

# TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of a meeting of the **POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held on **Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019** in Telscombe Civic Centre at 7.30 pm.

**Present:** Cllrs T Armour *Deputy Mayor*, J Harris, G Maskell, R Maskell, C Robinson, A Smith, J Wilkins & D Wright *Chairman*

**Also Present:** Stella Newman, Town Clerk & RFO (*minutes*)  
Approximately 20 members of the public

The Chairman advised everyone present to keep the fire exit ways clear during the meeting.

## **1233. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Laurence O'Connor advised that he had raised the query over agenda item 9, the Freedom of Information Policy and said he wanted to have best practice not merely a satisfactory policy. Regarding agenda item 10, the draft Service Level Agreement for the Community Flock Upkeep, Mr O'Connor raised several points as follows:- (a) does the agreement meet Lewes District Council's Lawyer's requirements, has anyone checked?; (b) why does it not state when the flock will be on and off the Tye; (c) why does it not state the level of husbandry and requirements of Defra – it should contain specific husbandry requirements; (d) why is there no mention of the flock tagging and (e) why is the flock continuing?

Another member of the public interrupted and said they thought the Council should have a different person looking after the community flock who is better qualified.

Laurence O'Connor asked when he would get an answer to his questions.  
*Cllr Wright advised the SLA would be discussed later in the meeting.*

Another member of the public said she had several questions she wanted to ask about the Public Space Protection Order Consultation as she felt that the statement put out did not explain enough. She then went on to read out the questions. She was advised that the Consultation and subsequent statement was issued by Lewes District Council, so unfortunately we could not answer her queries and that if she left her details, the Town Clerk would find out who at Lewes District Council she should refer her questions to and forward her the contact details.

Another member of the public asked if the wording of the proposed signs was just another way of imposing a PSPO and said that the wording referred to the sheep being pregnant so would not apply all year round.

*Cllr Wright replied that signs would be discussed later in the meeting under agenda item 15, but they will only be put up at the relevant times.*

Another member of the public had a question regarding agenda item 13, Natural England's recommendations re the HLS Agreement on the Tye. He wondered why the Council was considering fencing 10% of the Tye for wildflowers as he thought it would be cheaper to take the sheep off the Tye.

*Cllr Robinson advised she would take this to the Tye Commons Community Group.*

*Cllr Smith said the Council needs to carry out Natural England's recommendations.*

The member of public replied that Natural England had given two options.

Another member of the public asked if the Council was changing the terms of the HLS agreement and it had already been established that the Council cannot fence the 'E' piece.  
*Cllr Smith responded that the Council is trying to work with Natural England's recommendations and compromises may need to be made.*

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## **1233. Public Question Time (Contd)**

Another member of the public advised that Natural England use the Sussex Pony Grazing and Conservation Group who have Exmoor ponies that graze land such as the 'E' piece and she thought they would be ideal to graze the area. It was agreed that this be referred to the Tye Commons Community Group.

Public question time had run over by nearly 10 minutes, but the Chairman agreed for a final couple of questions.

A member of the public said she had concerns regarding the measurability and accountability of the Service Level Agreement and asked where the wording had come from.

*The Town Clerk responded that she had been asked to draw up a draft agreement at the last Council meeting. She had researched SLA agreements and drawn up the draft document. She explained that it was purely a draft and the duration of the agreement, wording etc had not been agreed but had been put in as a basis for a working group to work on.*

Another member of the public said he had questions regarding the PSPO.

*Cllr R Maskell advised the decision regarding the PSPO had been taken by Cllr Isabelle Linington at Lewes District Council and he should direct his questions to her.*

The Chairman brought public question time to a close at 7.55pm.

## **1234. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Cllr D Brindley due to a prior engagement and Cllr B Page due to illness. These reasons for absence were **agreed** by the Committee.

## **1235. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Armour declared an interest in agenda items 10 to 16.

Cllrs Smith and R Maskell declared an interest in agenda item 14.

Following a query from a member of the public, Cllr Wilkins declared an interest in agenda items 10 to 16.

## **1236. TO DISCUSS, APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 12<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2018**

Under minute 1215 Public Question Time on page 2858, in the paragraph before last which started 'discussion ensued between members of the public present' Cllr Robinson requested that the identity of the 2 members of the public who left should be put in and also that one of them swore when leaving. The Town Clerk advised that she had not heard any adverse language used and it was not relevant who the members of the public that left were. Committee members and the Chairman **agreed** with the Town Clerk and the minute was not altered.

Cllr Robinson then said that under minute 1220 on page 2860, it was not herself that had suggested forming a steering group but Cllr R Maskell. Cllr Maskell confirmed this and the Town Clerk altered the word 'she' to Cllr R Maskell.

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## 1236. To Discuss, Approve & Sign Minutes Of The Meeting Held On Monday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2018 (Contd)

The minutes of the meeting were then proposed by Cllr A Smith, seconded by Cllr J Wilkins and unanimously **RESOLVED** that they were a true record of the proceedings and were signed as correct by the Chairman, Cllr D Wright, who also initialled the amendment under minute number 1220 on page 2860.

## 1237. 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 <sup>nd</sup> 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 <sup>th</sup> August. These options will now be put forward by LewesDC to their cabinet meeting in September. – <a href="#">Agreed by LewesDC cabinet, now out to public consultation ending on 23<sup>rd</sup> November.</a> <i>Update on agenda for 21<sup>st</sup> January's meeting.</i>	February 2019
12 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2018	Min 1220, p 2860 – formation of a Telscombe Tye Commons Community Group	CR	Recommendation at P&R meeting on 12.11.18 to form Tye group was taken to Council for approval on 21.11.18 and approved. First meeting took place on 10 <sup>th</sup> January. Update from Cllr Robinson has been placed on agenda for 21 <sup>st</sup> January's meeting.	n/a
12 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2018	Min 1225, p 2863 – additional seating on the Tye	BB	Estimates are being sought for a rustic log bench.	April 2019
12 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2018	Min 1226, p 2863 – to consider draft FOI Policy	SN	Draft policy was approved and taken to Council for adoption. Following query from member of public, policy not adopted and clarification sought from SALC. Update on agenda for 21 <sup>st</sup> January's meeting.	April 2019
12 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2018	Min 1227, p 2863 – to consider draft Investment Policy	SN	Draft policy was approved, taken to Council and adopted on 21.11.18 with a review due in 3 years.	
12 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2018	Min 1228, p 2863 – to consider request from Josiah Povey charity to nominate trustees	SN	Recommendation at P&R meeting on 12.11.18 to remove all requirements of TTC on the charity Governing Document was resolved at Council meeting on 21.11.18. Charity Chairman notified by Town Clerk. Awaiting confirmation that request has been actioned.	April 2019

## 1238. BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

It was noted that some updates may be required following this evening's meeting.

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## **1239. TO RECEIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE TO 30<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2018**

The Committee's income and expenditure figures to the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018, of £97,011 expenditure and £254,263 income were unanimously **agreed**. Cllr Armour asked if we had received any income under budget head 1053 HLS grant income and the Town Clerk informed him that Natural England had requested clarification on some points which had delayed the payment being made.

## **1240. TO CONSIDER COMPUTER CLOUD BACK-UP**

Following the internal auditor's visit and his suggestion that the Council's computer back-up system be remotely tested, it transpires that the reciprocal back-up arrangement that had been in place with Peacehaven Town Council had now ended as they had changed their IT support company. We only therefore have on-site back-up, but it is recommended that Council's also have off-site back-up. Our IT support company provided details of a cloud data centre where it is stored in the UK and is ISO compliant. The cost is £49 plus VAT per month. It was therefore proposed by Cllr R Maskell, seconded by Cllr G Maskell and unanimously **RECOMMENDED** that Northstar IT be instructed to provide cloud back-up at £49 per month plus VAT on a monthly rolling service.

## **1241. UPDATE ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY**

The draft Freedom of Information Policy, the template having been provided by the Sussex Association of Local Councils (SALC), had been referred back to the Policy & Resources Committee from the last Council meeting following a query from a member of the public. SALC were subsequently contacted about the template they provided and advised that it is intended as a basis for a Council's own needs. Following discussion it was proposed by Cllr A Smith, seconded by Cllr R Maskell and **RECOMMENDED** by a majority of Councillors that the draft Policy be approved with no alterations and be taken to full Council for ultimate adoption. Cllr Robinson abstained.

Cllr Armour had declared an interest in the next agenda item as he has a pecuniary interest and left the room at 8.10pm.

## **1242. TO CONSIDER DRAFT SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT FOR COMMUNITY FLOCK UPKEEP**

Following a review into the arrangements for the management of the Community Flock by Lewes District Council's Senior Lawyer, it was agreed at full Council on 19<sup>th</sup> December, that the Town Clerk should draw up a draft Service Level Agreement to be brought back to this Committee for consideration/amendment/alteration.

Cllr Smith advised that the Council needs to differentiate between Mr Tim Armour as a Councillor and a farmer. Normally the Council would carry out a tender process, but no-one else will look after the community flock for £250. He also advised that the tenancy at Stud Farm is up for renewal and Mr Tim Armour will no longer be the tenant, but his family will be taking over. It was noted that this is only a draft policy and a basis for the Committee to work from. It was **RECOMMENDED** by a majority of Councillors (Cllr Wilkins had declared an interest and did not vote) that a working group consisting of Cllrs Brindley, Harris and Robinson, as well as the Town Clerk make alterations/amendments to the draft Policy and bring an updated draft back to the next Policy & Resources Committee for consideration.

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## **1243. TO CONSIDER WORK TO ASHURST AVENUE STEPS UP TO THE TYE**

The steps on one of the pathways leading from Ashurst Avenue to the Tye were crumbling and estimates obtained for their repair. The estimates were considered and it was proposed by Cllr A Smith, seconded by Cllr C Robinson and **RECOMMENDED** by a majority of Councillors (Cllr Wilkins had declared an interest and did not vote) that EH Treecare be instructed to carry out the works in the sum of £920 plus VAT.

Cllr Armour returned to the meeting at 8.16pm

## **1244. TO CONSIDER CLEARANCE OF CATTLE GRID AT BRIDLEWAY 8 GATE**

It was noted that the cattle grid at bridleway 8 locked gate needed clearing. Following discussion it was proposed by Cllr A Smith, seconded by Cllr C Robinson and **RECOMMENDED** by a majority of Councillors (Cllrs Armour and Wilkins had declared an interest and did not vote) that the previous contractor who had cleaned the cattle grids be instructed to clean out the grid. The Committee Chairman and Town Clerk have authority to approve works up to a maximum of £1,000, although it was anticipated the cost would be far less than that.

## **1245. TO CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS FROM NATURAL ENGLAND RE HLS AGREEMENT ON THE TYE**

The recommendations from Natural England were considered and it was proposed by Cllr A Smith, seconded by Cllr C Robinson and **RECOMMENDED** by a majority of Councillors (Cllrs Armour and Wilkins had declared an interest and did not vote) that the following recommendations be carried out:-

HK15 Main Tye - An area of the Tye, agreed with the SDNP Ranger and selected as the most likely area to succeed, is temporarily fenced off (using the Commons Act exemptions which allow 10% of the common to be fenced, to keep the sheep out, for up to 6 months of the year) during the summer and which would be very flower rich. This may require the purchase of some seed by the Town Council to re-establish flowering plants.

HK7 'E' Piece - Graze the small area of grassland that is remaining in the 'E' piece (again temporary fencing can be erected under the exemptions of the Commons Act, but this time to fence the stock in).

Allocate some of the funding in the agreement to reducing the scrub levels on the 'E' piece – I would recommend cutting back the bramble which is infiltrating to enable the grazed area to be expanded and to make the area safe for sheep to graze.

## **1246. UPDATE ON PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER FOR TELSCOMBE TYE**

The statement issued by Lewes District Council following the end of the public consultation was noted as follows:-

*'Having considered the findings from the recent consultation on the Telscombe Tye, the council will be not be introducing a Public Spaces Protection Order at this time.*



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## **1246. Update On Public Space Protection Order For Telscombe Tye (Contd)**

*However, the situation will be kept under close and constant review. In liaison with Sussex Police, inspections and patrols by the council's Neighbourhood First team will be increased at the start of the lambing season.*

*If at any point new evidence of attacks on sheep is found, the council will consider introducing a PSPO as a matter of urgency.*

*The council will also look at increasing signage at access points onto Telscombe Tye and community information about the countryside code.'*

It was further noted that Cllr I Linington had made the decision about the PSPO.

## **1247. TO CONSIDER SIGNAGE FOR TELSCOMBE TYE**

Cllr Smith advised that a poster put up at Landport Bottom had been the basis for the Council's draft poster. It was proposed by Cllr R Maskell, seconded by Cllr A Smith and **RECOMMENDED** by a majority of Councillors (Cllrs Armour and Wilkins had declared an interest and did not vote) that more permanent signage be purchased as per the draft, rather than using laminated signs. It was noted that there are 25 gates but the Council has an earmarked reserve of £1,800 to cover Tye signage.

## **1248. TELSCOMBE TYE COMMONS COMMUNITY GROUP UPDATE**

Cllr Robinson advised that 20 residents had attended the first meeting and a committee of 12 members had been agreed. The group will meet at the Civic Centre on the third Thursday of each month. The group's Terms of Reference have been drafted and once they are formally agreed, Cllr Robinson will forward a copy to the Town Clerk for information.

## **1249. URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING**

Cllr Robinson requested an up-to-date profit and loss spreadsheet for the community flock. The Town Clerk will do this as soon as she can.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Signed .....  
Chairman