

TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of a meeting of the **POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held on **Monday 12th November 2018** in Telscombe Civic Centre at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllrs T Armour *Deputy Mayor*, J Harris, B Page *Vice Chairman*, C Robinson, A Smith, J Wilkins & D Wright *Chairman*

Also Present: Stella Newman, Town Clerk & RFO (*minutes*)
Approximately 15 members of the public

The Chairman advised everyone present of the safety/fire procedures and the Council's filming policy.

1215. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public asked if agenda item 10 'Suggested formation of a Telscombe Tye Commons Community Group' could be brought forward to which the Chairman agreed.

Cathy Gallagher of the Saltdean Residents Association (SRA) advised she was there on behalf of the SRA who feel that a PSPO is not necessary. They have concerns regarding presence of sheep on the Tye, their welfare, finances and the whole purpose of the Tye. The PSPO has led to further information being made available and they are glad that everything is being reviewed. The group support agenda 10, 'Suggested formation of a Telscombe Tye Commons Community Group' and would be prepared to have a representative from the SRA in the group.

A member of the public advised that the cattle grid near bridleway 8 needs clearing and the surrounding soil is being washed away, revealing a sharp edge.

A member of the public asked Cllr Armour how many sheep attacks by dogs had been reported to the Police last year to which he did not answer. The resident again asked of the 81 attacks in 2017, how many were reported to the Police.

Cllr Smith advised he could understand they wanted correlation between the reports and actual deaths but advised that the attacks were not reported to the Police because they could not take any action; unless there is a suspect, it is pointless to report an attack. He asked what the person wanted to achieve so that the Council could assist.

A discussion ensued between members of the public present and they were told by the Chairman to cease the discussion as the Committee were trying to conduct their meeting, resulting in 2 members of the public leaving.

The resident re-iterated that she wanted to know how many attacks had been reported to the Police. *Cllr Smith replied very few.*

The Chairman advised that there have been a lot of anonymous allegations made and people have advised Councillors they have been intimidated and will not come to meetings which is a serious matter. He advised that there are several different options to the PSPO and it is down to the District Council to make a decision at the end of the consultation. Comments on social media have been inaccurate.

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1215. Public Question Time (Contd)

Another member of the public advised they had carried out an online survey which had received 500 responses and the only intimidation was from Stud Farm. She advised that some Councillors present had seen the online survey.

Cllr Page replied was it the ZoneZine online survey which he had seen and had 350 responses.

The member of the public replied yes, but there are now 500 responses. She then said that it is alleged there were 31 sheep deaths in 2017 and had asked Defra for a record of deaths, but due to new GDPR rules, Stud Farm will have to give permission, could she have that permission and if not why not?

The Chairman advised her to make a written request and then asked for one last question.

Another member of the public said that her garden backs onto the Tye and she has not seen anything and believes the deaths have been caused by something else. She said that in North Wales there are a lot more sheep and not so many deaths in a huge area.

Cllr Smith advised that the Tye is a small area of land surrounded by the sea and housing and there is therefore more contact between dog owners and sheep. Cllr Wright advised there is a high population of dogs in this area.

The SRA representative said that the Chairman had been speaking a lot and taken up some of the public question time and the Chairman agreed for one last question.

A member of the public asked if it was only the community flock that had been killed.

Cllr Wilkins advised it was a total of 31 sheep killed from both flocks.

Another member of the public said those figures were wrong as the information for the PSPO consultation said there were 31 ewes and 50 lamb deaths from the community flock only.

Another member of the public said she had information from Telscombe Town Council advising that the figures were for the community flock only.

The Chairman then advised he was drawing public question time to a close and asked Cllr Armour if he wasn't a Councillor would he look after the community flock for only £250 to which Cllr Armour replied 'it's a no brainer'.

The Chairman drew public question time to a close at 7.50pm.

1216. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllrs G Maskell and R Maskell due to annual leave and D Brindley due to family commitments. The reasons for absence were **agreed** by the Committee.

1217. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Armour declared an interest in agenda item 9 'Report in response to questions raised by Cllr C Robinson on the Community Flock.'

Some members of the public present felt that Cllr Wilkins should also declare an interest in this item. Cllr Armour advised that as he has shaky hands, he cannot complete paperwork for Stud Farm and therefore Cllr Wilkins does some for him voluntarily. As she has no pecuniary interest it was felt she did not need to declare an interest.



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1218. TO DISCUSS, APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 3rd SEPTEMBER 2018

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting and it was proposed by Cllr B Page who had chaired the meeting, seconded by Cllr J Harris and unanimously **RESOLVED** that they were a true record of the proceedings and were signed as correct by the Chairman, Cllr D Wright.

1219. TO DISCUSS, APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF THE GRANT SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 3rd SEPTEMBER 2018

Cllr B Page requested that the minutes of the meeting on 3rd September 2018 be accepted and the recommendations contained therein be adopted, seconded by Cllr Wilkins and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.

The Chairman, Cllr Wright, agreed for agenda item 10 to be discussed at this point.

1220. SUGGESTED FORMATION OF A TELSCOMBE TYE COMMONS COMMUNITY GROUP

Cllr Robinson advised that she recently had an informal meeting with Gaston Mallia, Editor and Director of ZoneZine online magazine; Cathy Gallagher Deputy Chair of Saltdean Resident's Association and Cllrs Brian Page and Ron Maskell at which she had suggested forming a steering group for the Tye which she was willing to chair. She felt that someone from Stud Farm should be involved. Cllr Page advised that it will not be a Council committee or sub-committee, just a group to suggest comments to the Council for consideration. Cllr Smith advised that they need to be mindful as they are complex land plots. Cllr Robinson advised she thinks it should be a small group and is happy to organise it. It was unanimously **AGREED** that the recommendation for Cllr Robinson to progress with this group formation be taken to full Council for approval.

1221. TO NOTE ACTION LIST

The points on the action list were noted as follows:-

Date of Meeting	Issue Detail	Action Owner	Update	Due Date
2 nd July 2018	Min 1196, p 2802 – Telscombe Tye PSPO update	SN	3 options of wording were agreed at an Extra-Ordinary Council meeting on 15 th August. These options will now be put forward by LewesDC to their cabinet meeting in September. – Agreed by LewesDC cabinet, now out to public consultation ending on 23rd November.	February 2019
3 rd Sept 2018	Min 1209, p 2835 – Community Flock Finances and Records	SN	Information requested by Cllr Robinson will be brought to meeting on 12 th November 2018	Nov 2018
3 rd Sept 2018	Min 1211, p 2836 – SDNP Scrub Clearance Disposal	SN	SDNP Ranger has commenced scrub clearance on cross dyke area of Tye, but may not finish until end of year. She has also cleared access onto the 'E' piece	January 2019

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1222. BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

It was noted that updates were due to be carried out shortly. Cllr Smith advised that the plan ends in 2019 and following losses, it had been agreed not to make the community flock up to 100 ewes for the next year.

1223. TO RECEIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE TO 30th SEPTEMBER 2018

The Committee's income and expenditure figures to the 30th September 2018, of £73,984 expenditure and £245,877 income were unanimously **agreed**.

1224. REPORT IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY CLLR C ROBINSON ON COMMUNITY FLOCK

Cllr Robinson's questions at the last meeting were answered as follows:-

1. Is there a signed partnership agreement between both parties and what are the heads of terms? (length of contract, break clause, welfare, etc)

No formal arrangement is in place. The reason for this is that there are no other suppliers of the service that we need, to be specific, to look after 100 ewes and their offspring on Telscombe Tye. Arrangements with Stud Farm came about in part because Cllr Tim Armour, who is the tenant farmer, has been willing to undertake this responsibility and the cost to the Council for this work amounts to £250 payable by a single cheque per year as a management fee. This is not actually paid to Tim Armour but to the shepherdess, Camilla Poulton. The business plan reference to this to '*Maintain a viable community flock of 100 Ewes and one Ram until such time that Councillors decide to discontinue the project*' denotes that both the farm and the Council have the ability to withdraw from the arrangement at any time. The costs to maintain the two flocks are subject to a rigorous process of invoice and cheques all of which are recorded by the Town Council and the farm. The costs feed into our profit and loss spreadsheet.

With a small number of exceptions, it should be noted that when lambs and/or ewes are sold at market, cheques are raised by the auction house and sent direct to the Town Council.

The project in terms of overall profit since the 2013 close of season has generated £13,500 which is directly fed back into supporting services for the residents.

2. Does the community flock have in their own right:

- a) CPH (County Parish Holding) Number*
- b) Flock Number*
- c) Movement Licence*
- d) Sheep identification*
- e) Flock holding register - supplied by Defra*

A printout taken from scanning eartags of the current community flock was provided showing the holding number, ear tag numbers and other information on the flock. It showed a total of 69 ewes.

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1224. Report In Response To Questions Raised By Cllr C Robinson On Community Flock (Contd)

f) Medicine book recording all medicines purchased and administered

Stud Farm had recently had a full day's inspection carried out by an Animal Health Inspector/Trading Standards Officer from Trading Standards and an APAHA Veterinary Inspector from the Animal Health and Plant Health Agency who are an Executive Agency of Defra. Both reports were produced and the Trading Standards Report confirmed that the 'veterinary medicines and records' were inspected and the information recorded was as required. The farm had received no adverse commentary in that Report or the report from Defra.

3. Profitability of the community flock – can the P&L account for 2016/2017 be presented to include stock, sale and loss of sheep, vets bills, sale of wool etc...

The profit and loss sheet was provided.

4. Welfare of the flock – in conjunction with the vet is there a yearly written health and welfare plan for the flock which include sufficient information to assess the basic output of the flock i.e. a record of lambing percentage and lambing records for each ewe

The previously mentioned Trading Standards report confirmed there were no issues to report on the welfare and management of the flock.

All the reports and documents listed above had been circulated to Councillors with the agenda and were available on the website for the public to view.

Cllr Robinson advised that all the new information was good and suggested it be put on the website. However, she did have a couple more questions. She asked to see the 2017 flock movements to see where the deaths had occurred. Cllr Wilkins advised she had a list of deaths from 2016/17 and 2017/18 which had been taken from diaries, but the new computerised data only started in 2018. Cllr Robinson then asked what colour the community flock's eartags were and she was advised red and she finally asked what happened to the fleece and wool. Cllr Armour had declared an interest in this agenda item and had not taken part in any discussion so far, but as he was the only one able to answer the question, the Chairman granted him permission to answer. He advised that wool is classed as waste so is subject to VAT and it is sold. Cllr Smith advised it is not worth any money. Cllr Smith then advised that the Council are not against dog walkers. A report by Abbeylands on the Tye made it clear that the Council needed to make money from the Tye. The decision had been made therefore to purchase a flock of sheep. The first experimental year had made £1,000 and the Council had therefore decided to continue with the flock which had to date made a lot of money, approximately 1-1.5%. Cllr Robinson advised it equates to approximately £4.50 per household. Cllr Smith asked the public if they wanted the flock or not or if the constant questions were a ruse to get rid of the flock. Cllr Robinson advised she did not think the sheep were as profitable as the Council make out and Cllr Page replied that an average of £2,250 had been made per year. Cllr Harris asked how the Council keep the grass down on the Tye and Cllr Wilkins responded that the meaning of the word Tye is land that animals graze. Cllr Smith then asked Cllr Robinson if she wanted the community flock and Cllr Robinson responded, yes continue for one more year and if it makes a profit again, then continue. Cllr Page responded that to make a profit the flock would need to be topped up otherwise it would dwindle away.

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1224. Report In Response To Questions Raised By Cllr C Robinson On Community Flock (Contd)

The Chairman concluded by thanking Stud Farm for their hard work and resultant good reports from Trading Standards and Defra vet, to Cllr Wilkins for updating the records of the flock, Cllr Page for number crunching and the Town Clerk for dealing with all the information.

1225. UPDATE RE ADDITIONAL SEATING ON THE TYE

The report from the Town Clerk regarding installation of a rustic log bench seat, rather than an actual log for sitting on was considered and it was proposed by Cllr A Smith, seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously **RECOMMENDED** to purchase a rustic log bench for the Tye to be placed near the cattle grid leading down into the Village at a maximum cost of £500. The South Downs National Park have confirmed this will be acceptable.

1226. TO CONSIDER DRAFT FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

Following a freedom of information request regarding the community flock ear tag numbers, a subsequent request for an internal review of the request had been received. Cllr Smith spoke with the Sussex Association of Local Councils who provided us with a standard Freedom of Information Policy. The draft policy was considered and it was proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously **RECOMMENDED** that the draft Policy be approved and taken to full Council for adoption.

1227. TO CONSIDER DRAFT INVESTMENT POLICY

Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments 3rd Edition hereafter known as ‘the Guidance’, which has been issued under section 15(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2003 requires local authorities to “have regard” to “such guidance as the Secretary of State may issue”.

Under the terms of the Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments 3rd Edition, from the 2018-19 financial year it is mandatory for any Parish Council expecting investments to exceed £100,000 at any time in the financial year to prepare an annual investment strategy which must be:

- approved by Full Council
- publically available on the Council website
- subject to review and renewal at least annually.

As Telscombe Town Council’s investments exceed the £100,000 limit a draft Policy was obtained by the Sussex Association of Local Councils. Following consideration it was proposed by Cllr A Smith, seconded by Cllr B Page and unanimously **RECOMMENDED** that the draft Policy be approved and taken to full Council for adoption.

1228. TO CONSIDER REQUEST FROM JOSIAH POVEY CHARITY TO NOMINATE TRUSTEES

The Town Clerk advised she had recently been approached by Revd Tim Mills who is the Chairman of The Rev Josiah Povey’s School Charity Trust. He had notified the Clerk that the Charity’s Governing Document states that the Nominative Trustees for the Charity should be appointed by Telscombe Town Council. As two Trustees had recently resigned, he re-



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1228. To Consider Request From Josiah Povey Charity To Nominate Trustees (Contd)

requested that Telscombe Town Council appoint new Trustees. The document also states that ‘the person appointed may be but need not be a member of the Council. The Town Clerk had researched information from the Charity Commission regarding appointing Trustees to a Charity and after consideration of the information and the Town Clerk’s full report it was proposed by Cllr B Page, seconded by Cllr J Wilkins and unanimously **RECOMMENDED** that the Charity be requested to remove the two previously mentioned requirements from their Governing Document being (a) the Council appoint 2 Nominative Trustees and (b) that ‘the Trustees may be but need not be a member of the Council.’ This removes any commitment from the Council and it will therefore have nothing to do with the Josiah Povey Charity. This recommendation will be taken to full Council for approval.

1229. NATURAL ENGLAND’S COASTAL ACCESS REPORT CONSULTATION

Telscombe Town Council had been invited by Natural England as someone with relevant interest in the land, to have an opportunity to make a representation and/or objection to the Secretary of State about proposals for improved access to the coast between Shoreham-by-Sea and Eastbourne. The proposals form part of a programme to establish a continuous walking route around England’s coastline. As maps and details of the proposed route were provided by Natural England earlier in the year and agreed by Councillors at a meeting in March and at a subsequent meeting in July it had been agreed for the land inward of the path to be agreed as Landward Coastal Margin, it was unanimously **RECOMMENDED** not to make any further comments.

1230. URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING

None.

1231. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting 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 meeting was adjourned at 8.33pm for a comfort break and re-convened at 8.40pm.

1232. TO DISCUSS, APPROVE & SIGN CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE EMPLOYMENT SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING ON 24th SEPTEMBER 2018

Cllr A Smith requested that the minutes of the meeting on 24th September 2018 be accepted and the recommendations contained therein be adopted, seconded by Cllr B Page and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted. The minutes were signed by Cllr A Smith, the Committee Chairman.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Signed
Chairman