

TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of a meeting of **TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL** held on **Wednesday 19th September 2018** in Telscombe Civic Centre at 7.30pm.

PRESENT:- Cllrs T Armour *Deputy Mayor*, D Brindley *Mayor*, J Harris, G Maskell, B Page, C Robinson, I Sharkey, A Smith, D Wright

Also present: Stella Newman, Town Clerk & RFO (*minutes*)
30 members of the public (approx)

1398. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Mr L O'Connor said he had made a previous Freedom of Information (FOI) request regarding ear tag numbers and had subsequently requested an internal review of his request.

Cllr Smith responded by advising that the Council have been making enquiries regarding the eartag numbers. There are 2 flocks, the Council's and the farmers. The eartags have a digital chip and the information is being updated. He advised that the Council do not have to give the information, but are trying to get the information to him. Cllr Smith advised he had spoken to the Sussex Association of Local Councils regarding the FOI review and they have just provided the Council with a model policy which will be taken to the next Council meeting.

Another member of the public asked if the Council had something to hide and advised they thought the information should be in the public domain.

Cllr Smith responded that the Council have nothing to hide.

A member of the public said the Council are sensoring information and as their representatives the Council do not have the right to deny the public the information requested.

Cllr Smith advised that the Council do not currently have the information, it is held by the farmer.

Another resident asked if the Council have records going back which show which sheep have died.

Cllr Armour advised that when they die, tag numbers have been recorded.

A member of the public asked if they had been photographed with their ear tag numbers.

Cllr Smith advised no.

The member of the public asked how we could have records when we do not photograph it, stating that the Council could photograph the same sheep.

Cllr Smith did not respond.

A Saltdean resident asked how much profit had been made over the last 2 years.

Cllr Smith responded that Telscombe Town Council's accounts are on a cash in/cash out basis and not profit and loss, however, the Council has a spreadsheet with the figures. Cllr Smith went on to explain that one thing in the Abbeylands Report on the Tye was to make money from it which is what the Council have explored. The sheep year runs from October to October but the Council's accounts year is from April to March. In 2012/13 the Council had a test year with old ewes and made a profit of over £1,000 so decided to continue with a new flock. In 2013/14 a profit of £2,987, more than 2% of the Council tax, was made; in 2014/15 a similar profit of £3,303 was made and in 2015/16 a profit of £3,916 was made with less ewes, which is a significant return. Cllr Smith explained that things had gone a little shaky after that and for 2016/17 there is a possible loss of £600 but the Council also get EU money from Natural England.

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1398. Public Question Time (Contd)

A member of the public asked if the Council had a record of the expenditure and if the Council was audited.

Cllr Smith said yes and the Town Clerk advised that all expenditure figures are taken to Council and circulated with the agenda which is also put on the website for everyone to see. She also advised that the Council are audited and the latest audit found everything to be in order and is being reported as an agenda item at this evening's meeting.

A member of the public asked if the Tye was a business as they thought it was an amenity.

Cllr Smith replied that it is a large area which needs to be looked after. Ragwort needs removal and the sheep help to do this. The land needs to be managed as it is grass downland.

A member of the public said that their Mum does not remember the sheep being there years ago and why does the farmer have to put sheep there.

Cllr Smith said he could not answer that question.

A member of the public said the Council represents them and asked why the farmer grazes sheep. He advised the Council should take into account the residents' wishes.

A member of the public said the Council should defend their right to roam freely on the Tye.

Cllr Smith responded that they have a right to roam.

The same member of the public said that the sheep are not allowing them that right. He said he likes animals and sheep, but likes dogs too and felt there should be a compromise and negotiation between the farmer and the Council. He believes there is a conflict.

Cllr Smith replied that the farmer had stood for election and was voted in by the public. Cllr Armour gestured that he had been voted in twice.

A member of the public said they objected to Cllr Armour's finger language and that he had used the 'v' sign.

Cllr Armour advised that he had gestured that he had been voted in twice and had not used the 'v' sign.

The same member of the public then advised that she objected to Cllr Armour's language on the phone as she had recently rung and reported a dead sheep on the Tye and had received a rude response. She said that she liked the sheep but does not like the way they are treated by the farmer. She asked why sheep dogs could not be used when rounding up the sheep rather than using tractors or quad bikes with their horns blasting.

As it was now almost 20 minutes over the allotted 15 minute public question time, the Mayor, Cllr Brindley, advised he would take just one more question.

A member of the public asked if the Council would be prepared to consult the public if they wanted a community flock.

Cllr Smith responded that it is not covered in the PSPO.

The same member of the public advised they were not talking about the PSPO.

Cllr Brindley advised that the Council were not prepared to ask the question now as it was not an agenda item.

The member of the public responded by saying that the Code of Conduct says that the Council should act for the public and 95% of the public do not want the community flock.

Cllr Brindley queried where the 95% had come from.

Cllr Robinson asked if she could move that the Council had a vote on it and she was also advised no as it was not an agenda item.

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1398. Public Question Time (Contd)

Cllr Page responded by saying that when the Council were first considering purchasing a community flock, it had been put in the Council's newsletter and no-one had objected. He therefore found it had to believe that 95% of residents are now against the community flock.

Cllr Brindley then drew public question time to a close at 8.11 pm.

1399. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr A Loraine who has been granted leave of absence until November, Cllr R Maskell due to annual leave and Cllr Wilkins due to work commitments. These reasons for absence were accepted. Cllr Mendoza was also absent but had not sent apologies.

1400. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Armour declared an interest in agenda item 14, Update on the Community Flock.

1401. TO DISCUSS & APPROVE MINUTES OF THE EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15th AUGUST 2018

It was proposed by Cllr G Maskell, seconded by Cllr A Smith and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the extra-ordinary meeting on 15th August 2018 were a true record of the proceedings and were signed as correct by the Mayor, Cllr D Brindley.

1402. TO RECEIVE MINUTES FROM THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES:-

(a) Planning & Highways – 25th June, 16th July & 6th August 2018

Cllr G Maskell proposed that the minutes of the meeting on 25th June be accepted and the recommendations adopted, seconded by Cllr I Sharkey and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.

1402. To Receive Minutes From The Following Committees (Contd):-

(a) Planning & Highways – 25th June, 16th July & 6th August 2018 (Contd)

Cllr C Robinson proposed that the minutes of the meeting on 16th July be accepted and the recommendations adopted, seconded by Cllr I Sharkey and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.

Cllr I Sharkey proposed that the minutes of the meeting on 6th August be accepted and the recommendations adopted, seconded by Cllr C Robinson and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.

(b) Policy & Resources – 2nd July 2018

Cllr B Page proposed that the minutes of the meeting on 2nd July be accepted and the recommendations adopted, seconded by Cllr G Maskell and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.

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1402. To Receive Minutes From The Following Committees (Contd):-

A member of the public started to shout out over the members and Cllr Brindley explained that public question time was over, the meeting was now in progress and asked the person to refrain from speaking.

(c) Amenities & Civic Centre – 21st May 2018

Cllr G Maskell proposed that the minutes of the meeting on 21st May be accepted and the recommendations adopted, seconded by Cllr T Armour and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.

1403. TO APPROVE PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS FOR JUNE AND JULY 2018

Payments for June of £48,425.50 and receipts of £5,649.74 and payments for July of £90,389.81 and receipts of £64,906.15 were proposed as correct by Cllr D Wright, seconded by Cllr B Page, unanimously **agreed** and signed as accurate by the Mayor, Cllr D Brindley.

1404. NOTIFICATION OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE TO 31st JULY 2018

The figures at 31st July 2018 for all committees and earmarked reserves being expenditure of £185,461 and income of £224,479 were proposed as correct by Cllr A Smith, seconded by Cllr D Wright and unanimously **agreed**.

1405. NOTIFICATION OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT

The Annual Return had been checked by the external auditor and their report found everything to be in order as follows:-

'On the basis of our review, in our opinion the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.'

'Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the Council: None.'

Cllr Wright proposed acceptance of the report, seconded by Cllr A Smith and unanimously **RESOLVED** to note acceptance of the External Auditors report. Cllr Wright thanked the Town Clerk/RFO for her completion of the Annual Return and ensuring a successful result.

1406. TO AGREE INCREASE IN CIVIC CENTRE HIRE CHARGES FROM APRIL 2019

It was noted that the last increase for room hire was in April 2014. The report from the Town Clerk/RFO was considered and the recommendation from the Amenities & Civic Centre Committee that charges be increased by 5% and the charities discounted rate be reduced to 26% **agreed**.

The recommended changes were proposed by Cllr A Smith, seconded by Cllr B Page and unanimously **RESOLVED** as follows:-

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1406. To Agree Increase In Civic Centre Hire Charges From April 2019 (Contd)

Room	<i>New Private/Commercial Rate (approx 5% inc) per hour</i>	<i>New Charities Rate (approx 26% discount) per hour</i>
Council Chamber	£21.00	£15.55
Chamber/Ex. Area	£33.50	£24.80
Room 1	£12.50	£9.25
Rooms 3 & 4	£10.50	£7.80
Rooms 5 & 6	£11.50	£8.50
Weekend Session Rates	<i>New rate (approx 2.5% increase) per session</i>	<i>New Charities rate (approx 26% discount) per session</i>
Morning and afternoon	£92.00	£68.00
Evening	£164.00	£121.00

1407. TO AGREE REVISION TO GRASS VERGE CUTTING CONTRACT FROM 2019

The report from the Town Clerk/RFO was considered, along with the recommendation from the Planning & Highways Committee. It was noted that East Sussex County Council are making a cut in the contribution they give to Telscombe Council to provide grass verge cutting from £11,900 to £3,470. This is a large reduction of over £8,000 and it was felt therefore that we could not sustain cutting the verges 8 times per year. Following discussion it was proposed by Cllr C Robinson, seconded by Cllr I Sharkey and unanimously **RESOLVED** to agree the recommendation from the Planning & Highways Committee to go out to tender for a 3 year contract based on 4 cuts per year with the months to be open to allow for weather fluctuations and that a budget be set of £6,000.

1408. TO CONSIDER FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE CTLA, CAB AND WAVE LEISURE SUMMER HOLIDAY PROGRAMME

It was noted that the Council support the CTLA community bus, Citizens Advice Bureau and Wave Leisure financially. Cllr Smith advised that in his opinion all 3 provide a very worthy service that is used by all members of the community and felt we should continue with the same contribution next year. It was proposed by Cllr C Robinson, seconded by Cllr B Page and unanimously **RESOLVED** to support the CTLA community bus for the sum of £1,500; support the Citizens Advice Bureau for £3,490 and the Wave Leisure summer holiday scheme for £1,500.

1409. TO AGREE WORKING PARTY TO ARRANGE 2019/20 BUDGET

Following discussion, members of the working party were unanimously **agreed** as follows:-

Chairman of Policy & Resources Committee, Cllr D Wright
Vice Chairman of Policy & Resources Committee, Cllr B Page
Chairman of Amenities & Civic Centre Committee, Cllr G Maskell
Vice Chairman of Amenities & Civic Centre Committee & Planning & Highways, T Armour
Chairman of Planning & Highways Committee, Cllr J Wilkins
Cllrs R Maskell, A Smith, I Sharkey and C Robinson
The Town Clerk/RFO

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1409. To Agree Working Party To Arrange 2019/20 Budget (Contd)

In accordance with Financial Regulation 3.1, the RFO will draw up draft figures and call a working party meeting to consider the figures in due course.

1410. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS REVIEW

It was noted that revisions had been adopted by Council on 21st March 2018 and that no new revisions are due at the present time. It was therefore proposed by Cllr D Wright, seconded by Cllr B Page and unanimously **RESOLVED** to adopt the Financial Regulations in their current form for the following year.

1411. UPDATE ON COMMUNITY FLOCK INCLUDING NUMBERS

Cllr Armour had declared an interest in this agenda item and took no part in the discussion.

Cllr Smith advised that the Council's business plan states that the Council should maintain a flock of 100 ewes. However, the figures show that we do not need 100 ewes to make a profit and although last year's figures are showing a deficit of approximately £600, he recommended that we continue with the flock for a further year at the current number and we do not purchase more to make the flock up to 100.

Cllr Robinson asked why buy more as the Saltdean Residents Association had been informed that there was no profit made last year and possibly none will be made this year. Cllr Smith responded that he had recommended not to increase the flock, but maintain it at its current level.

It was therefore proposed by Cllr A Smith, seconded by Cllr D Wright and **RESOLVED** to continue with the flock at its current level and not make it up to 100. Cllr Armour did not vote on this matter as he had declared an interest.

1412. REPORTS FROM:-

Mayor – The Mayor advised that he had been busy since his last report and had attended the RNLI fete in Newhaven, Blind Veteran's fete in Ovingdean, a Civic Service for his term as Mayor at the Telscombe Community Church in Buckhurst Road, the Deans Senior Tea Club as many times as he could; he had officially opened the Robert Kingan playground in East Saltdean; attended as many bingo evenings as he could and the fabulous firework display the Council had recently put on and the unveiling of the Tommy statue in Peacehaven. He ended by saying that he had recently taken one of his chickens to visit Peacehaven Heights Primary School as they are learning about animals and how things grow.

Deputy Mayor – The Deputy Mayor advised he had attended the Council's bingo evening, the Trafalgar Day Dinner and the Dieppe Raid commemoration event in Newhaven.

District Councillors – Cllr Smith advised that unfortunately there are budget cuts, but they are sharing services with Eastbourne Borough Council. He promoted the LewesDC Report It App and advised the phone system is to be improved. He ended by saying that recycling rates are increasing.

County Councillors – Cllr Smith advised that East Sussex County Council are trying to make savings, but have a £46m gap in the budget.

Representatives on Outside Bodies -

Saltdean Residents' Association – Cllr Page advised that a lot was discussed at the last meeting and they were not happy with the sheep on the Tye or the proposed PSPO. The Vice Chairman was going to write to the Council and ask questions and she had, in fact, emailed Cllr Smith who had replied.

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1412. Reports From (Contd):-

Representatives on Outside Bodies (Contd)-

Neighbourhood Development Plan – Cllr Robinson advised that the main concern now is the ‘call for sites’ and the Town Clerk had emailed round to Councillors. The plan needs to identify sites for 255 houses and we need to show we are trying to find land. Cllr Robinson advised she cannot attend the next meeting and wondered if anyone else was available. The meetings take place on the first Wednesday of each month at Peacehaven Council offices in the evening.

Crime Stoppers – Cllr Harris advised that domestic violence is on the increase. There is also a new initiative ‘Fearless’ which is similar to Crime Stoppers but for the younger generation.

Lewes District Association of Local & Paris Councils – Cllr Armour advised he attended the last meeting which only lasted 10 minutes and nothing was discussed.

Telscombe Cliffs School – Cllr G Maskell advised that LewesDC had donated 100 old black recycling boxes which are now being used in the school’s garden.

1413. URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING

Cllr Robinson reminded everyone present of the Telscombe Residents’ Association race night evening which is being held at the Civic Centre on 17th November. They will be donating half of the proceeds to the Mayor’s charity fund.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.48 pm.

Signed.....
Mayor, Cllr D Brindley