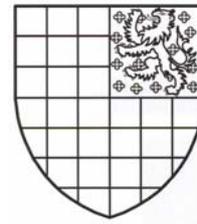


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**LEWES  
TOWN  
COUNCIL**

## *MINUTES*

Of the meeting of **Lewes Town Council** held on  
**Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> June 2012**, in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lewes** at **7:30pm**.

*NB if a record of voting was requested, this is shown in a table appended to these Minutes.*

### **PRESENT:**

Councillors S Catlin (Wischusen); M Chartier (*Mayor*); J Daly; M Kent; P Kingham; L F Li; D Lamport; M Milner; R Murray; S Murray; R O’Keeffe (*Deputy Mayor*); A Price; R Rudkin; J Stockdale and Dr M Turner.

*In attendance:* S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); M Larkin (*Mace Bearer*); Ms E Martin (*C’tee Administration*)

*Observing:* Mrs V McLachlan (*Finance Administration Officer*); Ms L Zeyfert (*All Saints Centre Manager*)

### **FC2012/14 QUESTION TIME:**

There were four members of the public present. Mrs A Cross asked for and was offered re-assurance that a varied programme of “mainstream” films would still be shown at the All Saints Centre on a regular basis even if anticipated increase in income was not realized.

### **FC2012/15 MEMBERS’ DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

Cllrs Chartier; S Murray; R Murray; O’Keeffe; Price and Turner declared interests *iro* agenda item 8c) (Grants Panel recommendations) as they were influential members of applicant bodies.

**FC2012/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies were received from Cllrs I Eiloart and J MacCleary. No message had been received from Cllr Dean.

### **FC2012/17 MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

It was announced that Items 6 (Lewes District Council Presentation) and 13 (Lewes Cinema Petition) would be moved forward on the agenda, for the convenience of visitors attending solely for those items.

The Mayor thanked Members and staff for their help at recent events held in the Town Hall over the Jubilee weekend.

Thanks were also recorded to Members who had attended the “tea and talk” for international students from Sussex Downs College.

The Mayor had responded to a letter published on the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2012 in the Sussex Express decrying a “lack of effort” over flags and bunting in the town during the Jubilee weekend and at Christmas time, outlining the efforts made by both Town and District Councils in this regard.

There was a reminder regarding deadlines and times related to the imminent annual Rotary Club Skittles Tournament, and congratulations were offered to Cllr Catlin for the amount of publicity he had managed to generate on the subject of dangerous pavement surfaces throughout the town.

### **FC2012/18 CONSULTATION:**

The Mayor welcomed Mr Greg McDonald, Economic Regeneration Project Officer from Lewes District Council, who was attending in response to Members’ request for more information regarding the District Council’s draft Public Realm Framework (*copy in minute*

*Continues...*

*book*). Mr McDonald outlined that it was a project to improve the public realm, initially in the main towns of the District, to enhance the quality of life for residents and to attract more visitors. He explained that it would cost an estimated £10,000 for Consultants to evolve a local vision and costed work-programme for Lewes and that £4,000 was available from Lewes District Council and £2,000 from the South Downs National Park Authority. A contribution of £4,000 was sought from the Town Council.

Questions followed, on such topics as: a need to expand the focus of the brief for consultants; integration with Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan proposals; whether local people and organizations would be better than consultants in identifying needs; and potential effects on current issues such as Lewes bus station. Members also highlighted well-understood aspects such as “de-cluttering” - reducing the number of street signs. Mr McDonald insisted that there was a need for a structured document, which could inform strategic decision-makers and assist when seeking funds for projects. It was anticipated that solutions might be as simple as a defined “brand” for signage, perhaps by specifying a particular typeface, or coordinated colours and presentation for public areas within the National Park, or development of the “shared-space” concept where vehicles and pedestrians mingle. Delivery would “probably” be through a stakeholder steering group. There were many other questions for Mr McDonald, and of specific interest to Members was the integration with the rest of Lewes District, and with the emerging Local Plan. He replied that: whilst it would be preferable to seek consultants to prepare a District-wide scheme (at an estimated cost of £50,000), it was feasible to address towns individually. It had been hoped that a start might be made in August, with a final report produced for the end of the year. Members stated that they were uncomfortable with the timing of this proposal in relation to Local and Neighbourhood Plan frameworks, and felt that there needed to be more clarity before any commitment could be made. It was subsequently

**resolved that:**

**FC2012/18.1** Lewes Town Council is willing to continue dialogue regarding Lewes District Council’s draft Public Realm Framework although does not agree to the current proposal (*copy in minute book*) and the attendant request for a financial contribution.

**FC2012/19**

**PETITION:**

Members considered report FC005/2012 (*copy in minute book*) regarding a petition presented on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2012 by Lewes Cinema Ltd. Where comments had been recorded by signatories these were analysed, and responses grouped into representative categories so far as practicable. An error in presentation within the report was noted and corrected. Council noted the premise of the petition and the gist of comments recorded, and Members spoke to explain that the Council was embarked upon its plans for film screenings at All Saints, and trusted that the community would come to understand the decision taken by Council. The All Saints Steering Group would be asked to take account of any relevant comments made by signatories. The service was scheduled to begin in September 2012.

**It was resolved that:**

**FC2012/19.1** Lewes Town Council notes the petition submitted on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2012 by Lewes Cinema Ltd, and asks the Council’s All Saints Steering Group to take due account of relevant comments made by signatories.

**FC2012/20**

**MINUTES:**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2012 were received and signed as an accurate record.

**FC2012/21**

**GENERAL POWER of COMPETENCE:**

Members considered report FC001/2012 (*a copy of which is in the Minute Book*) regarding the adoption of the General Power of Competence arising from the Localism Act 2011. The report explained that this allowed a council that satisfied eligibility criteria to do anything

that competent individuals may lawfully do, and eligibility depended upon a resolution that (at the time the resolution is passed) the Council satisfied the statutory conditions: that a minimum two-thirds of members were declared to be elected at ordinary elections or a by-election, and the Clerk is qualified as stipulated in the legislation, including specific training in exercise of the Power.

Constraints and practical considerations were outlined in the report, and Members were advised that the Council met the prescribed electoral conditions, and the Town Clerk held the necessary qualification.

Subsequently, following a brief discussion **it was resolved that:**

**FC2012/21.1** Lewes Town Council declares that it meets the conditions, prescribed in Article 2 paragraph 2 of The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 (SI2012/965), and hereby resolves to adopt the General Power of Competence as provided in the Localism Act 2011 ss1-8.

**FC2012/22**

## **WORKING PARTIES AND OUTSIDE BODIES:**

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

a] *All Saints Steering Group 12<sup>th</sup> April 2012.* The Minutes of this meeting were received and **it was resolved that:**

**FC2012/22.1** Minutes of the All Saints Steering Group meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> April 2012 (*copy in minute book*) are noted.

b] *Friends of Lewes liaison meeting 12<sup>th</sup> April 2012.* The notes of this meeting were received and a minor error corrected, and **it was resolved that:**

**FC2012/22.2** Minutes of the meeting with representatives of The Friends of Lewes, on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2012 (*copy in minute book*) are noted

c] *Grants Panel 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2012.* Members considered report FC002/2012 (*copy in minute book*) which contained the panellists' recommendations and **it was resolved that:**

**FC2012/22.3** The grant payments recommended in column E of report FC002/2012 be approved.

d] *Commemorations Working Party 31<sup>st</sup> May 2012.* The Minutes of this meeting (*copy in minute book*) were received and **it was resolved that:**

**FC2012/22.4** Minutes of the Commemorations Working Party of 31<sup>st</sup> May 2012 are noted.

e] *Audit and Governance Panel 7<sup>th</sup> June 2012.* Members received and noted the minutes of the Panel (*copy in minute book*) and **it was resolved that:**

**FC2012/22.5** Minutes of the Audit & Governance Panel meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> June 2012 are noted

f] *Standing Orders/Financial Regulations Review Working Party of 8<sup>th</sup> June 2012.* Members received and noted draft minutes which had been distributed earlier, and an oral report from Councillor O'Keeffe who had chaired the Working Party. The minutes identified in detail a number of amendments that had been agreed after lengthy scrutiny and debate. Cllr Stockdale raised a question regarding notes he had submitted for consideration in his absence, and was assured that these had been exhaustively considered, alongside all other proposals. Consequently **it was resolved that:**

**FC2012/22.5** Detailed amendments to Lewes Town Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are adopted as:

SO2 (x) insert after "power of wellbeing" the words "or current equivalent"

SO7 amend note to read "a revised Code of Conduct is in prospect at time of adoption of these SO's – this shall not alter the sense of SO7 c) below"

- SO9 d) replace “he” with “his/her”
- SO9 e) delete paragraph
- SO10 c) replace “he” with “he/she”
- SO11 a) replace “six councillors” with “nine councillors”
- SO17 d) replace “six councillors” with “nine councillors”
- SO23 a) insert comma after “committee”
- SO25 Amend heading to read “General Power of Competence”
- SO25 a) replace “power to promote well-being” with “General Power of Competence”
- SO25 c) replace “power to promote well-being” with “General Power of Competence”
- SO A1.11 replace references to “two minutes” with “three minutes”, and “six minutes with “nine minutes”
- SO A2.2 replace references to “two minutes” with “three minutes”, and “six minutes with “nine minutes”
- Appendix 2 s3.1 (4) replace “©” with “( c )” to correct typographical error
- FR 1.2 replace “shall be” with “is”
- FR11.1 (b) replace “£50,000” with “£60,000”
- FR11.1 (f) replace “£50,000” with “£60,000”
- FR11.1 (g) replace “£50,000” with “£60,000”

#### **FC2012/23 COUNCIL’S ANNUAL REPORT:**

Members considered a draft Annual Report on the activities of the Council in the 2011/2012 year. It was mooted that this did not mention several notable initiatives and actions of the Council in the year, and that it included references to activities and elements that were not the province of the Council. Following consideration it was decided that the report would not be adopted in its present form and that Members should offer any comments and prepare suggested amendments in time for a revised draft to be presented to the next meeting. TC offered to edit these.

#### **FC2012/24 ANNUAL REPORT & DRAFT ACCOUNTS Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012:**

Members considered report FC003/2012 (*a copy of which is included in the Minute book*), the draft annual accounts statements; the statutory annual return to the Audit Commission; and the final report for the year by the internal auditor and **it was resolved that:**

**FC2012/24.1** Lewes Town Council approves the statutory annual return as required for the year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012, for submission to the Audit Commission’s appointed external auditor (*a copy is included in the Minute book*).

**FC2012/24.2** Lewes Town Council approves financial accounts statements for the year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012, as provided with report FC003/2012. (*a copy is included in the Minute book*.)

#### **FC2012/25 CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT:**

Members considered report FC004/2012, on the assessment of risks associated with the operations and functions of the Council for the forthcoming municipal year (*a copy is included in the Minute book*).

Following a short discussion **it was resolved that**

**FC2012/25.1** Lewes Town Council notes the Corporate Risk Assessment report, reference FC004/2012 (*a copy is included in the Minute book*) and the summary table of assessed risks appended to it.

## **FC2012/26 NEW STANDARDS REGIME:**

Members considered interim arrangements for a local Code of Conduct for Members (CoCM). From July 2012, Councils would be free to adopt a CoCM of their choosing, provided that these encompass new statutory regulations on disclosure of pecuniary interests. Due to an hiatus between the demise of the Standards for England authority and the introduction of these new rules, the responsible officers for the principal authorities in East Sussex had jointly drafted a suitable Code for interim use and had followed closely the terms of the existing statutory Code as this was familiar to all. The Local Government Association and the Government's Department for Communities & Local Government had each drafted similar templates. These three examples were offered for consideration by the District Solicitor, who also provided some helpful and objective advice as to the merits of each, with the information that Lewes District Council and most other principal authorities locally had adopted the "East Sussex Draft Code" pending the publication of regulations and the opportunity to gather feedback on the new standards regime. Following a brief discussion **it was resolved that**

**FC2012/26.1** Lewes Town Council adopts, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012, a Code of Conduct for Members following the draft document included with the agenda for this meeting (14<sup>th</sup> June 2012) and labelled "the Draft East Sussex Code" (*copy in minute book*).

## **FC2012/27 REPLACEMENT CHAIRS:**

Members considered report FC006/2012 (*copy in minute book*) regarding replacement chairs for the Lecture Room at the Town Hall. This described the results of an exercise carried out to elicit public preference. Bearing in mind constraints such as durability; portability; ease of storage; ease of cleaning and repair; comfort; and cost, sample chairs of appropriate designs had been obtained from manufacturers. These were placed in the Lecture Room for six weeks ending on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2012, and room users were invited to indicate their preference by ballot-paper. The duration of the survey had allowed all members of regular-user organizations and others to vote. These groups represented a total of approximately 680 people per week. There was a brief discussion and it was established that the chair overwhelmingly favoured by users of the room was provided by a UK manufacturer. There followed an amusing interlude when Members tested the chairs for themselves, and subsequently **it was resolved that:**

**FC2012/27.1** Replacement chairs shall be purchased for the Lecture Room at Lewes Town Hall as described\* in report FC006/2012(*copy in minute book*), funded from the agreed reserve set up for that purpose and shown in the Council's 2012/13 estimated budgets as P11 (value £6,000).

*\* these being: 50 units of the example depicted and labelled "model F", which are stackable, and 30 units of "model E", with arms.*

## **FC2012/28 DOMESTIC ABUSE CHAMPIONS:**

Members considered a request from Lewes District Council to nominate a Councillor as Domestic Abuse Champion to help raise awareness of domestic abuse in the community. The Champion would attend training offered by the Lewes District Community Safety Partnership and Lewes District Domestic Abuse Action Group, which includes representation from Lewes District Council; Sussex Police; Refuge (charity) and voluntary organizations providing support services.

Cllr Price volunteered for the role and **it was resolved that:**

**FC2012/28.1** Lewes District Council applauds the initiative of the Lewes District Domestic Abuse Action Group, and nominates Cllr Ashley Price to act as Champion within the framework described in the letter (*copy in minute book*) dated 8<sup>th</sup> June 2012 from Lewes District Council's Head of Housing Strategy & Needs.

## **FC2012/29 BIOSPHERE RESERVE PROJECT:**

Members considered a motion (*NOM 006/2012, copy in minute book*) that the Town Council expresses its desire that the town be included in the proposed Biosphere Reserve in the area. The Biosphere Partnership hoped to achieve international recognition from the United Nations for the special nature of our environment – urban, rural and marine – as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. It sought this status as a way to integrate and encourage action to better care for, manage, understand and enjoy the local area and bring people and nature closer together. It was noted that UNESCO promoted a global network of such Biosphere Reserves, with 8 already in the UK including North Devon, mid-Wales and SW Scotland. There were precedents for Biospheres based on a city – the city surrounds of Paris, Cape Town and Rio de Janeiro, for instance, were recognised. The Partnership was aiming for widespread participation in its bid, which it hoped to submit in September 2013, and already involved district councils in the area, plus the National Trust, Sussex Wildlife Trust and others. The lead had come from Brighton and Hove City Council. Following a short debate **it was resolved:**

**FC2012/29.1** Lewes Town Council expresses its desire to see the town included in the proposed Biosphere Reserve in our area and its surprise that it is not currently included in proposals; when it has been established, through campaigning to get Lewes included in the National Park, that it is indeed an integral part of our chalk landscape.

**FC2012/29.2** To lobby Lewes District Council and the Biosphere Partnership asking that Lewes town itself and not just Landport Bottom, the Railway Land and other surrounding downland be included.

**FC2012/30**

#### **CARDBOARD RECYCLING:**

Members considered a motion (*NOM 007/2012, copy in minute book*) proposing that the Town Council cooperate with Lewes District Council to ensure a more comprehensive cardboard collection strategy for the neighbourhoods and residents of Lewes Town. Aspects of the existing service were discussed, and suggestions made by the District Council's Cabinet Member for District Services were considered.

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

**FC2012/30.1** Lewes Town Council will assist, where practical, Lewes District Council in researching a more comprehensive cardboard collection strategy for the neighbourhoods and residents of Lewes town.

**FC2012/31**

#### **UPDATE ON MATTERS IN PROGRESS:**

a) *Paddock Road Wall:* Members were informed that the scheduled work on the wall was almost complete; however, the structural engineer had revisited as the works progressed, and reported that increased distress in three sections of the wall suggested a more extensive rebuild than had been originally intended for those areas. This would be most advantageously dealt-with while the contractor was still on-site, by two variations to the contract at additional costs of £7,100 and £14,400, compared with a potential estimated cost of over £12,000 and £20,000 respectively if the work were to be offered as a separate contract at a later date. In the light of the engineer's revised advice; if a variation were to be agreed for this element, the works required to the remaining sections (which were not so urgent) would cost an estimated maximum of £37,000. Following a short debate **it was resolved that:**

**FC2012/31.1** Variations be agreed to the current contract for rebuilding of the flint wall at Paddock Road, Lewes, as recommended by the District engineer in the sums of £7,100 and £14,400.

b) *Malling Community Centre:* Members were brought up-to-date and made aware of discussions arising from an independent approach by a third party seeking to refurbish and take over a redundant section of the building. The Council's tenant was involved in these discussions and the Mayor and TC were due to meet shortly with their representatives and an architect to identify implications which might affect the current

joint plan to refurbish the Centre. TC sought confirmation from Council that the direction of these discussions was appropriate and that it agreed further investigation along those lines. This was **agreed**.

c) *All Saints Centre (ASC)*: there was nothing further to report on issues surrounding the cinema project.

d) *Lewes Town Centre 20mph speed limit proposals*: An exhibition would be set up by East Sussex County Council in the Town Hall Foyer between 26<sup>th</sup> June – 20<sup>th</sup> July. Facilities for public feedback would be offered, and Highways Dept officers would be present on three occasions to answer questions (Tues 10<sup>th</sup> July 1-5pm; Thurs 12<sup>th</sup> July 5-9pm; Sat 14<sup>th</sup> July 10am-2pm).

**FC2012/32**

**NOTICE OF ITEMS IN PROSPECT:** Members were advised of the following events:-

- a) The next Landport Bottom Joint Management Committee meeting would take place on 20<sup>th</sup> June 9.30am on site and then at 11.00am at Lewes House.
- b) The Planning Committee would meet on Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> July at 7pm in the Yarrow Room.
- c) The next Councillors “drop-in” surgery would take place on Saturday July 7<sup>th</sup> which Councillor O’Keeffe would attend.
- d) Audit Panel would meet on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> July.
- e) The next meeting of Council was scheduled for Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> July 2012 at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber, with the deadline for submission to the Town Clerk of proposed items for the agenda being 12 noon on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> July.
- f) To be confirmed were Meetings of Malling CC Liaison Party; Communications Working Party and All Saints Centre steering group.
- g) The next meeting of the Commemorations Working Party would be on 30<sup>th</sup> July at 11.00am.

**FC2012/33**

There being no further business the Mayor declared the meeting closed, and invited those present to join him in the Parlour for refreshments.

*The meeting ended at 10:15pm*

Signed: .....

Date: .....