

HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Environment and General Purposes Committee held 4th September
2023.

Nick Chapman (Chair)
Alison Rees (Vice Chair)
Anne- Marie Cooke
Sandy Ellis
Stephanie Inglesfield **
Deanna Nicholson
Duncan Pascoe
Leila Wilson

Apologies Absent***
Also present: Town Clerk, Events and Community Officer
and Mr Crump (part of meeting).

- 14. Apologies**
S. Inglesfield – Holiday
- 15. Minutes**
The minutes of the Environment & General Purposes Committee dated 3rd July 2023 were taken as read, confirmed as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.
- 16. Substitutes**
P. Lucraft for S. Inglesfield
- 17. Declarations of Interest**
None
- 18. Events and Community Officer Update (ECO)**
The ECO presented the update report as tabled in the agenda. The ECO was pleased to announce that over 70 stalls had been booked for Town Day. In line with this Members were reminded that any help on the day from Councillors would be welcomed and indeed was very much needed to make the event viable. With regards to moving forward with a Dementia Alliance for Haywards Heath a meeting was held with partners and interested partners at a local level to see what could be achieved. The meeting was well attended but people were not willing to do much. As a result, the proposed next step would be the setting up of a Town Council working group to look at ways of driving the initiative forward with volunteers being sought thereafter. This led onto the only recommendation in the report, which was to appoint the working group. The ECO asked for Members to sit on the group with Cllrs Wilson, Ellis, Pascoe and Rees all volunteering. It was also suggested that an officer from West Sussex County Council be involved at the appropriate juncture and furthermore a local officer from the Alzheimer's Society acknowledging funding for the regional post was to cease in the immediate future. Mention was also made regarding Active Haywards Heath and the forming of the Executive Board. One place for the community representative was still outstanding with one nomination at the time of the meeting. It was also that the Council's Grant criteria and level of funding available would be discussed at the next meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee. The ECO was thanked for all of her hard work and it was hoped that Town Day would be a great success. With this;

Members **NOTED** the report **RESOLVED** to form a working group to develop a Dementia Friendly Alliance for Haywards Heath made up of

Cllrs Wilson, Ellis, Pascoe and Rees who would support the Events and Community Officer.

19. America Lane Allotments

Mr Crump was present on behalf of the America Lane Plotholders who had been working closely with the Town Clerk on the matters to be presented for consideration under the item. The Town Clerk introduced the ongoing issues with site security and advised of the need to revisit a past resolution regarding works to the stream adjacent to The Hollow. Turning to the anti-social incidents on the site Mr Crump explained that a disturbing trend of vandalism and thefts had returned to the site. It was noted that the site's entry was set against America Lane and was a long lineal site, which was hard to secure. It was noted that the Police had been made aware of the issue and their thoughts were appended to the accompanying report and that letters had been sent to surrounding properties and the Bentswood Hub, which had not reduced the incidents. Members asked about the timing of the vandalism and Mr Crump stated it was concentrated to night time. Debate on the matter led to Members consideration of CCTV on the site. It was noted that a formal CCTV Camera would be costly and would need to be linked to Sussex Police Headquarters at Lewes. It was suggested at this point that grants may be available from the Police Crime Commissioner who provides a rolling programme of grants for community safety and business safety. Taking aforementioned cost constraints into account and the time any funding would take obtain, it was felt that trail cameras would be prudent and they could tie in with wildlife monitoring on the site, with signage that could also deter intruders. Other solutions agreed were non-drying paint on the entrance fence, works to fill gaps with hedgelaying techniques and adhoc visits by the Community Warden and PSCO. With these actions agreed the Town Clerk said that he would liaise with Mr Crump. With regards to the works the bank adjacent to The Hollow it was noted that at the outset there were concerns regarding the stability to the bank. After taking professional advice it was deemed that the bank was stable and there would be a considerable effect on plot holders to enable the works. It was also noted the laying of a pipe was considered but again this was cost prohibitive at circa £35,000. Mr Crump then asked if an alternative solution could be found and suggested an alternative solution, which would involve rationalising the scrub trees on The Hollow side of the stream and cutting back of overhanging branches from established trees and then planting hazel and fast-growing willow on the allotment side. The Town Clerk added that buy in would be needed from the residents from The Hollow and due to the riparian rights going down the middle of the stream and the mutual benefit to them from the works. With this Members agreed to both projects and that they would be funded by the £10,000 previously allocated by the Town Council for site works and then

Members RESOLVED to delegate a programme of site security measures at America Lane Allotments to the Town Clerk and to change the programme of works at the stream adjacent to The Hollow from bank reconstruction works to the removal of vegetation and a new planting regime funded by the £10,000 previously allocated in Town Council reserves.

20. Environment Priorities

Members had before them the Environment priorities agreed by the previous administration, which was based on a matrix backed by the science from the Draw Down Project. It was claimed that Plant Treaty communication previously was confusing as people thought the Town Council were promoting a vegan town. Town Clerk explained it was actually aimed at signposting and giving the people the option and was not a direction from the Town Council. Members agreed that this is what was

intended to be the case moving forward and the Town Council should be cognisant of giving people food options when delivering community events and general activities. Turning to the other priorities it was agreed that the committee was not the appropriate place to undertake the review, so it was agreed that the Environment Working Group be reformed and that it would meet before the next meeting of the Committee. Cllrs Chapman, Pascoe, Rees, Ellis and Nicholson volunteered to form the Working Group. The Town Clerk stressed at this point that resources needed to be considered when the working groups meets to deliver all of the worthy priorities, with this in mind.

Members **RESOLVED** to reform the Environment Working Group, to review the Town Council's priorities and projects, made up of Cllrs Chapman, Pascoe, Rees, Ellis and Nicholson.

21. Cllr Motion – Safer Sun Campaign

Cllr Pascoe presented his motion with regards to the Town Council raising the issue of sun safety, which was timely in line with the forecasted weather for the forthcoming Town Day the following Saturday. Members were supportive of the motion and agreed that a sun cream station be provided at Town Day and that there would be an ongoing campaign of information regarding staying safe in the sun. With regards to the sun cream station at Town Day caution was aired in relation to the products being used in terms of the risk to sensitive skin and reactions that the Town Council could be liable for. It was agreed a waiver be produced and high-quality products used. In addition, the first aid team booked for the event be liaised with and that some public relations would be sent out during the week. It was therefore agreed that sun safety was considered at all events and a general awareness campaign be ongoing.

Members **RESOLVED** to develop a sun safety awareness programme.

22. Mid Sussex Marathon 2024

Member were supportive of the Marathon and without comment.

Members **RESOLVED** to continue to provide financial support of £1,000 towards the Mid Sussex Marathon to be held in 2024.

23. Haywards Heath Winter Management Plan

Members noted the winter management plan and then.

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Haywards Heath Winter Weather Management Plan for 2023/2024.

24. Haywards Heath in Bloom

Cllr Ellis stated that the results ceremony for the Town's entries into South and South East Bloom was taking place on the 29th September 2023 and members of the Groundstaff and the Haywards Heath in Bloom Committee would be attending to pick up any awards that are made. In addition, the Friends of Ashenground Wood, America Lane Allotments and the Bentswood Hub were also going to attend as they entered individually. It was also noted that the Town Council would be hosting its own awards ceremony in October with best kept gardens, allotment and business amongst the awards to be made.

Members **NOTED** the update.

25. Leave No One Behind Campaign

The ECO presented a report that sought support to continue the Leave No One Behind Campaign, which reached out to the elderly and vulnerable people during the Christmas period last year. The campaign included, and was suggested to continue this Christmas with information being provided on services that were available over the Christmas period and gift bags. It was noted that the project was supported by Age UK and last year with agreed funding of £1,000 from the Town Council and further £1500 obtained from sponsorship reaching reach 250 people. The aim of this year is in line the cost-of-living crisis and it was noted that again £1,500 had be secured in principle to support the financial input of the Town Council. It was asked if the reach of the project could be expanded to social prescribers, housing associations and doctor's surgeries and if the bags could include Cards for Kindness from children in local schools. It was agreed that both points be looked into. Members therefore were supportive of the campaign and agreed to fund the campaign to the tune of £2,000 and that the demographic would again focus on the elderly and vulnerable. As an aside it was also noted that there was to be Carol Event to be held on the 7th December 2023 to celebrate what is going on in the Town, thanks to organisations in the Town and building on the Leave No One Behind Campaign.

Members **RESOLVED** the **2023 Leave No One Behind campaign and allocate £2,000 towards the campaign**

26. Urgent Items

There were none.

Meeting closed at 9.13pm