDC might be asked to revisit these aspects, rather than commission a full revaluation, but after lengthy consideration of all relevant factors and benefits to the Trust, Members agreed to recommend that the transfer should be accepted, while the offer remained open.

**PellsXchWP2021/14 CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS :**

It is recommended that the Town Clerk be asked to conclude the transfer of land as proposed in the Heads of Terms provided by Lewes District Council and considered at this meeting.

**PellsXchWP2021/15** The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution and declared the meeting closed.

*The meeting closed at 3:55pm*

Signed: .....

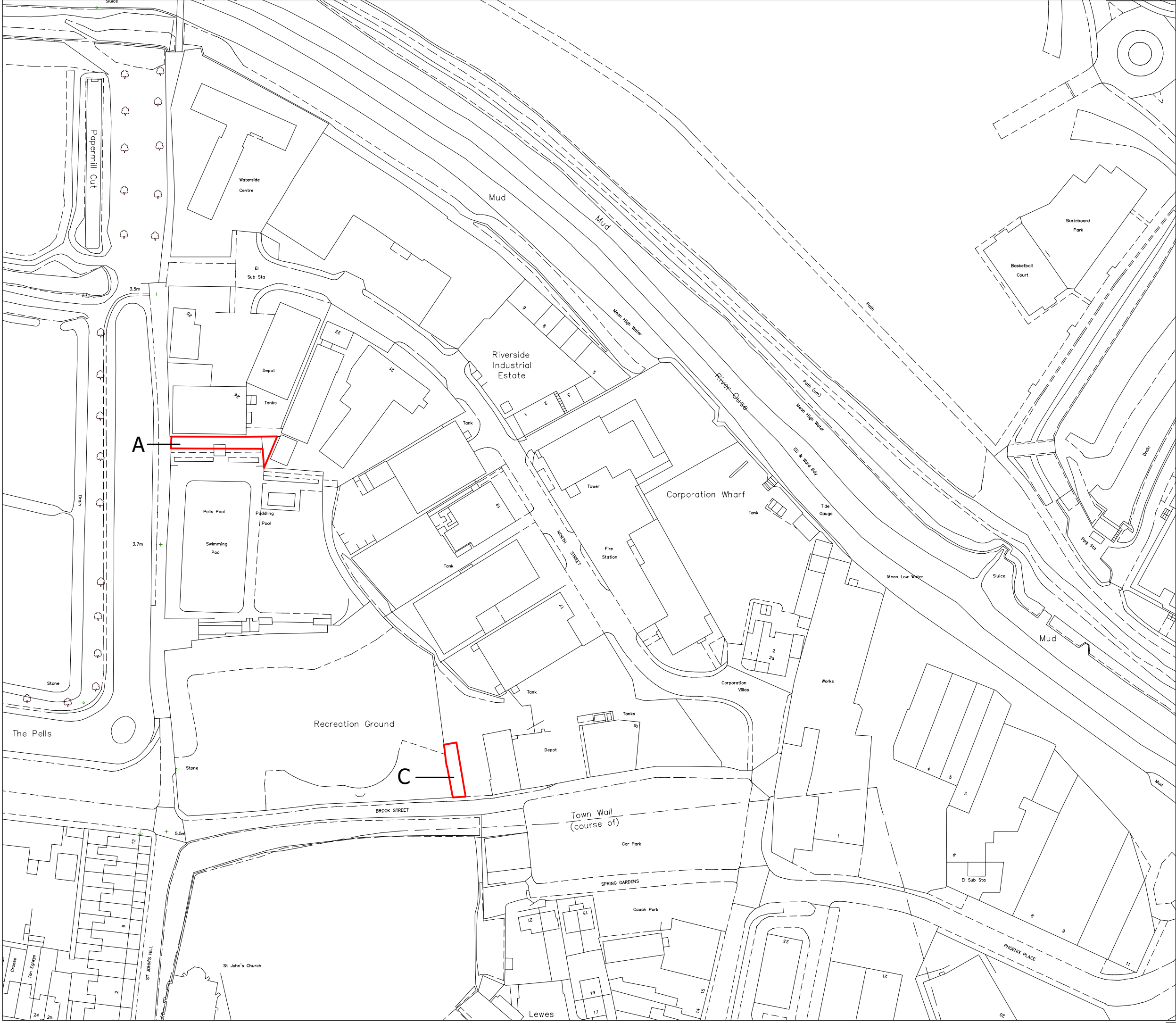
Date: .....





*boundary redrawn with new means of enclosure as part of NSQ development*

**POTENTIAL AMENDMENT TO PARK BOUNDARY**



# PLAN 1

**Project:**  
 LDC/LTC PLANS  
 NORTH STREET QUARTER  
 LEWES  
 EAST SUSSEX

**Job no.:** 46042  
**Revision:** 000  
**Drawn on:** 27/04/2021  
**Drawn by:** AW

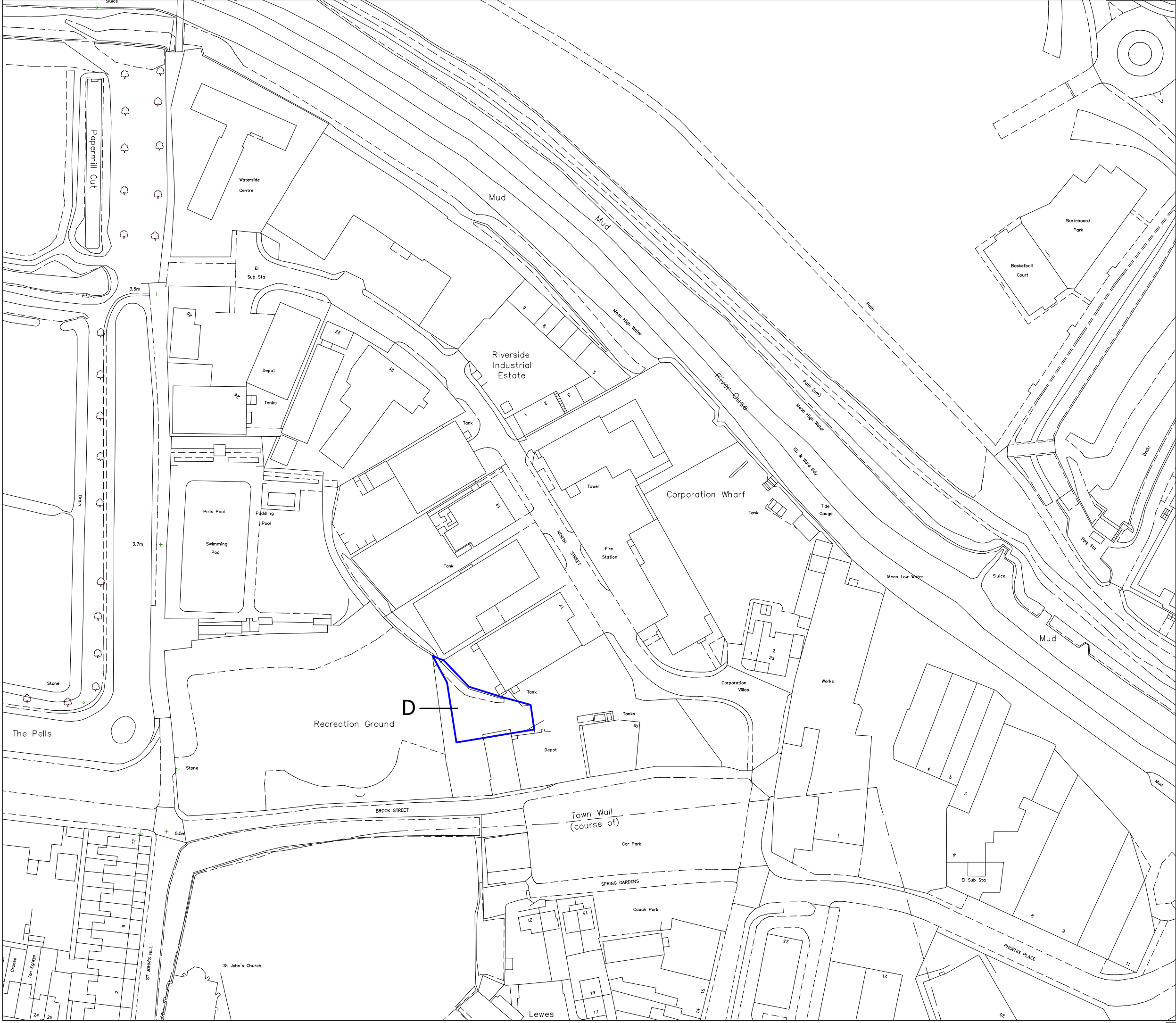
**Client:**  
 LEWES DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Scale:** @A3  
**Site Plan** 1:1250

Trueplan (UK) Ltd  
 Mount Pleasant House  
 2-6 Lonsdale Gardens  
 Tunbridge Wells  
 Kent TN11 1HJ  
 01892 614881

plans@trueplan.co.uk  
 trueplan.co.uk  
 @Trueplanuk  
 facebook.com/trueplan





## PLAN 2

**Project:**  
 LDC/LTC PLANS  
 NORTH STREET QUARTER  
 LEWES  
 EAST SUSSEX

**Job no.:** 46042  
**Revision:** 000  
**Drawn on:** 27/04/2021  
**Drawn by:** AW

**Client:**  
 LEWES DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Scale:** @A3  
**Site Plan** 1:1250  
 20 40 60 80 100 Metres

Trueplan (UK) Ltd  
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## NOTICE OF MOTIONS PROPOSED

Notice has been received, as described below, of motions which are proposed for consideration by Council at its meeting on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021

**NOM 010/2021** – received from **Cllr Earl** on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021, in the following terms:

### **It is proposed that:**

This Council resolves to write to Southern Water and South East Water asking what steps the companies are taking to alleviate the high level of pollution in the Ouse caused by discharges of sewage from sewage treatment works along the river and its tributaries; and the high level of water abstraction that has had a damaging effect on the tributary streams from the South Downs that feed in to the Ouse.

### **Supporting Information:**

1. There are 35 major sewage treatment works beside the Ouse and its tributaries. In times of heavy rain, the treatment works cannot always cope and raw sewage overflows into the river. If the flow into a sewage works exceeds seven times the dry weather flow (DWF) the company is deemed to have consent to discharge raw sewage to watercourses via what are known as Combined Sewage Overflows (CSOs), which results in rivers being charged with pathogenic bacteria and viruses, according to arboriculturalist Mary Parker, who has been researching the water system in Lewes District.
2. However, according to a Sussex Ouse Conservation Society (SOCS) newsletter from 2008, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2008 Southern Water was fined £4,000 plus £845 costs for allowing sewage to enter the Bevern Stream. In 2017 the CSOs at Barcombe Sewage Treatment Works discharged 64 times. That is more than once a week. In 2018 there were 98 incidents covering a total of 635 hours. That is nearly twice a week, for a procedure that is only supposed to be carried out during “exceptional rainfall”.
3. The risk of pollution is not just from harmful bacteria and solid waste but also from dissolved nitrates, phosphates and other dangerous chemicals. There are frequent reports of people, especially children, swimming or falling off paddle boards becoming ill with dysentery. On many occasions large quantities of fish have been found dead in the river.
4. The concentration of chemicals in the river is exacerbated by the need for water for human consumption, industry and agriculture. The resulting low flows of the tributary streams of the Ouse are often inadequate to dilute the sewage thereby causing much ecological damage as well as being a threat to human health. In summertime about 60% of the river water at Barcombe Mills is sewage effluent. The water there is then extracted and cleaned to provide potable water.
5. Lewes District receives water from sources owned and operated by South East Water and Southern Water. Southern Water, which is owned by the Australian investment bank Macquarie, has a licence to remove 77,500,000 litres per day from its downland bore holes. South Eastern Water, which is 50% owned by an American company and 37% owned by a Canadian company, has six boreholes along the South Downs between Lewes and Shoreham. The company has a licence to abstract 5,500,000 litres a day from the boreholes along the foot of the Downs.
6. This high level of abstraction has had a damaging effect on the tributary streams from the South Downs that feed in to the Ouse. In 2016/17 South East Water estimated that every person used 151 litres of water per day but there needed to be a long-term reduction in water use. It is generally believed that Sussex could be faced with severe water shortages in just ten years’ time if predictions from Southern Water prove to be accurate. The National Audit Office (25/3/2020) has called on the government to take further steps to prevent parts of the south of England from running out of water within 20 years.

Cllr G Earl  
27<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**Agenda Item No:** 8 **Report No:** FC011/2021  
**Report Title:** Lewes Priory Trust UNESCO World Heritage site initiative  
**Report To:** Full Council **Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021  
**Report By:** S Brigden, Town Clerk

**Purpose of Report:** To apprise Members of an initiative of Lewes Priory Trust (tenants of the Council's Priory Park) in alliance with the international Federation of Cluniac Sites.

**Recommendation:** That this initiative is supported.

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**Information:**

1. Lewes Priory Trust hold a lease, expiring in August 2041, on the Council's land at Lewes Priory. The permitted uses under the lease are:
  - a) The provision establishment and management of a heritage site and other facilities with access for the public and to develop the site as desirable for heritage, heritage related, educational and general leisure purposes.
  - b) The repair, renovation, restoration, maintenance and preservation of the remains and the heritage site generally.
  - c) The support and encouragement of archaeological and other research related to the premises.
  - d) The establishment and development of museums, displays and other exhibitions and to publicize the site in whatever manner is appropriate.
  - e) The provision of facilities for the benefit and education of the public and to make such arrangements as are necessary to enable the public to view and enjoy the site (whether free or at a charge).
  - f) With the prior agreement of the Council to perform or carry on any other purpose or activity which can in the opinion of the Trust be properly performed or carried on in connection with or ancillary to these uses.
- 2 The Council makes an annual grant under the lease as a fee for maintenance of the site as a public park.
- 3 *Information provided by the Chairman of Lewes Priory Trust:*

Lewes Priory of St Pancras is a Cluniac monastery. It was the major Cluniac monastery in Britain. The Cluniacs were one of the most important monastic orders in the Middle Ages and it means that for some 450 years Lewes Priory was part of a network of hundreds of Cluniac monasteries across Europe. Today the impressive remains of Lewes's priory are owned by Lewes Town Council and maintained on a day-to-day basis by Lewes Priory Trust.

Lewes Priory Trust is one of 186 members of the international Federation of Cluniac Sites. The Federation has announced its plan to register as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Sites fall into two main categories, "cultural" and "natural".

There are already 32 World heritage Sites in the UK, including Stonehenge and the Lake District.

What this means for Lewes:

  - › Stage 1 - the Federation is creating a list of Cluniac sites from which a shortlist will go forward in support of the Federation's candidacy. Lewes Priory Trust has already indicated to the Federation that it wishes to be part of that shortlist.
  - › Stage 2: the Federation presents its case to UNESCO. For Lewes this means a lot of paperwork, perhaps over a three-year period, demonstrating that the Priory is properly maintained, that it is part of the community and that local bodies (and indeed **all the way up to national level** in both the political and cultural domains) are supportive. The Trust feels confident that it meets all the criteria concerned and looks forward to collaborating at all levels in order to bring about the success of the bid. Although there will be some costs incurred during this process (*eg* travel and other costs associated with making presentations etc.) the Town Council should need to do no more than offer its current level of support and assist in maintaining the integrity of the site.

- › Stage 3: if the Federation's bid is successful, Lewes is then part of a UNESCO World Cultural Site and the town, the county and the country can promote Lewes Priory as such. Although registered as part of a "collectivity" of locations, such as the Route to Compostela and the Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales, Lewes would now stand alongside individual locations of world renown, among them the Taj Mahal, the Pyramids and the Colosseum in Rome.
- › This is a very exciting project, and we hope that the Town Council and the people of Lewes will feel that they can give it every support.

S Brigden 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**Agenda Item No:** 12 **Report No:** FC012/2021  
**Report Title:** Transfer of responsibilities to successor Town Clerk  
**Report To:** Full Council **Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021  
**Report By:** S Brigden, Town Clerk

**Purpose of Report:** To recommend immediate transfer of responsibilities to the successor Town Clerk.

**Recommendation(s):**

- 1 That all responsibilities and duties of the Town Clerk (TC) as Proper Officer; Head of Paid Service; statutory responsibilities and those conferred by Standing Orders; Financial Regulations *etc.* be transferred with immediate effect to the Town Clerk Designate, as a practical measure in anticipation of the imminent retirement of the present Town Clerk.
- 2 That, pending commencement of the agreed part-time Responsible Finance Officer (*as defined in s151 Local Government Act 1972*), the responsibilities of that role are temporarily conferred on the Town Clerk Designate.

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**Information:**

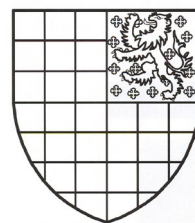
1. The Town Clerk (TC) formally retires on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021, but on account of significant accrued leave entitlement will cease work on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2021, taking leave up to the retirement date and with any balance outstanding at that date paid *in lieu* in the normal way.
2. This means that this meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 is the last scheduled opportunity before the Town Clerk is effectively unavailable, for Council to transfer responsibilities without any problematic ‘gap’ in the conduct of all the Council’s statutory and business processes.
3. The Town Clerk Designate has been in-post since 1<sup>st</sup> September. The agreed separate part-time post of Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) is not yet filled (recruitment will commence shortly).
4. The Town Clerk Designate has rapidly familiarized herself with the role and already demonstrates a thorough understanding of the duties and responsibilities. I have no hesitation in proposing a handover of responsibilities earlier than the standard review of a new employee and no doubt that this will offer a smooth transition for staff and Councillors alike.
5. As she previously acted as RFO at her previous Council (another ‘larger’ Council with a Council Tax precept of >£1Million) and will have a thorough briefing from me (the current RFO) before leaving, during commencement of the annual budget cycle, the practical option to bridge any ‘gap’ before the new RFO is in post is to confer temporarily these responsibilities to the Town Clerk Designate.

S Brigden  
30<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Town Hall  
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BN7 2QS

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**LEWES  
TOWN  
COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES**

of the meeting of the **Malling Community Centre (MCC) Steering Group** held on **Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021**, online via Zoom meetings, at **3:00pm**.

**PRESENT** Cllrs Dr J Baah; M Bird; S Catlin; G Earl; J Lamb; M Milner; S Sains; K Wood, and (*not appointed to the Steering Group*) I Makepeace

**In attendance:** S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); Ms Laura Chrysostomou (*TC Designate*); Ms H Roxx (*MCC Manager*); Ms F Willis (*MCC Asst Manager*).

**MCCSG2021/10** **QUESTIONS:** Mr James Gardiner asked whether the Council had considered creation of a Community Interest Company (CIC), for catering or to operate the Centre. The Chair explained that Parish Councils, by their nature represented the principles of a CIC, and that, after considering other options, the decision had been to directly manage the Centre with the Council's own staff. With regard to the operation of catering: this was currently under review, and as parish Councils tended to favour non-profit and local enterprises for many things, such a model was not discounted. Mr Gardiner had, of his own accord, circulated a proposal to Members prior to the meeting regarding CIC operations and sought a wider conversation with the Council regarding several fundamental aspects such as hire policies. He was encouraged to discuss this with the Town Clerk/Town Clerk Designate.

**MCCSG2021/11** **APOLOGIES for ABSENCE:** There were none.

**MCCSG2021/12** **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were none

**MCCSG2021/13** **REMIT of the STEERING GROUP:** Members noted the remit of the Group which was set by Council as:

The Malling Community Centre Steering Group is tasked with general strategic oversight of that Centre's operations, meeting ad hoc and formulating recommendations for Council or other committees, functional panels, or working parties as appropriate. This may include scrutiny of current, future and proposed business plans; staff structure and costs; profit and loss; contracting-out; income and expenditure reporting as well as review of booking, operations issues and management plans

**MCCSG2021/14** **BUSINESS OF THE MEETING:**

The Group addressed matters as:

1 *General overview:* TC briefly reviewed the current position, in that there were a few 'snagging' issues still outstanding but these were in-hand with sub-contractors as required and should be completed soon. Equipping the Centre continued, with tables and chairs now delivered and items such as window blinds installed. The building license for public entertainment; sale of alcohol *etc* were expected to be approved shortly by the Licensing Authority. Bookings were increasing, and the Centre Manager expounded upon these. Regular weekly bookings for evenings and mornings were rapidly filling the diary, and there were provisional bookings for single events in 2022. There were questions as to how these would operate under the proposed model of a catering licensee, and this would be dependent upon Council's requirements being met when tenders were offered to the professional market, if that were the model chosen. Most hirers seemed very open to a range of possibilities and excited about the future prospects. The majority of hirers were local groups, and most of the 'original' users had returned and expressed themselves very happy with the new building. One exception was the Scout Group, who were

unhappy that they would be unable to offer some of their previous activities (indoor ball games and use of the kitchen for cookery skills training) and other dissatisfactions, including the charges. The Scout's traditional booking times remained open to them, but they were insistent that they must have exclusive use of the whole building. Other 'divisions' of the movement, such as Beavers and Cubs had returned and were very happy. Councillors expressed surprise that these younger age-groups did not have similar exclusivity requirements, and it had been explained that they simply chaperoned any young member who needed to use facilities elsewhere in the building. Members were sympathetic to some of the Scout leader's points, although recognized that it would not be practical or advisable to agree some of the requirements. Discussions would continue, and any Members who wished to assist in finding a resolution were reminded that they must scrupulously observe the distinction between assisting a constituent, and operational management matters.

It was recognized that a new profile of use would emerge once operations commenced, and Ms Roxx explained that there was much interest in the ultimate vision of a fully-operational Centre with the bar/café operating normally. This was attractive to many who used the halls, although some users sought a bar that they could operate themselves as a fund-raising opportunity, as in the past. There had been early discussions with other children's classes and family groups, and a relationship was building with the adjacent County Council's Children's Centre and a local adoption agency/group had expressed interest in regular use of the smallest hall. There followed a series of general questions from Members and discussion on several aspects of the building and prospective operations, including such things as users 'migrating' from other buildings/facilities in the area (a Wellbeing group were understood to have moved from elsewhere); bicycle stands (purchased – exact siting under consideration), and basic equipment for use by hirers. A 'gala' opening event would be planned in due course. A "Festival of Malling" was suggested as a theme, although it was acknowledged that the facility was intended to serve a wider community than the immediate local area.

There was interest in the effectiveness of staff coverage for the operating hours that were becoming established. It was explained that these were being managed, and a number of other elements were in place to allow the Council flexibility in future *ie* the recruitment of three staff on fixed-term contracts at the All Saints Centre had covered the current establishment vacancy (Venue Assistant) and the maternity leave of the Manager and Assistant Manager. These would be reviewed in due course and there may be scope to redeploy one of these staff, although there were other factors to consider such as the eligibility for retirement of all operational staff at the Town Hall between mid-2023 and early 2024.

Other matters discussed covered online booking systems; 'What's On?' guides; customer feedback opportunities *etc.*, and it was acknowledged that there was scope for review by the new Communications Officer, collaborating with other working parties.

2 *Catering:* Further to the Group's earlier decision draft Heads of Terms (HoT) outlining details and the vision for the café/bar had been given to the Council's solicitor, and a draft lease was available for discussion. There followed a lengthy dissection of various elements of this, notably the opportunities for Council to influence or control hours of operation; locality of operator; use of local produce; sustainability of operations *etc.* All these aspects could be addressed by an interview process once a shortlist of credible/viable operators had been found through the tender process.

At this point the Chair moved, and **it was resolved that:**

**MCCSG2021/14.1** In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted during the remainder of the meeting, pursuant to the Public Bodies

(Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 *etc.* any members of the press or public present be excluded and instructed to withdraw. The nature of that business is to consider commercially-sensitive detail related to proposed works and contracts.

Those affected duly complied.

There were several questions regarding such aspects as the retention of the commercial agent, and their fee; the likelihood of attracting suitable operators with no current equipment available and no established clientele; opportunity to model flexibly for use as a community café *etc.* and it was explained that preliminary advice from the industry specialists indicated that the venue was an attractive proposition.

The contract offered would specify requirements for any aspects unique to the Council's policies and overall management of the building, and when a contract was offered to the market, it should be possible to require a presentation by bidders before a tender was accepted, to assess compatibility with the Council's outlook.

Cllr Bird argued that the HoT draft was rather prescriptive, and opportunities must remain open for local community operators. He was asked to provide suggestions for alternative text and undertook to provide this to TC after the meeting, for review and forwarding to the solicitor.

**MCCSG2021/15**

**CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Members wished to record their appreciation of the work of the staff in bringing the Centre to the present level of operation so quickly and providing such a friendly and well-received service to customers.

It was agreed that council should be asked to note the considerations of the Group and endorse its decisions.

**MCCSG2021/16**

There being no other business, the Chair declared the meeting closed and thanked everyone for their contribution. *The meeting closed at 5:00pm*

Signed ..... dated .....



## Status update

These are in addition to various projects and initiatives itemised in the Council's budgets and accounts and represent larger-scale activities deserving special attention.

Project	description	Status at July 2021	Status at October 2021	
1	<b>Town Hall repairs &amp; conservation</b>	Replace boilers; Council Chamber redecoration and replace carpet; Corn Exchange and Lecture Room replace lighting; Yarrow Room replace carpet	Heating system: Acoustic survey underway. Electrical survey pending. Specialist sub-contractors tender invitations issued by Contractor.	Building W/party 23 <sup>rd</sup> Sept 2021 considered unforeseen elements (reported in Minutes). Consultants preparing revised options appraisal.
2	<b>Pells Lake ecology project</b>	Improvements to water quality. Introduction of aquatic plants. W/Party remit to consider structural integrity of lake perimeter. partially completed – specialist report obtained	Pending commencement of 3rd-party works in locality (flood defence structures and improvements to recreation facilities as conditions of North Street redevelopment planning consent) to achieve best value for money – links to item 3. May be revisited once status of new owners' revised planning application can be assessed.	No change
3	<b>Pells Recreation Ground and kiosk/café development (with Pells Poll Community Association; North Street developers, and others)</b>	Engagement with North Street developers and others to improve the “urban realm” in the area as an integral component of necessary flood-defence works; taking the opportunity to replace children's play equipment and introduce equipment for a wider age-range, and to provide an enhanced café facility for the swimming pool, recreation ground, and surrounding parkland.	See also item 2. Partially-developed plans on-hold pending improvements to local area as condition of North Street redevelopment planning consent to achieve best value for money.	No change. New owner of North Street land has commenced programme of public consultations on future vision and has declared intention to submit new application for Planning Consent within a year.
4	<b>Malling (Bridgeview) Community Centre refurbishment</b>	To carry out a comprehensive refurbishment of the community centre, with modern heating and lighting, with improved facilities for community use, including more flexible interior spaces and better integration of the sports changing-rooms with the adjoining sports pitches and recreation ground.	Snagging items nearly complete. Various equipment deliveries completed – others imminent. Catering contract draft in preparation. Agreement reached with District Council re access to changing facilities for hirers of pitches. Some hires booked and diary developing.	Most snagging items now dealt-with. Others scheduled. Building operational and popular. Catering lease draft prepared and considered by Malling Community Centre Steering Group 30 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2021 – reported in Minutes.
5	<b>Continuing programme of environmental enhancements and specific site improvements</b>	Engage with appropriate projects arising from third-party initiatives (eg highway safety/traffic management). Continuing improvements to own assets (eg allotment sites)	Continuing programme. Proposals to Council 29 <sup>th</sup> April 2021 re disbursement of funds for sustainability projects and contribution to costs of surfacing improvements to Ouse Valley Way. agreed – projects gradually restarting.	Projects gradually restarting.
6	<b>Devolution of assets &amp; services</b>	Provide for transfer of ownership of various assets/services from Lewes District Council. (currently subject to ongoing negotiation)	Continuing. LDC have withdrawn the offers of sale regarding 2 Fisher St and Market Tower. Discussions postponed <i>in</i> Mountfield Pleasure Ground and Stanley Turner Trusts.	No change
7	<b>DECISIONS re Retirement of key staff</b>	Prepare strategy for recruitment of Town Clerk Designate and further staff establishment changes.	TC Designate appointed. Start date 1 <sup>st</sup> September.	TC Designate commenced in post 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2021. Proper Officer responsibilities to be transferred at Council 7 <sup>th</sup> October 2021. TC last working day 29 <sup>th</sup> October 2021.