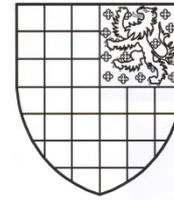


Town Hall
High Street
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 2QS

☎ 01273 471469 Fax: 01273 480919

✉ info@lewes-tc.gov.uk
www.lewes-tc.gov.uk



**LEWES
TOWN
COUNCIL**

To All Members of Lewes Town Council

A Meeting of **Lewes Town Council** will be held on **Thursday 15th December 2016**,
in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lewes** at **7:30 pm** which you are summoned to attend.

S Brigden, Town Clerk, 8th December 2016

AGENDA

1. QUESTION TIME

To consider any questions received regarding items on the agenda for this meeting.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

To note any declarations of personal or prejudicial interest in items to be considered at this meeting.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To consider apologies tendered by Members unable to attend the meeting.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive any announcements from the Mayor.

5. MINUTES

To agree Minutes of the Council's meeting held on 10th November 2016.

(attached page 3)

6. WORKING PARTIES & OUTSIDE BODIES

To consider matters arising from working parties; members serving on outside bodies *etc.*

a) *Administrative Structure Working party 16th November 2016*

(minutes attached page 15)

b) *Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group 17th November 2016*

(meeting notes attached page 18)

c) *Liaison meeting with Pells Pool Community Association 29th Nov 2016*

(meeting notes attached page 21)

d) *North Street Quarter s106 Play & Recreation group 6th December 2016*

(Oral report by Cllr S Murray)

(Provisional public consultation results attached page 23)

e) *Grants Panel 7th December 2016*

(report FC011/2016 attached page 35)

7. INTERIM REPORT of the INTERNAL AUDITOR

To consider the auditor's interim report for the current year

(attached page 37)

8. UPDATE ON MATTERS IN PROGRESS

(Oral report by Town Clerk)

9. NOTICE of ITEMS IN PROSPECT

(Oral report by Town Clerk)

For further information about items on this agenda please contact the Town Clerk at the above address

This agenda and supporting papers can be downloaded from www.lewes-tc.gov.uk Copies are available from the Town Hall

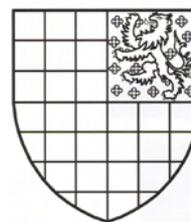
PUBLIC ATTENDANCE: Members of the public have the right, and are welcome, to attend meetings of the Council – questions regarding items on the agenda may be heard at the start of each meeting with the Chairman's consent, subject to time available. Questions or requests to address the Council should, whenever possible, be submitted in writing to the Town Clerk at least 24 hours in advance. For more information on how to ask questions, please contact the Town Clerk. General questions about the work of the Council can be raised at our offices between 9am-5pm Mons- Thurs 9am- 4pm on Fridays – when our staff will be pleased to assist.

Copies for information: T/hall noticeboard; LTC website; Library, Sx. Express, E.Argus, Sx. Police, M Caulfield MP, LDC, ESCC, Fr'ds of Lewes

PAGE INTENTIONALLY BLANK



PAGE INTENTIONALLY BLANK



MINUTES

Of the **meeting of Lewes Town Council**,

held on **Thursday 10th November 2016**, in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall**, Lewes at **7:30pm**.

PRESENT Councillors A Ashby; J Baah; A Bolt; R Burrows; S Catlin (Wischhusen); M Chartier (*Deputy Mayor*); W Elliott; H Jones; J Lamb; I Makepeace; Dr G Mayhew (*Mayor*); R Murray; S Murray; R O’Keeffe; T Rowell and E Watts.

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk*); Mrs E Tingley (*Committee Admin.*) and Canon R Moatt (*Chaplain*)

Observing: Ms J Dean (*Customer Services Officer*) and Mr B Courage (*Town Ranger*)

Before the meeting opened, Canon Moatt offered some thoughts on the ease with which even large organizations can ‘get things wrong’; the sacrifice of those who have died in wars and other conflicts which, he said, should never be forgotten; and the effect on society of those who may feel powerless and ‘forgotten’ by governments and institutions.

FC2016/63 **QUESTIONS:** 5 Members of the public were present.

A written question had been received regarding items placed in remembrance on the War Memorial. The question and the answer given are appended to these minutes.

FC2016/64 **DECLARATIONS of INTEREST:** Cllr R O’Keeffe declared an interest *iro* item 6h (Citizens Advice Bureau).

FC2016/65 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies had been received from Cllr Barker, who was working in the Channel Isles and Cllr Milner who was recovering from medical treatment. **It was resolved that:**

FC2016/65.1 The reasons submitted for absence from this meeting are accepted.

FC2016/66 **MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

a) Cllr Milner had sent an update on his health, together with thanks for all good wishes received. He had been suffering from severe ulcerative colitis and had been hospitalised twice. He was now on a new medication which seemed to be working. Members wished Cllr Milner a speedy return to health.

b) Regrettably, despite a collaborative effort between Cllrs Barker and R Murray with Wave Leisure Trust, The Youth Sports Awards nominations had been scarce and not enough to make a full competition. To prevent young people from being discouraged, the Mayor would hold a reception in the Council Chamber for all those nominated, and those who submitted a nomination, on 7th December at 5.30pm.

c) The Mayor reminded Councillors and guests to assemble in the foyer of the Town Hall at 10.45am on 11th November for the Armistice Day service of remembrance.

d) Remembrance Sunday would be on 13th November. Councillors and guests were asked to assemble in the Town Hall foyer at 2.00pm and allow time to find their robes and hats.

e) The exhibition of WW1 pictures from the Reeves photographic archive, currently on display in the Town Hall’s Baxter Gallery, was augmented by various contemporary documents and local artefacts which had been retrieved from archive storage at The Keep (County Archive).

FC2016/67 **MINUTES:**

It was resolved that:

FC2016/67.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 29th September 2016 are received and signed as an accurate record.

'MISSING FROM THE MEMORIAL' PROJECT:

This item was brought forward on the evening's agenda as most of the public attendees were present in connection with it.

Council considered information provided by Cllr O'Keeffe on a project called "Missing from the Memorial": Cllr O'Keeffe promoted the project through the organisation "When Skies Were Always Blue", following a petition which had gained over 1000 signatures. Members of the local British Legion were interested in setting up the project and making funding applications to support it. The project was intended to reach out across the present community in Lewes and involve them to find out some basic facts about the people who died during WWI and who did not have their name inscribed on the War Memorial. The aim was to add an extra plaque to the memorial or to place a plaque in the Town Hall, as most appropriate. Research would also be carried out by school children with the help of experts and older people's memories. Permission would need to be given by the Council, as owners of the War Memorial, in order for third-party funding to be sought.

Cllr Dr Mayhew reminded Members that he was carrying out research to establish the position regarding WW1 omissions from the War Memorial with a view to any additions being made in 2018. This had been requested by Council at their meeting in August 2014 following a recommendation of the Commemoration Working Party and he referred to those minutes, which described the origins of the project – inspired by discussions in 2013 with the Chairman of Lewes Branch, Royal British Legion. It was known that in 1920-21, when the community was asked to provide names to be commemorated on the memorial; many families did not respond. Further; it had been noted that three brothers from one family, who had all been killed in action, were commemorated elsewhere. It had been generally accepted that any additions to a memorial should be properly researched, and reasonable attempts made to contact surviving family to ascertain their wishes. Cllr Dr Mayhew, an academic historian by profession, had conducted such research over forty years ago which resulted in the addition of the names of those fallen in the Second World War, and he had offered to extend that work to establish the position regarding the WW1 omissions. This was being conducted at a measured pace with a view to any additions being made in 2018, to mark the end of WW1, on a suitably high-quality plaque. This had been warmly welcomed, and the Chairman of the RBL had been kept advised. It was hoped that this would be completed by early summer 2017.

Since inception of the project, the War Memorial had been elevated to a 2* Heritage Listing which meant it was unlikely that any changes could be made to the Memorial.

Cllr O'Keeffe explained to Council that the project she espoused was educational and for children to engage with their local War Memorial. It was recognized that any research conducted in schools would be considered as advisory only, as access to the full resources of archives and expert historians would be limited. Nonetheless; Council could support the principle of such a project as a parallel to the commission of Dr Mayhew.

Following questions and a short debate **it was resolved that:**

FC2016/68.1 Lewes Town Council supports in-principle the educational project proposed by the organization "When Skies Were Always Blue" – which may parallel Cllr Dr Mayhew's current research on behalf of the Council regarding names omitted from the Lewes war memorial immediately following WW1 – and will confirm this if requested for funding applications.

WORKING PARTIES AND OUTSIDE BODIES:

Members were reminded that anyone who may have attended a meeting of any recognized outside body which has covered issues that deserve attention by the Council, should ensure that TC is aware of this before the Council's next meeting, and preferably before the agenda deadline. Reports on all activities of the organization are not expected.

a) *Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group:* Members considered the Minutes of the Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (*copy in minute book*) held on 3rd October 2016.

The Group had been informed of Council's agreement regarding appointments and chairmanship, as decided on 29th September. The Chairman had commented that the primary requirement was for representatives of organisations, but not ruling out individuals who may be able to provide specialist input. Ordinary members of the public would be welcome to contribute via workshops; as observers at the Group meetings; and be encouraged to participate during the public consultation.

Revised Terms of Reference for the Group were distributed. Several organisations had been approached regarding additional representation.

Of the original list of 97 organisations originally invited to join the Steering Group, 14 had been regularly involved in the process of developing the Plan. Significant background work had been done looking at housing sites that appeared viable and there remained a need to identify sites for 132 homes after eligible existing schemes were deducted from the 220 'target'.

Topic groups had met and a useful tourism report had been obtained that would complement work already completed that was held by the consultants pending integration within the final draft Plan. There had been discussion regarding the possible designation of Bonfire sites as greenfield sites with special cultural significance to the community.

The Design & Built Environment team had reviewed the Draft Plan and previous documents. A workshop had been held which 12 people had attended from different associations, and made further contributions. There was a recognized need to create more affordable business space. The group had tried to structure inclusive policies that would be relevant to the people of Lewes.

Housing – much of the draft policy would be re-worded.

Sustainability – This group had completed a substantial amount of work around 18 months ago and now extended that. The Steering Group needed to think about how to prioritise these emerging policies.

Transport – work continued and revised drafts were imminent.

The latest pre-submission Draft Plan had been received from the consultants a few days earlier. The briefing note accompanying this was extremely helpful and gave clear advice on what was lawful or irrelevant etc. The forward plan was to hold combined/split workshops on Wednesday 5th October in the Council Chamber to review the latest draft and concentrate on text revisions, not further discussion. Topic Leaders were to meet again on 7th October to complete all comments to the consultant by 10th October. The emphasis was on providing FERIA with completed text – not additional comments.

The Group considered two schedule choices, either of which would see a completed pre-submission "Regulation 14" draft Plan completed by 31st March 2017. The Group elected to follow the schedule which would see final text/draft revisions between 3 – 13th January 2017; public consultation commence on 16th January and run for six weeks plus one day, to 28th February. A two-day public 'drop-in' consultation event was scheduled for 19th & 20th January.

Publicity for the following public consultation would aim to:

- raise awareness of the plan with all those who live and/or work in Lewes and,
- encourage good turnout for the referendum.

Steering Group members were tasked with:

- Reactivation of www.lewes4all.uk as a news portal – this was being done
- Reactivate Facebook page for social media users
- Refer to www.lewes4all in all material
- Advertise fresh call for new housing sites – 4 week limit
- Ideas for advertising of public consultation
- Prepare an attractive leaflet for door to door delivery
- Place articles in local newspapers i.e. Sussex Express and Argus.

Advertising could be placed in schools and Doctors Surgeries. A newsletter could be produced and delivered by residents associations. Rocket FM would be talking about Planning Matters on their breakfast show (7 - 9am) on 26 & 27th October.

It was resolved that:

FC2016/69.1 The Minutes of the Lewes Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (*copy in minute book*) held on 3rd October 2016 are noted.

b) *North Street Quarter 's106' Play & Recreation group 11th October 2016:* Cllr S Murray gave an oral report. The group had discussed the various issues that came within its remit including progress on a replacement Skate Park. Detailed proposals were being drafted for the upgrade with help from the young people who use the skate park. One of the issues with such early works was the timing of funding, as 'Section 106' contributions arising from the North Street development would not be triggered until late stages of the programme. Lewes District Council would look at the possibility of funding the project which could be repaid when the Section 106 money was available. There had also been discussion on flood defences in the Pells area and the first stage in public consultation, aiming to identify preferences for landscape, play and recreation improvements at The Pells and Malling Recreation Ground, was scheduled for 25th November at St John Sub Castro & 26th November at Malling Community Centre.

It was resolved that:

FC2016/69.2 The oral report on North Street Quarter s106 Play & Recreation Group held on 11th October 2016 is noted.

c) *Commemorations Working Party 21st October 2016:* Cllr Chartier presented the Minutes of this meeting (*copy in minute book*) which had considered:

The Royal Sussex Regimental Association had requested for assistance in maintaining and upholding the memory, heritage and traditions of the Regiment.

The Royal Sussex Regiment endured from 1881 - 1966, and was awarded the Freedom of the Borough of Lewes in 1953. The forebears of the Regiment were founded in 1701 and had proceeded, through amalgamation, to the Queen's Regiment and, today, the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment.

The Royal Sussex Regiment had taken part in virtually every major campaign of the British Army and this year the Battle of Boar's Head, known as 'the day Sussex died' (telling the story of 11th, 12th and 13th Battalions, "Lowther's Lambs") had been a prominent commemoration of action on the Somme in WW1.

The RSRA requested that some recognisable feature, possibly a badge or plaque, as a mark of respect and gratitude, be displayed in the entrance hall of Lewes Town Hall, a focal point, to all Royal Sussex veterans and those who appreciate their services.

Lewes Light Festival: The Working Party had authority from Council to reimburse appropriate costs of up to a maximum of £5000. Items were individually scrutinized and approved, which amounted to £3,099.26 in total. There were one or two items outstanding that were expected to cost a few hundred pounds and TC was asked to deal with these in due course, within the balance remaining. The organizers had reported that attendance to the event was 50% higher than 2015.

Lightbox 2016 project "1916 – Lewes Remembers: stories seen through a glass plate" – Brigitte Lardinois, of the University of the Arts, London, had presented an update on the project to exhibit 80 light-boxes in 65 windows throughout Lewes, depicting individuals and scenes from 1916. The Council had agreed to host an accompanying exhibition in the Baxter Gallery at the Town Hall and this had enormous local support. Plans were described for a torchlight vigil at the War Memorial to remember those fallen in WW1 who were named thereon. This was supported by Bonfire Societies and plans were well-developed, but there was a possibility that it could not be mounted this year but would be presented in 2017. Members had been impressed by the concept and endorsed this project. (*Post-meeting note: it was subsequently advised that this project must be deferred to 2017*).

It was resolved that:

FC2016/69.3.1 The Minutes of the Commemoration Working Party held on 21st October 2016 (*copy in minute book*) are noted;

FC2016/69.3.2 Lewes Town Council agrees in principle to some form of permanent memorial for the Royal Sussex Regimental Association, subject to firm proposals coming forward for detailed consideration at a later date.

d) *Building Repairs Working Party 21st October 2016*: Cllr Chartier presented the minutes of this meeting (*copy in minute book*)

Cllr Rowell had registered concerns which he summarized as:

1. Financial control procedure 11.1g had not been complied with.
2. No explanation in the minutes as to why it had not been complied with
3. No explanation in the minutes as to how this contract complies with the procedures had been given.
4. Does the working party have authority to contract?
5. “Specialist services” is not a clear enough term and 11.1a allows for a substantial weakness in control.
6. Council had not been given the opportunity to satisfy itself that it has obtained value for money on this contract.

These points were contended, and the opinion expressed that in essence they represented dissatisfaction with the particular wording of minutes. The original remit of the Working Party was to commission repairs and refurbishment at the Town Hall. This had been, logically, extended in 2014 by Council to include ‘*administration of the project to refurbish the Malling Community Centre*’, and it was generally held that the wording of the relevant minute represented the wishes of the Council that the Working Party should manage the project in that the word “administer” was understood to include the contexts of “manage” and “control”. Cllr Rowell submitted that he had no opportunity to raise concerns when the minutes of the last meeting were presented to Council, although this was strongly refuted by colleagues, who noted how straightforward it was to indicate a wish to speak at any meeting. Other members could not accept the interpretation of incomplete or misleading minutes, and considered that the record of this project to-date, and the Working Party’s decisions, was clear. The Chairman had asked TC to obtain an opinion from the Council’s internal auditor, and they had discussed the matter in detail. TC reported that the auditor was entirely comfortable with the way the Working Party had behaved; the structure of minutes and the detail that had been recorded, and the clarity of current SO’s and Financial Regulations. He could see no objection to the process to date and would certainly not find grounds for censure. TC had described the manner in which the Working Party had assured itself regarding value-for-money aspects and the fact that minutes did not make specific reference to itemised regulations was not seen as important. TC suggested that if this aspect caused any concern the minutes of the present meeting would now regularize that situation. For the avoidance of doubt: it was confirmed that BLB had been commissioned for specialist services to be provided [FCP 11.1 a) (ii)], and their value-for-money *bona fides* had been satisfied prior to other contracts in previous years and principal councils had validated their cost structure.

Works to the Town Hall roof were proceeding well, and surprisingly few “extras” had been found as the true condition of the structures was exposed by the removal of old material. To date this had discovered only a small amount of rotten timber, and several courses of brickwork to a gable-end which needed to be taken down and rebuilt. These costs were likely to be only a few hundred pounds.

Members had considered a rough-draft Project Execution Plan submitted by BLB Surveyors for the Malling Community Centre refurbishment, and the results of the tender process recently conducted regarding preliminary “due diligence” surveys.

Project Execution Plan: This was obviously based upon a standard template, and some sections had not been “tailored” with detail of the actual MCC refurbishment project.

This document had been analysed in detail and a series of amendments noted.

On the broader aspects of the proposed refurbishment it was proposed that: when Architects design ideas were available, a meeting of the Working party could be held at the Malling Community Centre and the public invited to comment. During works, when inevitably the facilities would be unavailable for a time, efforts would be made to suggest alternative venues for the regular users. It was thought that some might utilize Landport Youth Centre but Cllr O’Keeffe had indicated this was unlikely to be available. In response to a question TC had explained the implications regarding Value Added Tax. A question was raised regarding funding: the Council held £263,000 in an earmarked Reserve, and other Reserves could be appropriated if required to add more. This would not cover the whole cost of the project (estimated at >£400,000), but it was anticipated that grants would be available for several elements once the design was established eg sports-oriented funds which may contribute toward changing facilities and environmental funds and others which offer support for community buildings. Cllr O’Keeffe had suggested that she would be happy to investigate potential applications. Should there remain a shortfall in the funds, it was always open to Council to borrow from the Public Works Loans Board. This had been understood from the outset, when a refurbishment project was first contemplated by Council.

Architects to be invited to tender: BLB had proposed a short list of RIBA Chartered Architects practices who were considered to have relevant expertise and should be invited to express interest in the project. Members agreed these and proposed an addition in respect of a practice who had been engaged with the initial feasibility assessment in 2013.

At this point the meeting had resolved to exclude the press and public, as during the remainder of the meeting the business was to consider tender values and submissions for prospective contracts.

“Due diligence” surveys: BLB had conducted a tender exercise on the Council’s behalf; inviting bids for surveys required before the project could be practically commenced: an Asbestos survey; a Measured Building survey, and a survey of Mechanical and Electrical Plant installations. All firms bidding were local and of the nine invited (three in each discipline) only two had declined to tender. In each case the recommended contractor was also the lowest bid.

In conclusion, the Working Party had accepted the Project Execution Plan, with amendments as noted during the meeting; a list of architects to be invited to tender, and agreed the results of the tender process for preliminary “due diligence” surveys. The bids accepted were:

Asbestos risk: DAF Consulting (£760)

Mechanical & electrical plant survey: Delta Green Environment Design (£2,010)

Measured buildings survey: Zara Associates (£1,435)

The group would meet again when an appropriate milestone stage was reached.

It was resolved that:

FC2016/69.4 The Minutes of the Building Repairs Working part 21st October 2016 (*copy in minute book*) are noted.

e) *Liaison meeting with Friends of Lewes 25th October 2016:* Cllr Chartier, who had been asked to Chair this meeting, presented the minutes (*copy in minute book*)

Pipe Passage lighting - At the previous meeting it had been proposed that the FoL; LTC, and Lewes Association for Restoration & Conservation (LARC) might jointly-fund the replacement of three street luminaires in Pipe Passage, the original elegant historic fittings having recently been replaced by East Sussex County Council (ESCC) with utilitarian modern designs. The recently-installed units could be replaced with an appropriate design at a cost of approximately £2,000. It had subsequently been confirmed that LARC would contribute £1,000 to this end, and FoL would contribute £500. The Council had agreed the proposal and would pay the balance of approximately £500. For reasons of practicality the Council would act as principal, and an order for works had been placed.

Tourist Maps - At the previous meeting it had been noted that the large maps produced by FoL and shown in display cases at strategic locations in the town centre (car parks etc.) were becoming out-of-date. It was suggested that it may be sensible to wait until this was a little more advanced before a comprehensive update was drafted. There was agreement in-principle to a future joint project, subject to Council agreement when detail was established. There had been no further development of this and it was suggested that a full 'audit' of major changes to the town, both since last publication and anticipated in the near future, would be beneficial. There was suggestion that Lewes District Council might be prepared to contribute to this. It was agreed that this item would be routinely monitored at subsequent liaison meetings.

Riverside path (South of Bear Yard) - The riverside route from Timberyard Lane was occluded by the electricity sub-station but there was space for a path to be created alongside. Possible inclusion of the principle within the Neighbourhood Plan had been proposed, and it was expected that this would feature in the appropriate section. UK Power Networks (UKPN) had indicated they had no objection but would seek relief from responsibilities and inclusion of appropriate safety screening. These concerns, and any liability arising for the retaining wall on the riverbank, would be discussed with UKPN.

Land adjoining Castle Ditch Lane ("the Magic Circle") - Design drawings for this project had been circulated. Footpath dedication had now been addressed, although there were outstanding issues related to ownership of the land. Responses were awaited from Lewes District Council and ESCC. The FoL recommended that the public seating and peace-garden should constitute a single project for practical reasons, and the design proposal was on that basis. This, and a target of 2018, was agreed. Mr Beasley, the architect of the plans, would consult the District and National Park Authority Conservation Officers and Historic England. At an appropriate stage it was intended to involve schools and the wider public. FoL were seeking LTC's general agreement, as funding could not be addressed until all agencies had indicated their position.

Overhead electricity cables - The South Downs Society held a sum of money, bequeathed by the late Paul Millmore, to address the issue of unsightly overhead cables. This was a modest amount, but agreement had been reached with the South Downs National Park Authority and FoL that a pilot scheme could be conducted, and originally a suitable scheme was thought to be the installation serving Albion Street. This had since been deemed to be not workable at present, and FoL continued to seek alternative suggestions. It was suggested that the project could feature in the Council's Newsletter to invite site suggestions.

War memorials - A project to research a directory of all war memorials in Lewes had been suggested. A question had arisen at the previous meeting as to the future of the plaque within Lewes Post Office, commemorating postal workers who had fallen, should plans to relocate the service come to fruition. The present location of the plaque was discussed (believed to remain undisturbed at time of writing) and it was thought that the Post Office management had a location in mind, although this was not clear. They would be reminded of offers to house the plaque if required. The directory project was considered to represent a significant amount of work and there were currently no resources available. Cllr O'Keeffe described her "Missing from the Memorial" project and sought feedback. As it was anticipated that additions to the war memorial would be problematic (as it was now listed as a Grade 2* heritage structure) she wondered if the Town Hall foyer might accommodate some form of commemorative list. This could be proposed to the Council in due course.

Mount Place wall - There had been brief discussion on the continuing deterioration of the rendered surface to this prominent local feature, which was becoming more unsightly. Ownership was not known, and there was some discussion as to who would be the most-likely "candidate". It was suggested that Cllr O'Keeffe, in whose ESCC Ward it fell, might investigate this with residents in the hope that one might hold some documents

that would shed light on the question.

Interpretive plaques for local buildings – The meeting had received an update on the latest agreed batch of plaques, and it was noted that the Premier Inn had reinstated the plaque removed from the previous Magistrates Court building; which was welcomed. For the future, it was agreed that only “strong candidates” should be brought-forward as suggestions for new plaques to avoid potential saturation; given the town’s wealth of historic connections.

FoL Trees project - A proposed planting schedule had been distributed for this project, and other suggestions were contributed. Detail was awaited as to the replacements proposed for trees lost from St Anne’s Hill.

White Lion - The figurine had been consigned for cleaning and refinishing by its maker, as he had been unhappy at the rapid weathering noted since installation. In the event he had decided to remanufacture the figure using a different compound material and the new figure had been installed in Westgate recently.

Paving adjacent Crown Court - A recent meeting with ESCC officers was reported; at which strengthening works to remedy problems at this site had been discussed. An original estimate of around £25,000 in March 2016 had increased to £45,000 in August and a figure of >£55,000 was now suggested although details were awaited. This matter would be kept under review

It was resolved that:

FC2016/69.5 The Minutes of the Liaison meeting with Friends of Lewes 25th October 2016 (*copy in minute book*) are noted.

f) *Communications Working Party 27th October 2016*: Cllr O’Keeffe presented the minutes of the meeting (*copy in minute book*) which had considered:

Social Media i.e. the use of Facebook and Twitter. TC had advised that whilst the Council had an adopted policy this was modelled upon an early example and a review would be appropriate. It was agreed that some examples of modern policies from other Councils should be obtained for consideration at the next meeting.

Website: TC had met with colleagues from Hailsham Town Council, whose recent new website had been viewed favourable with Members at an earlier meeting. The company who had produced the sites were local to Lewes as were other providers who had been asked to submit proposals.

Integration of a new website with Facebook and Twitter: Live examples of how this worked had been projected and various opinions expressed. At the next meeting Members planned to look at examples of modern social media policies as a specific item for the agenda and would endeavour to draft a policy for recommendation to Council.

Council’s Newsletter: Members had been encouraged to send items of relevance to TC and to take photographs if they attended an event which could be used as a contribution to the newsletter; which the Communications Working Party were reviving.

It was resolved that:

FC2016/69.6 The Minutes of the Communications Working Party 27th October 2016 (*copy in minute book*) are noted.

g) *Personnel Panel 2nd November 2016*: The Mayor presented the Minutes of the Personnel Panel (*copy in minute book*)

The panel had considered the Council’s prevailing training policy, and held a lengthy discussion on appropriate options to deliver Councillor training and the availability of suitable “trainers”. TC had presented summary returns from Councillors’ self-assessment questionnaires, which indicated that general training continued to be appropriate in all areas. There were one or two fields where a different approach may be effective but overall it was agreed that the most effective way to deliver training was by inviting providers to present sessions in-house, tailored to the Council’s scale of operation, as it was classified as one of the few hundred ‘larger’ parish councils in the country.

Regarding the self-assessment exercise: appropriate seminars or similar were sought that would address the needs of respondents who indicated positive need for training (levels 4/5), and allowed the inclusion of those who indicated only passive requirements (level 3) wherever possible. Direct provision allowed for everyone to be included, and for places to be offered to other parish councils in the District.

There had been questions as to how Continuing Professional Development (CPD) was supported, although acknowledged that with the profile of the council's very small staff team this was largely of an informal nature. TC described various elements that effectively addressed this context. Some specific proposals were discussed, such as Diversity training (already noted as a future prospect) and training for Councillors in the use of social media.

Some Members considered that opportunities to meet and 'cross-fertilize' ideas with fellows from other areas was important, and there was some discussion on how this had been achieved in the past. Of particular note was the friendly link with Chichester City Council (parish council) whereby reciprocal day visits had been arranged from time to time on common topics such as Planning. This could be re-invigorated and TC would approach his colleague at Chichester to discuss this. Locally, it was suggested that there could be merit in similar meetings with Newhaven Town Council and this would also be pursued.

It was commented that the Council had within its own ranks one of the best sources of training in areas such as "The Council as an Employer" in Cllr Barker – a highly-experienced professional adviser working nationally across local government for over 30 years. Members were also reminded that their most immediate source of advice should always be the Town Clerk, and particularly when their enquiry related to Lewes-specific detail; financial structure, or budgets. There were frequent opportunities for Members to meet and interact with staff, and all were encouraged to take advantage of these.

Scheduling for training was discussed and it was explained that 2015/16 had unfortunately been an untypical election year as so many councils had seen unprecedented numbers of seats change and huge influx of novice Members, which had taxed the systems which provided training and other services in the sector.

TC and Cllr Barker had updated the Panel on the implementation of the LLF Living Wage for Council staff, and TC presented some information related to staff absence through sickness which had been collated in answer to a recent question. This related days of sickness absence to the theoretical maximum available "productive days" of employees (allowing for weekends; bank holidays; holidays *etc*) and showed that the Council had an enviably low ratio of lost days. Adjusted for two specific long-term illnesses the factor was less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of one percent, with just a few days lost to minor ailments. There were no factors that would require any review of the establishment in the foreseeable future. TC had noted some of the occasional training and development events staff had attended in the past year.

A question had been raised as to how Council was able to assess staff performance in the execution of its decisions. TC had reminded Members that there was a published Annual Plan denoting major areas of work in the year that the Council proposed to initiate and complete or continue, in addition to the projects and initiatives itemised in the Council's budgets and 'everyday' activities. At every Council meeting TC reported under the standard Agenda heading of "Update on Matters in Progress" which represented a continuous review process. Added to that were the reports from Working Parties *etc* in the form of Minutes of their meetings reported to Council. Members could question progress at any time.

Some members considered that a structured system of staff appraisal should be introduced, and there followed a lengthy discussion on the relative merits of such systems. There was considerable research available on the applicability and the positive & negative effects of formal appraisal in organizations and groups of all sizes, and TC was

familiar with both viewpoints, having been trained in the area and having long experience in the application to organizations large and small; public and commercial. He did not consider that appraisal of his staff was appropriate but, if Members desired additional reassurance, he suggested that a periodic (once/twice each year) meeting could be held between the Panel and Town Clerk, facilitated by an independent professional. Immediately to mind was Mr Richard Penn, who had conducted the job evaluation exercise recently. Members were referred to the minutes of the previous meeting, appended to their agenda, where they could read an itemized summary of Mr Penn's illustrious career in local government: with over 30 years in senior positions including Chief Executive roles at Bradford City Council and Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council. Members had considered this was a very practical proposal and asked TC to research costs and practicalities with a view to a decision at their next meeting.

In conclusion:

The Personnel Panel had recommended no change to the current training policy.

Reciprocal meetings with other Parish Councils would be pursued; to facilitate informal networking and idea-sharing.

The Council's generally very low ratio of staff sickness absence was noted and welcomed. Council would be asked to the introduction of a regular meeting with the Town Clerk to discuss progress on corporate objectives; to be facilitated by an independent professional adviser.

There was a brief discussion, and one member insisted that the Panel's proposed regular progress meetings with TC should be labelled as 'performance management reviews'.

It was resolved that:

FC2016/69.7 The Minutes of the Personnel Panel 2nd November 2016 (*copy in minute book*) are noted.

h) *Citizen's Advice Bureau:* Cllr R Murray reported that the grant of £5,000 that Lewes Town Council gives to the CAB helps them provide a vital service to people in Lewes. Consultations and questions from the public mainly concerning benefits and tax credits. The Housing and Planning Act was now in place, and the number of rented private sector homes in the District had doubled over the last 15 years to 6000 households. There were 29 letting agents in Lewes alone. It was reported that CAB would be moving their office premises from Lewes to Newhaven in 2017.

It was resolved that:

FC2016/69.8 The oral report on the Citizens Advice Bureau is noted.

i) *Sussex Community Rail Partnership:* Cllr Catlin reported on a stakeholders' meeting held on 14th October at The Gatwick Hilton. It had been reported to the meeting that Rail journeys had doubled since privatisation in 1996. The re-opening of the Lewes Uckfield line should be covered in the Chancellor's autumn statement due on 23rd November. The experimental trial of ticket office closure would now take place in inner London only and 90% of conductors had signed a new contract for the role of On Board Supervisor. No response had been received from Members to a timetable questionnaire which included a new 23.17 departure from London Victoria serving East Coastway. There would be a reduction to one train every two hours to Plumpton, but an additional service on alternate hours stopping at Cooksbridge through the day, instead of peak hours only. Due to overcrowding on the 2-car diesel service to Ashford it was proposed to replace this with a 4 car electric service to Hastings, and to run a 2 car Ashford service from Hastings. Since the introduction of the through-service Brighton-Ashford, Eurostar services to and from Ashford had been cut back. There were proposals to cut the through Seaford-London services and allow more time for interchange at Lewes. This would remove the possibility of service disruption when problems occur on the single line from Newhaven-Seaford.

It was resolved that:

FC2016/69.9 The oral report on the Sussex Community Rail Partnership is noted.

FC2016/70 UPDATE ON MATTERS IN PROGRESS

- a) *Assembly Room/Corn Exchange roof repairs:* The works were still ongoing.
- b) *Town Hall Fire Alarm:* The system was now fully commissioned, and smoke alarms had been tested in a real event, due to unauthorized smoking near to an entrance door at a recent concert.
- c) *Public Access Defibrillators:* These had been installed and were operational. Dates were awaited from the Ambulance Service regarding training on their use.
- d) *Public WiFi in Town Hall:* This system had gone 'live' on the 10th October and was working well.
- e) *Audit (external):* The Town Brooks Trust Audit for the year-ended March 2016 had been completed, and there were no items to report.
- f) *Government consultation on 2017/18 Local Government Finance Settlement:* Cllrs had been provided with a copy of the response sent by TC to this consultation. He described the general response from parishes across the country, and recounted a meeting to which he had been invited by the National Association of Local Councils, at which the matter was discussed between several of the parishes 'targeted' for potential limitation on their precept, and officers from the Department of Communities & Local Government. Almost without exception, the proposals to 'cap' the precept increases of parishes had been met with the strongest objections, and dire warnings that such a restriction was directly counter to the spirit of localism and would lead to an unwillingness in most parishes to accept any devolution of assets or services from principal authorities.
- i) *Late Night Shopping – 1st December:* As has become the annual tradition, Council's staff would don fancy dress and serve mulled wine and hot chocolate to the public in the Town Hall Foyer, with proceeds divided between the Mayor's good causes.

FC2016/71 NOTICE of ITEMS IN PROSPECT

- a) The next Member's Surgery was scheduled for Tuesday 6th December 2016 – 10:00am – 12:00pm in the Town Hall Foyer – Cllrs Catlin and Rowell volunteered to attend.
- b) The next Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting would be held on Monday 17th November at 7.00pm.
- c) A 'dementia-friendly Lewes' lunchtime drop-in session was scheduled for 25th November, in the Yarrow Room
- d) A Liaison meeting with the Pells Pool Community Association would be held on Tuesday 29th November at 2.30pm in the Yarrow Room.
- e) The next Planning Committee would take place on Tues 29th November at 7:00pm.
- f) The next Council meeting would take place on Thursday 15th December 2016, with a deadline for agenda items to reach TC by noon on Monday 5th December.
- g) Communications Working Party would meet on Monday 19th December at 7.00pm.
- h) The next deadline for grant applications: (cycle 3 of 4 2016/17) was Fri 25th November. The Assessment Panel would meet on Wed 7th December with recommendations being considered by Council at its meeting on 15th December 2016.
- i) Meetings to be arranged were: Buildings Working Party (follow-on), Homes & Workspaces Working Party, Energy efficiency Working Party, Personnel Panel and Finance Working Party.
- j) The deferred Audit Panel meeting would be rescheduled.

There being no further business the Mayor closed the meeting and invited all present to join him in the Parlour for refreshments
The meeting ended at 8:55pm

Signed:

Date:



QUESTION RECEIVED:

What reassurances can the Council give to residents who wish to place their own symbol of Remembrance on the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday, that those items will be treated with the same respect as any other?

Ms J Steele

ANSWER:

We regret that we can offer no assurances as the Town Council has no control over the actions of third-parties.

The Town Council owns the war memorial, but considers itself to hold this in trust for the community, and has no prescription for forms of remembrance. The Council has respect for, and sensitivity toward, any form of memorial and hopes that others will respect this position.

Many separate events are held at the memorial, and wreaths *etc* are normally removed by the Council only if/when they have deteriorated due to the passage of time, provided always that there is no offence to commonly-held standards of taste and decency. The Council may remove memorials for practical reasons such as impending Bonfire celebrations or bad weather, but cannot prevent actions by others at other times.

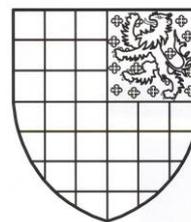
*Cllr Dr G Mayben
Mayor of Lewes 2016/17*

Town Hall
High Street
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 2QS

☎ 01273 471469 Fax: 01273 480919

✉ info@lewes-tc.gov.uk

🌐 www.lewes-tc.gov.uk



**LEWES
TOWN
COUNCIL**

MINUTES

of the meeting of the **Working Party** formed to consider the Council's administrative structure held on **Wednesday 16th November 2016**, in the **Yarrow Room, Town Hall**, Lewes at **7:00pm**.

PRESENT Cllrs A Ashby; S Catlin; M Chartier; W Elliott; J Lamb ; I Makepeace; M Milner; S Murray; R O'Keeffe.

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*).

ASRWP2016/01 ELECTION of CHAIRMAN:

Cllr Chartier was elected as Chairman of the Working Party for the 2016/17 municipal year.

ASRWP2016/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: There were none.

ASRWP2016/03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were none.

ASRWP2016/04 QUESTIONS: There were none

ASRWP2016/05 REMIT of the WORKING PARTY:

The remit of the working party, as defined by Council was reviewed:

Council meeting 29th September 2016 Minute ref FC2016/59

COUNCIL ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE:

Council considered a motion (NOM009/2016 – *copy in minute book*) proposing that Lewes Town Council adopts a revised administrative structure. The proposer amended this and it was resolved that:

FC2016/59.1 A working party be set up consisting of Cllrs Ashby; Catlin; Elliott; Chartier, Lamb, Makepeace, Milner, S Murray; and O'Keeffe to consider the Council's administrative structure and to bring recommendations to Council no later than its scheduled meeting for January 2017.

ASRWP2016/06 BUSINESS OF THE MEETING:

It was submitted that the inspiration for the original motion, giving rise to the Working Party, was a perception that some Councillors and constituents had concerns regarding the extent of forward notice of meetings, and the accessibility for making views known, and misunderstanding as to the technical status of a Working Party compared with a standing committee. Others commented that this was not, in fact, a common belief. The motion proposed a fixed schedule of meetings, published annually and amalgamation of several working parties into, effectively, standing committees.

There followed a general discussion. TC explained the legal distinctions to the various organs of a Council, and noted that the labelling of Working Parties was consciously chosen to reinforce the concept of meetings at which detailed work would be done, as opposed to simply debate. Each meeting should be clear as to its remit and level of delegated authority, and this was usually rehearsed on the agenda before items of business. A title was not really important and legal status was not a matter for concern, as any court would interpret Council's *intentions* should such circumstances ever arise. Agendas and notifications were usually announced significantly further in advance than technically required. One member wisely commented that it was the 'quality' of a meeting that was paramount. Council had, in 2005, recognized the benefits of dealing with issues wherever possible involving all Members at meetings of Council (based upon debate informed by prepared information/reports *etc*) and delegating more time-consuming or complex

considerations to working groups that would break down bulk information into salient detail and bring forward recommendations. The principle was intended to give short timescales and these groups were not expected to meet more than once or twice before completing their task. There was a suggestion that there could be fewer full Council meetings with no impact upon effectiveness. It was important to distinguish between the cabinet system, or 'Westminster model', that prevailed in principal Councils. There was no legal basis for this in parishes but, in any event, it was widely considered to be fundamentally undemocratic. Some Members felt that there were too many meetings in total, and did not like the *ad hoc* principle that they were called when necessary, preferring an annual schedule published in advance. Members who had experienced both models: a fixed-schedule of standing committees and an *ad hoc* system of working parties noted several benefits of the present model, compared with the earlier system. The number of meetings was, they considered, not excessive and a table distributed with the agenda showed an average of 50 meetings per year across the past five years, with many tasks completed with a single meeting. TC advised that whatever schedule might be published, however far in advance, it was always likely that some Members would be unable to attend a meeting for reasons arising at short notice. Similarly; a date fixed in advance meant that unforeseen/new business for the Council, or external factors affecting it, could not be so flexibly addressed. It was also acknowledged that public attendance was usually for a specific purpose, and this was influenced more by Agenda content than date. There were other side-effects as fixed dates limited the availability of rooms that might otherwise be hired-out, and flexibility for staff was compromised. There was some discussion as to the practicalities such as room availability and it was suggested, as an example, that a Panel such as Audit (with a principally internal focus) could meet in TC's office. TC pointed-out that whilst six Members could be accommodated; the public actually had a legal right to attend all meetings and this must always be allowed-for - his office did not offer that capacity.

There was interest in how other Councils were structured, and it was agreed that a further 'fact-finding' meeting in the New Year, would usefully look at examples. TC commented that they would each be unique, both in structure and the underlying reasons for it. He would obtain information from a selection of the larger parish Councils, and background on the designs.

There followed an analysis and discussion on particular areas of operation as described in the original motion; the implications for each of forward scheduling, and potential amalgamation of functions or remits. Members were clear that they did not seek change for its own sake, and carefully considered aspects such as the likely length of meetings, given any particular remit, and any constraints imposed by external factors (*eg* changes to Audit regime; annual government finance reviews *etc*). Whilst further work was envisaged for the new Year, this gave rise to a number of suggested amendments for immediate recommendation to Council, some of which were decided by vote:

ASRWP2016/07

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL:

The Working Party concluded that:

1. *Traffic/transport matters:* As this working party continued to work-through relevant issues not falling within the remit of the Planning committee, and further reactive work in this area (driven by external factors) was anticipated, it should continue. One date should be fixed in the calendar for the municipal year, with subsequent meetings *ad hoc*.
2. *Commemorations and significant events:* This working party had a remit confirmed by Council to 2019, and was 'driven' by a number of external factors. One date should be fixed in the calendar for the municipal year, with subsequent meetings *ad hoc*.

3. *Buildings repair and management:* There was a need for flexibility in the immediate future, as repair/refurbishment projects were underway. Longer term – it could be helpful to extend the remit of the working party to include aspects of buildings (and land) management, especially as Malling Community Centre would come back into direct management after its refurbishment and further land acquisitions were in prospect. It was anticipated that the whole context of land & buildings management would change for the Council in the next few years and the matter would be revisited as required. For the forthcoming year, it should be retitled “Buildings & land management Committee”, and assimilate the remit of the current Energy Efficiency Working party but NOT that of the All Saints Steering Group, which should remain unaltered. Two dates should be fixed in the calendar for the municipal year, with subsequent meetings *ad hoc*.
4. *Communications:* This working party should fix four dates in the calendar for the municipal year, related to the publishing cycle of the Newsletter, with other meetings if required.
5. *Finance:* This working party was currently awaiting decisions by Government affecting the forthcoming year’s budget. It usually required only one meeting in any year, but this was never certain. A similar situation could arise in any year, and it was agreed that flexibility was important. One meeting should be scheduled for December each year, with the exact date to be determined according to circumstances.
6. *Audit:* This was affected by a prevailing, externally-imposed, audit regime and this was subject to change in any year. Flexibility was therefore desirable, although internal functions to address assurance matters could be on a fixed programme. This Panel should set its meetings for the third week following the end of a financial Quarter, with actual dates to be confirmed.
7. *Personnel Panel:* This should meet at least twice each year.
8. *‘Lead Members’:* These roles had never been intended to reflect the executive roles as at a principal council, but rather as ‘champion’ or ‘spokesperson’ in key areas. It was considered that these were now superfluous and should be scrapped.
9. Other meetings, such as occasional liaison with Friends of Lewes and Pells Pool Community Association should continue *ad hoc* as now.

ASRWP2016/08 There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed, and thanked everyone for their attendance. *The meeting closed at 9:10pm*

Signed date

- St Anne’s School. This had reduced in prospective numbers as ESCC agreed with a number they were comfortable with at the moment.
- St Anne’s Crescent was the Lewes land site where it was suggested to the County Council that the car park (which is set below the level of the street) could be decked. Plans had already been drawn up for this.
- Pells School – a very controversial site. The reason this had been included is that it could be allocated for ‘housing for local people’. This could be a supplementary document regarding affordability for housing. However, if it was accepted that this site may need to remain as a school.
- Saxonbury Lodge – This would be just for the conversion of the building and not for the use of the land around the site.
- School Hill Dr’s Surgery is owned by Lewes District Council - six units would be built within the building.
- Mallong Close/opposite Police Headquarters – an open space that is not really used for anything but may be good for housing for the elderly (bungalows).
- North Street/East Street – Could be redeveloped to a similar scale as it once was a 3 storey tenements with a pitched roof.
- East Street Car Park – not sure that this land would be released. However the car park would be blocked at the top once the Santon Development goes ahead.
- Police Garages/Spital Road – May not be released for housing. Police Estates team had been contacted. Waiting for a response from the Police.
- Land at Landport/Kingsley Road Garages – It had already been agreed that this site would be released for housing.
- Land adjacent to Mallong Community Centre – This would have to be decided by Full Council.
- Station Car Park – decking over the car park to provide low rise housing.

In addition there was a pre-application lodged for 41 houses on the land behind Tesco and another for the Antiques Centre in Station Street. The upper floors of the Post Office could also be used to provide housing units.

Richard explained that the group could add their own ideas on what they would like a developer to design. Local definitions and local knowledge relating to ‘low cost housing’, ‘local affordability’ ‘sustainability’ ‘design’ etc. could be added to the sites which would be helpful to Feria who would then use the 16 sites and embed them into the Draft Plan. Further housing sites suggested could follow on. It was favourable to have too many sites in the Plan in that if one was rejected another site could not automatically replace it and would have to be subjected to fresh consultation.

The next stage of the process would be the six week pre-submission ‘Regulation 14’ Consultation run by the Town Council. Between the pre-submission and inspection there would be revisions to be made based on views by the public.

4. Overview of November Draft LNP, and Forward Plan

Feria would convert the Draft Plan into the format that they need. The Draft would be returned to the group in two weeks. The Draft would be more effective with the housing sties (maps) and policies in it as issues in the plan could be changed into site-specific comments instead of generalisation. That will leave the group 3 weeks leading up to Christmas to finish the editing with more specific information.

A question was raised relating to green spaces; in the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations there was a mechanism to protect areas of community recreational or cultural value.

SDNPA comments on the draft – Feria would put the relevant comments from the SDNPA into the current draft. The authority would comment again when the plan was further revised. It was suggested that the group hold another workshop where group comments could be made on the draft rather than individual comments.

5.	<p><u>LNP Schedule update</u></p> <p>The Chairman showed a slide with the Forward Plan and Critical Path for the plan with milestones.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text, photos & maps – Revised draft had been received from Feria. Current comments rolled into text & and returned by Feria. Update by Feria. Further comments and revisions (on restricted basis). Final revisions to Draft, post on website • New Housing – Continue research, meetings with landowners etc. Fresh call for sites. Research fresh sites. Prepare data sheets & maps for each site (Feria) • Public Consultation (Regulation 14) – Prepare Leaflet and make mail drop (with Feria). Prepare maps, illustrations, etc (Feria). Public Consultation. Drop in event (noon-noon + one evening) • Summarise public consultation comments. Incorporate as appropriate into Final Plan. Issue to SDNPA.
6.	<p><u>Any other business – Eco Systems Services</u></p> <p>The Chairman informed the group that Dr Colin Tingle who had been working on the Eco Systems approach was seriously ill and he would be sending the Group’s best wishes to him. The Chairman had a series of questions on Eco Systems that he put to the group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Why is Lewes the only NPlan so far to adopt the Ecosystem Approach? (Because the SDNPA told us to use this approach?) b) What does this Approach do extra that a reasonable environmental protection approach adopted by every other NPlan does not do? c) How can a lay person read through this section without quickly losing interest? d) What specific proposals relevant to Lewes are actually required, how will they be policed, etc? <p>Cllr Catlin referred to question (a) that Lewes Town Council agreed that one of the objectives would be to insist on an Eco System approach. This decision would have to be revised by the Council if it was no longer thought appropriate. Richard Eastham confirmed that when the consultants were appointed the Eco System approach was included in the tender specification. The Town Clerk offered an anecdote regarding effects on the Pells lake of water abstraction for human consumption over the course of the 20th century, which illustrated the real impacts of an EcoSystem approach by showing the long-term effect of planning in the absence of such a context.</p> <p>Kirsten Firth informed the group that she had been speaking with Colin who was still in contact with SDNPA and other experts in the Eco Systems field as this was a new topic for Neighbourhood Planning. Neville Harrison told the group the approach is a key factor in the Local Plan and the SDNPA would support the Eco Systems approach in the Neighbourhood Plan. Richard Eastham explained that whilst the Eco Systems approach can work well on a grander scale it can struggle in a highly urbanised area.</p> <p>The Chairman had spoken to Colin several times and had suggested to him the difficulty of ‘selling’ Ecosystem or Natural Capital.</p> <p>After a long debate where several people expressed their views it was agreed that Kirsten would approach Colin and see if she could take over where Colin left off and that Kirsten would also liaise with Richard with a view to producing a simplified text.</p>
7.	<p>The next meeting of the Steering Group would be on 21st December at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>The Meeting ended at 8.50pm</i></p>

NOTES OF MEETING

<i>Between</i>	LEWES TOWN COUNCIL (LTC) and PELLS POOL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (PPCA)		
<i>Reason for meeting</i>	Regular liaison meeting between organizations		
<i>Venue</i>	Yarrow Room, Town Hall		
<i>Date</i>	2:30pm Tuesday 29 th November 2016		
<i>Attending</i>	Conrad Ryle	PPCA (Chairman)	
	Wendy Stonestreet	PPCA	
	James Booth	PPCA	
	Phil Ransley	PPCA (pool manager)	
	Cllr S Catlin	LTC	
	Cllr M Chartier	LTC	
	Cllr S Murray	LTC	
	Cllr R O'Keeffe	LTC	
	Steve Brigden	LTC (Town Clerk [TC])	
NOTES:			
1.	Cllr Chartier was asked to act as Chairman for the meeting, and agreed.		
2.	<p>Mr Ryle presented his Chairman's report for the 2016 season at the pool:</p> <p>“In many ways this season has been our most successful to date. This was helped by better than average, but not exceptional weather.</p> <p>We have provided extended opening hours with adult only, early morning sessions from 7am to 9am every week day and general public sessions from 10 am to 7 pm every day (except Tuesday's) from June to September. This was possible due to improvements made to the plant room in the previous two seasons. The water quality held up very well despite heavy bather loads over an extended period. Our publicity through social media and conventional methods has lead to many more customers than in previous seasons and we were pleased to see an increase in the number of 'serious swimmers' who came to the pool in all weather conditions. We are now in a very strong financial position with around £150,000 in the bank</p> <p>Our commitment to community involvement continued with a series of evening sessions lead by Brighton Triathlon club. The pool was hired out to individuals and local organisations for evening gatherings throughout the season. The was a successful concert featuring Lewes Orchestra and the annual 'Midsummer Madness' concert raised around £4000 that was split between the 'Starfish' youth music project and Landport and Malling summer play-scheme's. The sponsored swim for the Macmillan charity went ahead as last year, we are awaiting the final figures for this. We also had our very own writer in residence - Tanya Shadrack - who had a positive influence around the place and provided some good publicity.</p> <p>Success has brought some problems. We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Phil Ransley our manager who has worked above and beyond the call of duty and has built up many weeks of overtime over the season. We are revising our staffing structure for next season and seek to employ a full time permanent deputy manager and provide part time contracts with overtime options for our life-guards. there were a few occasions when we had to operate a, 'one in one out', door policy in order to maintain safety standards, and customers sometimes waited for up to an hour to get in. This was most problematic on Tuesday's where the pool was hired out until mid-day by the 'Pells Paddlers' group. This is to be reviewed.</p> <p>Now planning permission for the Phoenix development has been granted, and we know</p>		

	<p>that the pool will lie within the flood protection area we are hopeful that the planned development of the kiosk will take place within a two or three years. We have money set aside for our contribution towards that project. However the paddling pool is in need of work, there are cracks and areas of degradation to the concrete tank and the coping stones and surrounding slabs are in need of re-bedding. We have been looking into either refurbishing or replacing the paddling pool and have obtained a quotation for building a replacement pool that includes providing a filtration system and a 'beach like' gentle slope into one side of the pool, that is within our budget. We would very much like to have this in place for next season, it would be a very positive visual indication of the successful partnership between the Town Council and the PPCA.</p> <p>We have a strong committee of trustees who have provided measured contributions, enthusiasm and commitment throughout the year, I would like to thank them and welcome two new members, Brad Chick and Sarah Baylis.”</p>
3.	<p>Mr Ryle went on to describe the PPCA’s proposal for improvements to Paddling pool and surrounding area. This would re-shape the pool and tile it, with improved slabbing to the surround and incorporating the adjacent area as a leisure space with provision for supervising adults. There would be separate filtration to the water and a secondary refreshment area. Quotes had been obtained and this project would cost £40,000 and could be completed for the 2017 season. PPCA did not seek financial support for this, but were asking the Council for permission to proceed.</p>
4.	<p>Mr Ransley answered questions on various matters, such as the night-time levels of antisocial behaviour - reported as relatively low and weather-dependent. There had been minor damage and some evidence of drug use, but no more than was consistent with any public open space.</p>
5.	<p>Councillors warmly welcomed the season’s report, and the paddling pool improvement proposal and agreed to recommend that Council granted permission. They thanked the PPCA representatives for their continuing commitment to the Pool, and the partnership between the two organizations.</p>
	<p>There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for their contribution and closed the meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Meeting ended 3:10pm</i></p>

North Street Quarter, Lewes Landscape and Play Working Group

Meeting No. 3 - Consultation Summary



Public Consultation 1

Questionnaires total: 74 responses (Online and paper)

**St Johns Church Hall:
25th November
10.00am-6.30pm**

Estimated Attendance: 180-200

**Malling Fields Community Centre:
26th November
10.00am-2.00pm**

Estimated Attendance: 100-120

Pells Recreation Ground

Question 1.1: What do you like about the Pells Recreation Ground?

Wild character **Nothing** **Trees** **Green space** **Shelter** **Grass**

Safe **Space for games and creative play** **Biodiversity**

Intimate **Social** **Natural materials** **Open Space** **Shaded**

Picnics **Play equipment** **Enclosure** **Connection to Pells Pool**

Natural environment **Quiet/Peaceful** **Relax** **Attractive**

Caters for younger children **Relationship with the school**

Pells Recreation Ground

Question 1.2: What would you like to see done to improve the Pells Recreation Ground?

Pells pond improvements **Maintain sense of safety**

Improved boundaries **Trim trail/fitness equipment**

Play leader **Volleyball** Maintenance considered **Protect existing Trees**

Planting – wildflowers **Sand Play Hides and dens**

No Extra Entrance **Natural materials**

Imaginative play **More seating** New entrance

Tree planting **Challenging play**

Shade Lighting Litter bins Art Toilets Brook street Drainage Flint wall

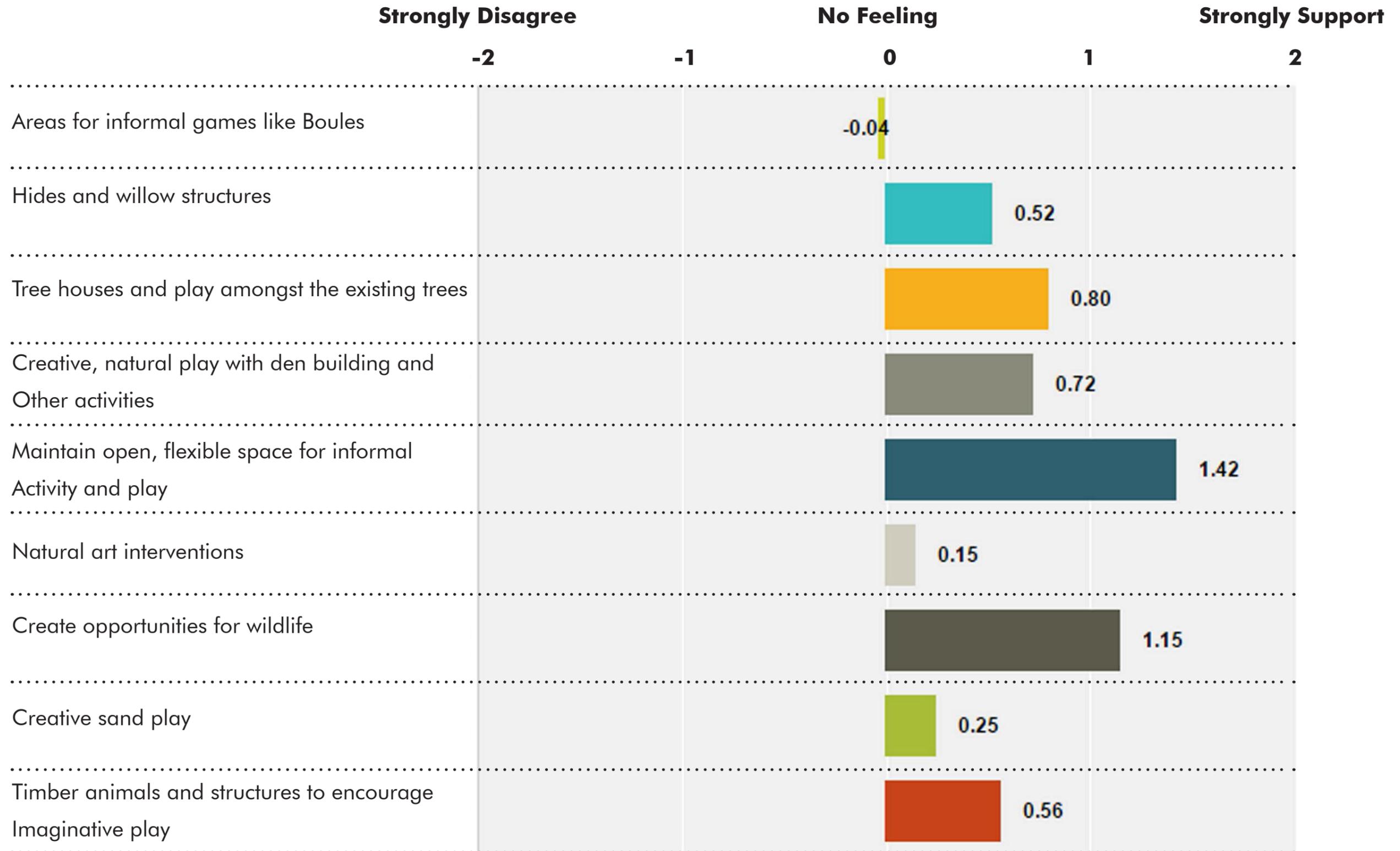
Play equipment **Kiosk/café**

Minimal intervention Wildlife Hire games

No hard surface **Sand pit** **Connect to pool**

Pells Recreation Ground

Question 1.3: Please let us know what you think of the following possible enhancements to Pells Recreation Grounds?



Malling Fields

Question 2.1: Please tell us what you like about Malling Fields?

Separate play for young children Events space

Open flexible space

MUGA Skate area Trees Play area

Sport pitches Dog friendly

Riverside Social space

Views and downland setting Accessible from town

Question 2.2: Please let us know what you think of the following possible enhancements to Malling Fields:

Improved Drainage Maintenance considered Biodiversity

Path network Seating Community centre – indoor

Tree planting **Dog/litter bins** Bmx trail **Trim trail**

Improve access **Play** Shelter **Teenage and adult facilities**

Tennis Boules **Climbing boulders**

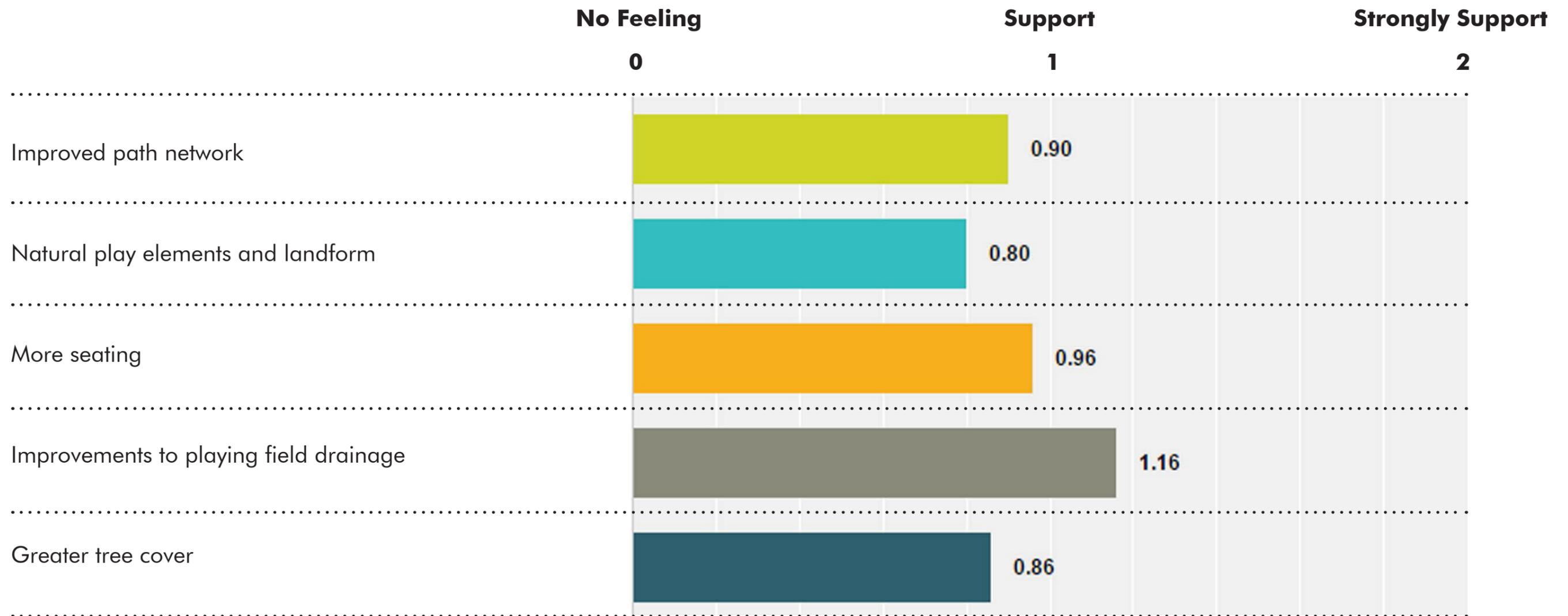
Table tennis **Riverside setting** Large climbing frames

Old rail line path **Inclusive skate area** **Planting** Parkour

Landform – play and skate **Lighting** Trampolines Toilets

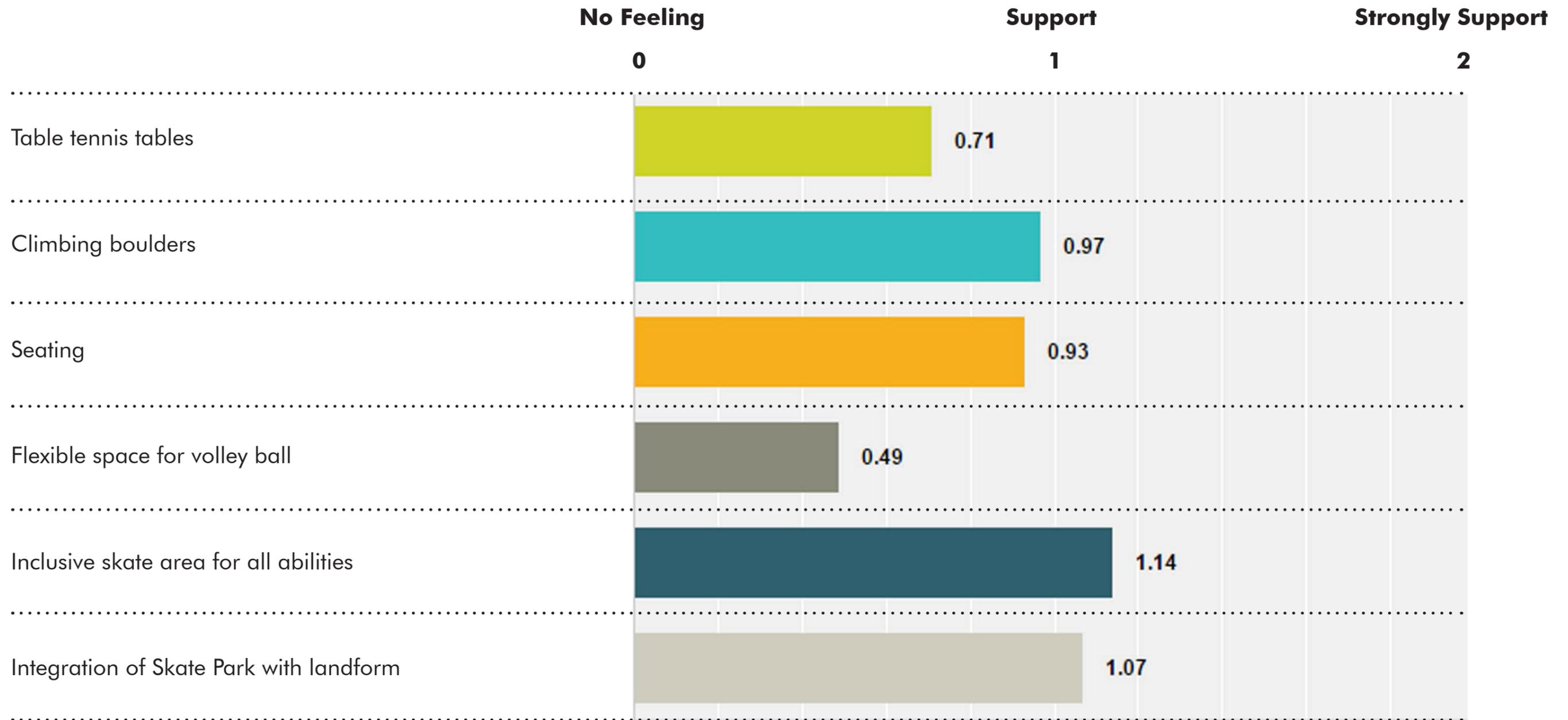
Malling Fields

Question 2.3: Please let us know what you think of the following possible enhancements to Malling Fields:



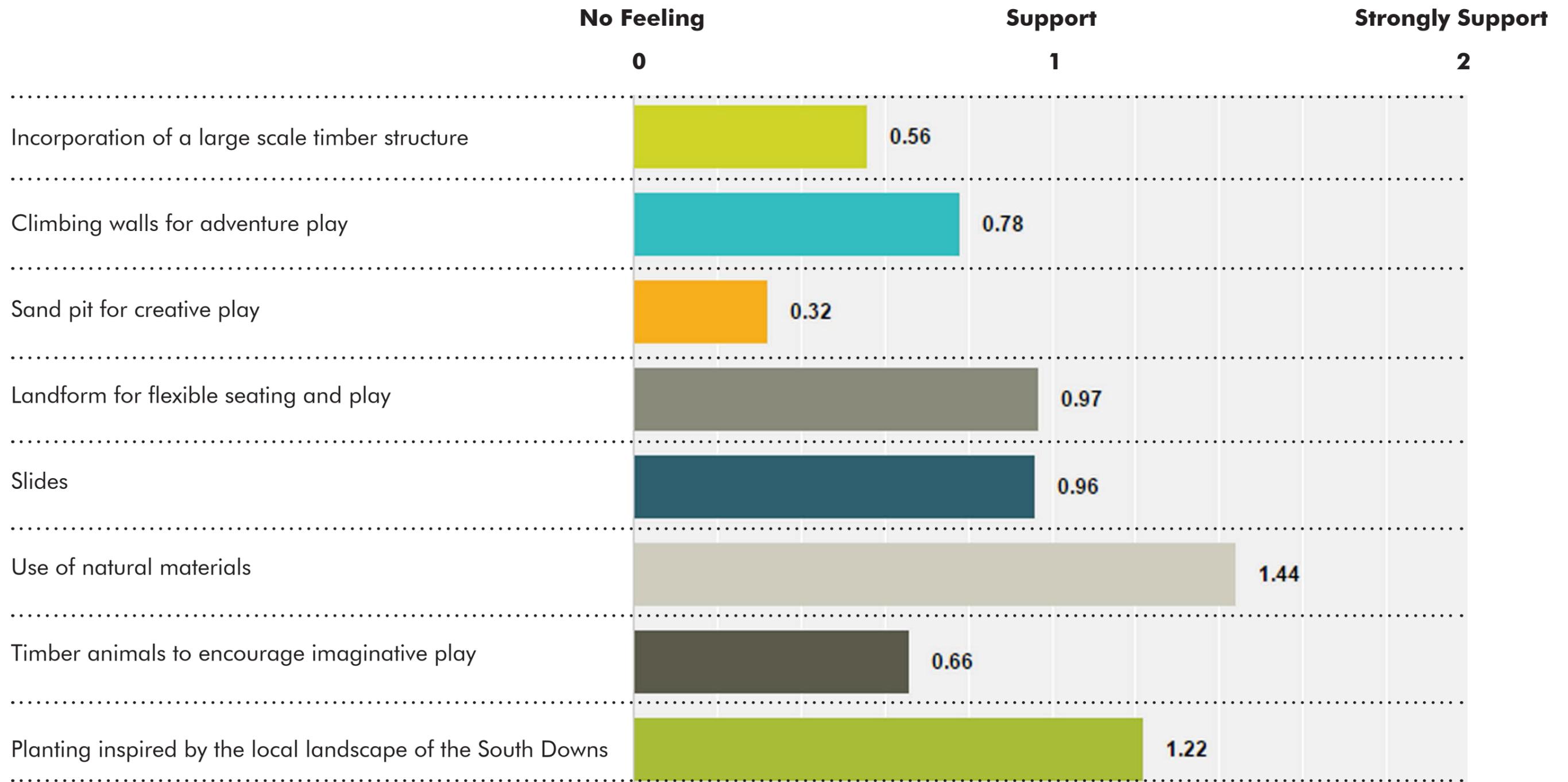
Malling Fields

Question 3: Please let us know what you think of the following possible enhancements to Malling Fields Games and Skate area :



Malling Fields

Question 4: Please let us know what you think of the following possible enhancements to Malling Fields Play area:



Summary of keys issues: Pells Recreation Ground

- A new entrance leading from the new development was the main concern for many people with some individuals passionately against the idea
- Any interventions should enhance the existing character of the space and not impact on the sense of 'wild', 'safety' and 'enclosure'
- New play equipment should be made of natural materials
- New play equipment should not dominate the space and enhance the play experience for all age groups
- More/Improved Seating areas/benches should be introduced
- The open, central lawned area should be a flexible space for informal activities
- Boundaries to the space should be upgraded
- Connections/improvements should be co-ordinated with Pells Pool and opportunity for a cafe/kiosk should be explored
- General lack of understanding of impact of Flood defences along Pelham Terrace and Pells Pool

Summary of keys issues: Malling Fields

- New path and cycleways should connect to wider routes and ensure they are accessible for all
- The sense of open space and flexibility for sports and events should be maintained
- The riverside location provides great opportunity for recreation and provide a unique sense of place in the Recreation ground which could be enhanced
- Drainage in localised areas near path ways and main routes as well as sports pitch drainage
- Future of the Community centre and indoor facilities including toilets and a cafe should be explored
- A new play area would be a great facility for surrounding communities and should include areas for different age groups and use natural materials
- The new skate and games area should be inclusive of all age groups and genders and specific areas for young adults
- Trees and planting would enhance the setting of the Recreation ground

Agenda Item No: 6e)

Report No: FC011/2016

Report Title: Grants panel recommendations – 7th December 2016

Report To: Full Council

Date: 15th December 2016

Report By: S Brigden, Town Clerk

Purpose of Report: To recommend payment of grants as suggested by the Grants Panel, following its meeting on 7th December 2016 (the third of four cycles for 2016/17)

Recommendation(s):

- 1 That the grant payments recommended in this report (as shown in column **G** of the appended table) be approved.

Information:

1 The Grants Panel met on 7th December 2016. Eighteen applications were considered, with requests for support in the sum total of £19,952.

2 Assessing applications were: Cllrs Burrows; Jones; Murray (S); and O’Keeffe. No message had been received from Cllr Watts. *NB following the meeting Cllr Watts advised she had suffered a cycling accident.*

3 Using the system approved by Council, each panellist evaluated applications on their merits in five categories:

- 1 Closeness of match to Lewes Town Council’s grant scheme policy
- 2 Overall “robustness” of the proposal – general likelihood of success/sustainability
- 3 Financial planning exhibited - adequacy/prudence/appropriateness *etc.*
- 4 Scope and sustainability of the proposal – beneficiaries; scale; thoroughness
- 5 A personal (subjective) assessment, based on any special insight or considerations.

Where recommended awards are below the amount requested by the applicant, the details of the proposal were carefully scrutinized as to the appropriateness of the sum requested in relation to the overall scheme or project budget, and alignment with the Council’s published aims. Also considered were factors such as the balance or proportion of Council funding compared with other sources and the applicant’s own funds, and other detail elements.

4 **The recommended grant awards for this cycle are shown at column G, below.**

Salient points, considered by panellists during their deliberation and influencing their final recommendations (noted/highlighted in column H below, where appropriate), fall into the areas of:

- ⊕ No other funding sought.
- ⊕ Sum requested disproportionate to own assets or contribution to scheme or project.
- ⊕ Sum requested from parish disproportionate to total cost of scheme or project.
- ⊕ Project or scheme mis-matched with parish council powers or LTC’s scheme policy.
- ⊕ Sum recommended is considered to be an appropriate/proportionate parish contribution.

S Brigden

8th December 2016

FINANCIAL GRANTS PANEL - 7th December 2016				Cycle 3 - 2016/17			
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
line	Ref.	ORGANIZATION	STATED purpose of organization	STATED purpose of grant requested	£REQ'D	£ RECC'D	Salient comments (if any) by Panellists
1	1	St Peter & St James Hospice	Provides palliative care for people with a terminal, life limiting illness with support and advice for families.	Clinical Nurse Specialist (salary), travel expenses, training, telephone.	1,000	1,000	
2	2	Lewes District Citizens Advice Bureau	To provide free independent confidential advice to people on the rights and responsibilities.	To purchase a laptop and projector for the Lewes office.	755	755	
3	3	Kantanti Ensemble	Perform concerts of orchestral repertoire, giving residents of Lewes and nearby regions the chance to hear fine music	Rehearsals, players fees, management and administration, marketing, publicity, venue hire,	3,000	1,000	proportionate to council scheme
4	4	Cliffe Bonfire Society	Torchlight procession, firework display and associated activities to mark various national, royal and civic events and celebration on 5th November.	Funding to assist their xmas fair fund-raising event held each year in December at the Town Hall.	400	300	proportionate to council scheme
5	5	Ringmer Disability Social Club	A club for disabled men and women 20 years upwards in Lewes, Ringmer and surrounding areas.	For 2 buses to take members to meetings 12 times a year.	800	500	proportionate to council scheme
6	6	The Nutty Wizard	A safe and comfortable space for young people to meet, play pool and enjoy supervised activities.	Rent, insurance, governance, utilities, maintenance etc	1,500	1,200	proportionate to council scheme
7	7	Seedy Saturday	Annual event in the Town Hall to encourage gardening, growing food and outdoor activities.	Speakers, publicity, children's activities, stationery and equipment, room hire, volunteer expenses.	700	700	
8	8	Lewes Priory Cricket Club	To encourage participation in cricket by individuals of all ages.	To purchase new nets.	1,500	900	proportionate to council scheme
9	9	Lewes Concert Orchestra	To provide concerts of classical and light music for the people of Lewes and surrounding areas.	Venue hire, conductor, printing, publicity, hire of music insurance, etc	500	400	proportionate to council scheme
10	10	British Science Assc – Lewes Branch	To provide members of the community to have direct contact with science, engineering, technology and maths activities.	Room hire, van hire for transport of exhibit materials and misc materials.	502	502	
11	11	St John Sub Castro Church	Church of England, Services for Worship, Pastoral Care, Focus for Community Life.	Phase two of building repairs to the building.	1,000	600	proportionate to council scheme
12	12	Westgate Chapel Trust	Maintains and Runs the Grade II Listed Building for the benefit of the community.	To run a volunteer led project 'out of town' to bring more visitors to Lewes.	800	400	proportionate to council scheme
13	13	The Oyster Project Charity	A disabled person led self-help charity that initiates, supports and encourages disabled people to volunteer and contribute to the	Training for Assessors, initial training for new assessors and workshops.	1,200		Project aims unclear. Confusing application
14	14	The Sussex Archaeological Society	To promote the study of archaeology and history of Sussex.	To refurbish the toilets at Lewes Castle.	2,000	1,000	proportionate to council scheme
15	15	iContact	A new Lewes-based community led group for children and young people with an Autistic Spectrum Condition.	Room hire, equipment and consumables, travel expenses, projects and contingency.	1,690	1,200	proportionate to council scheme
16	16	Circles Network	A short break service which enables the family and carers of members to have respite from caring responsibilities.	Rent of Building (47a Western Road), salaries and day to day purchases.	1,000	750	proportionate to council scheme
17	17	Creative Lewes	To develop, strengthen and expand the artistic and creative community of Lewes and surrounding areas.	To produce 250 copies of a 20 page booklet with an essay on the life of Tom Paine and the history of him	995	300	proportionate to council scheme
18	18	Malling Tenants & Residents Assc	Provides weekly supplies of food to 50 people referred from other six agencies in Lewes.	Rent, fridge, storage cupboard, administration etc	610	610	
19							
20		TOTALS			£19,952	£12,117	
21							
22				Miscellaneous Grants Budget		£35,000	
23				"Cycle 1" total grants awarded		£8,110	
24				"Cycle 2" total grants awarded		£9,045	
25				"Cycle 3" total grants recommended		£12,117	
26				"Cycle 4" total grants awarded			
27				Total paid/recommended		£29,272	
28				Budget balance		£5,728	

Lewes Town Council

Internal Audit

Year Ended 31st March 2017



Prepared by: Mulberry & Co
Date of Interim Visit: 22nd November 2016
Date of Final Visit: TBC

Law and Regulation Regarding Internal audit

Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 imposes a duty on local councils to ‘maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control in accordance with the proper practices in relation to internal control. Internal audit is a key component of the system of internal control.

The purpose of internal audit is to review and report to the council whether its systems of financial and other internal controls over its activities and operating procedures are effective.

Internal audit’s role is to assist the council in fulfilling its responsibility to have and maintain proper internal control arrangements and those for the prevention and detection of fraud, error or mistakes

All internal audit work must be reported to the council. Any report by internal audit is addressed to the council, may recommend actions to be taken by the council, and should be treated as a document open to view by local taxpayers.

Two pieces of legislation set out how local councils should behave when accounting for the public funds they manage and what rights local taxpayers have in relation to those accounts. These are the **Audit Commission Act 1998** and the **Accounts and Audit Regulations issued from time to time under the Act**. The requirement for local councils to prepare accounts annually and to subject them to external audit comes from the Audit Commission Act 1998 (the Act). The Act describes the rights of taxpayers and other interested parties in relation to those accounts.

Under the regulations, all local councils must at least once a year conduct in accordance with proper practices a review of the effectiveness of their system of internal control and publicly report the outcome. The Annual Governance Statement in Section 2 of the annual return provides the means for local councils to report to local taxpayers on their system of internal control.

This report is prepared for the council and proper officers of the council named above, for use in fulfilling their obligations under the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations issued from time to time under the Act for preparing the Annual Return and reviewing the effectiveness of their system of internal controls. Mulberry and Co accept no responsibility for any action or inaction taken as a result of the findings of this report and accept no responsibility to any other party other than those named above.

No part of this material may be reproduced in any form without the prior permission of Mulberry & Co.

Contents

Law and Regulation Regarding Internal audit	2
Summary Findings.....	4
Points Forward – Action Plan.....	7
Overview of Council.....	8
Professional Independence and Competence Questionnaire	9
Budget.....	11
Timetable	12
Inherent Risk Assessment.....	13
Specific Audit Plan	14

Summary Findings

I enclose my interim report for your kind attention and presentation to the council. My audit was conducted in accordance with current practices and guidelines and testing was conducted in line with the inherent risks assessment. Whilst I have not tested all transactions, my sample has where appropriate covered the entire year to date. Amongst others, the following areas were covered in my testing:-

- Review of the Financial Regulations & Standing orders
- Review of the Risk Assessments
- Review of the Budgeting process
- Proper Bookkeeping – review of the use of the Sage package.

It is my conclusion that the council has robust policies and procedures in place that are fit for purpose and it has provided evidence to show it is following its own financial regulations and standing orders. In addition to this, the council has risk management strategies in place and policies that enable it to achieve its principle objectives and where there is a financial risk this is appropriately insured for.

Councillors are informed individuals and are provided opportunities for training and every effort is made by the council to ensure new members are given training and support.

The council staff are trained and demonstrate a good working knowledge of the council and actively seek to make continuous improvements for the betterment of the council.

I conclude that at the interim stage there are no significant matters that require attention.

A. BOOKS OF ACCOUNT

The council continues to use Sage a widely-respected professional accounts package, together with excel and word. I have tested the brought forward balances against the prior year annual return and can confirm these have been brought forward correctly.

The Sage system is used daily to report and record the financial transactions of the council and a review of the cashbook shows that all data fields are being entered, the hard copy reports are signed off and reviewed and are easy to read and logically filed. I therefore make no recommendation to change in this system.

The council used Sage payroll, and a manual diary system for hiring's.

The clerk/RFO is responsible for ensuing staff are trained and this is reviewed via the training needs assessment system. There is a training budget in place.

B. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, STANDING ORDERS, POLICIES

The NALC model Financial regulations were taken to council in April 2015, and duly approved. It is diarised to review at council before the year end.

The NALC model Standing Orders were taken to council April 2015 and duly approved. It is diarised to review at council before the year end. It was demonstrated that three clear working days' notice is given of council meetings. Approval has been given by council to issue agendas and papers electronically.

The council has several policies in place and a robust attitude to maintaining and following these on an ongoing basis.

The national/district model Members Code of Conduct was last reviewed/adopted in April 2015. It was demonstrated that the declarations of interest were signed within 28 days of appointment.

The council has an open-door policy and an ethos to providing training and support to members throughout their term as councillor's. The council has a training budget in place and all councillors are given a member's pack that contains policies and regulations and a training self assessment return. The clerk/RFO does retain data on training and meeting attendance so if needed this data could be used as a measure of success/achievement.

Council gives authority to spend via the annual budget process, payments are made so long as there is available budget. The purchase order sign off sheet contains a check list box to indicate the budget has been checked. The council has a dual signatory system in place in respect of cheque and bacs payments. It is clear council has good robust systems, policies and regulations in place and takes seriously its responsibility in this regard.

Council has 18 member positions of which none are currently vacant. Full Council meets 10 times per annum throughout the year.

C. RISK MANAGEMENT & INSURANCE

The council has a risk strategy in place and monitors and reviews risk on an ongoing basis. Council is aware of and has policies in place to mitigate financial risk.

Council is insured with Zurich on a standard local authority long term deal that expires in 2020. Asset and money cover appear adequate and council understands that at the end of the term quotes will need to be taken before renewal.

D. BUDGET & PRECEPT & PLANNING

The council is in the process of preparing the budgets for 2017/18. It is anticipated this will be completed by end of December/January. Full council will finalise in January.

Council has circa £1.2m of bank balances of which £586k is currently earmarked. It is anticipated to spend circa £370k to the end of the year, the remaining general reserves at the year-end will be circa £250k, this equates to roughly four to six months of monetary cover, depending very much on additional spending required for maintenance. This is a little low for a council of this size and I draw council's attention to this.

The council is preparing a neighbourhood plan, and annual plan. The annual plan consolidates the various wants and aspirations of the council into one document. At each full council meeting, there is an update on ongoing matters from the annual plan.

E. INCOME

TBC at the year end

F. PETTY CASH

TBC at the year end

G. PAYROLL

TBC at the year end

H. ASSETS AND INVESTMENTS

The asset register is maintained on word, assets are shown at cost or proxy cost. The council understands it needs to update the web site in respect of its land register under transparency regulations.

I. BANK RECONCILIATIONS

Reconciliations for all bank accounts are carried out regularly, printed off in hard copy and counter signed in accordance with regulations. The reconciliations and cashbook were verified in detail to ensure correct transfer of opening balances. There are no reconciling errors.

The October 2016 bank reconciliation was tested in detail to bank statements and the accounts – there were no errors.

J. YEAR END ACCOUNTS

TBC at the year end

K. TRUSTEESHIP

Clerk demonstrated Charity is up to date with filings and returns.

Mark Mulberry
Internal Auditor
22nd November 2016

Points Forward – Action Plan

Point Forward / Action needed	Auditor notes	Council response
Other		

Overview of Council

	Work Task	Schedule Ref	Notes/Results
Terms of Engagement			
1	Review terms of engagement letter and confirm appropriate to this year		New engagement letter issued Engagement letter is kept on the correspondence file.
2	Confirm that the professional independence and competence questionnaire has been completed and agreed with the client	1.2	Yes – confirmed and attached
3	Complete Budget	1.3	Completed & Agreed with Client
4	Complete Timetable	1.4	Completed & Agreed with Client
Planning Notes – Understanding the Town & Parish Council			
	Number of electors and size of precept		13,000 electors 2016/17: Precept £860k + Grant £53k 2015/16: Precept £780k + Grant £62k 2014/15: Precept £750k + Grant £74k
	Key personnel		Clerk & RFO Steve Brigden Assistant Clerk Fiona Garth Finance Officer Viv McLachlan
	Type of financial accounting in place i.e. Manual books, computerised system		Sage Accounts system – augmented with manual spread sheets Risk assessment software - LCRS
	Does the council carry out an annual risk assessment, and is it documented.		Yes. This is reviewed as a minimum annually.
	Does the council have a good control environment (evidence of internal reviews and counter signing of cheques etc)		There is evidence of regular internal review which is carried out council and committee Full Council circa 5 weekly Planning every 3rd Tuesday Grant Panels quarterly Working parties as and when
	Any significant changes since prior year (staff or procedures)		Enhancements made to procedures to coincide with new sections of financial regulations
	Any there any matters arising from last year's audit and/or management letter		None
	Matters arising from discussions with council, including whether there is any evidence of fraud or material misstatement.		None
	Key high risk or expected problem areas,		None

Professional Independence and Competence Questionnaire

The internal audit function must be sufficiently independent from the management of financial controls and procedures of the council which are the subject of review. The person or persons carrying out internal audit must be competent to carry out the role in a way that meets the business needs of the council.

There are two key principles, which all local councils must follow in setting up their internal audit function, regardless of how procured: **independence and competence**.

INDEPENDENCE	
Do you have any specific reliance on the fee to be earned from this assignment	No
Overdue fees	
Does the client/group of clients owe the firm any money which exceeds our normal credit terms?	No
Litigation	
Is there any actual or anticipated litigation between us and the client in relation to fees, audit work or other work?	No
Associated firms	
Are you or your staff associated with any other practice or organisation which has had any dealings with the client council?	No
Family or other personal relationships	
Do you or any of your staff have personal or family connections with the council or its officers?	No
Mutual business interest	
Do you or any of your staff have any mutual business interests with the client or with an officer or employee of the client?	No
Financial involvement	
Do you or your staff, or anyone closely related to you or any of your staff, have any financial involvement in the client in respect of the following:	
Any beneficial interest in shares or other investments?	No
Any loans or guarantees?	No
Goods and services: hospitality	
Have you or any of your staff accepted materials, goods or services on favourable terms or received undue hospitality from the council?	No
Ex-partners or senior staff	
Has any senior officer of the council been a partner or senior employee of the practice?	No
Is the partner or any senior employee on the audit team in negotiations to join the client?	No
Long association	
Have you been acting for more than 10 years? If yes, then consider rotation/engagement quality review. 6th Year of auditing	No
Provision of other services	
Do we provide any of the following services to the client:-	
Accounting services, book-keeping or payroll services	No
Staff secondments	No
IT services where we are involved in the design, provision or implementation of systems	No
Specialist valuations which are included in the accounts	No
Tax compliance work or tax planning	No

Corporate finance activities	No
Any advocacy services e.g. Tax commissioner hearings	No
Any services relating to the management of the council	No
Any other services that may cause a threat to the firm's objectivity or independence	No
Where any of the above have been answered 'yes', then specify below what safeguards are proposed to maintain integrity and independence:-	
Competence	
Consider the following matters prior to deciding to accept appointment/re-appointment as auditors:	
Are there any particular challenges and risks associated with this client?	No
Do we have sufficient expertise available to undertake this audit engagement?	Yes
Are there sufficient resources available to undertake this audit engagement?	Yes
Having regard to the safeguards identified, I am satisfied that we are independent and competent to perform this audit.	

Budget

		Hours
Planning & Systems Work	Interim Visit	4
File Review and reporting	Interim Visit	1
Financial Procedures	Final Visit	4
File review	Final Visit	1
Total Budget Hours		10
Hourly Rate		£50
Time Cost		£500
Other costs	Mileage	£90
Total Budgeted Cost		£590
Total Budgeted Fee		£750

Timetable

Autumn 2016	Planning and Interim Audit work
June 2017	Final Audit work
June 2017	Issue Audit Report & Letter

Inherent Risk Assessment

Based on the above findings and discussions with council it is my opinion that the inherent risk within the systems of the council is categorised as follows

Work Task	notes	
Are standing orders and financial regulations regularly reviewed	Yes these were on site and were current and reference to a minute	Low Risk
Is council following its written Financial regulations & standing orders	Yes	Low Risk
Does the council have risk assessments in place and are these reviewed at least annually	Yes	Low Risk
Does the council have a committee or working party responsible for internal checking	Yes	Low Risk
Is there evidence of hierarchical review (counter signing bank rec, invoices etc)	Yes	Low Risk
Is there regular reporting against budget?	Yes	Low Risk
Are books and records maintained on a regular basis	Yes	Low Risk
Is the clerk under time pressure	No	Low Risk
Are there complicated transactions?	No complicated transactions	Low Risk
Any changes to key staff	No	Low Risk
Any changes in systems or procedures	No	Low Risk
Is all info on site and to hand?	All info on site and to hand	Low Risk
Any problems in the past	No problems in past	Low Risk
Are there any other factors to consider?	Records neat and tidy	Low Risk

Conclusion & Opinion

I discussed the system above with the RFO and reviewed an invoice picked at random, which contained all the details mentioned above.

The system in place is robust and entirely fit for purpose for a Parish Council of this size. There are good internal controls, policies and procedures in place which are reviewed on an annual basis.

I am of the opinion that the inherent risk in the system is low and would recommend a sample size of 10 when testing in detail and would also state that the internal controls can be relied upon.

Specific Audit Plan

Audit Area Section 4 Annual Return	Notes	Risk of error or misstatement	Tests	Ref
Appropriate books of account have been kept properly throughout the year.	SAGE package in place, limited and uncomplicated transactions	Low	Review transactions in cashbook make verbal enquiries. Test arithmetic.	A
The council's financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	Good, simple system	Low	Review invoices and reconcile to cash book in detail. Review minutes and cheque books for authorisations	B
The council assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	Risk assessment policy written risk assessments carried out	Low	Review and comment	C
The annual precept requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate	SAGE package used	Low	Review minutes for evidence of council discussion of the same	D
Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	Various streams of income	Low	Test to precept application and other documentation as appropriate	E
Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	Minimal petty cash	Low	Test to petty cash tin	F
Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with council approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	Payroll processed using SAGE system in house	Low	Test rates and hours are authorised Test net wages to payments due	G
Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	Fixed asset register in place	Low	Review insurance schedule and cashbook for missing items off the register	H
Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	Regular reconciliations on SAGE	Low	Test reconciliation in detail	I
Accounting statements prepared during	Income and Expenditure	Low	Test audit trail sufficient for electors rights	J

<p>the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.</p>				
<p>Trust funds (including charitable) The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.</p>	<p>Yes – no problems in the past</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Ensure separate meetings, bank and charity info up to date</p>	<p>K</p>

End of interim report