

TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of a meeting of **TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL** held on **Wednesday 16th November 2022** at 7.30pm at Telscombe Civic Centre.

Councillors Present:- Cllrs Clarkson, Cheta, Gallagher, Judd, O'Connor, Page, Robinson, Selby and Sharkey

Also present: Stella Newman, Town Clerk & RFO (*minutes*)
1 member of the public

2013. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from the public.

2014. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Brindley who had work commitments, Cllr Mills who had a prior engagement and Cllr Smith who was unwell. These reasons for absence were accepted by the Committee.

2015. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN RELATION TO MATTERS ON THE AGENDA

None.

2016. TO APPROVE AND SIGN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 28th SEPTEMBER 2022

It was proposed by Cllr O'Connor, seconded by Cllr Clarkson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting on 28th September 2022 were correct and were signed by the Mayor, Cllr Judd.

2017. TO AGREE MINUTES FROM THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES AND ADOPT RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) Amenities & Civic Centre – 25th July 2022

Cllr Clarkson proposed that the minutes of the meeting on 25th July 2022 be accepted and the recommendations adopted, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.

(b) Planning & Highways – 31st August & 10th October 2022

Cllr Sharkey proposed that the minutes of the meetings on 31st August & 10th October be accepted and the recommendations adopted, seconded by Cllr Gallagher and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.

(c) Policy & Resources – 12th September 2022

Cllr Gallagher proposed that the minutes of the meeting on 12th September 2022 be accepted and the recommendations adopted, seconded by Cllr Clarkson and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.

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2019. TO NOTE ACTION LIST

Date of Meeting	Issue Detail	Action Owner	Update	Due Date
19.5.21	Min 1809, p 3423 – agree bank mandate/signatories to Mayor's acct	SN	Cllr Brindley to be added as signatory to Mayor's bank account. <i>Bank still not confirmed Cllr Brindley has been added so chased & they will look into it – have still not responded despite chasing several times. Do we want to pursue this as there is only 6 months left of this Cllr term of office?</i>	Dec '22
15.9.21	Min 1858, p 3499 – To note climate change joint working group minutes & decide way forward	SN	Agreed to continue joint working group meetings with PeacehavenTC and a meeting to be arranged. TTC working group has met separately and action plan drawn up.	Ongoing
28.9.22	Min 2003, p 3750 – Approve continued use of L&N Consultancy & Jim Boot as consultants for the NDP & associated costs	SN	Costings are being collated and will be brought back to a future meeting for approval and consideration when forming the budget for 2023/24.	Jan '23
28.9.22	Min 2005, p 3751 – Agree whether to opt out of standard appointed external auditor	SN	Resolved not to opt out and therefore no action was needed.	Complete
28.9.22	Min 2006, p 3751 – note change of internal auditor company name & agree continued use	SN	Internal auditor has completed their interim audit for 2022/23 and their report is on the agenda for this meeting for consideration.	Complete
28.9.22	Min 2007, p 3752 – agree storage of Council Minutes and book of condolence for the Queen at the Keep	SN	Minutes are being sorted into storage boxes and will be taken to the Keep once they are ready, along with the book of condolence.	March '23
28.9.22	Min 2008, p 3752 – set up Budget Working Group	SN	Meeting set for 11.11.22 to consider draft budget which will then be taken to full Council in December/January for ultimate approval.	Jan '23
28.9.22	Min 2010, p 3752 – urgent matters – Peacehaven Library letter	SN/LOC	Cllr O'Connor drafted a letter to be sent to ESCC, LDC & PTC which was approved by a majority of Cllrs via email and sent by the Town Clerk. Response awaited.	Complete

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2019. To Note Action List (Contd)

Regarding minute 2010 on page 3752, Peacehaven library, Councillor O'Connor advised that we have now received a response to our letter from ESCC. There was discussion regarding this and Cllr O'Connor advised he will get more information next week and will be happy to draft a response for agreement by Councillors via email. This course of action was **agreed**.

2020. TO APPROVE PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS FOR SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2022

Payments of £17,978.61 and receipts of £4,984.49 for September and payments of £34,064.76 and receipts of £4,405.18 for October were proposed as correct by Cllr Page, seconded by Cllr Gallagher and unanimously **RESOLVED** that they be approved and were signed by the Mayor, Cllr Judd.

2021. TO AGREE INCOME & EXPENDITURE TO 30th SEPTEMBER 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 Council as a whole and Earmarked Reserves were noted. It was proposed by Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr Page and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the actual total year to date figures to 30th September 2022 being income of £293,054 and expenditure of £161,166 be accepted as correct.

2022. TO REVIEW & AGREE DIRECT DEBIT/BACS & REGULAR PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS ETC

It was noted that a 2 year review was due in accordance with our Financial Regulations 5.6, 6.6 and 6.9. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Sharkey, seconded by Cllr Cheta and unanimously **RESOLVED** to authorise (a) payment of the following by direct debit:-

- Advo Payroll for payroll services & payroll payments
- Chamber of Commerce for subscription renewal
- CK Office for photocopies
- Fastnet for broadband monthly and domain renewal annually
- Focus Group for broadband line rental
- Grenke Leasing for photocopier lease
- Ingenio for website hosting
- LewesDC for rates
- Nat West for payment of credit card bills
- Northstar IT Services for IT support, email hosting, antivirus & contract works
- Pitney Bowes for franking machine rental
- Purchase Power for franking machine postage & renewables
- Trade UK for payment of trade card purchases
- Utility companies:- BT, EDF & SSE

(b) payment of the following which are made on a regular basis as a result of a continuing contract, statutory duty or obligation such as salaries, PAYE, NI, pension and regular maintenance contracts:-

Grounds maintenance contract 1 – payments to Countrymans

Grounds maintenance contract 2 & 3 – payments to Countrywide

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2022. To Review & Agree Direct Debit/Bacs & Regular Payments to Contractors (Contd)

Grass cutting contract – payments to Countrymans Contractors

Pyrotec for fire extinguisher servicing

Languard Alarms for intruder alarm servicing & repairs

Securitel for fire alarm service & repairs

Sussex Lifts for lift servicing

c) Monthly via BACS- salaries to staff members, PAYE to HMRC, NI to HMRC & pension payments to ESCC

d) Transfer of funds to and from investment, normally on a monthly basis.

2023. TO AGREE ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

It was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Cheta and unanimously **RESOLVED** to authorise renewal of the following subscriptions:-

Parish Online – (*online mapping service*) £150 (due September)

Zoom - (*Virtual meeting platform*) £60 (due May)

Information Commissioner – (*data protection service*) £40 (due July)

Satswana – Data Protection Officer, Registration Only Service – approx. £150 (due December)

Survey Monkey – online survey site £390 (new subscription agreed by ACC meeting in September)

2024. TO NOTE AND AGREE THE INTERNAL AUDITOR'S INTERIM REPORT FOR 2022/23

The Town Clerk advised that the auditor's report confirmed that we have '*successfully maintained a very strong system of financial control*' and that '*the quality of documentation is very high, and evidence to demonstrate compliance with financial regulations is very clearly presented.*' They did, however, have one minor recommendation which is mentioned at the bottom of page 7 under 'Points Forward – Action Plan – Interim Audit'. It is regarding investment of funds and recommends that '*it would be sensible to move some funds to another institution to ensure the Council has some protection should there be disruption in financial institutions, although I accept that options are limited for Town and Parish Councils at present.*' The full report which had been circulated was noted and the Mayor thanked the Town Clerk for achieving a successful audit. It was proposed by Cllr Judd, seconded by Cllr Clarkson and unanimously **RESOLVED** to agree the internal auditor's interim report. It was noted that investment of funds was being discussed under an agenda item at this meeting.

2025. TO ADOPT THE REVIEWED MEMBER/OFFICER RELATIONS PROTOCOL POLICY

The Policy & Resources Committee had reviewed the Member/Officer Relations Protocol Policy, agreed a minor amendment and recommended approval and adoption by Council. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Page and unanimously **RESOLVED** to adopt the Member/Officer Relations Protocol Policy with a review due in three years' time.



2026. TO ADOPT THE REVIEWED INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND AGREE TO OPEN A SAVINGS ACCOUNT FOR THE COUNCIL AT THE NATIONWIDE

The Policy & Resources Committee had reviewed and agreed the Investment Strategy and recommended approval and adoption by Council. The Committee had also agreed that the Town Clerk should open a savings account for the Council at the Nationwide to enable the transfer of funds to spread the risk. It was therefore proposed by Cllr O'Connor, seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously **RESOLVED** to adopt the Investment Strategy, with a review due in three years' time, and to open a savings account with the Nationwide and transfer £85,000 into it.

2027. TO NOTE THE LATEST CITIZENS ADVICE FIGURES AND AGREE BUDGET PROVISION FOR 2023/24

The statistics provided by the Citizens Advice were acknowledged. There was debate as to what contribution the Council would make and also if we would continue to charge for room hire following a query from the new CEO. It was proposed by Cllr Judd, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and unanimously **RESOLVED** to agree a budget provision for the Citizens Advice of £4,080 for 2023/24 being a 3% increase and to continue to charge the charity rate for room hire for an Advisor visiting the Civic Centre.

2028. TO ACKNOWLEDGE CIL MONIES RECEIVED FROM LEWES DISTRICT COUNCIL IN OCTOBER 2022

It was acknowledged that the sum of £2,475.11 had been received in October regarding planning application number LW/19/0713, 128 Bannings Vale, bringing the total received in the 2022/23 financial year to £8,148.04. It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to transfer the sum of £8,148.04 to the CIL earmarked reserve at the end of the financial year.

2029. TO AGREE COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCE AMOUNT FOR 2023/24 FINANCIAL YEAR

Taking into account the IRP's Report dated February 2020 (updated November 2020) it had previously been agreed to review the Councillor allowance in July 2023 for the 2024/25 financial year. However, the Town Clerk wanted confirmation that the allowance was to remain unaltered for the 2023/24 financial year at £250 per Councillor. It was noted that a Councillor does not have to claim their allowance. It was proposed by Cllr Robinson, seconded by Cllr Cheta and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Councillor allowance remain at £250 per person for the 2023/24 financial year.

2030. TO AGREE THE CIVIC CENTRE CHRISTMAS CLOSURE PERIOD

Following discussion it was proposed by Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously **RESOLVED** to close the Civic Centre at lunch time (2pm) on Friday 23rd December and remain closed for the Christmas period, re-opening on Tuesday 3rd January 2023.

2031. TO CONSIDER COMMENTING ON BOUNDARY COMMISSION REVIEW PROPOSALS

It was noted that as far as this area is concerned, there are no changes in the revised proposals regarding constituency boundaries. However, there was discussion regarding the constituency name of Brighton Kemptown as it was felt that it does not reflect the extent of the area covered. It was therefore proposed by Cllr O'Connor, seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk

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2031. To Consider Commenting on Boundary Commission Review Proposals (Contd)

complete the online consultation and request a review of the name to Brighton Kempton Peacehaven to reflect the true extent of the constituency.

2032. REPORTS FROM:-

Mayor:- Cllr Judd advised he had attended the Remembrance Day service at the Telscombe Community Church.

District Councillor:- Cllr O'Connor advised that 400 new homes had been approved at the west quay in Newhaven. He also advised that LDC are pushing to reach their sustainability targets.

County Councillor:- Cllr Robinson advised that ESCC had recently issued an update which had been circulated by the Town Clerk.

Representatives on external bodies:

Citizens Advice – Cllr Sharkey advised that she had recently attended a Citizens Advice meeting and met the new CEO.

2033. URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

Cllr O'Connor commented regarding the UK Power Networks proposed underground cabling work on the Tye. He was concerned regarding the badger set on the west side of the Tye and that we had not received a copy of an environmental assessment. Also he did not agree with the press release that the SDNPA suggested we should issue. It was unanimously **agreed** that the Council should notify residents of the intended work start date of next week and that we ask the SDNPA for a copy of their press release which we share, rather than issuing one ourselves.

2034. 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.

2035. TO AGREE THE NATIONAL SALARY INCREASE FOR 2022/23 TO BE BACKDATED TO 1st APRIL 2022 AND ONE EXTRA DAY'S ANNUAL LEAVE COMMENCING 1st APRIL 2023

The Town Clerk advised that the Employment Sub-Committee had agreed the salary increase as notified by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) to be backdated to 1st April 2022 and recommend that it is approved by full Council. She also advised that the NJC encourage employers to implement the pay award as swiftly as possible. The increase equates to £1 per hour for each scale point and varies for our staff from a 4.42% to 9.8% increase depending on the scale point. This increase is a lot more than anticipated and budgeted for, therefore at year end we will exceed the budget allowance for salaries. As part of the national negotiations, it had also been agreed that as from 1st April 2023, all staff should receive an extra day's annual leave and that the lowest scale point would be removed.

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2035. To agree the National Salary Increase for 2022/23 to be backdated to 1st April 2022 and one extra day's annual leave commencing 1st April 2023 (Contd)

Details of each staff member, their salary point and actual salary had been provided to Councillors and it was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Gallagher and unanimously **RESOLVED** to agree the salary increases in accordance with the new national scale as advised by the NJC for all staff members on their current salary point, to be backdated to 1st April 2022 and paid in the November pay, and for an additional day's leave as from 1st April 2023. This is with the knowledge that the salary's budget will be exceeded for 2022/23.

2035a. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE EMPLOYMENT SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 7th NOVEMBER 2022

Cllr Judd proposed that the minutes of the Employment Sub-Committee held on Monday 7th November 2022 be accepted and the recommendations therein adopted, seconded by Cllr Gallagher and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.42 pm.

Signed – Mayor

Date of next Council meeting – 21st December 2022