

TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of a meeting of **TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL** held on **Wednesday 16th March 2016** in Telscombe Civic Centre at 7.30 pm.

PRESENT:- Cllr W Botting, Cllr J Harris, Cllr G Maskell, Cllr R Maskell,
Cllr A Mendoza, Cllr A Smith, Cllr J Wilkins

Also present: Stella Newman, Deputy Clerk/RFO(*minutes*)

1067. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Mr Peter Seed asked about change of values on the asset and was advised that values have to stay at their original purchase price and cannot be revalued or depreciated.

1068. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs D Brindley and A Loraine due to family commitments, Cllr D Wright due to another engagement, Cllr D Neave due to attendance at a planning meeting at Lewes DC, Cllr T Armour due to work commitments and Cllr B Page due to annual leave. These reasons for absence were accepted.

Apologies were also received from County Councillor Phil Howson.

1069. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

1070. TO APPROVE AND SIGN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20th JANUARY 2016

The Council considered the minutes and it was proposed by Cllr R Maskell, seconded by Cllr J Harris and unanimously

RESOLVED that they were a true record of the proceedings and were signed as correct by the Mayor.

1071. MATTERS ARISING FOR NOTING

None.

1072. TO RECEIVE MINUTES FROM THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES:-

(a) Planning & Highways – 11th January & 1st February 2016

In the absence of the Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman, Cllr G Maskell requested that the minutes of the above meetings be accepted and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.

(b) Policy & Resources – 18th January 2016

Cllr A Smith requested that the minutes of the above meeting be accepted and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.

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(c) Amenities & Civic Centre – 25th January 2016

Cllr G Maskell advised she would like the minutes to be discussed at the next Committee meeting and then be taken to next Council.

1073. NOTIFICATION OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE TO 31st JANUARY 2016

The actual year to date figures at 31st January 2016 for all committees and earmarked reserves being expenditure of £213,495 and income of £302,205 were accepted.

1074. TO APPROVE PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS FOR JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2016

Payments of £16,251.79 for 1st-31st January 2016 and £22,613.31 for 1st-29th February 2016 were proposed as correct by Cllr R Maskell, seconded by Cllr J Harris, unanimously agreed and signed as accurate by the Mayor. Receipts of £1,494.70 for 1st-31st January 2016 and £10,962.44 for 1st-29th February 2016 were noted.

1075. TO APPROVE RISK ASSESSMENT AND HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES

It was noted that draft Risk Assessment and Health & Safety Policies had been taken to the Audit sub-committee in January, discussed and agreed. Having studied the documents and Councillors being happy that all aspects of risk including financial were covered it was proposed by Cllr A Smith, seconded by Cllr R Maskell and

RESOLVED that the documents be approved. They were then signed by the Mayor. Thanks were given to the Town Clerk for completing these documents.

1076. TO APPROVE ASSET REGISTER

The full draft Asset Register had been taken to the Audit sub-committee in January and agreed. It was noted that assets totalling £8,678 had been purchased and £10,667 disposed of over the last year resulting in a decrease of £1,989. Having studied the figures it was proposed by Cllr R Maskell, seconded by Cllr A Mendoza and

RESOLVED that asset register totalling £1,760,729 be approved. This was signed by the Mayor. Thanks were given to the Deputy Clerk/RFO for its completion.

1077. TO REVIEW THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL/AUDIT PROCESS

The effectiveness of the internal control and audit process had initially been taken to the Audit Sub-Committee for examination and agreement and was subsequently discussed in detail as follows:-

- i.* **Scope of internal control & audit** – The scope of audit was detailed in the auditor's engagement letter and is in accordance with current practices and guidelines - it covers all required aspects of internal audit. Councillors also carry out certain aspects of internal control/audit by checking the bank reconciliations quarterly and two Councillors checking invoices and signing cheques. All payments & receipts are also reported to full Council for checking.
- ii.* **Independence** – The internal auditor appointed is one of a number of auditors on the recommended list provided by the Sussex Association of Local Councils. Mulberry & Co are a totally independent from the Council.

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1077. Contd. To Review The Effectiveness Of The Internal Control/Audit Process

- iii.* **Competence** – Mulberry & Co have sufficient knowledge to carry out the audit work as they are chartered certified accountants, registered auditors and chartered tax advisers.
- iv.* **Relationships** – Both the Clerk and RFO have been issued with job descriptions which clearly define their relevant responsibilities with regard to internal control. A full risk assessment which also covers financial aspects has been carried out by the Town Clerk and approved by full Council earlier in the meeting.
Members are also aware of their responsibility to ensure procedures are being carried out correctly. A list of payments & receipts are taken to full Council for approval and income & expenditure lists are taken to each Committee meeting and full Council. Two Councillors examine invoices due for payment & sign them as evidence before signing the relevant cheque and verification of bank reconciliations produced by the RFO are now undertaken by a Councillor quarterly.
- v.* **Audit Planning and reporting** – Internal audits take place twice yearly, the plan and terms of engagement having been agreed by full Council at its meeting on 16th September 2015. Internal Audits take place at the end of the calendar year, and another at the end of the financial year. Members are advised of the exact dates once they have been agreed with the internal auditor and the audit reports taken to Council for review. The external audit takes place at the end of the financial year and needs to be submitted to the external auditors by June 13th following approval by full Council. Once quarterly bank reconciliations have been checked by a Councillor, this is reported to the next Policy & Resources Committee meeting.

Having considered the points above members were satisfied with the effectiveness of the internal control and audit processes in place.

1078. TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF NEW PHOTOCOPIER LEASE AND SERVICE AGREEMENT BY DIRECT DEBIT

The new photocopier lease and service agreement were agreed at full Council in December with commencement on 1st April 2016. Thanks were given to the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO for her negotiations on this. It was proposed by Cllr A Smith, seconded by Cllr J Wilkins and

RESOLVED that payment for the photocopier lease and service agreement be made by Direct Debit.

1079. TO NOTE COUNCIL'S COMPLIANCE WITH NEW WORKPLACE PENSIONS AUTOMATIC ENROLMENT

It was noted that the law on workplace pensions had changed and under the Pensions Act 2008, every employer in the UK must put certain staff into a pension scheme and contribute towards it which is known as 'automatic enrolment'. The staging date for employers varies and the effective date for Telscombe Town Council was 1st March 2016. The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO confirmed that staff had been assessed as at 1st March and all employees who were eligible already belonged to the LGPS which is a qualifying pension scheme under the new regulations. One member of staff was not eligible and opted not to join. In order to meet compliance all staff had been written to advising how automatic enrolment applied to them using the templates provided by The Pensions Regulator. This action was noted by Council.

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1080. REPORTS FROM:-

a) **The Mayor:-** Cllr W Botting advised that he had attended the welcome evening for the new Reverend Tim Mills. Sadly he had also attended two funerals, one for the High Sheriff's husband and one for the mother of County Councillor Ian Buchanan. He had also attended the Cubs pancake evening where many pancakes had been tried and had attended the Burns Night celebrations in Peacehaven dressed in full Scottish dress.

b) **The Deputy Mayor:-** Cllr G Maskell advised that she had also attended the welcome evening for the new Reverend Tim Mills. She had also attended the Homelink's music quiz which had raised £240 for the homeless. She did attend the PCS netball tournament but unfortunately it was 'rained off' shortly after commencement.

c) **County Councillors:-** Unfortunately Cllr P Howson was unable to attend and had not left a report.

d) **District Councillors:-** Cllr R Maskell advised that the current Chief Executive leaves tomorrow. He also advised that he had been to Eastbourne regarding housing and that they are far ahead of Lewes. He also advised that some affordable housing had been created on the Thakeham Estate in Peacehaven. Cllr Maskell also advised that there had been cuts within adult social care.

Cllr A Smith advised that the new Chief Executive is a shared Chief Executive with Eastbourne Borough Council and that Eastbourne are years ahead of Lewes. Cllr Smith advised that there are proposed changes regarding waste and recycling which will be going to a group meeting on the 23rd and there will be changes with shared services.

e) **Outside Bodies:-** Cllr J Harris advised that he is attending a Crimestoppers event in Brighton where the author Peter James will be present. He also gave statistics regarding domestic violence.

Cllr G Maskell advised that the proposed drop off zone at Telscombe Cliffs School will not go forward. The car park is to be fenced and gated with only a few people having the code for the gate. There will be no drop off zone in the car park. This is a security measure and will cost in the region of £60k with East Sussex County Council paying for most of the work, but the school will need to pay the rest. This will cause a problem as in September the school will have 610 pupils. It is hoped the school will get use of the laybys between certain times and results of the survey into the layby use is awaited. Cllr Maskell also advised that 2 new classrooms are being built at the school, the swimming pool is going to be relined and that the library is up and running with help from a donation from the Josiah Povey Charity.

1081. URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING AND/OR INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

None.

There being no further business the Mayor closed the meeting at 8.05pm.

Signed.....
Mayor, Cllr W Botting