

**HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MEETING OF HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021**, which was held virtually by Zoom under the provisions of the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020.

**Councillors:** Christopher Ash-Edwards  
Richard Bates \*\*  
Clare Cheney  
Rachel Cromie  
Sandy Ellis  
Christopher Evans (19.52pm)  
Howard MUNDIN  
Stephanie Inglesfield  
Matthew Jeffers  
James Knight  
Clive Laband  
Jack Langley (20.21pm)  
Alastair McPherson  
Richard Nicholson  
Mike Pulfer  
Sujan Wickremaratchi

**Apologies\*\* Absent\***

**Also, present: Town Clerk and one resident.**

Before the meeting commenced Inspector Taylor and Sergeant Bethan updated on matters relating to local policing and took questions from Members. This conversation can be found on the Town Council's YouTube channel.

**The Town Mayor then asked for each Member to confirm that they were present, which is reflected above.**

**66. Council Prayer**

The Town Council prayer, which was read by the Town Mayor Alastair McPherson.

**67. Apologies**

Richard Bates – Conflicting Meeting.

**68. Public Forum**

None

**69. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 were taken as read, confirmed as a true record and duly signed by the Mayor.

**70. Declarations of Interest**

None.

**71. Dispose of any Business from the Last Meeting of the Council**

None.

**72. Mayor's Engagements and Announcements.**

The Town Mayor made mention of communications he had within the last two weeks with the Town's two Twin Towns and was glad to report that all seemed to be well with them both at the present time, which was good news. The Town Mayor's New Year Webcast was available on social media and the Town Council website. It was also announced that the Mayor's Charity Time 4 Children were hosting an online quiz on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021 7pm - 9pm details were to found the Charity's website. With Time 4 Children in mind, it was noted that The Town Mayor would potentially be running a marathon (over three days) with two colleagues of the Town Council in the spring, Covid restrictions allowing, so he could raise some money as he had not been able to host any events during the last year.

**73. To receive and consider the adoption of the Minutes of Council standing committees.**

**(i) Planning Committee - MINS. 75 - 104**

The reception and adoption of the resolutions of the Planning Committees, dated 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020 **Mins 75 – 82**, 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020 **Mins 83 – 89**, 21<sup>st</sup> December 2020 **Mins 90 – 97** and 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021 - **Mins 90 – 104** were moved, seconded and agreed by Council.

**(ii) Environment & General Purposes Committee - MINS. 29 - 37**

The reception and adoption of the resolutions of the Environment & General Purposes Committee dated 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020 **Mins 29 - 37** were moved, seconded and agreed by Council.

**(iii) Policy & Finance Committee - MINS. 35 - 47**

The reception and adoption of the resolutions of the Policy and Finance Committee dated 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 **Mins 35 - 47** were moved, seconded and agreed by Council.

**74. Town Council Budget 2021/2022**

The Town Clerk presented the 2021/2022 budget as recommended by the Policy and Finance Committee to Full Council. The Town Clerk commended the work of the Responsible Finance Officer and stated that the budget went to meet the aspirations of the Town Council for the development of land at Hurstwood Lane, continuation, Covid allowing, of the Council's events programme and the Council's Environment Polices, whilst budgeting for Covid processes and requirements for the safe operation of Town council services and the Town Hall. It was noted that there would be no rate of living increases for staff nor members during 2021/2022. Finally, it was recommended that £4,000 be allocated to Western Road cemetery as prudent spending in difficult times had seen a forecasted underspend in the current year end forecast. The Leader of the Town Council and Chairman of the Policy Finance both commended the budget, which was a balance below inflation rise and praised the work of the Responsible Finance Officer. As did the Chairman of Planning who felt that the effort was extraordinary in the current climate and thanked those involved. The Town Mayor echoed these comments and thanked both the Clerk and again the Responsible Finance Officer, then,

**Member RESOLVED to;**

**Ratify the recommendations of the Policy and Finance Committee dated 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and,**

- (a) approve the 2021 - 2022 budget as presented in Appendix 1, with a 1.6% increase in Council Tax and a 1.8% increase in the precept (which includes a tax base rise of 0.2%). This equates to a precept of £681,486. This will represent an average Band D Council Tax of £55.86 p.a.
- (b) approve the earmarking of a proportion of the projected 2020/2021 underspend to the Western Road Cemetery at £4,000.

**75. West Sussex Association of Local Council 'Value for Money Review'.**

The Town Clerk introduced the report and update on the background and potential consequence of the West Sussex Association of Local Council (WSALC) 'Value for Money Review' of Sussex and Surrey Association of Local Councils (SSALC). Whilst doing so the Town Clerk again declared that he undertook ad-hoc work for SSALC in training new clerks in his own time. Members noted that the report dealt with the future membership of the Association and suggested a way forward to deal with an unsatisfactory outcome of the 'Value for Money Review'. It was agreed that leaving WSALC and NALC wasn't something the Town Council ultimately wished to do but the current situation around the review and the actions of WSALC left the Town Council little choice to move with the recommendation to serve notice. In taking this course of action it was felt that the Town Council's main concern, as stated before, was around the poor governance of WSALC and lack of transparency so it should get its own process right. As a result, it was agreed that the final decision should not be delegated to the Town Clerk to make, but returned to a further Council meeting probably March or if needed an extraordinary meeting. This would show it was a Council decision and protect the Town Clerk, who Members had full confidence in but had openly admitted a personal interest in the matter. This also would make the decision-making process clear and transparent. It was noted that the Councils appointed representatives would carry on representing the Town Council on other WSALC matters and the forthcoming AGM. With this recommendation a was carried unanimously and recommendation (b) was struck off resulting in a further Town Council decision to be required on the professional services it receives once all options were known.

**Member RESOLVED that;**

**The Town Council submits its intention to leave West Sussex Association of Local Council and subsequently National Association of Local Councils on three months' notice, but reserves the right to withdraw this if the service offered at the end of the 'value for money review' is deemed to be suitable.**

**76. Urgent Items**  
None

Meeting Closed at 8.34pm