

**Minutes of the TOWN OF HAYWARDS HEATH ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2016** held at the Town Hall, 40 Boltro Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 1BA on Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

## Minutes

### Present;

Cllr Sujan Wickremaratchi (Town Mayor)	Cllr Matthew Jeffers
Cllr Alastair McPherson	Cllr Mike Pulfer (Leader)
Cllr Stephen Hillier	Cllr Clive Laband
Cllr Sandy Ellis	Cllr Rod Clarke
Cllr David Dorking (Deputy Leader)	Cllr Anne Boutrup
Cllr Jonathan Ash-Edwards	Cllr Chris Ash-Edwards
Cllr Howard Mundin	Steve Trice (Town Clerk)
Andrew Sturgeon (Deputy Clerk/RFO)	Cllr Gary Wall (Leader MSDC)
Helen Hewett (Assistant to Clerk)	Sarah Valentine (Adim Officer)
Fatima Mirza (Community Liaison Officer)	Andra Houchen
Sarah Smith	Kat Wilmore
Keith Jones	Phil Revis
Eric Bassett	Marcia Bassett
Jane Reid	David Williams
Richard Goddard	Tim Barkley
Irene Balls	J Rider
Lorraine Chedzey-Ackland	Bethan Chedzey-Ackland
Jessica Chedzey-Ackland	Barbara Baldwin
David Cochran	Tim French
David Waite	Nadeeka Wickremaratchi
T Briggs	Howard Burrell
Ashen Wickremaratchi	Glenn Rodgers
Linda Watson	Lela Wilson
Mike Bright	Lesley Bright
M Lewis	A Pareka
Nick Demetriades	Kirstie Thomas
Richard Bates	L Montgomery
M Montgomery	

### 1. Welcome from the Town Mayor.

Cllr Sujan Wickremaratchi (Town Mayor) opened the meeting by thanking those present for taking time to attend the meeting. The Town Mayor then referred residents to the Town Council's Annual Report 2015 - 2016, which had been previously circulated and was available at the meeting. The Mayor also notified the meeting of the following apologies;

- The Right Honourable Nicholas Soames MP
- Mrs Mims Davies MP
- Cllrs Mr James Knight, Jacqui Hollister and Julie Hayden

At this point the Town Mayor asked each Councillor to introduce themselves, which they duly did. Then, on opening the meeting, it was asked that residents save questions until Item 7 Public Questions unless invited to do so.

### 2. Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2015 were noted and approved.

### 3. Presentation Dementia Friendly 'Haywards Heath'

The Town Mayor welcomed Fatima Mirza (HHTC Community Liaison Officer), Mr David Williams and Andra Houchen to the meeting who made a joint presentation on the work

being undertaken to promote and train people to assist in creating a 'Dementia Friendly Haywards Heath'. There was also a section in the presentation on techniques to support dementia sufferers through memory stimulation. Presentations from the three representatives are available on request from the Town Hall. Furthermore, it was noted that the Town Council's Annual Report contained information on the Dementia Work Programme for Haywards Heath. Further information can be obtained at the Town Hall or email [Fatima.mirza@haywardsheath.gov.uk](mailto:Fatima.mirza@haywardsheath.gov.uk)

#### **4. Cllr Sujan Wickremaratchi, Town Mayor**

The Town Mayor addressed the meeting and stated that it had been an absolute honour and privilege to be Mayor of Haywards Heath, which was a wonderful town and that he had been working hard to support and help fundraise for various charities and voluntary organisations. The Town Mayor felt that the most important thing he had learnt from being Town Mayor was to respect and admire the volunteers who give up their time to help others. His personal thanks went to all volunteer groups for the fantastic work they did for the community with special mention made to Sussex Autism Support chaired by Katarina Wilmore who was present at the meeting, and 4SIGHT who were represented by Nick Dimitriatis Chairman, Kirsty Thomas and Phil Revis. The Town Mayor then went onto mention the Spring Festival the Sunday before the Town meeting, which had been organised by the Town Council on Muster Green, which again was a great success with volunteers representing various charities being there to raise funds so to continue their good work and support for others. The Town Mayor thanked the Town Council staff who worked tirelessly and the Town Councillors who helped on the day. The Town Mayor proudly announced that his charity dinner dance in aid of 4Sight in February was a fantastic success with 165 guests attending, which managed to raise a staggering £5,000 pounds for his charity and successfully highlighted Stargardt's a disease that affects the young and their peripheral vision. It was noted that there was no cure using stem cells so research is ongoing, which is why fund raising is so important.

The Town Mayor committed to supporting the Town's Twinning Association who he felt were doing a fantastic job by involving local schools and helping to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the trains coming to Haywards Heath by designing a mosaic for the new Station. He informed those present that he had visited Traunstein twice in the last year and thanked the Traunstein Council for a fantastic welcome and supporting an exchange of students between the two towns. He also mentioned the relationship with Boundaries in France and that riders from Traunstein and Boundaries both took part in the Greater Haywards Heath Bike Ride this year, which as per usual was very well organised.

In concluding his address, the Town Mayor took the opportunity to thank residents of the Town, Town Councillors, Town Hall staff and Groundstaff and the Local Member of Parliament the Rt Hon Sir Nicholas Soames, and most importantly his wife and consort Nadeeka for the support given to him over the year. Cllr Wickremaratchi's final words were - our Town Council motto is " To Serve the People Well" and that was exactly what he and his colleagues strived to do.

At the end of his address the Town Mayor welcomed the members of the 4Sight team (Nick Dimitriatis Chairman, Kirsty Thomas and Phil Revis) to whom he presented a cheque for £5000 pounds

#### **5. Cllr Michael Pulfer, Leader of Haywards Heath Town Council**

Cllr Michael Pulfer (Leader) of Haywards Heath Town Council stated that it had been an honour and pleasure to lead the Town Council with the support of his fellow Councillors and the Town Clerk and his staff. Without them and their support, the Town Council would not have achieved so much for the public of the Town. It was acknowledged that Councillors give their time readily for the benefit of the town.

The Leader felt it would be remiss not to mention the sterling work carried by the Town Team, and in particular the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the train line coming to Haywards Heath, the Haywards Heath and District Business Association, the Haywards Heath Society, and the Haywards Heath Community CIC, all who have had input to this, and many other projects which are, or had gone on around our Town.

He then informed those present that Committee Chairman's reports would follow, so he would not be commenting directly on any committee work as the presentations that were to be made by Cllrs. Dorking, Jeffers and Mrs Ellis would cover the achievements of the Council. It was noted that Cllr Jonathan Ash-Edwards would be available to answer questions on Policy and Finance and Central Sussex College. However, it was worth noting that as a Town Council we had been monitoring the situation regarding the College for some years, and the matter was for Central Government and MP Rt Hon Sir Nicholas Soames. As a result of the aforementioned, he would only deal with major activities within the Town.

Turning to local issues the Leader referred to the,

- Refurbishment of the Station Quarter - Waitrose still being on track to arrive in the Town later in the year and the station redevelopment, which sees the bridge near to completion and car park completed.
- Fact that the Town Council intends to engage with Southern Rail regarding the part closure of the Ticket office at the station.
- "Real Time" bus information that continues to be rolled out subject to monies being available across the Town.
- Work being undertaken by Cllr Alastair McPherson to see what can be done about the economic development in the Town and in particular South Road so that the area is compares well when the Burgess Hill shopping experience transpires.
- Transport Partnership, which has attempted to engage with Lindfield Parish Council and Sussex Buses about the renumbering/rerouting of the number 30 bus, within in the Town and Lindfield. It was noted that at the present time the route had been fixed by the Department of Transport and that it was not practical to alter it within sixty days of the change. During this period the effectiveness of the route would be reviewed.
- Development of a Country Park off Hurstwood Lane. It was mentioned last year that Hurst Farm was being put forward for development. During the Council year MSDC had confirmed that they wished to bring Hurst Farm forward for some 300 plus houses. It is the intention of the Town Council to lobby for a considerable amount of benefit to the community from the housing through the development of a County Park, to include Asylum Wood, allotments plus a cemetery. The Town Council, on these grounds, were interviewing companies to assist it in setting a proposed masterplan for the site. The Town Council had also asked Wivelsfield Parish that in their Neighbourhood Plan, the adjacent land in their Parish be allocated as greenspace. The Town Council has also learned that West Sussex County Council wish to see a new primary school.
- Local housing pressure, it was noted that housing pressure continues to come to bear on the Town from over our borders with Lindfield, Ansty and Staplefield and Lewes District Council building off Greenhill Way. Some 2500 house will be occupied in the next couple of years with 500 or more coming forward in Lindfield. These are all on our borders. This puts pressure on every type of infrastructure for our Town. Rest assured that we are having continuing discussions with both Mid Sussex District Council and West Sussex County Council to attempt to have a more equitable apportionment of Section 106 monies gleaned from these developments and we are now bringing pressure to make sure that Section 106 monies are spent within the Town and following our intervention, have saved

money for the Town rather than it being allocated by officers outside of both the Town and County.

- **Public consultations, WSCC commissioned a report by planning consultants Atkins, who have identified £10 million worth of improvements within the Town from Commercial Square to the Eastern end of South Road and that is where the majority of the 106 Gamblemaed development near the Fox and hounds 106 monies will be spent. As you will have seen from the press it is highly likely that we will have a Premier Inn in Perrymount Road.**
- The Sports Forum continues to progress under the Chairmanship of Cllr Stephen Hillier and aided by Cllr Rod Clarke.

On that note, the Leader then welcomed Cllr Matthew Jeffers who presented the activities of the Environment and General Purposes Committee. Cllr Jeffers then passed over to Cllr Sandy Ellis, Vice Chairman of the Environment and General Purposes Committee, as Chairman of the South and South East in Bloom Committee, who updated on the success of the Committee with special mention of the awards won during the year and the recent Button Art Competition.

Cllr David Dorking then presented on the activities of the Planning Committee making special reference to the progress of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Dorking thanked Cllr Pulfer, the Clerk and Mr Tim Barkley for their hard work in progressing a Neighbourhood Plan, and to Andrew Sturgeon (Deputy Clerk and RFO) for his hard work and support when Clerking the Planning Committee. To see the background to the content of each of the Councillor's speeches and the activities of each of the Committees please see the Council's Annual Report 2015/2016. Cllr Pulfer then closed his address.

## **7. Public Questions**

In addition to a statement made by a lobby group as attached to these minutes as appendix one, which was read to the meeting by the Town Clerk, Ms Lorraine Chedzey-Ackland and Ashen Wickremaratchi raised her deep concern about the proposed closure of the Central Sussex College and the effect it would have on her two daughters. *It was noted that the Town Council was concerned about closure of the College and it was lobbying the local MP and West Sussex County Council officers/Members, but unfortunately due to the status of the College (not being local authority run) that there was not a great deal that could be done. However, discussion was ongoing that would involve local partners and the college along with discussion in Westminster. It was asked if Cllr Ash-Edwards could talk to Ms Chedzey-Ackland after the meeting.*

Mr Eric Basset (Bolnore Depot Site), Mr Basset asked for the official position and status of the small parcel of green space next to Beech Hurst Depot owned by MSDC, which had been included in the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan for development. *Cllr Dorking referred to the statement issued by the Town Council on the matter as follows (as endorsed by MSDC)*

*The site in question is a proposed housing allocation in the 'draft' Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan, which has been consulted upon by Mid Sussex District Council, over the last six weeks, as the Local Planning Authority. Mid Sussex District Council is also the land owner of the site, which includes its old depot and a green piece land adjacent to Beech Hurst Gardens. The Town Council has been guaranteed by Mid Sussex District Council that the land in question does not form part of the Beech Hurst Land Trust. As landowner Mid Sussex District Council promoted the site for inclusion in the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan for a 20 plus housing scheme that will be 100% affordable housing, which is much needed for an ever growing population. There are no proposals for development on Beech Hurst Trust land as outlined in the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan.*

Mr Bassett thanked Cllr Dorking for the response and on behalf of the Haywards Heath Society praised and endorsed the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan. He thanked Cllr Pulfer and Dorking and made special mention of Cllr Tim Farmer who started working on the Plan before his untimely passing.

Mr Richard Goddard (Members Attendance), Mr Goddard thanked the Town Mayor for all his hard work over the year and stated that Cllr Wickremaratchi had done a wonderful job over the last twelve months. Mr Goddard then raised concerns about the attendance record of two Councillors, which had been compounded by their non-attendance at the meeting. Mr Goddard called for their resignation on the grounds of not serving the Town Council and community in an appropriate manner and the said Councillors should return their allowance. *The Leader stated that the attendance was a concern to the Town Council and the two Councillors in question would be written to. It was clarified that neither had broken the six-month rule.*

Mrs Irene Balls (Twinning Association), thanked the Town Mayor for all of his support for Twinning and stated that he had been a great ambassador. Mr Tim French echoed the praise for the Town Mayor and shared a memory of the Mayor taking time to welcome a younger Member of the community, who had skated over from the Victoria Park Skatepark to see what was going on. The Town Mayor explained that the Town Council was lighting the Beacon for the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. This showed how Cllr Wickremaratchi engages with the whole community.

Mrs Leila Wilson (Station Quarter Pedestrian Access), raised concerns about safety and the condition of pavements and crossing points around Commercial Square, especially around the turning to Mill Green Road and access to Queens Road. Cllr Wickremaratchi informed the meeting of the recently adopted West Sussex County Council Haywards Heath Transport Study, which dealt with the matters raised within the study's priority projects. The Town Mayor then stated, in his role as West Sussex County Councillor for the area of the Town, that he supported residents in their wishes to have the area in question improved.

**Without and further questions from the floor, the Mayor formally closed the meeting at 9.19pm.**

Appendix 1 – Representation on Central Sussex College submitted before meeting.

*1) We want a guarantee that the college will remain open in the short term for the pupils that are seeing out their final year of college. If Central Sussex goes bankrupt will West Sussex/Government step in and keep the college open until the end of the 2017 academic year. We also want assurances that they will continue to provide the best education that they can for these pupils.*

*2) Our long term aim is to ensure that we can secure sixth form facilities for the future college age children in Haywards Heath so they don't have to travel long distances for their education. Especially as the town continues to grow and more junior schools are being built and extended.*

*3) We want West Sussex Council to confirm that they will be funding the travel costs for ALL students who are now faced with long journeys and high travel costs to gain a sixth form education.*