

TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of a meeting of the **POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held at Telscombe Civic Centre on Monday 12th September 2022 at 7.30 pm.

Committee Members Present: C Clarkson, C Gallagher *Chairman*, L O'Connor, B Page, C Robinson *Vice Chairman* & I Sharkey

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

A two minutes silence was held at the beginning of the meeting in honour of the late HM Queen Elizabeth II and Councillors and Officers wore black armbands as a mark of respect.

1624. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present. However, a written question had been received by the Town Clerk from someone who was concerned regarding the condition of the gates and fencing on the Tye and the safety aspect regarding escaping sheep. It was noted that agenda item 17 was regarding the latest Tye inspection report and whether any repairs were required. It was therefore agreed to update the resident with respect to any decision(s) made following discussion of that agenda item.

1625. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Judd for health reasons, and Cllr Cheta as he was working away. These reasons were accepted by the Committee. Cllr Brindley was absent but had not sent apologies.

1626. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN RELATION TO MATTERS ON THE AGENDA

None.

1627. TO APPROVE AND SIGN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11th JULY 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2022 were proposed as correct by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and unanimously **RESOLVED** that they were a true record of the proceedings and were signed as correct by the Chairman, Cllr Gallagher.

1628. TO NOTE ACTION LIST

The actions detailed on the list were noted as follows:-

Date of Meeting	Issue Detail	Action Owner	Update	Due Date
8.3.21	Min 1472, p 3366 – unregistered land on Telscombe Tye	SN	Registration in hand for area at Tye 'E' piece. <i>BB submitted documents to Land Registry – they advised could take up to 18 months.</i>	Sept 2022

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1628. To Note Action List (Contd)

Date of Meeting	Issue Detail	Action Owner	Update	Due Date
7.3.22	Min 1584, p 3613 – Update following meeting with Stud Farm and to agree actions	SN	A letter sent to Stud Farm and a response awaited, along with a date they are available for a further meeting with Councillors. <i>No response received from farm re a meeting. Will chase.</i>	See new agenda item
9.5.22	Min 1606, p 3655 – To agree proof for Tye information boards	SN	Suggested amendments at last meeting undertaken & proofs agreed by Committee via email. <i>Boards now received and to be installed shortly.</i>	Complete
9.5.22	Min 1607 Urgent Matters, p 3655 – Tye fencing	SN	Tye fencing – Town Clerk to obtain estimates for fencing repair behind Highview Road north properties. <i>Yet to be undertaken</i>	January 2023
9.5.22	Confidential Min 1608, p 3656	SN	Town Clerk awaiting a response. <i>Response received.</i>	See new agenda item
11.7.22	Min 1614, p 3696 – Discuss & agree sheep grazing numbers on Tye	SN	Letter recently written to Stud Farm reiterating limit to 252 sheep inc lambs in total & advising TTC seeking legal advice. Solicitors contacted re enforcement of sheep numbers.	Complete See new agenda item
11.7.22	Min 1618, p 3697 – business plan update	SN	Strategic review undertaken and V 2.5 agreed at full Council on 20.7.22	Complete
11.7.22	Min 1619, p 3697 – To agree Tye cutting estimate	SN	Cutting carried out, but extra 26 bales disposed of = 9 tonnes @ £50, total £450.00	Complete
11.7.22	Min 1620, p 3697 – Update on Tye objectives	SN	Meeting held with consultant & working group.	See new agenda item
11.7.22	Min 1621, p 3697 – Urgent matters Tye sign & fencing problem reported by Cllr Robinson. Cllr Gallagher asked for Tye reports to be taken to Committee	SN SN/ ME	New please shut the gate signs put on gate 2 and resident of Hamsey Road written to asking to reinstate damaged Tye fencing behind their property following their boundary fence works. Latest report added to this agenda.	Complete See new agenda item



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1629. TO AGREE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE TO 31st JULY 2022

The Town Clerk's report detailing any significant differences between budget and actual spend figures, along with the full income and expenditure list detailing the current budget lines for the Committee and Earmarked Reserves were noted. Cllr Robinson thanked the Town Clerk for getting an increased rate on the Council's investment monies. It was unanimously **RECOMMENDED** that the actual total year to date figures to 31st July 2022 for the Committee of £131,424 income and expenditure of £56,513 be **agreed** as correct.

1630. BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

The updated version 2.5 of the Business Plan was noted by the Committee. It was unanimously **RECOMMENDED** to make the following amendments to Section II relating to the Policy & Resources Committee:-

Item 2 – Amend the activity to read ‘review the TMP once Tye objectives and which agreement to progress with is in place.’

Item 3 – To add in ‘to consider Tye fencing replacement.’

1631. TO REVIEW THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct was due its 3-year review. The Town Clerk explained that she had checked with ESALC and they advised that NALC currently endorse the Local Government Association Code of Conduct which was approved in 2020 and updated on 19th January and 17th May 2021. She had therefore based the draft model on that version. Following deliberation of the draft it was proposed by Cllr Page, seconded by Cllr Clarkson and **RECOMMENDED** that the draft Code of Conduct be agreed with the addition of a sentence after ‘best practice 15’ saying ‘Some of these best practices apply to principal authorities only.’ The amended draft will be taken to the next full Council meeting and recommended for adoption.

1632. TO REVIEW THE CO-OPTION POLICY

The Co-option Policy was due its 3-year review. The draft model was considered which included a couple of minor amendments as follows:- No 5 to read – ‘*Candidates will be invited to attend the Full Council meeting at which co-option will be considered and will be sent an agenda of the meeting.*’ No 6 - a penultimate paragraph be added ‘*Any newly co-opted member will be provided with a welcome pack and invited to attend an induction/training session with the Town Clerk and/or other officers. This should take place as soon as possible.*’

It was proposed by Cllr O'Connor, seconded by Cllr Clarkson and **RECOMMENDED** that the draft Co-option Policy be agreed and taken to the next full Council meeting for adoption.

1633. TO REVIEW THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

The Equal Opportunities Policy was due for its 3-year review. The Town Clerk advised that it had previously been called Equal Opportunities Statement, but this had been changed to Equal Opportunities Policy. She also detailed some amendments that had been made to the Policy which included removal of the previous No 2 as it modelled No 1, removal of number 5 and addition of a new heading ‘Breaches.’ The draft model was considered and it was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Sharkey and **RECOMMENDED** that the draft Equal Opportunities Policy be agreed and taken to the next full Council meeting for adoption.



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1634. TO REVIEW THE MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

The Media & Communications Policy was due for its 3-year review and no amendments were suggested. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Robinson and **RECOMMENDED** that the draft Media & Communications Policy be agreed and taken to the next full Council meeting for adoption.

1635. TO REVIEW FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Financial Regulations were due their annual review. The draft model was considered with the only amendment being to Number 2.2 to remove the wording 'other than the Mayor.' It was therefore proposed by Cllr Robinson, seconded by Cllr Page and **RECOMMENDED** that the amended draft Financial Regulations be agreed and taken to the next full Council meeting for adoption.

1636. TO REVIEW COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BETWEEN 1st APRIL AND 31st AUGUST 2022

Councillors noted that 79% of complaints received between 1st April and 31st August were resolved within 7 days and that 21% were non TTC related. A separate sheet detailing the non TTC related complaints was also noted. Cllr Sharkey asked how we knew if complaints had been resolved satisfactorily. The Town Clerk confirmed that we use the agreed 'Enquiry & Feedback Mechanism' whereby we acknowledge receipt within 1 working day and reply within 10 working days. Follow-ups may be necessary and they are diarised for further 10 working day periods and the complainant is kept up-to-date of actions being taken. Information is allocated a complaint number and entered onto a spreadsheet detailing every action taken, along with the dates and it is not closed-off until it has been resolved. Cllr Robinson asked what the 3 complaints that have been outstanding for between 91-180 days were and the Town Clerk advised she would look these up and email the details to Committee members.

1637. TO CONSIDER REGISTERING THE TYE AS A FILMING LOCATION

It was proposed by Cllr Robinson, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and **RECOMMENDED** not to register the Tye as a filming location.

1638. TYE OBJECTIVES UPDATE AND TO AGREE WAY FORWARD

Cllr Page advised he was very interested in the presentation Cllr Clarkson had given last Friday, following the recent workshop event he had attended at the Knepp Estate. Unfortunately, however, a lot was not relevant to Telscombe Town Council. Cllr Clarkson thanked Councillors for the opportunity of attending the workshop which he had found very interesting. He advised that there are several options that the Council could take-up regarding grant payments for maintenance of the Tye.

It was noted that until Natural England have carried out their final inspection of the Tye prior to the ending of the current HLS agreement, we are in a state of limbo. However, it was unanimously **RECOMMENDED** that a Tye Objectives Working Group meeting be held towards the end of November to progress matters, even if Natural England have not inspected the Tye at that date.

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1639. TO AGREE WAY FORWARD REGARDING LEGAL ADVICE ON SHEEP GRAZING

Following discussion it was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and unanimously **RECOMMENDED** to authorise the Town Clerk to instruct solicitors on the best terms to get advice regarding enforcement of limiting the numbers of sheep grazing on the Tye to the amount in the Commons Register with a monetary limit of £1,000.

1640. TO NOTE TYE INSPECTION REPORT AND AGREE REPAIRS REQUIRED

There was a long debate regarding the condition of the gates and fencing on the Tye and whether the Council should maintain all areas within their responsibility, rather than the limited areas previously agreed. The concerns of the resident brought up during public question time were also noted. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and unanimously **RECOMMENDED** (a) that the Town Clerk arrange a site meeting with as many members of the Committee that can attend to review the situation. Photographs will be taken and a report compiled to be brought to the next Committee meeting for a decision to be made as to how to proceed and (b) that the Town Clerk arranges remedial works to be undertaken to gates 14 and 22 and a spur added to each of the 3 broken fence posts in Gorham Way.

The Town Clerk was asked to update the resident of the action agreed at this meeting.

1641. TO AGREE IT SUPPORT PRICE INCREASE

It was proposed by Cllr B Page, seconded by Cllr C Robinson and unanimously **RECOMMENDED** to agree the increased cost per item from £40 to £45 and to sign a long-term contract of 5 years with Northstar IT.

1642. URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

Cllr O'Connor advised that he had been contacted by a resident advising him that as landowners we have a duty to pass on details of complaints regarding sheep welfare on the Tye to the East Sussex County Council Trading Standards for Animal Health (ESCC Trading Standards AH) and/or the Southern Duty Vet at Animal Plant and Health Agency (APHA). Councillors raised concerns about passing on third party information. The Town Clerk advised that if we receive complaints, we refer the person either to Stud Farm or to ESCC Trading Standards AH and pass on the contact details. She also advised that she will ring the ESCC Trading Standards AH and ask for their direction on this. Councillors were in agreement for the Town Clerk to follow the advice she is given and to also update the resident accordingly.

Cllr Robinson asked if the destroyed Tye fencing at the rear of a property in Hamsey Road had been reinstated after the Town Clerk had written to the resident and the Town Clerk confirmed no remedial work had been carried out and she had not heard from the resident. Councillors **agreed** that the Town Clerk should write again and the situation will be reviewed at the next Committee meeting.

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1643. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was unanimously **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.

1644. TO APPROVE AND SIGN CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE EMPLOYMENT SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11th JULY 2022

It was proposed by Cllr Robinson, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and unanimously **RESOLVED** that they were a true record of the proceedings and were signed as correct by the Committee Vice Chairman, Cllr Page, in the absence of the Chairman, Cllr Judd.

1645. UPDATE ON CONFIDENTIAL ITEM DISCUSSED AT A MEETING ON 9th MAY RE TELSCOMBE TYE GRAZING

The Town Clerk's report was noted and it was proposed by Cllr Robinson, seconded by Cllr Sharkey and unanimously **RECOMMENDED** to take no action at this time, but to review the situation in 6 months' time.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.26 pm.

Signed
Chairman

Date for next meeting of the Committee – Monday 7th November 2022