

TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of **TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL** held on **Wednesday 15th January 2020** in Telscombe Civic Centre at 7.30pm.

PRESENT:- Cllrs D Brindley *Deputy Mayor*, C Clarkson, C Gallagher, J Harris, D Judd, G Hill, L Mills, L O'Connor, B Page, C Robinson, I Sharkey *Mayor*,

Also present: Stella Newman, Town Clerk & RFO (*minutes*)
Bianca Buss, Amenities Officer
Vanessa Rowlands, South Downs National Park Parish Member
6 members of the public

The Mayor welcomed everyone present and ran through safety procedures.

The Mayor advised she was going to bring agenda item 7 forward as the first item, Introduction of the South Downs National Park Authority Parish Member.

1588. INTRODUCTION OF SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY PARISH MEMBER

Vanessa Rowlands introduced herself as the Parish Member of the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) for this area and said that she is a Councillor at Cuckmere Valley Parish Council. She advised that the second representative is Richard Waring from Lewes Town Council. She went on to ask if there is anything she can help with and there was discussion with Councillors regarding footpaths and access. Councillors want to encourage use of the Downs and it was noted that we need better cycle ways and paths. Cllr Gallagher advised that as Chair of the Neighbourhood Development Plan she would like to work with the SDNPA. Cllr O'Connor advised that the Telscombe Residents' Association are planning on putting interpretation boards on the Tye and assistance with funding is needed. Regarding pathways, Vanessa advised that she will contact the SDNP Officer that is in charge of these. She also advised that she does not know this area very well and would like to undertake a site visit.

7.44pm Vanessa Rowlands left the meeting and the Mayor adjourned the meeting for public question time.

1589. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public said he had questions regarding Agenda Item 8, Bridleway 8 Gate Policy and Process and asked the Mayor if he could speak at that time. The Mayor agreed to this. The same member of the public then asked when a horse jump which went across fencing between the Tye and a field would be removed. He was advised the Council were not aware of this and would investigate. If part of the jump is on the Tye, the Council can remove it as no-one has been given permission for it to be there.

Another member of the public asked if the Stud Farm Sheep Calendar published on our website was for this year. Cllr O'Connor advised that it is a generic calendar for every year, but as explained on the website, timings could change annually due to weather conditions and manpower available. He advised that Stud Farm have intimated that their flock of sheep will probably return to the Tye in 6 to 8 weeks time and the Farm will aim to give the Council a weeks notice.

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1589. Public Question Time (Contd)

A member of the public advised that Stud Farm vehicles continue to drive on the Tye. Cllr Judd advised that the Council have spoken to the farm about this and requested that they only use farm vehicles such as quad bikes. Cllr Gallagher advised that the member of public should bring this up at the Tye Commons Community Group meetings chaired by Cllr Robinson. There were no other questions from the public present.

The meeting reconvened at 7.52pm.

1590. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs A Smith sent apologies due to ill health and this reason was accepted. Cllr Cheta was not present but had not submitted apologies.

1591. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN RELATION TO MATTERS ON THE AGENDA

None.

1592. TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18th DECEMBER 2019

It was proposed by Cllr Mills, seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting on 18th December 2019 were correct and were signed by the Mayor, Cllr Sharkey.

1593. TO APPROVE PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2019

Cllr O'Connor noted a payment in November for Tye inspections and fence/gate repairs and asked how we know what fencing or gates need repairing. The Town Clerk advised that the Ranger completes a form when he has undertaken his visits detailing areas that need attention. Cllr O'Connor then noted a refund in November for the NFU Insurance and asked if the Council therefore had no cover. The Town Clerk explained that as the community flock had been sold in October, she had cancelled the Insurance Policy, but that it would have ran out in November anyway. Payments for November of £36,746.33 and receipts of £15,634.63 and payments for December of £22,382.74 and receipts of £14,792.60 were proposed as correct by Cllr O'Connor, seconded by Cllr Gallagher, unanimously **agreed** and signed as accurate by the Mayor, Cllr Sharkey.

1594. NOTIFICATION OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE TO 30th NOVEMBER 2019

The actual year to date figures to 30th November 2019 being £178,372 expenditure and £289,454 income were unanimously **agreed**.

1595. TO AGREE BRIDLEWAY 8 GATE POLICY & PROCESS

The Amenities Officer explained that a review of the Bridleway 8 Gate policy and process had been undertaken by the Planning & Highways Committee at the beginning of 2019.

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1595. To Agree Bridleway 8 Gate Policy & Process (Contd)

As a result of the review, a revised draft Policy and recommendation to continue with the padlock system was taken to full Council in July for consideration. As many of the Councillors were new and did not know the history of the gate, it was recommended that the matter be referred back to the Planning & Highways Committee and a more detailed costed option be brought back to a future meeting.

Following this several amendments were recommended to the Policy by the Planning & Highways Committee as detailed in the Amenities Officer's report.

Discussion ensued regarding the Policy. Cllr Brindley felt that the cost for a replacement lost key at cost was too low and the figure should be increased and the application form should be amended to allow enough room to list all vehicles in the household that would be using the key. Cllr O'Connor asked the reasoning why people who worked in the Village were removed from the criteria and Cllr Judd advised that as they may not be local or inhabitants of the area, they could use the proper roadway.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 8.08pm for public question time.

A member of the public asked why it was being changed to only 1 key per household and advised that he had a right of way noted on his Deeds that he could use the bridleway 8, so if he was not given a key, he would remove the padlock. He advised that he was willing to show Cllr Judd his Deeds stating his rights of access.

Another member of the public advised that they have a right of easement over the bridleway 8.

A query was raised regarding the maintenance contract and what the charge would be based on and Cllr Sharkey advised the cost would be based on the annual maintenance costs for the gate, i.e., call out and repairs/replacement of the padlock, with the total cost being equally invoiced to all key holders.

A member of the public asked why the 8 properties on the unmade part of Telscombe Cliffs Way were no longer being included in the criteria and the Amenities Officer advised that one of the reasons was that they had been included on the understanding that they maintain the unmade area, but it transpires that St Modwyn do. It was clarified that the Policy does say that applications will be considered from those who do not fit the criteria but who have a proven need to have access through the gate, but they may not be successful.

As there were no further questions the meeting was re-convened at 8.20pm.

Discussion ensued regarding various aspects of the Policy and criteria. It was proposed by Cllr L Mills and seconded by Cllr Judd that the deposit for replacement of a lost key should be £100. It was put to the vote and as only 2 other Councillors were in agreement to the proposal the motion was not carried.

It was then proposed by Cllr Brindley, seconded by Cllr Clarkson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that replacement of a first lost key would be automatic, the replacement deposit for a lost key would be £50 and a request for a second lost key would be referred to the Planning & Highways Committee for consideration.

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1595. To Agree Bridleway 8 Gate Policy & Process (Contd)

It was also proposed by Cllr O'Connor, seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Policy, Application Form and Key Holder Maintenance Agreement be accepted with the following amendments:-

- The deposit for a key should be increased to £100
- The £100 deposit for the first key would be non-returnable in the event of the key being lost
- The 8 properties on the unmade road part of Telscombe Cliffs Way and those who work in Telscombe Village are removed from the criteria
- Only 1 key is issued per household
- The words 'criteria for the' be added to the sentence regarding the key holder register review to read 'The criteria for the Key Holder Register will be reviewed yearly by the Planning & Highways Committee.'
- More room be inserted in the application form to allow the listing of all vehicles in a household

Finally it was proposed by Cllr L Mills, seconded by Cllr D Judd and unanimously **RESOLVED** that a new padlock and key be purchased for the gate and that all keyholders be asked to re-apply for a key. If current keys are returned, the deposit paid will be returned.

Two members of the public and the Amenities Officer then left the meeting at 8.40pm.

1596. TO AGREE BUDGET/PRECEPT FOR 2020/21 FINANCIAL YEAR

The Town Clerk advised that following receipt of tax base information from Lewes District Council (LDC) which was virtually unchanged and their advice that they will not be paying any Revenue Support Grant to us, the Budget Working Group had convened again. Figures had been reviewed and slight amendments agreed from the draft figures that had been taken to Policy & Resources in November, resulting in a precept of £239,943.00 and £65,431.25 to be put into Earmarked Reserves. There was discussion regarding the Council's contribution to CTLA and it was unanimously **agreed** to increase the figure to £6,000, but discussions should be held with CTLA regarding the service they provide before any funds are released to them.

Cllr Clarkson praised the Town Clerk for drawing up the proposed budget which maintains services and provides the opportunity for making a difference.

Cllr Page summarised past budgets, advising that in 2013/14 we received a £32,000 Revenue Support Grant and this year we are receiving nothing. He also advised that in 2011/12 Council Tax for a Band D property was £94.54 and despite the tax base being 200 lower now than in 2011/12, the Council Tax for a Band D Property will only be £94.70.

Cllr Robinson thanked Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs for their input in the budget which is providing allowance for youth services and improving where we live. She also thanked the Town Clerk for her work in putting the budget together.

It was therefore proposed by Cllr Mills, seconded by Cllr Brindley and unanimously **RESOLVED** that (a) the budget requirement and precept for the 2020-21 financial year be set at £239,943.00, resulting in the precept increasing by £14,526 (6.4%) and Council Tax increasing for a Band D property by £5.48 (6.1%) to £94.70 (b) that funds totalling £65,431.25 be put in Earmarked Reserves and (c) the funds in Earmarked Reserves for Community Capital Projects and Summer Fayre totalling £3,985 be transferred to a new heading Community Café, as detailed in the report that accompanied the agenda. The budget and precept figures are as follows:-

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1596. To Agree Budget/Precept for 2020/21 Financial Year (Contd)

COMMITTEE	EXPENDITURE	LESS INCOME	NET PRECEPT
Policy & Resources	173,835	9,616	164,219
Amenities	53,600	1,000	52,600
Civic Centre	42,080	32,500	9,580
Planning & Highways	18,000	4,456	13,544
TOTALS	287,515	47,572	£239,943

1597. TO CONSIDER YOUTH MAYOR/DEPUTY MAYOR FOR TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL

Following brief discussion it was proposed by Cllr O'Connor, seconded by Cllr D Judd and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk make investigations regarding what is involved in appointing a Youth Mayor and Deputy Mayor and the information be brought back to a future meeting.

1598. TO AGREE INSURANCE RENEWAL

The Town Clerk's report and renewal papers were considered and it was proposed by Cllr Page, seconded by Cllr Clarkson and unanimously **RESOLVED** to appoint Zurich Insurance on a 3 year long term agreement from February 2020 to February 2023, at a cost of £3,029.63 including IPT for the first year.

1599. REPORTS FROM:-

Mayor:- Cllr Sharkey advised that she had not attended any functions since the last meeting.

Deputy Mayor: Similarly, Cllr Brindley had also not attended any events.

District Councillors: Cllr O'Connor advised re a review of the Local Plan Part 2 and that Central Government is changing the housing numbers.

County Councillor: Cllr Smith was not in attendance.

Representatives on external bodies:-

Citizens Advice – Cllr Sharkey advised she had visited the Newhaven office and that it had been very busy and is a well used service.

Joint Action Group – Cllr Mills advised that at the last meeting they were informed that the shop at Ashington Gardens in Peacehaven had been robbed.

Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Gallagher asked that the Neighbourhood Plan be an agenda item at each Council meeting. She advised that Peacehaven Town Council had agreed to employ a Senior Projects Officer (planning and business development) and they would be able to assist with the Neighbourhood Plan. She also advised that 30 Masters Students from Brighton University will be doing papers on the Neighbourhood Plan and the reports are due in May.

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1599. Reports From (Contd):-

Representatives on external bodies (Contd):-

Neighbourhood Plan (Contd) - Finally Cllr Gallagher advised that there will be a business evening in Peacehaven at 6pm on 29th January which will be combined with the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Hill said there needs to be transparency regarding the Neighbourhood Plan as no one seems to know what is happening with the Co-op. Cllr O'Connor advised that there had been a bidding process and the bids were confidential, but that process has now ended. He advised the Co-op want to sell the land to a developer which is not a secret.

Saltdean Residents' Association – Cllr O'Connor advised that the community space will be limited if the lido refurbishments go ahead, however, the CIC need millions to do the work. The SRA will no longer print their newsletter.

Cllr Judd advised he and Cllr O'Connor have regular meetings with Stud Farm and it is helpful to have regular communication with the farm. However, things that are agreed at the meetings do not always happen.

1600. URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

Cllr Brindley advised that the Tye is covered in dog waste and following discussion, it was agreed that we will put an article in our newsletter. Cllr Robinson also said she will ask Julie Hickling of the Neighbourhood First to come to our next meeting as she was unable to attend the December meeting.

1601. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public during consideration of the following items pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reasons of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

The remaining members of the public present left the meeting at 9.32pm

Signed.....
Mayor, Cllr I Sharkey

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1602. TYE HLS REQUIREMENTS

a) Management Consultant

Cllr Robinson advised that management of the Tye needs specialist help to assist the Council in meeting the requirements of the HLS Agreement and also liaison with the Commoners. She and the Town Clerk had met with 3 companies and their reports and costs were considered by Councillors. Cllr Clarkson advised that the Tye involves a lot of time and causes stress for staff and is in full support of employing a management company.

Following discussion it was proposed by Cllr Robinson, seconded by Cllr Mills and unanimously **RESOLVED** to employ Savills in West Malling as per their Proposal at a cost of £140 per hour for Stuart Nicholls and £110 per hour for his colleague, the estimated costs associated with the various actions in the proposal from Stuart Nicholls being £2,240.00. It was also agreed for a one month notice period on either side to end the contract.

b) Meeting Requirements of HLS

The implications of the actions suggested by Natural England to remedy the failure to meet the specified targets in the HLS Agreement were noted. The most problematic would be daily checking of electric fencing on both the main area of the Tye and the 'E' piece, as well as renting and monitoring of a flock of sheep for grazing the 'E' piece. Volunteers will therefore be needed.

c) Maintaining Fence Line Round Edge of Tye

Following discussion regarding the merits of maintaining the fence surrounding the main area of the Tye it was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Judd and unanimously **RESOLVED** to maintain the fencing along the A259, Gorham Way and surrounding the Dew Pond only; other fencing/gates would not be maintained and if deterioration occurred it would be removed to make the area safe and finally any fencing adjoining neighbouring properties is to be maintained by the landowner and not ourselves. Town Clerk to obtain legal advice regarding our obligations.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.01 pm.

Signed.....
Mayor, Cllr I Sharkey

Next Council Meeting on 18th March 2020