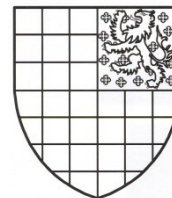


Town Hall
High Street
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 2QS

☎ 01273 471469 Fax: 01273 480919

✉ townclerk@lewes-tc.gov.uk

🌐 www.lewes-tc.gov.uk



**LEWES
TOWN
COUNCIL**

To All Members of Lewes Town Council

A Meeting of **Lewes Town Council** will be held in the **Corn Exchange, Town Hall, Lewes** on **Thursday 2nd September 2021**, at **7:30pm** which you are summoned to attend.

S Brigden, Town Clerk,
27th August 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 29th July 2021.

(attached page 3)

6. WORKING PARTIES & OUTSIDE BODIES

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

a) *Audit Panel 5th August 2021*

(Minutes attached page 9)

b) *Commemorations Committee 12th August 2021*

(Minutes attached page 10)

c) *Open Council Working Party 23rd August 2021*

(Minutes to follow)

d) *Lewes Chamber of Commerce*

(oral report, Cllr Lamb)

7. USE OF GLYPHOSATE HERBICIDE

To consider an approach to E.Sx. County Council to cease use of Glyphosate. *(NOM007/2021 attached page 14)*

8. PROTECTION of BUS SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE

To consider an approach to the Planning Authority *(NOM008/2021 attached page 15)*

9. CYCLE STORAGE INITIATIVE

To consider a proposed project to provide for secure cycle storage *(NOM009/2021 attached page 16)*

10. RETENTION of INTERNAL AUDITOR

To agree retention of the Internal Auditor for the 2021/22 year *(Report FC009/2021 attached page 19)*

11. POLICY on COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

To review continued precautions *(oral report by Town Clerk)*

12. NATIONAL RESILIENCE STRATEGY

To consider a response to the National Association of Local Councils *(document attached page 30)*

13. UPDATE ON MATTERS IN PROGRESS

(oral report by TC/Annual plan summary to follow)

14. NOTICE of ITEMS IN PROSPECT

(oral report by Town Clerk)

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

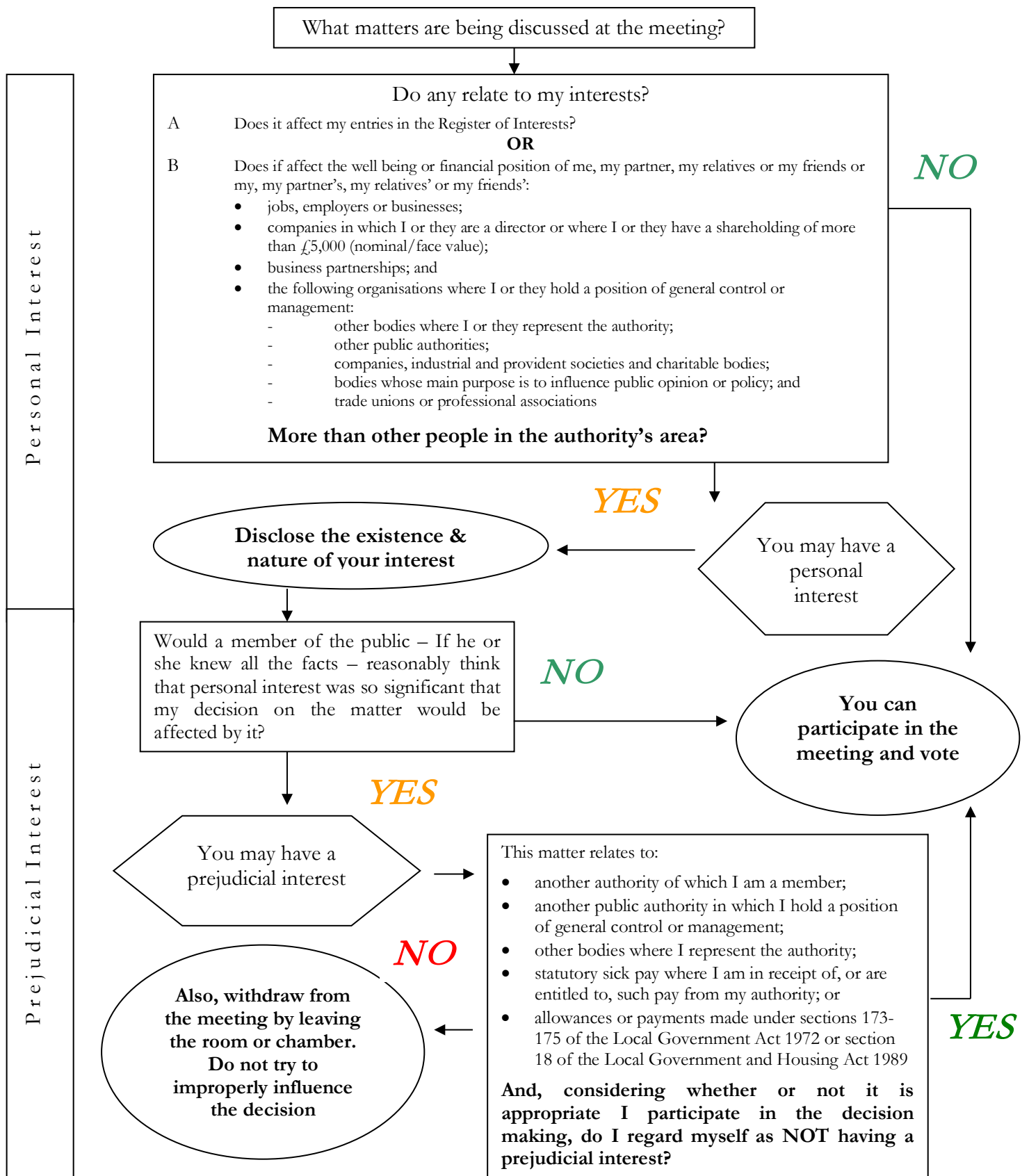
PUBLIC ATTENDANCE –

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 escalation 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.

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



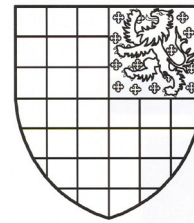
YOU WILL ALSO NEED TO CONSIDER:

Am I biased or have I predetermined a matter?

TEST: Would an informed member of the public think that there is a real possibility that you could be biased?

Have I made up my mind about the issue?

You should not make your mind up about an issue before you come to take a decision on it. You can still form a provisional view but you must be willing to consider all arguments presented at the meeting and you must be genuinely open to persuasion on the merits of the case. If you do not have a genuinely open mind about a matter, this will potentially leave the decision susceptible to legal challenge because of the common law concept of predetermination.



MINUTES

Of the meeting of **Lewes Town Council**,
held on **Thursday 29th July 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; J Herbert; J Lamb; I Makepeace;
Dr W Maples; 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 Mrs E Tingley
(*C’tee Admin.*) M Larkin (*Town Hall Keeper*)

Observing: Ms L Zeyfert (*All Saints Centre Manager*); Ms H Roxx (*Malling Community Centre Manager*); Ms F Willis
(*Asst. Malling Community Centre Manager*) B Courage (*Town Ranger*). Ms L Chrysostomou (*TC designate*).

Before the start of the meeting the Council’s Chaplain, Rev Judith Egar, offered a thought-provoking comment prompted by recent controversy over an Olympic athlete’s admission of mental health problems. It was observed that a “carry on regardless” attitude is not always appropriate and that Covid-19 had taught the lesson that “it’s OK to not be OK”.

FC2021/26 QUESTION TIME: There was one member of the public present who wished to ask a question, previously asked and answered by email. The question, together with the answer given, is appended to these minutes.

FC2021/27 MEMBERS DECLARATIONS of INTERESTS: There were none.

FC2021/28 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Handy and Henman who were on holiday, Cllr Dr Mayhew and Cllr Wood, who were unwell and Cllr Vernon; who was recovering from an injury.

FC2021/28.1 Reasons submitted for absence from this meeting are noted.

FC2021/29 MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

a) Members noted that Cllr Dr Baah was now a Public Governor of the NHS Sussex Community Foundation Trust. Cllr Dr Baah and the Mayor would be promoting the Trust at an NHS stall on Cliffe Bridge this Saturday from 10.00am to 1.00pm and all Members were welcome to participate.

b) The Covid Hero Awards would be held in the Assembly Room, Town Hall on September 8th at 7.00pm. Invitations would be sent out shortly.

c) The Mayor’s Civic Reception would be held on 9th September, in the Assembly Room, Town Hall. Cllr and Mrs J Lamb would receive the Past Mayor and Mayoresses badges at the event. Invitations for this event were imminent.

FC2021/30 MINUTES:

It was resolved that:

FC2021/30.1 Minutes of the Council meeting held on 24th June 2021 were received and agreed as an accurate record.

FC2021/31 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) South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA): Cllr Waring gave an oral report explaining that he now held a number of roles since his election as an East Sussex Parishes representative member to the SDNPA, and he had recently been appointed onto the Park’s Planning Committee and to the South Downs National Park Trust; a separate organisation

that raised funds for nature recovery. Cllr Waring was also a member of the Local Access Forum and the Culture Group. The Access Forum advise the SDNPA and other organisations in ways to manage access to the surrounding countryside within the park. The Culture Group looks at the culture of the organisation and how it impacts the audience of the SDNPA. Cllr Waring mentioned two current Planning issues in Lewes: the proposed Old Malling Farm development and Garden Street. Members were informed that the South Downs National Park had now taken ownership of the Seven Sisters Country Park.

It was resolved that:

FC2021/31.1 The oral report on the South Downs National Park Authority is noted.

FC2021/32

COUNCILLORS' INDIVIDUAL DUTIES:

Report FC006/2021 (*copy in minute book*) was received, regarding changes to Members appointed individual duties.

It was resolved that:

FC2020/32.1 The individual responsibilities of Members for the remainder of the 2021/22 municipal year shall be amended as:

Cllr Dr Maples has stepped down from the Planning Committee.

FC2021/33

DISPOSAL OF LAND by LEWES DISTRICT COUNCIL – North Street Quarter:

Council considered a letter received from Lewes District Council (LDC) seeking opinions regarding the sale of land owned by LDC at the North Street Quarter (NSQ). LDC Cabinet had earlier approved the negotiation of a sale and purchase agreement with Human Nature, and the Town Council had made no comment. LDC was now consulting on its intention to sell the Equine Warehouse and Back to the Grain sites to Human Nature in order that they can be incorporated in the NSQ regeneration scheme. It was noted that this was conditional upon the purchaser securing planning permission for its new scheme, and upon the Council securing best consideration for the land in accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act (1972).

It was resolved that:

FC2020/33.1 Lewes Town Council notes the intention of Lewes District Council to sell land to be incorporated into the North Street Quarter and makes no comment.

FC2021/34

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARY PROPOSALS:

Council considered a draft corporate response (*copy in the Minute book*) to current consultation on Parliamentary constituency boundary changes. There were suggestions for revised wording and the inclusion of some population statistics to add impact to the opinion, and consequently **it was resolved that:**

FC2020/34.1 Lewes Town Council makes the following response to the Boundary Commission for England's current consultation on revised parliamentary constituency boundaries for 2023:

“Lewes Town Council believes that the 'northern villages/parishes' in a corridor running from the town NorthWest up to the East Sussex County border should be retained in the new Lewes County Constituency. These all have strong community links with Lewes (the ancient County Town), established over centuries, and these should be respected. For completeness these are Barcombe & Hamsey, East Chiltington & St John, Chailey, Newick, Plumpton, Streat, Ditchling & Westmeston and Wivelsfield. A useful side effect of this would be the elimination of the proposed division at Landport Bottom, which is acknowledged to follow a parish boundary but unhelpfully divides a significant landholding. As shown on the consultation maps the 'new' boundary also, somewhat bizarrely, arbitrarily divides several domestic landholdings, cutting through gardens and buildings - this can surely not have been intentional?

To counterbalance this in terms of constituency electorate numbers it is suggested that Polegate (already part of the existing constituency) is transferred to a neighbouring constituency with more natural community links (Eastbourne or Wealden) for the voters of Polegate. The proposed additions to the east could be retained in respect of the

balancing of numbers although arguably Willingdon voters are likely to have the same community links discrepancy as Polegate and almost no commonality with Lewes. Populations for these areas suggest a balance would be maintained as Polegate has a population of 9,000; and Willingdon & Jevington 7,500, whereas the populations of the villages noted in the Lewes area total around 9,000.”

FC2021/35

POLICY on COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS:

Council considered report (FC007/2021, *copy in the Minute book*) that proposed a prudent continuation of some restrictions on use of Council buildings following central government’s release of restrictions on 19th July 2021.

Following the government’s relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions there had been significant national debate on independent application of some controls by employers and public-facing organizations. Scientific advice and published statistics on the prevalence and transmission of Covid-19 indicated that the government decision was premature.

The National Joint Council for local government services guidance on this dilemma noted that: in line with the Government’s emphasis on a gradual return to ‘normal’, organizations should carefully consider retaining appropriate measures where this could help reduce Covid transmission.

With regard to staff, the government was no longer instructing work from home but during this period of high prevalence, it “expects and recommends” a gradual return and employers must observe their legal responsibilities for the health and safety of staff, applying measures to minimize the risk of transmission.

Generally, while face covering was no longer mandatory, in some areas it would be required, such as public transport. The government “expects and recommends that people continue to wear face coverings in crowded, enclosed spaces.” As such, organizations should consider mandating the wearing of face coverings, particularly in workplaces and public spaces which could become crowded, along with other mitigation measures such as barriers/screens, effective ventilation, and changes to the layout of the space.

Simply-put: precautions that had been in place for some time for staff and visitors to LTC buildings were still relevant and prudence dictated that they should continue. TC had instructed staff accordingly and asked Councillors to observe these reasonable measures. These were straightforward and simply maintained a need for ‘metre-plus’ distancing; wearing of masks; sanitizing of hands and frequent cleaning/sanitizing of surfaces and minimizing the exchange of paper and other materials that might enhance transmission.

With regard to hirers of the Council’s buildings, the matter was not quite so clear-cut. TC’s colleagues in larger parish Councils across the country reported arguments already being raised by users of their services, both for and against continued restrictions.

One council had reported seeking legal advice following a challenge which insisted that NOT continuing to provide an environment that allowed social distance and required face-coverings was a breach of the Equalities Act 2010. The legal advice received was that a disabled service user could support such a claim. Whilst not clear-cut there was a significant risk arising from the argument that failure to take appropriate safety measures while the pandemic continues (mandating masks, social distancing *etc*) amounted to indirect discrimination as it puts disabled people at a particular disadvantage and cannot be justified.

Whilst it was no longer unlawful not to wear masks without a valid excuse, it was open to the owners of premises to set their own rules. If such a rule was set and someone refused to comply, they may be asked to leave. Refusal would leave them open to legal action.

A number of events traditionally taking place in LTC premises attracted large numbers of visitors and/or used close seating layouts, and the weakest aspect of the risk management strategy was ventilation; known to be a key factor in transmission of the virus. The Town Hall and All Saints Centre in particular had limited options to provide adequate ventilation for large numbers in these circumstances, and TC therefore proposed that Council operate a temporary policy that continued to require the wearing of masks by all visitors and restricted audience or visitor numbers to events to 50% of a room/hall’s normal capacity. This could be reviewed as the Covid-19 situation unfolded nationally and locally.

It was resolved that:

FC2020/35.1 Lewes Town Council agrees the temporary policy set out in report FC007/2021 (*copy in the Minute Book*) with regard to continued restrictions on visitors to Council buildings. This will require the wearing of masks by all visitors and restrict audience or visitor numbers to events to 50% of a room/hall's normal capacity. This policy will be regularly reviewed following monitoring of published Covid-19 conditions.

FC2021/36

PELLS LAND EXCHANGE PROPOSALS:

Council considered report (*FC008/2021, copy in the Minute Book*) apprising Members of amendments proposed by Lewes District Council to the previously approved exchange of land in the ownership of the Town Brook Trust

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 was appended to illustrate this. A 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.

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.

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 27th 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.”

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

LDC had recently submitted proposals 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 is drawn:

o LDC has discovered, in carrying-out detailed work on the title boundaries, that one of the parcels of freehold land which they 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.

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

o There was 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.

o 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) has any material implications for either value or the proposals in general terms, and this should be established.

It was resolved that:

FC2020/123.1 Proposals for amendments to the exchange of land at the Pells, as described in

report FC008/2021 (*copy in the Minute book*) are referred to the Pells Land Exchange Working Party for detailed assessment; and preliminary legal advice should be sought, as appropriate.

FC2021/37

UPDATE ON MATTERS IN PROGRESS:

An update on progress with the annual plan of major work had been distributed with the agenda (*copy in minute book*) and TC elaborated on various salient points.

FC2021/38

NOTICE of ITEMS IN PROSPECT:

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

› Parliamentary Constituency Boundary Proposals

Dates to note etc for forthcoming meetings and events were:

- › The Audit Panel would meet for a review of the 1st Quarter 2021/22 on Thursday 5th August 6:00pm, **online**.
- › The next Planning Committee will be Tuesday 10th August 7:00pm in the Council Chamber (**face-to-face meeting**)
- › Commemorations Committee Thursday 12th August 3:00pm , **online**
- › The next Council meeting will take place on **Thursday 2nd September 2021** at 7:30pm, with a deadline for agenda items to reach TC by noon on Monday 23rd August.
- › The next cycle of applications (Cycle 2 of 4) to the Council's grants programme has a deadline for applications (now online-only) of 3rd September 2021 with an online meeting of the Grant Panel on Weds 15th September to formulate recommendations to Council on 7th October.
- › TBC – Open Council Working Party - others in due course.

There would be a members' Surgery within the Town Hall indoor market as usual, on the first Tuesday of the month – 3rd August. Cllrs Catlin and Dr Baah would attend. The next would be 7th September, and the Mayor asked volunteers to let him know if they planned to attend. That would be displaced by Lewes Operatic Society use of the Corn Exchange, and would take place in either the Yarrow room or an alternative to be confirmed.

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

The meeting ended at 8.35pm

Signed:

Date:



QUESTION RECEIVED:

From: Rita Ellis
Sent: 26 July 2021 16:00
To: Steve Brigden <TownClerk@lewes-tc.gov.uk>
Subject: Town Hall opening

Dear Town Clerk,

As a council taxpayer I have always taken a close interest in the business of the Town Council ,attending meeting regularly. I am dismayed to learn that the Town Hall reception is only open between 10 and 12 which severely limits access for those who have dealings with the Council. I shall be attending the meeting on Thursday but could not find information about the agenda on the notice board outside the Town Hall. Can you tell me when the Town Hall will return to its normal opening hours?

Yours Sincerely

Rita Ellis

ANSWER:

At the present moment we have a number of staff absent through sickness and enforced isolation, and vacant posts due to the promotion/redeployment of others.

Reception will open when we are able to sustain it.

The Covid lockdown period has shown us that our Reception service was just as effective by telephone and email and face-to-face Reception hours were not all needed, so what was 'normal' before Covid will not return in the same form. With the movement of staff to other posts we are taking the opportunity to refocus the effort where it is most needed and the vacant Reception post will be replaced by a Communications Officer who will deal with such things as social media.

The meeting Agenda is posted in the noticeboard and on the website as normal.

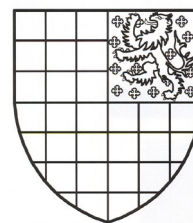
I attach a copy for your convenience.

To minimize risk to everyone, this meeting will be held in the Corn Exchange as it allows considerably better ventilation and spacing apart of attendees.

Please use the Fisher Street entrance.

Please note the general arrangements will be:

- You will all be required to wear a face mask (these will be provided if needed).
- Hand sanitizing gel and disposable gloves will be freely available.
- You will be separated by an appropriate distance and seated on plastic chairs – sanitized before and after your use. You may wish to bring your own cushion!
- You will be asked to vacate the room promptly to allow sanitizing to be carried out.



MINUTES

of the **Audit & Governance Panel** held on **Thursday 5th August 2021**, online via Zoom Meetings at **6:00pm**.

PRESENT Cllrs Catlin; Lamb; Dr Maples, Milner (*Chairman*).

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*)

Observing: Ms Laura Chrysostomou (*TC Designate*)

AudPan2021/01 ELECTION of CHAIR Cllr Milner was elected as Chair of the Panel for the 2021/22 year.

AudPan2021/02 QUESTIONS: There were none.

AudPan2021/03 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies had been received from Cllr Bird, who had childcare commitments.

AudPan2021/04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were none.

AudPan2021/05 MINUTES: The minutes of the meeting held on 25th November 2020 were received and agreed as an accurate record.

AudPan2021/06 BUSINESS OF THE MEETING:

Routine financial monitoring: Members were furnished with detailed information (*copies in minute book*) following the end of the first quarter of the financial year and miscellaneous comparative values *in* present status compared with previous years.

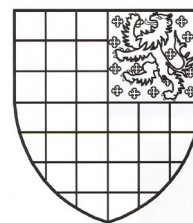
1. *Budget monitoring update* – this showed actual expenditure and income values as posted to the Council's *Sage* accounting system for all transactions processed in the period. There was some discussion on salient points of detail, and TC responded with reference to the identified sources.
2. *Oversight as required by the Governance & Accountability Code of Practice:* Due to remote working, TC was unable to show the file of periodic bank reconciliations for review of the scrutiny already conducted. Ordinarily the Chairman would append his signature to verify this, 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.
3. *General matters* – There followed a general discussion on various matters including: provision for equipping Malling 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 (would need a detailed specification); structural repairs at the All Saints Centre (programme underway).

AudPan2021/07 CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 Members considered information on the Council's financial status and management for the first quarter; and found no items of concern. The overall position was better than anticipated. It was acknowledged that routine bank reconciliations would be validated by physical signature later in the year.

AudPan2021/08 There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.

The meeting closed at 7:00pm



MINUTES

of the meeting of the **Commemorations & events Committee**, held on **Thursday 12th August 2021** online via Zoom Meetings at **3:00pm**.

PRESENT Cllrs S Catlin; G Earl; Dr W Maples; Dr G Mayhew(*Chairman*); J Vernon

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); F Garth (*Asst TC & Civic Officer*),

Observing: Ms Laura Chrysostomou *TC Designate*)

Commems2021/01 ELECTION of CHAIR: Cllr Dr Mayhew was elected as Chair of the Committee for the 2021/22 year.

Commems2021/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies had been received from Cllr Makepeace, who was attending a family picnic; Cllr O'Keeffe, and Cllr Milner who were on holiday, and Cllr Wood who was unwell.

Commems2021/03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:
There were none

Commems2021/04 QUESTIONS: There were none

Commems2021/05 MINUTES:

It was resolved that:

Commems2021/05.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 8th September 2020 are received and agreed as an accurate record.

Commems2021/06 REMIT of the COMMITTEE:

The remit of the committee was rehearsed:

- > Originally a Working Party set up in 2012 to address a number of imminent commemorations; this body had its mandate extended in response to the similar considerations arising through to 2019; when it was established as a standing committee to address the continuing volume of noteworthy commemorations foreseeable in the next few years.
- > The Commemorations & Events Committee is mandated to consider significant anniversaries/centenaries or similar occasions, and such notable events as may be presented, and to formulate recommendations for Council as to the appropriate recognition of them.

Commems2021/07 LEWES CLIMATE FESTIVAL:

An update was given on the planning of this event, which was supported by the Council. 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

Commems2021/08 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.

QUEENS PLATINUM JUBILEE 2022:

a) *Celebratory event:* Preliminary discussions had been held with representatives of Lewes's bonfire Societies who were planning a weekend event in June 2022 involving local area street parties followed by processions through the town culminating in a display, possibly from the Martyrs' Memorial, and sought support and funding from the Town Council. This would be the finale to a day-long public event probably on Malling Recreation Ground. The cost of fireworks for a suitable display was of the order of £15,000 and this was generally considered to be the lowest cost of a traditional Lewes display. 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 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. Mrs Garth would investigate the costs and practicalities of these ideas.

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, 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) 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 C20;

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.

Commems2021/11 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 23rd October and there would be events at All Saints Centre and the town library.

Commems2021/12 TOM PAINE DAY:

This item was deferred in the absence of Cllr Milner, who had promoted it.

Commems2021/13 PELL'S 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 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

Commems2021/14 PUBLIC ART:

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, of course, the commissioned artist(s). If young people could be involved in some way, this would be ideal: perhaps conducting the initial litter picks or, if the commissioned artist wanted 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.*

Commems2021/15 GENERAL DISCUSSION:

It was proposed that the Council should purchase a Sussex Flag to be flown on Sussex Day each year (16th June – St Richard's Day). Mrs Garth 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. The idea of a “tourist-cam” webcam installation was agreed as an interesting suggestion that could be investigated as a future project.

Commems2021/16

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

It was agreed to recommend to Council that:

- › A sum of £15,000 be included in budgets for 2022/23 as support for the Lewes bonfire Societies’ joint project for a Queen’s Jubilee firework display, as described at Minute 09 a) above.
- › A sum of £12,000 be agreed pending establishment of costs for production of a suitable “Roll of Honour” book, and that the Commemorations Committee be authorized to complete the project, as described at Minute 10 a) above.
- › A rededication ceremony should be planned for the town’s War memorial.
- › Support be given to the Black History Month events planned, as described at Minute 11 above.
- › Support be given to produce two historic interpretation bards at the Pells, as described at Minute 13 above.
- › In-principle agreement be given to develop a public “waste artwork” project as described at Minute 14 above.
- › The Council should purchase a Sussex Flag to be flown on Sussex Day each year (16th June – St Richard’s Day) (cost approximately £100).

Commems2021/17

There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed, and thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions.

The meeting closed at 4:45pm

Signed.....

Date

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 2nd September 2021.

NOM 007/2021 – received from Cllr R Waring on 23rd August 2021, in the following terms:

It is proposed that:

Lewes Town Council will write to 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 below.

Supporting Information:

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 five 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 e.g. 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.

Cllr R Waring 23rd August 2021

It is proposed that:

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.

Supporting Information:

Bus services are a vital service for many members of 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.

This motion calls on 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 to ask the Council to ensure that it supports all attempts to retain bus routes through the town.

Planning proposals are 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, we 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, this 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 is considered essential that these policies are strictly adhered-to.

Cllr J Lamb 23rd August 2021

NOM 009/2021 – received from **Cllr Dr W Maples** on 23rd August 2021, in the following terms:

It is proposed that:

Lewes Town Council will ask the Transport Committee to investigate the purchase of parking storage facilities for bicycles for residents with no, or highly restricted, bicycle storage space. This investigation to be conducted in a timely fashion in order to present findings and recommendations prior to the 2022 budgeting agreement.

Supporting Information:

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 are 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 include street parking schemes, such as this in Walthamstow:

– Bike Hangars: Secure Residential Cycle Parking



Storing bikes in houses and flats with limited space can be a challenge. To help you keep your bike safe we have installed nearly 500 hangars, offering over 2800 residents an accessible and secure place to store their bike.

Taking up half a car parking space and housing up to 6 bikes they offer an extremely efficient and cost effective alternative to a parking a car; current membership is £35 per year.

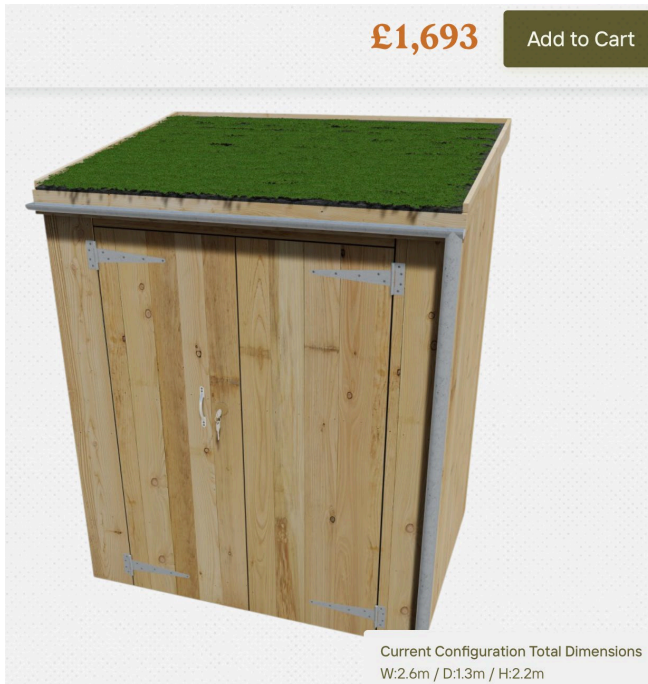
From: <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/storing-your-bike-safely-station-cycle-hubs-and-bike-hangars>

Other schemes are ‘off-street’, but can use a similar, safe ‘hangar’ design, or storage container style ‘cages’:



PCM18.48 Cycle Storage Unit - Tuffplas Grey Slat Cladding (End Panels) ZedPanel Cladding (Doors / Rear) - HD Galvanised Coating (Frame / Roof) - Mechanical Keypad Lock - Rail Fix (Toast Rack) Cycle Stands - 12no Cycles

https://streetspacegroup.co.uk/metrostor/cycle-stores/?gclid=CjwKCAjwmeiIBhA6EiwA-uaeFYacjTSBfVvYW2JUe8VojeOivdgOnsrBDyJzDeTxpAuc13k9x5m9bBoCX1YQAvD_BwE; or safer (no external visibility) wooden design, such as this (NB available with a living roof), from Ringmer-based ‘Brighton Bike Sheds’:



<https://www.brightonbikesheds.co.uk/product/vertical-bike-shed/>.

(Note that the price quoted is for a 6-bike shed; the image is for a 1-2 bike shed.)

There are currently two private car parking spaces for sale near Lewes Library:
<https://www.lewesstates.co.uk/property-for-sale/lewes/bn7-2lz/2191343>

The cost of one space is £17,000 and it would enable bicycle storage for 10-12 bicycles (at least twice that for two spaces). Additional costs for setting up a scheme would include clearing the space, and the price of the hangar, plus theft-proof installation (bolting to the ground). Setting up applications for use, key cutting, etc. could be done on a similar (though ideally online) model to the allotment allocations, but with criteria for greatest need similar to that set by Walthamstow Council. These are the guidelines Walthamstow issues regarding the use of their 'bike hangars':
https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Bikehangar-FAQs-2020%20price%20increase_0.pdf

At a notional £35 per year x 10 bicycles per hangar, the Town Council will never recuperate its expenditure. However, it would lead to more people owning bikes in Lewes, more people cycling, less traffic, less pollution and a healthier town.

We are in a climate crisis. Anything we can do to reduce car use and encourage active travel must be done. Such a scheme is in accord with our Visioning priorities, one of the highest of which was to do with cycling and supporting active travel and yet, apart from a few miscellaneous grants, **we have made no direct expenditure to support cycling in over two years of this administration.** Given the specific commitment to active travel, the Transport Committee is best placed to explore on behalf of the Council.

I propose we have a budget of £100,000 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.

Cllr Dr W Maples 23rd August 2021

Agenda Item No: 10 **Report No:** FC009/2021
Report Title: Retention of Internal Auditor
Report To: Full Council **Date:** 2nd September 2021
Report By: S Brigden, Town Clerk

Purpose of Report: To recommend retention of an Internal Auditor.

Recommendation(s):

- 1 That 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.

Information:

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. The first was the (then) recently retired Director of Finance at Wealden District Council. Following his untimely death in 2005, the Council retained another professional, recently retired from an extended career with the District Audit Service (a division of the Audit Commission), who subsequently fully retired at the close of the 2010/11 account year.
5. Both the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and The East Sussex Association of Local Councils (ESALC) maintain (short!) 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 our 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.

Internal Audit

2021/22

17 AUGUST 2021

Mulberry & Co

Author: Mark Mulberry



Table of contents

Introduction	3
Location of audit	3
Who is to carry out the work?	4
How long will an audit take?	4
Engagement letter	5
Fees and services	5
Your right to complain	5
Appendix 1 - Audit plan	6
Appendix 2 - Information to prepare for audit	9
Appendix 3 - Contact us	10

Introduction

We are writing to confirm your 2021/22 internal audit arrangements. Internal audit is an on-going function, undertaken regularly throughout the financial year, to test the continuing existence and adequacy of the authority's internal controls. It results in an annual assurance report to members designed to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and operating procedures under the authority's control.

The interim audit(s) will generally focus on the governance and accountability functions of the council rather than the financial elements. The conclusion of this review is a report providing the council with recommendations where applicable for the improvement of internal processes and assurance that the councils systems are fit for purpose and the possibility of the systems being prone to error or misstatement are low.

At Mulberry & Co we recommend that councils have at least two internal audits per annum with one in the autumn (interim) and one after the council year end. In some cases, your council may well have additional interim audits where there are significant areas to focus upon.

Location of audit

With the easing of pandemic restrictions, this year's interim audit is planned to be conducted onsite, although we can offer a remote audit if preferred.

In the accompanying email, we have asked you to state your preferred dates and times for your audit. Please make it clear in your response advising of your availability whether you are requesting an **onsite** or **remote audit**.

Please note that bookings are available on a first come first served basis, and we will try to accommodate all reasonable requests for specific dates and times.

LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Regulation 5 (1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 imposes a duty on local councils to 'undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal audit standards or guidance.' For parish and town councils, this guidance is set out in the NALC publication "Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England."

The purpose of internal audit is to review and report to the council whether its systems of financial and other internal controls over its activities and operating procedures are effective.

Onsite audits

Your auditor will attend on site at the agreed date and time. Please ensure you have access to the information listed (appendix 2, page 9) for the visit. If all information is available, we will aim to complete our report within 48 hours of the visit.

Remote audits

If you request a remote audit, this will be conducted over a period of time, starting with an initial review of information sent to us (appendix 2, page 9). We respectfully request this information to be provided to us **at least one week in advance of your booked date and time**. This can be emailed or uploaded via your Openspace account.

We may then contact the council to request further sample evidence based on the information sent to us, to support our findings.

The booked date and time for your remote audit will allow your auditor to contact you to discuss the findings either over the phone or via video conference. **Please ensure you provide the correct contact telephone number or video conference link when you book your date and time.**

The remote audit report will then be finalised, pending receipt of any additional information requested, issued to the council via the Openspace Server.

Who is to carry out the work?

All audit work will be carried out by either Mark Mulberry or Andy Beams.

How long will an audit take?

This is dependent on the scale and complexity of your council's accounts. We aim to conduct the majority of the work at the interim audit, so that at the year-end our work is focused on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and the information being presented to the external auditor. As a guide, we generally allow three to four hours for an interim audit and two to three hours for a final audit. Appendix 1 details the testing we will carry out.

Engagement letter

Our engagement letters are issued electronically via our Openspace secure server. This letter sets out the basis of our professional engagement and is required under the ethical guidelines of The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants. The contents of the letter describe our respective responsibilities and key deadlines. Please contact us if the contents of this letter are not in accordance with your understanding of our terms of appointment or you do not have an engagement letter.

We will shortly be issuing engagements letters for the 2021/22 council year. You will receive an automatic notification of this from our Openspace server with a link attached. Please can I remind you to logon to your Openspace account to electronically sign your engagement letter by going to www.irisopenspace.co.uk. By electronically signing the engagement letter, you are agreeing that we can start work immediately and that you agree with our terms. **Please note we cannot start work until the engagement letter has been approved.**

Fees and services

We base our charges on hourly rates which remain the same as the 2020/21 rate for the 2021/22 council year and £0.45p per mile for travel expenditure. All our fees are charges are subject to VAT at the prevailing rate.

Your right to complain

If you feel unhappy at any time about the service that we provide to you or the amount that we charge, I hope that you will first raise your concerns with me. Whether or not you wish to do this, we operate a formal complaints procedure, which you have the right to use at any time.

If you require any further information, or have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards

Mark Mulberry

Appendix 1 - Audit Plan

Audit Area	Tests
Appropriate books of account have been kept properly throughout the year.	Review transactions in cashbook make verbal enquiries. Test arithmetic.
The council's financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved, and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<p>Financial Regulations (FR) and Standing Orders (SO) reviewed and noted in minutes in last 12 months</p> <p>Select items from FR to test to physical documentation</p> <p>Review invoices and reconcile to cash book in detail</p> <p>Review selection of VAT entries</p> <p>Review minutes and payment list for authorisation</p> <p>Agendas and minutes properly prepared and published</p> <p>Council has Acceptance of Office and Register of Members' Interests in place and signed</p> <p>Review council is following Transparency Regulations</p>
The council assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	<p>Review and comment on risk assessments in place – ensure financial risk assessment considered</p> <p>Review of effectiveness of audit carried out</p> <p>Review and comment on council disaster recovery plans</p>

	Review and comment on council's insurance
The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	Review minutes for evidence of council discussion of the same Review and comment on actual versus budget information presented to council Review and comment on level of general and earmarked reserves
Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	Test precept application to precept receipts Test other income to annual charges (as approved by council) Test sample of VAT charged Comment on any partial exemption issues
Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	Test physical cash balances to accounting records Review items paid for by cash Enquire as to if cash received is banked entire or used for petty cash
Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with council approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	Test rates and hours are authorised Test net wages to payments due Ensure PAYE paid on time

	Council has pensions provision in place
Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	Assets shown at cost or proxy cost only Asset register sufficiently detailed Review insurance schedule and cashbook for missing items off the register
Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	Test reconciliation in detail for all accounts Are reconciliations signed and presented to council Test loans to PWLB and or other documentation
Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	Review and comment on method of preparation Box 7 and 8 reconciliation agrees if applicable Schedules of prepayments, accruals, debtors and creditors agree to final accounts Elector's Rights has correct date parameters
Trust funds (including charitable) The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Enquire as to if council is sole managing trustee and note details Ensure accounts do not contain trust income or expenditure

Appendix 2 – Information to prepare for audit

	Information Requirement	Tick when completed
Website data (These items must be on your council website)		
1	Financial Regulations and Standing Orders	
2	Register of Members' Interests	
3	Minutes and agendas of all council meetings and committees	
4	Compliance with Transparency Act Regulations	
5	2020/21 signed AGAR	
6	2020/21 Notice of Elector's Rights	
7	2020/21 Notice of conclusion of audit	
Information to be available during the visit (onsite) <u>or</u> sent to us one week in advance of the booked date and time (remote)		
1	Minute reference of review of Financial Regulations and Standing Orders	
2	Minute reference of review of risk assessments and risk management polices	
3	Minute reference of review of 2020/21 internal audit report	
4	Minute reference of review and acceptance of notice of conclusion of 2020/21 audit	
5	Minute reference of review of annual fees and charges	
6	Copy of cashbooks April to August 2021 (either excel spreadsheet or pdf print from your accounting package)	
7	If using electronic accounting package - Copy of nominal ledger print (All cost centres / account codes year to date) in nominal account order	
8	Income versus budget year to date	
9	List of earmarked reserves	
10	Copy of last VAT return	
11	Copy of insurance certificate and schedule	
12	Copy of financial risk assessments	
13	Copy of draft 2022/23 budget (if applicable)	
14	Petty cash cashbook	

15	Payroll summaries and pay slips for two calendar months	
16	Copy of fixed asset register showing additions and deletions since 31-03-21	
17	Copy of bank reconciliations for 3 consecutive months, together with bank statement page showing reconciled balance	
18	Confirmation of charity numbers where council acts as sole managing trustee	
19	Copy of Acceptance of Office for last appointed councillor	

Appendix 3 – Contact Us

- Email councils@mulberryandco.co.uk
- Phone 01483 423 054
- Upload – <https://www.irisopenspace.co.uk/Account/LogOn>

29 JULY 2021

PC5-21 | NATIONAL RESILIENCE STRATEGY

Summary

The Cabinet Office (CO) has recently launched a call for evidence into its development of a National Resilience Strategy. The COVID-19 pandemic has stretched the capacity of governments around the world and their resources. This has demonstrated the importance of a resilient society with well-developed plans and 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. This call for evidence seeks public views regarding how best to frame a National Resilience Strategy supporting UK National Resilience and the objectives required for it. The main consultation document can be downloaded [here](#) . The consultation closes at the Cabinet Office on 27 September 2021.

Context

The government's stated aim for the National Resilience Strategy is to make the UK the most resilient nation. In delivering this vision, the government will be guided by a series of core principles:

- We should understand the risks we face, including the impacts they could have, and our exposure to them.
- We should invest in preparation to better prevent, mitigate and recover from risks.
- We should energise and empower everyone who can make a contribution.

The government's vision for 2030 is to have a strengthened ability to assess and understand the risks we face. The national suite of systems, infrastructure and capabilities (including international systems) for managing those risks should become more proactive, adaptable and responsive; and there should be fewer regional inequalities in resilience terms.

As a result, the government wants our local communities, businesses, and the UK as a whole, to be more cohesive, resistant to shocks and stresses, and ultimately more adaptable to future threats and challenges.

Questions in this Call for Evidence focus on six broad thematic areas:

- Risk and Resilience: Strengthening our ability to manage an evolving risk landscape depends on improving our ability to both predict and adapt to identified and unexpected challenges.
- Responsibilities and Accountability: It is fundamentally important that all those involved in building resilience have a clear understanding of when, where and how to apply tools, processes and relationships effectively.
- Partnerships: Resilience is not solely a government or public sector responsibility. Other parts of society play an essential role in building our collective resilience.
- Community: A whole-of-society approach will be central to strengthening the UK's resilience, with a revived effort to inform and empower all parts of society who can make a contribution.
- Investment: The challenge of where to place investment in the risk cycle is one that affects the public and private sectors alike. As government, individuals and businesses, we face choices around what, and how much, to invest.
- Resilience in an Interconnected World: UK resilience is closely entwined with the wider global context. Challenges and opportunities are frequently experienced on a global scale.

NALC's current policy positions

NALC will be responding to this call for evidence given many local (parish and town) councils are already working with partners and supporting the community. We would also like to gather examples of resilience strategies from local councils or county associations to submit as part of our response.

Consultation Questions

The main consultation questions NALC will be responding to in this consultation are as below and NALC seeks the views of county associations and member councils in response to these questions to help inform its own submission to MHCLG:

Questions on Vision and Principles:

1. Do you agree with the proposed vision of the Resilience Strategy? Is there anything you would add, amend, or remove?

2. Do you agree with the principles laid out for the strategy? Is there anything you would add, amend, or remove?

Risk and Resilience:

1. Is there more that the government can do to assess risk at the national and local levels? If so, what?

2. Is there more that the government can do to communicate about risk and risk appetite with organisations and individuals? If so, what?

3. How could the government make risk assessment and data more accessible by frontline personnel in an emergency?

4. How does your organisation assess risks around unlikely or extreme events, when there is limited or no data?

5. How could the current local risk assessment process, managed through Local Resilience Forums, be strengthened to help local partners?

Responsibilities and Accountability:

1. Do you think that the current division of resilience responsibilities between Central Government, the Devolved Administrations, local government and local responders is correct? If not, why?

2. How can the UK Central Government, DAs, local and regional forms of government and local responders better collaborate on resilience?

3. What role, if any, should the UK Central government have in assuring that local areas are effectively carrying out their resilience responsibilities, whilst also respecting local responsibilities?

Partnerships:

Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) owners and operators:

1. Do you think that the resilience of CNI can be further improved? If so, how?

2. Do you think the introduction of appropriate statutory resilience standards would improve the security and resilience of CNI operators? Why? a. How would such standards define the necessary levels of service provision? b. Are there any risks associated with implementing such standards?

3. What do you think is the most effective way to test and assure the resilience of CNI? a. To what extent do you think regulators should play a role in testing the resilience of CNI systems and operators?

4. During an emergency, what do you think should be the role of the operators of CNI in ensuring continued provision of essential services (e.g. water, electricity, public transport)? a. How can the government support CNI owners or operators during an emergency?

Wider critical sectors

5. What role, if any, does your business or sector play in national resilience?

6. What are the risks that your business is most concerned about?

7. What information, tools or guidance could the government provide to help your business better assess or prepare for these types of risk?

8. What is your business' approach to building resilience in any key supply chains that your business is part of?

9. How useful have vehicles such as Local Enterprise Partnerships, Growth Hubs and other local business support services been strengthening your organisations' resilience? Why?

Academic and research organisations

10. What can the government do to make collaboration between academic and research organisations more effective?

11. Are there areas where the role of research in building national resilience can be expanded?

Community and local resilience:

1. Do you agree that everyone has a part to play in improving the UK's resilience? If not, why not?

2. Do you understand the types of emergencies that might impact you and other members of your community? a. What would help you better understand the risks that could affect your community? b. Do you know where to access information about emergencies that could affect you?

3. Have you considered the actions you might take to prepare for or during an emergency? a. What has motivated you to plan or make preparations? b. What has stopped you from planning or making preparations? c. What would help you to be able to make a plan or prepare?

4. Have recent emergencies (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic, flooding, terrorist attacks) made you think differently about risks or changed the way you prepare for emergencies?

5. Are there any barriers in accessing local volunteering schemes or finding community groups that discuss local emergency planning? If so, what are the barriers?

Investment:

1. How does your organisation invest in your approach to the risks outlined in this document? Is your investment focussed on particular stages of the risk lifecycle (for example, on prevention)?

2. Has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the way your organisation is investing, or will invest, in preparing for these risks? If so, how?

3. Are there models of successful resilience investment? If so, to what extent could they be adopted in the UK?

4. Are there examples of where investment (whether by the government, by businesses or by individuals) has driven improvements in resilience?

Resilience in an Interconnected World:

1. Where do you see the UK's resilience strengths?

2. Are there any approaches taken by other countries to resilience that you think the UK could learn from?

3. Which of the UK's international relationships and programmes do you think are most important to the UK's resilience?

4. What international risks have the greatest impact on UK resilience?

5. How can the UK encourage international partners to build resilience to global risks?

Your evidence

Please email your responses to this consultation to chris.borg@nalc.gov.uk by 17.00 on Friday 10 September, 2021 along with any examples of local resilience

strategies. County associations are asked to forward this briefing onto all member councils in their area.

© NALC 2021