

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

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15th May 2023

Councillors: Abdul Bashar
Nick Chapman
Anne-Marie Cooke
Rachel Cromie
Sandy Ellis
Stephanie Inglesfield
Barbara King
Anne-Marie Lucraft
Paul Lucraft
Alan Murphy
Deanna Nicholson
Alison Rees
Duncan Pascoe
Antony Platts
Sinead Walsh **
Leila Wilson **

Apologies Absent***

Also present: Mr Noel Sweeney, Mr Mike and Mrs Lesley Bright, Mr Clive Laband, Cllr Sujan Wickremaratchi, Mr Alastair McPherson, Mrs Margaret Baker (all part of meeting), Helen Hewett (Assistant to the Town Clerk)

1. Council Prayer

Members stood for the Council prayer, which was read by Town Mayor Cllr Howard Mundin. Cllrs King and Basher left the chamber during the reading of the prayer.

At this junction the outgoing Town Mayor addressed the Town Council and stated that it had been an honour to serve as Town Mayor for the last two years. The hard work of so many community organisations that he had the privilege of meeting was conveyed to the Town Council along with comment regarding the many wonderful people he had met. He thanked his consort for her support and the outgoing Deputy Town Mayor Mr Alastair McPherson along with the staff at the Town Hall, who had worked so professionally to support him. Special mention was made of his PA Maria Horne and also the Town Clerk Steven Trice and Deputy Town Clerk Andrew Sturgeon. He then wished the new Town Council well for their term of office. At the end of his address Mr Mundin was presented with a past service medal, a Town Crest plaque and small token of appreciation from the Town Council as presented by the Town Clerk.

2. Election of Town Mayor for 2023/2024

The Town Clerk asked for nominations for the Town Mayor for the 2023/2024 Council year. There was one nomination for Town Mayor, which was duly seconded and without challenge;

Cllr Stephanie Inglesfield was the duly declared Town Mayor for the Council year 2023/24. Cllr Inglesfield made her declaration of acceptance of office and signed the declaration of office book.

Cllr Inglesfield addressed the Town Council stating she was honoured to be Town Mayor and thanked the outgoing Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor for their endeavours. Cllr Inglesfield stated that she looked forward to leading the new Town Council and wanted every Councillor to be fully involved over the next four years. Cllr Inglesfield noted that it was a very new Council who would be on a steep learning

curve, but was sure that Councillors would be supported by the Town Clerk and his team. It was stated that politics should not be a factor and that every Councillor has a part to play and she hoped that those within the minority groups would be shown the same courtesy and friendship that was afforded to herself and colleagues during the last term of the Town Council.

3. Apologies

Cllr S. Walsh – Personal Matter
Cllr L. Wilson - Holiday

4. Public Forum

Cllr Sujan Wickremaratchi wished to commend and thank Mr Howard Mundin for being an outstanding Town Mayor and paid tribute to all of Mr Mundin's hard work, along with his Consort, during his term of office as Town Mayor. He felt that this achievement was even more significant as Mr Mundin also continued his work with the NHS and also sat as a JP during his term of Town Mayor. Cllr Wickremaratchi closed by also thanking the former Deputy Mayor Mr Alastair McPherson for his work to support Mr Mundin and for his tenure as the previous Mayor and then wished the new Council well for their term of office.

Mr Sweeney also thanked the former Town Mayor and wished the new Town Mayor Cllr Inglesfield well for her term of office. Mr Sweeney then informed the Town Council of an incident he was involved with a cyclist on the highway, which fortunately on this occasion was not a serious incident as he was driving slowly when a cyclist ran into his path. This incident was directly the result of a pot hole, so with this in mind Mr Sweeney asked the whether the Town Council intended to continue to lobby West Sussex County Council to repair and improve the road network in and around Haywards Heath and in turn work to return highways repair services to a local delivery model. Mr Sweeney stated that he was fed up with the passing back and forth the blame for incidents that could be have avoided, such as he was involved in so that people can travel safely around the Town. Mr Sweeney also felt that there should be a full risk assessment of the road network that the pending London to Brighton Bike Ride would be using.

Cllr Paul Lucraft responded on behalf of the Town Council by stating that, the Town Council will continue to make representation and help local residents to report problems to West Sussex County Council to follow up and ensure that these are given priority by the County Council. Cllr Lucraft noted the terrible accident that took place recently in Perrymount Road and is reported in the Mid Sussex Times where an elderly cyclist suffered traumatic injuries. The knock-on costs to other services like the NHS in this case and the impact on people's lives of inadequate road maintenance can be huge. As well as lobbying West Sussex County Council, the Town Council has been working with the other Town Councils in Mid Sussex to explore the potential for bringing back service delivery for potholes and similar highway repairs to the Town Councils and neighbouring villages. Potholes are a matter which Cllr Lucraft was sure is on the agenda for all councillors at all levels locally and one where he hoped that all Councillors can work together to persuade WSCC to give the delivery arrangements back to the towns in our area because a locally based team will be able to respond more quickly and effectively to deal with potholes and prevent problems worsening. Clearly one additional aspect of this is that Councillors would like WSCC to hand over part of their budget to the Town Councils to deal with the potholes. Haywards Heath residents already pay for road maintenance through their council tax and WSCC is also in receipt of grants from central government to deal with this issue. It was hoped that a pragmatic solution could be found.

5. Appointment of Deputy Town Mayor for 2023/2024

The Town Clerk asked for nominations for the Deputy Town Mayor for the 2023/2024 Council year. There was one nomination for Deputy Town Mayor, which was duly seconded and without challenge;

Cllr Duncan Pascoe was duly declared Deputy Town Mayor for the Council year 2023/2024. Cllr Pascoe made his declaration of acceptance of office and signed the declaration off office book.

6. Appointment of the Leader of the Council for 2023/2024

There was one nomination for the Leader of the Council, which was duly seconded and without challenge;

Cllr Paul Lucraft was duly declared as the Leader of the Council for the year 2023/2024.

7. Appointment of the Deputy Leader of the Council for 2023/2024

There was one nomination for Deputy Leader of the Council, which was duly seconded and without challenge;

Cllr Ann-Marie Cooke was duly declared as the Deputy Leader of the Council for the year 2023/2024.

8. Committee membership for the 2023/2024

The Town Clerk informed Members that he had received pre-prescribed nominations for 2023/2024 Committee Membership, working groups and outside appointments. As a result, to the best of his knowledge he would run through the appointments given to him and would offer the opportunity for others to be nominated. It was then stated that if there were more requests than positions available there would be a vote, by a show of hands.

The following names were put forward and agreed for the Committee membership for the Council year 2023/2024 with challenge.

(ii) Environment & General Purposes Committee

Nick Chapman
Alison Rees
Leila Wilson
Anne-Marie Cooke
Duncan Pascoe
Stephanie Inglesfield
Deanna Nicholson
Sandy Ellis

(ii) Planning Committee

Stephanie Inglesfield
Duncan Pascoe
Abdul Bashar
Barbara King
Nick Chapman
Anthony Platts
Deanna Nicholson
Sandy Ellis

(iii) Policy & Finance Committee

Anne-Marie Cooke
Sinead Walsh
Paul Lucraft
Anne-Marie Lucraft
Abdul Bashar
Alison Rees
Rachel Cromie
Allan Murray

9. To confirm appointments of Committee Chair and Vice Chair for the Council year 2023/2024.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Members were appointed as Committee Chair and Vice Chair for the Council year 2023/2023. None of the posts were contested.

(i) Environment & General Purposes Committee

Chair: Nick Chapman
Vice Chair: Alison Rees

(ii) Planning Committee

Chair: Stephanie Inglesfield
Vice Chair: Duncan Pascoe

(iii) Policy & Finance Committee

Chair: Ann-Marie Cooke
Vice Chair: Sinead Walsh

10. Membership of the Sub Committees/Working Groups:

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Members would serve on the following Sub Committee Working Groups for the Council year 2023/24.

(i) Haywards Heath In Bloom:

Sandy Ellis

(ii) Communication and IT Working Group:

Paul Lucraft, Abdul Bashar, Rachel Cromie, Allan Murray
(1vacant position)

(iii) Planning and consultation working group:

Drawn from the Committee when required.

(iv) Staff Working Party:

Leila Wilson, Barbara King, Abdul Bashar, Stephanie Inglesfield

(v) Chair's Working Group:

Stephanie Inglesfield, Anne-Marie Cooke, Nick Chapman, plus Leader of the Town Council if required

(vi) Environment Working group:

Drawn from the Committee when required.

(vii) Active Haywards Heath:

Barbara King

11. To confirm Council representatives on the following outside bodies:

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Members would be the representatives on the following outside bodies. None of the posts were contested.

(i) Rep to Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils and West Sussex Association of Local Councils:

(ii) Duncan Pascoe and Anthony Platts (with full voting rights on behalf of the Town Council). The Town Clerk ensured that Councilors were aware and content with regards to the voting rights of the appointments, which would be on behalf of the Town Council, as there had been confusion amongst Councils that were in membership of Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils and West Sussex Association of Local Councils of the two associations historically.

(iii) Rep to Mid Sussex Association of Town Councils:

Stephanie Inglesfield, Anthony Platts, Paul Lucraft, Rachel Cromie

(iv) Rep to Haywards Heath Twinning Association:

Anthony Platts

(v) Rep to Blunts/Paiges Meadow Reserve and Scrase Valley Reserve:

Anne-Marie Cooke and Barbara King

(vi) Ashenground Park and Bolnore Open Spaces Steering Group:

Stephanie Inglesfield and Sandy Ellis

(vii) Rep to Woodside Pavilion Management Committee:

Sinead Walsh

(viii) Rep to Haywards Heath Business Association:

Abdul Bashar

(ix) Rep to Haywards Heath Town Team:

Vacant

(x) Rep to Burgess Hill Northern Arc Liaison Group:

Stephanie Inglesfield

(xi) Rep to Mid Sussex Cycle Forum:

Nick Chapman

(xii) Rep to Clair Hall Working Group at MSDC:

Nick Chapman

(xiii) Rep to Bentswood Hub:

Cllr A Rees was nominated for the representative position on the Bentswood Hub (Hub) then Cllr R Cromie challenged the appointment and requested she take the position due to her historical work with the Hub and in line with the joint working statement of the Town Mayor outlined in her address to the Town Council under item two of the agenda. The Town Clerk stated that there was only one position given by the Hub so it was not in the gift of the Town Council at the meeting to appoint both Councillors as consultation and agreement with the Hub was required. The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council's options were either one person stand down, there be a vote or deferment. Deferment of the appointment was supported by the Town Mayor and put to the Town Council. With this it was moved and seconded to defer the appointment of the representation on the Hub to the next meeting of the Town Council. The Town Clerk was then asked to investigate any flexibilities of the representational position with the Hub, which supported the Events and Community Officer in her work, with regards to the number of positions available.

(xiv) Rep to Mid Sussex Voluntary Action:

Barbara King

It was stated by the Town Clerk that all of the appointments would come through the Town Hall and Councillors will be informed of meetings and activities related to their appointments.

12. Declarations of Interest.

None.

13. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 20th March 2023, without comment, were taken as read, confirmed as true and duly signed by the Mayor.

14. To Dispose of any Business Outstanding from the Last Meeting.

The Town Clerk explained that the item was for information relating back to the last meeting of the Town Council as items such as any other business and matters arising were not permitted on agendas, but any business under this item in the future would directly relate to the minutes and resolutions of the last meeting of the Council. To this end with a very light agenda there was nothing to report as Martyn's Law was still going through the legislative process.

15. Mayor's Engagements and Announcements.

The new Town Mayor Cllr Inglesfield presented the list of engagements of the former Town Mayor, which were noted by the Council. The Town Mayor again commended the work of Mr Mundin and Mr McPherson for their work over the last two years as Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor.

16. To receive resolutions of the following Committees:

- (i) Planning Committee - **MINS. 127 - 148**
The resolutions of the Planning Committees, dated 27th March 2023 - **Mins 127 – 134**, 17th April 2023 - **Mins 135 – 142** and the extraordinary meeting dated 2nd May 2023 - **Mins 143 – 148** were noted without discussion by the Council.
- (ii) Environment & General Purposes Committee - **MINS. 46 - 56**
The resolutions of the Environment & General Purposes Committee, dated 3rd April 2023 - **Mins 46 – 56** were noted without discussion by the Council.
- (iii) Policy & Finance Committee
No meeting held since the last meeting of Full Council.

17. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations Annual Review.

Members noted the report of the Town Clerk and the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations as presented, acknowledging the need for a minute reference of the review each Council year for audit purposes. With no comments or changes required;

Members **RESOLVED** to;

Adopt the Town Council's revised Standing Orders and Financial Regulations as presented for the 2023/2024 Council year.

18. Code of Conduct

Members noted the Code of Conduct as adopted of the meeting of the Town Council in January 2022. Without comment and again for good order in terms internal audit requirements;

Members **RESOLVED** to;

Adopt the Local Government Association Councillor Code of Conduct as presented.

19. Membership of West Sussex Association of Local Councils and National Association of Local Councils.

Members re-affirmed their support for both associations, with this;

Members **RESOLVED** to;

Renew the Town Council's membership with the West Sussex Association of Local Councils and the National Association of Local Councils at the cost of £3,461.54 (£1,750 WSALC and £1,711.54 NALC).

20. General Power of Competency

Members noted the presentation of the Town Clerk, which gave new Members the background to the Powers bestowed on the Town Council through the Localism Act 2011 as also outlined in the covering report and without comment.

Members **RESOLVED** to;

Confirm that the Town Council met the Criteria to enable the adoption of the General Power of Competency and that the Town Council would exercise the Power when required.

21. Diary of Council Meetings 2023/2024

Members were presented with a slightly revised Committee timetable to that deferred for agreement by the Policy and Finance Committee in January 2023 and were content with the change of date of the Planning Committee to May 22nd and the change of the date of the Policy and Finance Committee to Tuesday 27th June 2023.

Members **RESOLVED** to;

Adopt the revised Committee Timetable for the Council year 2023/2024.

22. Mandate/BACS/Cheque Signatories

The Town Clerk requested that four Councillors be appointed to undertake the banking/financial authorisation transactions explaining that any two of the four would be required to authorise payments set up by officers with Standing Orders and Financial Regulations at any one time. In addition, it was not good order for the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor to take such positions as they oversaw the bank reconciliation. Turning to the appointments it was noted that Cllr Ellis was already a signatory carried over from the last term of the Town Council and it was asked that she remain as such, which was agreed. The Town Clerk therefore requested three more nomination to be signatories. With this, it was agreed that Cllrs A. Cooke, S. Walsh and A. Murray be appointed in addition to Cllr Ellis, which was unanimously agreed. The Town Clerk then asked that the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) also be appointed as he was hampered in his ability to obtain information required for him to undertake his duties. It was questioned what power this would give the RFO? The Town Clerk said the RFO's requirement was only for information access as he set up payments so Councillors would still be required to sign of the payments. Councillors were content with the reasoning given and then.

Members **RESOLVED** that;

- a) Cllrs S Ellis remains as an authorised signatory.**
- b) Cllr Anne-Marie Cooke, Cllr Sinead Walsh and Cllr Allan Murray be authorised to sign cheques, authorise electronic payments and be authorised to agree and sign any bank transactions/mandates on behalf of Haywards Heath Town Council.**
- c) That the Responsible Finance Officer also be an authorised signatory to enable information access.**

23. To consider any urgent items, the Mayor has received.

The Town Clerk confirmed that Councillor training would take place on Tuesday 23rd of May 2023 at 6pm.

The Town Clerk informed Councillors that he had been called for Jury Service for two weeks commencing on the 5th June 2023.

24. Members RESOLVED to exclude the public and the press.

None.

Meeting Closed at 8.31pm

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