

# TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of a meeting of **TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL** held on **Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021** at 7.30pm by remote transmission.

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

**Also present:** Stella Newman, Town Clerk & RFO (*minutes*)

The Mayor welcomed everyone present.

## **1744. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public present.

## **1745. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllrs Brindley and Cheta were not present but had not sent apologies.

## **1746. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN RELATION TO MATTERS ON THE AGENDA**

None.

## **1747. TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2020**

It was proposed by Cllr Judd, seconded by Cllr Gallagher and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020 were correct and were signed by the Mayor, Cllr Sharkey.

## **1748. TO RECEIVE MINUTES FROM THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES:-**

### **(a) Planning & Highways – 23<sup>rd</sup> November and 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

Cllr Harris proposed that the minutes of the meetings on 23<sup>rd</sup> November and 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020 be accepted and the recommendations adopted, seconded by Cllr Judd and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.

### **(b) Policy & Resources – 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

Cllr Clarkson proposed that the minutes of the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020 be accepted and the recommendations be adopted, seconded by Cllr Harris and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.

## **1749. TO NOTE ACTION LIST**

Date of Meeting	Issue Detail	Action Owner	Update	Due Date
15.1.20	Min 1597, p 3117 – To consider youth mayor/deputy mayor for Telscombe	SN	As a result of pressure of work due to Covid-19 & lack of staff, no progress made on this to date. Suggest review at Annual Council next year.	May 2021

# TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



18.3.20	Min 1615, p 3158 – Climate Change working group	SN	Joint meetings continue, next one 21.1.21. TTC to have their own separate one before then.	Ongoing
15.7.20	Min 1667, p 3217 – cycle route from P/H to Telscombe	LO’C	Update on this agenda to advise being taken over by Planning & Highways Committee	Complete
15.7.20	Min 1668, p 3217 - Update on clifftop fencing	SN & working group	2 Zoom meetings held with working group and Mitchells & Butlers representatives. TTC quotes obtained higher than M&B’s – revised quotes awaited from M&B as LDC confirmed we can have their fencing FOC. <i>M&amp;B staff furloughed, awaiting response on their return.</i>	March 21
18.11.20	Min 1713, p 3287 - Provision of Libraries	LO’C, IS, CCIk	Working group to work with PeacehavenTC to take this forward. Update on this agenda.	Jan 2021
18.11.20	Min 1715, p 3288 – draft budget percentage increase notification	SN & working group	Tax base info received from LDC and working group finalised figures. Item placed on this agenda for agreement of budget and precept.	Jan 2021
16.12.20	Min 1737, p 3314 – to note CIL monies received & identify potential projects	SN	As agreed, an item is being placed on each Committee agenda to identify potential projects, with suggestions to come back to full Council	May 2021
16.12.20	Min 1738, p 3325 – to agree new photocopier lease	SN	Town Clerk has contacted Copier King and is awaiting contract documentation.	March 2021

The action list was noted.

## **1750. TO APPROVE PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS FOR DECEMBER 2020**

Payments for December of £17,710.36 and receipts of £2,723.72 were proposed as correct by Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr Clarkson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that they be approved and were signed by the Mayor, Cllr Sharkey.

## **1751. UPDATE ON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Cllr Gallagher advised that the draft plan is currently being written. It is concentrating on a sustainable town with a good quality of life and a re-focussed town centre. She advised that a draft greenspaces report has also been written. Another grant of just under £5,000 has been applied for and approved which will help pay the consultant’s costs. The survey sent out in the post closes at the end of January and so far Telscombe has had approximately 50 completed forms returned.

# TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



## **1752. TO AGREE AMENDMENTS TO NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN (NDP) STEERING GROUP'S TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Cllr Gallagher explained that the amendment is to item 8.2 which has increased the Steering Group membership to 10 – it was previously 6. It was proposed by Cllr Judd, seconded by Cllr Harris and unanimously **RESOLVED** to agree the amended Terms of Reference.

## **1753. TO AGREE BUDGET & PRECEPT FOR 2021/22**

The Town Clerk advised that the tax base for Telscombe Town Council had reduced by 40 which meant that even if the precept requirement had remained the same, the Council tax for a band D property would have risen. The Town Clerk confirmed that the working group had met on several occasions and drawn up the draft detailed figures which had been circulated. The Town Clerk also advised that some budget heads had been split to show more accurately what funds were being spent on, for example 'phone, fax and internet' and been split to 2 headings being phone and internet and the fax element removed as we no longer have this facility.

Cllr Page confirmed that the working group had gone through the figures in detail, line by line.

It was therefore proposed by Cllr Page, seconded by Cllr Mills and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the budget requirement and precept for the 2021-22 financial year be set at £248,733, resulting in the precept increasing by £8,790 (3.7%) and Council Tax increasing for a Band D property by £5.05 (5.3%) to £99.75. The budget and precept figures breakdown were agreed as follows:-

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>LESS INCOME</b>	<b>NET</b>
Policy & Resources	180,620	8,066	172,554
Amenities	46,500	1,550	44,950
Civic Centre	41,500	21,415	20,085
Planning & Highways	15,300	4,156	11,144
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>283,920</b>	<b>35,187</b>	<b>248,733</b>

The Earmarked Reserves will be looked at nearer year end and agreed at the March full Council meeting.

## **1754. TO NOTE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL REPORT AND SET COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES FOR 2021/22**

The Town Clerk's report advised that an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) had been convened by Lewes District Council early last year to review the Councillor allowances for Parish/Town Councils. A Parish/Town Council may choose to pay their members an allowance to recognise the time and effort they put into their parish duties. There is no obligation to pay such an allowance but if they do, they should have regard to the recommendation from the IRP. The IRP's report recommended that:-

# TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



## **1754. To Note Independent Remuneration Panel Report and Set Councillor Allowances For 2021/22 (Contd)**

- \* Parish/Town Councils who feel that a basic allowance would be appropriate should be able to pay an amount of up to 15% of the basic allowance of Lewes District Council. This equates to £489 per annum and is subject to indexation. In accordance with statutory regulations this should only be paid to Councillors who have been elected and not those co-opted.
- \* Parish/Town Councils who feel that a chair's allowance is appropriate should be able to pay an amount up to 30% of the basic allowance for Lewes District Council. This equates to £978 per annum.
- \* Parish/Town Councils should pay travel and subsistence allowances in line with those agreed as part of the members allowances schedule for the District Council when they travel out of the Council area either to visit another Council or to attend conferences or seminars.
- \* The indexation of allowances should be in line with annual staff salary increase when applicable.
- \* A Councillor may choose not to receive all or part of any allowance to which they would otherwise be entitled. To do so they must give written notice to the proper officer of the Parish/Town Council.
- \* The IRP recommends that Parish/Town Councils publicise the allowances in accordance with Section 5, Paragraph 30 of the Regulations (SI2003 No 1021) as detailed on page 4 of the IRP report.
- \* Any changes must take place from the start of a financial year and can be backdated to April 2020 or start in April 2021.

Having regard to the current economic climate due to Covid-19 it was proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Judd and unanimously **RESOLVED** as follows:-

- \* There is no back-dated increase for 2020/21 and the allowance remains at £250.
- \* The allowance also remains unaltered for the 2021/22 financial year at £250 per Councillor, but the allowance is reviewed again later in the year in accordance with the IRP's recommendations and taken into account when setting the budget for 2022/23.
- \* The Mayor's Civic allowance remains at £1,500.
- \* The allowance continues to be paid in one lump sum at the end of each financial year in March.
- \* Travel and subsistence payments can be claimed if a Councillor chooses to in accordance with the rates in the IRP's report.
- \* The allowance will be publicised as required in the IRP's report.
- \* The Council does not draw up a Members' Allowance Policy at this stage.

## **1755. TO AGREE INSURANCE RENEWAL**

Councillors had read the policy Schedule and Policy Changes which had been circulated with the agenda. It was noted that this is year 2 of a 3-year long-term agreement. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Harris and unanimously **RESOLVED** to renew the insurance at a cost of £2,998.13 which included insurance premium tax of £321.22 with Zurich Municipal.

# TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



## **1756. TO APPROVE AND ADOPT DRAFT GRIEVANCE POLICY**

Councillors noted that a draft Policy had been drawn up based on the SALC template. It had been reviewed and agreed at the last Policy & Resources Committee with an amendment to the first sentence on item 5 to read 10 working days instead of 5 working days. It was therefore proposed by Cllr O'Connor, seconded by Cllr Page and unanimously **RESOLVED** to adopt the Grievance Policy with a review due in 3 years.

## **1757. PROVISION OF LIBRARIES UPDATE**

Cllr O'Connor advised that a meeting recently took place with East Sussex County Council (ESCC) representatives and the library needs and provision were discussed. Cllr O'Connor advised that ESCC had a population of 14,000 recorded, but including Telscombe it is nearer 23,000, however, ESCC take other factors into consideration. Apparently ESCC agreed there is a need in this area, but have not budgeted for this going forward so there is a possibility the Towns could be temporarily left with no library provision. It is essential we try and get library provision in the re-development of the Meridian site and a space of approximately 600 square metres is required to form a community hub, not the 150 square meters that was proposed a little while ago when the library was going to be moved into the old newsagent/post office space. Cllr Smith advised that libraries are not the same as they used to be and there are online facilities and e-books, but we do want local library facilities. He advised that the library service of ESCC are tenants of the Meridian Centre and only considered moving into smaller premises when the owners were proposing a rent increase, but as this was reversed the library remained where it is now.

## **1758. CYCLE ROUTE UPDATE**

East Sussex County Council's (ESCC's) invitation for us to participate in their Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan consultation was discussed at our Planning & Highways Committee meeting in November and is now being taken over by that Committee. It was agreed to form a joint working group with Peacehaven Town Council and Cllr O'Connor was agreed as a member of the group. Following a working group meeting, a joint response was submitted to ESCC. Cllr O'Connor advised that we are waiting for an update from ESCC.

## **1759. UPDATE ON BUSINESS PLAN**

Regarding Part 1, No 7, It was noted that the tree planting scheme is not progressing due to the amount of underground services and ESCC have been asked if bushes or wildflowers could be used instead. A response from them is awaited. Individual committees are reviewing the plan at meetings and agreeing the amendments to be done.

## **1760. REPORTS FROM:-**

There were limited reports as follows:-

County Councillor: Cllr Smith detailed information from a Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources Report that had recently been published online. ESCC have lost £138m from the budget since 2010, but this is not an annual figure and over a decade equates to past £1b of lost public funding.

# TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



**1760. Reports From:-**

County Councillor (Contd):-

Covid is destroying the economy and the ability for local businesses to pay business rates. Cllr Smith also advised that a reform is needed for Adult Social Care. Figures regarding unemployment and the furlough scheme support are available in the report.

Representatives on external bodies:-

Crimestoppers – Cllr Harris advised that they are having Zoom meetings and unfortunately domestic violence is on the increase.

Joint Action Group – Cllr Mills advised that 2 drug dealers in the Seahaven area have been arrested in relation to 19 charges.

Seahaven Mascot – Cllr Mills advised this is a Police based meeting. There have been a lot of break-ins and 3 people have now been tagged whilst waiting to go to Court.

**1761. URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA**

Cllr Robinson conveyed her thanks to the Town Clerk and her husband for going out during the Christmas break and sorting out the damage to bus shelters and a tree in Chatsworth Park following Storm Bella. The Town Clerk acknowledged the thanks and advised it highlights that as we do not have our own grounds maintenance staff, as Town Clerk it was her responsibility to make sure everything was safe. However, this needs to be looked at and something put in place in case anything like this happens in the future.

Cllr Clarkson advised that he has had a complaint from some elderly residents that are having trouble walking through the park due to mud and detritus, mainly at the northern end near the memory garden. The Town Clerk advised that it is in the grounds maintenance contract to sweep pathways, but she couldn't remember how often. There was discussion regarding this and it was unanimously **agreed** to organise contractors to clear the pathways in question and the Town Clerk should authorise the work if it is within her delegated spending power.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

**Signed – Cllr I Sharkey, Mayor .....**

*Date of next Council Meeting – 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021*