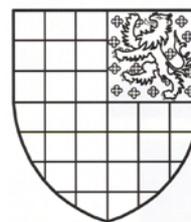


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**LEWES
TOWN
COUNCIL**

MINUTES

Of the **meeting of Lewes Town Council**,
held on **Thursday 24th August 2017**, in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall**, Lewes at **7:30pm**.

PRESENT Councillors A Ashby; J Baah (*Deputy Mayor*); A Barker; R Burrows; S Catlin (*Wischhusen*); M Chartier (*Mayor*); W Elliott; Dr G Mayhew; R Murray; S Murray; R O’Keeffe; and T Rowell.

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk*); Mrs F Garth (*Civic Officer & Asst. Town Clerk*) and Mrs E Tingley (*Committee Admin.*). also: Mr Ian Linton (*Chairman; Lewes Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group*)

Observing: Ms V McLachlan (*Finance Officer*) and Mr B Courage (*Town Ranger*)

The Council’s Chaplain, Canon Richard Moatt, offered a few words before the meeting. He related recent news articles purporting to describe “typical” and “average” people and believed that in reality no-one could actually be average. He described a council’s job as balancing the needs of individuals against wider viewpoints.

FC2017/36 QUESTIONS: There was one member of the public observing.

A written question had been received from Mr Adrian Ross in relation to future travel by Lewes Town Council staff or Councillors to Lewes’s Twin Towns. The question; together with the answer given, is appended to these minutes

FC2017/37 DECLARATIONS of INTEREST: There were none.

FC2017/38 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Dr A Bolt, I Makepeace and M Milner who were away on holiday; and Cllrs H Jones, J Lamb and E Watts who had work commitments.

It was resolved that:

FC2017/38.1 The reasons submitted for absence from this meeting are accepted.

FC2017/39 MAYOR’s ANNOUNCEMENTS:

a) On Sunday 10th September Town Hall tours would be held at 10.00am, 12.00noon and 2.00pm as part of the national Heritage Open Days initiative.

b) On Thursday 21st September ‘Poems for Peace’ would be held in the Council Chamber as part of the International Day of Peace, with further details to be confirmed by the organizers.

c) The Mayor had recently visited and opened the annual parish ‘*Chilbi*’ festival in Waldshut-Tiengen, and reported that once again the warmth of welcome and hospitality enjoyed had been “extraordinary”. He reported that our European colleagues had been dismayed by the ‘Brexit’ decision, and he had been concerned to emphasize that we had not turned our back on Europe. He reminded everyone how both our twin towns had generously contributed to fundraising following the flooding of Lewes in 2000 and 1960.

FC2017/40 MINUTES:

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th July 2017 were received and signed as an accurate record.

FC2017/41 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 (LNPSG):** Mr Ian Linton, Chairman of LNPSG, reported on the latest work of the Group. There had been 2,281 detailed responses *via* the online survey. An editing team were working through what would be needed to incorporate into the Draft Plan to produce a final version which could be submitted to the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA). The team were also working through the responses from statutory consultees *e.g.* SDNPA, Lewes District and East Sussex County Councils; Natural England; Historic England, Environment Agency and various other agencies. A meeting had been held with Lewes District Council when different issues had been aired; including development on redundant lock-up garage sites and certain off-street car parks. Feasibility studies were being carried out on the garage sites therefore LDC reported that they were not sure what might be possible. One of the draft LNPSG Policies was concerned with retail shop conversions to residential use. The policy was intended to prescribe what owners of such shops should do before shops could be considered for change of use. This Policy did not receive support. There had been a general welcome for the principle of Lewes Low Cost Housing as described in the Plan, although it was important to ensure that such a policy could be deliverable, and work was progressing to assess this.

It was resolved that:

FC2017/41.1 The oral report on the Lewes Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is noted.

b) **Meeting with Compass Travel 8th August 2017:** Council considered the notes of this meeting. The meeting had welcomed Mr Chris Chatfield – Managing Director of Compass Travel, and discussed the recent tour of the routes by some Members; kindly hosted on a Compass bus by Joe Beckley, Operations Director for the company.

Notes and photos from the tour were to be collated and any problems highlighted, such as problems with awkwardly-parked cars or overhanging vegetation which restricted access, would be passed to the relevant third-party. It was agreed that the most beneficial effect on reliability of services would come from clearance of obstacles from the route.

Mr Beckley's notes following the tour were provided and stated:

“We covered the full route of the 127, both ends, Landport and Malling then on to the full 128 and the 129 covering Nevill, Winterbourne, and Spences Lane. Each area certainly did have its own unique problems.

I have made a summary below of main issues that slow up the bus service and we believe could be solved.

- Last part of Friars Walk as it becomes Lansdown Place, the parking bay extends too far and is opposite the bend in the road, this causes the bus or any large vehicle to slow down to walk pace and more often than not will have to mount the kerb to safely pass. This can be dependent on how the car is parked on the last bay and certainly our visit has revealed what looks to be an abandoned car as it has a puncture at the front plus many parking tickets placed in the windscreen! The effect of this difficulty in passing creates a queue of traffic.
- Fisher Street, despite the double yellow lines, cars still park along here (possibly on deliveries) again this creates a slowdown and a queue of traffic. More often than not towards the end of Fisher Street adjacent to a take away establishment, a car is parked part on the pavement and part on the road, this seems regular late afternoon early evening and in particular on a Saturday after 5, this is very awkward for a bus to safely pass.
- Landport Estate in general is very narrow (as always has been) but the double yellow lines we feel, do extend far enough on the roads where they are placed, *ie:* do not extend to the bends and junctions. We also wonder if kerbs/grass verges can be slimmed down to give some extra width on the road?
- Nevill Estate on the whole is passable except Firlle Crescent, again on the bends, no double yellow lines and then end of Windover Crescent turning right into Northway, this is a real issue here, as there always seems to be parked cars and a van that never seem

to move (I am sure they do at some time) the bend is tight here and even with a short bus it has no alternative but to mount the kerb or brush the kerb that eventually causes tyre wear and damage.

- Winterbourne Estate has much the same challenges, narrow roads with more parked cars now than ever before.

- Along the entire length of Southover High Street from the junction of Bell Lane/Kingston Road, we feel the speed humps are far too severe and whilst I do fully support traffic calming measures for all the obvious reasons, when travelling and driving a bus, even at the slowest of speeds, these can cause some discomfort to passengers and drivers and actually, impatient road users think you are stopping and then attempt to go around you! The other main issue here is the brick sections of road in-between the speed humps, this really does cause discomfort and shakes the vehicle that is shortening the life of components such as springs, tracking, air bags etc. Sometime ago a similar layout was on the entrance to Tesco in Lewes and this got removed for much the same reasons.

- Lewes High Street is unpredictable but consideration should be given to restricting delivery times and the size of vehicle that is allowed to enter Lewes High Street.

- Orchard Road into Spences Lane, this is where the real trouble starts, the road is just simply far too narrow for a bus and the amount of people using it. The wall on the right half way along does not help, I know this cannot be removed but surely the parking opposite should be banned, we struggled to get through as a car was parked opposite and not very well. Then further along the vegetation on the right really needs trimming right back as again, this was just about impossible to pass and the potential of knocking a mirror off or losing a window on the bus is high; very high!

- Malling Estate, Old Malling Way as you turn into this, I could not believe that cars are now parked on both sides of the road, again this really restricts the bus size that can be used, and why should it! There is suggestion that these cars are employees of the Police Headquarters. A fire engine would struggle through here, they are certainly not residents cars, and bus stops are clearly marked along the route, so it's obvious a bus comes along here. Again this needs serious consideration to extending double yellow lines.

- Junction of Spital Road/Nevill Road, the 'Keep Clear' box appears to be not in a good place, why can there not be one to prevent traffic blocking the right turn from Spital Road into Nevill Road, bizarrely, it is in the place where traffic turns left from Nevill Road into Spital Road??

Further to the experience of the narrow road problems in Spences Lane; Members enquired if it was feasible to operate a smaller vehicle on the route, but this was not practical. Mr Chatfield pointed-out that it would be less effective on all other parts of the route, and would require purchase of additional vehicles which was simply uneconomic.

Future improvements were discussed, and Members were interested in the extension of 'real-time' information displays to a wider area. Mr Chatfield advised that this was a technology that had already been effectively superseded by mobile phone applications, which were aligned with many people's lifestyle habit and much cheaper to develop and make available. It was submitted that there were still many potential passengers who did not use Smartphones, but acknowledged that the points made by the bus operators were valid.

It was noted that government subsidies to the County Councils were inadequate and still diminishing. The majority of Compass's passengers were using bus-passes, for which the company only received 40% of the true fare.

Mr Chatfield advised that 97% of his company's work was under council contract, and its profits had reduced over several years; to the point of making a small loss in the last year. Members were interested to hear about bus service operations, and understood the difficulties of the working environment. They recognized that Compass was not a

company operated in pursuit of high profits, but rather displayed an altruistic philosophy which sought to promote bus travel as a benefit to society. This, they felt, accorded with the remit of a Parish council, and they were unanimous in supporting a recommendation that Council now releases the £5,000 balance of the grant to Compass Travel for the year. There followed a general discussion on various topics of mutual interest, and Mr Chatfield was thanked for his attendance and most helpful contribution.

it was resolved that:

FC2017/41.2 The notes of the meeting with Compass Travel held on 8th August 2017 are noted; and

FC2017/41.3 Lewes Town Council will now release the £5,000 balance of the grant to Compass Travel for the year.

c) Commemorations Working Party 9th August 2017: Council considered the Minutes of this meeting. (*copy in minute book*)

The Working Party had welcomed Mr Tony Oliver of the Royal Sussex Regimental Association (RSRA), attending to update members on a proposed commemorative plaque, and Mr Phil Rose, who wished to discuss the 2017 Lewes Light Festival (LLF)

1 *Commemorative plaque for RSRA Lewes Branch* – Mr Oliver had expanded upon the points made when he had first approached the Working Party on behalf of the RSRA in October 2016. Especially poignant was the reminder that the local men of the regiment who had lost their lives in service had all been young conscripts. Subsequently, Council had agreed in principle (*minute FC2016/69.3.2 refers*) to some form of permanent memorial plaque for the Royal Sussex Regimental Association, subject to firm proposals for consideration. Estimates had been obtained from suitably-qualified memorial masons, who had proposed either marble; sandstone, or granite with painted and gilded engraved detailing. Members considered aspects of these suggestions including the size of the tablet, requirements for fixing within the heritage-listed Town Hall, and appropriateness of the proposed material and design. Costs ranged from £2,200 to £4,300 including a reasonable allowance for installation, taking account of the wall construction likely to be encountered. After some discussion, there was majority agreement to recommend a tablet of polished/honed ‘Abbey’ light grey granite measuring 30”wide x 24”deep x 2” thick, with gilded/painted detail at a total cost of approximately £2,200. The RSRA were able to contribute around £300 towards this cost, and Members were reminded that the Council’s earmarked financial reserve for such matters (R7) had an available balance of £13,005. This would be subject to grant of consent for the works to the listed building.

2 *Lewes Light Festival 2017* – Mr Rose had explained the development of the Lewes Light Festival in the previous two years, and described enhancements and extensions of the project for 2017. Organizers were slowly moving towards more sustainable funding, and were again anticipating significant support in-kind from within the lighting industry: loan or donation of equipment, and technical assistance. As previously, the 2017 programme would begin at the Town Hall; this year with a theme of trade; industry, and commerce as the installations followed a ‘trail’ through town accompanied by a coordinating historical storyline. Brighton University and Northbrook College undergraduates were engaged with the project, which extended the educational range even further than 2016. The event would cover the 13th, 14th and 15th of October 2017. Following the principle established in 2016, the Council was asked to consider funding for the costs of items which were essential but mundane, and unlikely to attract sponsorship, *eg* insurance premium. A sum of £6,292 was requested.

Members had asked a number of questions related to the organization of the festival, and Mr Rose explained background details in-depth. He confirmed that, due to the use of modern LED technology, the entire three-day festival consumed little power; comparing it with a single floodlit football game. LLF organizers were also working closely with the officers at the South Downs National Park Authority who were responsible for the ‘Dark Skies’ initiative, and the light overspill from installations would be negligible beyond a few

metres distance.

Members wished to record their gratitude to Mr Rose; Graham Festenstein, and others responsible for the production of such a high-quality, popular, event for Lewes. They unanimously agreed to recommend that Council provide financial support of £5,500, and underwrite the cost of necessary project elements up to a maximum of a further £800; the final amount to be decided following consideration of post-event accounts.

3 *International Day of Peace* – Council had recently agreed to support an event commemorating this day on 21st September 2017 and asked the Working Party to look at details. The theme of the 2017 IDP was to be “*Together for Peace – Respect; Safety and Dignity for all*”. The Council Chamber had been reserved in anticipation of an event, but no other facilities were available. A number of suggestions had been received and details of these were considered in the context of appropriateness and practicality. Of the suggestions put forward, members were interested to find out if some form of collaboration between the Pestalozzi Village children’s charity and a local school might be developed. The charity had expressed a desire to extend its events and it was thought that there may be potential to ‘pair’ with students from a local school for the day. This would be investigated although it was acknowledged that lack of access to school staff during holidays would make a project difficult to initiate for September 2017. From a range of ideas suggested by the public, it was decided to recommend that Council support a proposed evening festival of poetry – ‘*Poems for Peace*’ – offering the Council Chamber as a venue and some support for publicity *etc* and reasonable costs of the event. It was suggested that the event would feature local actors and poets, and follow similar initiatives recorded by the United Nations in past years. The proposer would be asked to provide more detail for Council to consider before deciding.

6 *Other matters* - Members noted that requests had been made by third-parties regarding the naming of a bus for Dr Colin Tingle, which had been discussed at the previous meeting. It was understood that The Big Lemon company advised they did not offer the facility, and Brighton & Hove Bus Company would consider requests only after one year had elapsed since Dr Tingle’s death.

Members had been interested to discuss aspects of the Parliamentary project ‘*Vote 100*’ which had commenced in 2015 and would conclude in 2018 with a major public exhibition in Westminster Hall. The project commemorates a series of anniversaries related to development of democracy, and in 2018 would mark:

- February 2018 - 100th anniversary of the Representation of the People Act 1918, which enabled all men and some women over the age of 30 to vote for the first time;
- April 2018 - 60th anniversary of the Life Peerages Act 1958, which allowed women to sit in the House of Lords;
- July 2018 - 90th anniversary of the Equal Franchise Act 1928, which gave women the right to vote at age 21 on the same terms as men;
- October 2018 - 60th anniversary of women sitting in the House of Lords for the first time;
- November 2018 - 100th anniversary of the Parliament (Qualification of Women) Act 1918, allowing women to stand for election to the House of Commons;
- December 2018 - 100th anniversary of all men and some women voting for the first time, in the general election of December 1918.

It was agreed that there would be opportunities in 2018 programme to explore some form of local project, and this would be discussed at a future meeting.

Council considered the recommendations at some length and some members expressed unhappiness at a military commemoration, such as the RSRA plaque, being sited within the Town Hall. It was remarked that the antecedents of the Regiment had formed part of an ‘Imperial army’, and this had unpalatable connotations. Others noted that such a plaque was an appropriate mark of respect for those with local connections who had

died, and this should prevail over personal views on war. A vote was called on this particular item and **it was resolved that:**

FC2017/41.4 The Minutes of the meeting of the Commemorations Working Party held on 9th August 2017 (*copy in minute book*) are noted; and Council supports the approach taken by the Working Party and its particular conclusions as described in those minutes, notably:

FC2017/41.4.1 Provision of a tablet to commemorate the Royal Sussex Regiment at a total cost of approximately £2,200, to be funded from the earmarked financial reserve for such matters (R7 'Commemorations' - 2017/18 available balance of £13,005). This subject to grant of consent for the works to the listed building.

FC2017/41.4.2 Provision of financial support to Lewes Light Festival 2017 of £5,500, and underwriting of the cost of necessary project elements up to a maximum of a further £800; the final amount to be decided following consideration of post-event accounts. These sums to be drawn from the earmarked financial reserve for such matters (R7 'Commemorations' - 2017/18 available balance of £13,005).

d) All Saints Steering Group 9th August 2017: Council considered the minutes of this meeting (*copy in minute book*).

1 *Film@AllSaints (F@AS):* Performance statistics had been reviewed for the full season, September 2016 to July 2017. Seventy-four films had been shown over 121 screenings. This was the fifth full season and analysis of the 'performance' of each film title was also provided. The season had yielded an operating loss of £1,777; although over the five years the operation had achieved an overall surplus of £5,717. There had followed some discussion as to the effects of the Depot Cinema, which had opened in May. Film@AllSaints had been operating at a modest financial surplus up until that point in the season, and it was acknowledged that the new facility offered a completely different experience for film-goers; many of whom had, understandably, immediately begun to patronize the new venue.

It was understood that Lewes Film Club, who screened on alternate weekends to F@AS, were planning to reduce their screenings and had booked only for an event in October and some provisional dates in January 2018. There had followed a lengthy discussion on the future Council provision of cinema at ASC, and a number of scenarios and alternatives were considered. There had been some discussion with the club as to the possibility of taking ownership of the disc projector and ceasing to call upon their services for projection and assistance with programming, which agreement had cost around £4,000 each season. It was recognized that there was unsatisfied demand for weekend availability of the Centre for music; theatre, and other uses which had been effectively 'blocked' due to cinema screening through the year, and that the Council had occasionally arranged successful drama events prior to the cinema operation. This meant that whatever was decided regarding cinema, the Centre would be unlikely to see reduced demand for its facilities, especially given the imminent modernization of stage lighting and sound systems. It was agreed that the film operation at All Saints was not necessarily in competition with the Depot, and catered for a different market, with some members feeling that it could arguably be seen as complementary in providing film choices to the town. The new cinema offered an interesting and valued new dimension to the entertainment on-offer in Lewes and everyone wished it to have a clear field in which to become established, whilst ensuring that the community's choices were as wide as possible. A number of views were expressed and it was ultimately agreed to recommend that Council should continue with film screenings at ASC on only one 'short' weekend (Friday and Saturday) each month, ending the season earlier, in June 2018, and with a mid-season review in the New Year. Alongside this, it was also agreed to approach the Depot to explore potential collaborative working or programming, and to investigate the cost of a disc projector.

2 *General matters:* Members had been pleased to learn that the Toy Library, which

the Council had taken-over in late 2016 when volunteer operators could no longer continue, was thriving and regularly attracted new users. Despite modest membership charges, the amount held on account for replacement toys had grown significantly since the transfer of the operation and purchases were planned in the near future.

New lighting and sound systems were due to be installed during the traditional summer 'maintenance recess' starting the following week, when works were effected that were best undertaken in the absence of users, such as floor stripping/re-finishing and outstanding minor building repairs. There was some rehearsal of the discussion during the previous meeting, on the charge for hire of the new sound system as an "extra" to room-hire fees; in the way that bar equipment and facilities were currently charged. This was considered appropriate, and a figure of £40 per hire was confirmed as reasonable, aligned as it was to existing charges. It was clarified that this would not be applied to 'basic' facilities, but only when hirers wished to take advantage of enhanced or extended system capabilities. The next Steering Group meeting would be held at the Centre.

It was resolved that:

FC2017/41.5 The notes of the meeting of the All Saints Steering Group held on 9th August 2017 (*copy in minute book*) are noted; and Council supports the approach taken and decisions made by the Group.

e) Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB): Cllr R Murray, the Council's representative on the CAB, reported that there was concern regarding Universal Credit (a monthly payment for people on low income or out of work). By 2022, 7 million families would be claiming Universal Credit. The CAB would be writing to Maria Caulfield MP to seek review of this system. **It was resolved that:**

FC2017/41.6 The oral report on activity of the Lewes & Seaford Citizens' Advice Bureau is noted; and Lewes Town Council will also write to Maria Caulfield MP regarding a review of the Universal Credit System.

FC2017/41.6.1 The Council also noted the distinguished service to the Citizens' Advice Bureau of Mr Michael Bell, who was to step down as Chairman. Councillors extended their thanks to Mr Bell and sincere appreciation of the part that he has played in providing these much-needed and valued community services.

FC2017/42 TOWN CENTRE CLOSED-CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV) UPDATE:

Council considered report FC006/2017 (*copy in Minute book*) advising Members of a request by Sussex Police regarding the progressive updating of the county closed-circuit television (CCTV) network.

In 1999, the Town Council, in partnership with the District Council, Sussex Police Authority, and local business, had undertaken to provide a system of closed circuit television cameras (CCTV) in Lewes. This formed part of a county-wide network, with local councils typically paying for the provision and maintenance of cameras and operating infrastructure, and the police providing management, monitoring and strategic aspects of the services.

The three cameras in Lewes town were sited at:

- Cliffe High Street/High Street (o/s Boots)
- Lansdown Place/Station Street
- Station Street/High Street

The system had been subject to regular updating, moving from the original analogue electronics to modern digital infrastructure and the police had been preparing a plan for comprehensive upgrade of both physical assets and monitoring/management models. It was approached from the perspective that any changes had to be compatible with the current system unless a full replacement were to make savings of such a significant value that it justified a capital outlay. It was of interest to note that the system is considered a

leader in its field and is the envy of many other Police areas.

There were three contracts in relation to CCTV: one for the main *IWitness* system and maintenance (*BTRedcare*); one for transmissions (*BTRedcare*); and one for camera maintenance (*ChromaVision*). A Sussex Police project team had been looking at these contracts, the proposals offered by existing providers and potential costs of a replacement system with a new contractor. As a result of this work a paper was presented to the Sussex/Surrey Police Joint Procurement board with recommendations that the contracts with *BTRedcare* be agreed for a 5 year term and that a competitive process takes place for the camera maintenance contract.

The *IWitness* contract offered would offer a full upgrade to the current system across the county in all Sussex Police and partner premises. The new system would allow for Internet technology across the counties, new technology; different and better cameras and the potential for income generation through Wi-fi *etc.* There were other benefits that could be added for consideration in the future such as integration for mobile devices and officer body-worn video. *BTRedcare* had offered this at the same cost as for the *IWitness* contract. This gave confidence that unless there were deliberate variations, costs would be static for 5 years. *BTRedcare* had also offered an additional discount on the current transmission costs. This would mean some financial reduction in the transmission costs, again unless additional circuits were added. They had also offered a competitive price for IP camera replacement/additional cameras including installation and 7 year warranty. The effect of any camera upgrade should mean a reduction in the camera maintenance contract over time, due to improvements inherent to the latest technology.

The police procurement Board was recommended to extend the existing contracts to facilitate this new deal, during which time all partners must agree their position for the proposed five year term to follow. A response was requested by 1st October 2017.

The options offered largely differed in strategic aspects that did not affect Lewes town's current system; such as the possibility to have 'hybrid' cameras with special units such as number-plate recognition at relevant locations. Savings were offered over the current system due to the advances in technology and the opportunity for rationalized operation by the police, who could reduce the number of monitoring centres and back office support with no reduction in 'cover'. The practical option for the Council would provide an overall discount of 16% on costs of the system over the next five years.

Current costs for Lewes were £7,109.10 per year for the monitored camera system, discounted to a £4,734.65 recharge to the Council, the difference being paid by Sussex Police as LTC was an 'original partner'. There was a separate cost of approximately £1,000 for transmission (line rentals and power). The recommended option would bring an increasing discount (12% rising to 20%) giving reduction each of the next five years amounting to an overall saving of £1,420.40 or 16%.

It was resolved that:

FC2017/42.1 Lewes Town Council agrees the five-year contract option for the town CCTV system, as recommended in report FC006/2017 (*copy in minute book*).

FC2017/43

CLOCK TOWER – Town Clock:

Council considered report FC007/2017 (*copy in minute book*) advising Members of a request by the Parochial Church Council (PCC) regarding repairs urgently required to the clock tower of St Michael's Church, and the position regarding shared responsibility.

Brief History: The original Town Clock had been housed in the 'Round Tower' of St Michael in Lewes, and had already been there for many years by 1878, when a programme of extensive improvement and renewal work at St Michael's was begun by a committee of public subscribers. Cottages on the site were demolished and the present clock tower and Church House built in their place. In 1881 the clock was placed on a new tower, and although Church House, including ownership of the tower, was

presented to the Church, the clock and associated fittings were all given to the Borough Council, to mark its inauguration. At first the chimes of the old clock were used in the new one, but the five bells were re-cast in 1888, at the expense of the Mayor, Alderman Joseph Farncombe, in 1887 as “a small personal tribute to commemorate the Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Victoria”. The clock was modernized in 1958 when a new electric drive replaced the hand-wound mechanism.

Responsibility subsequently passed to the Town Council, and in 1994 the Council contributed to works to replace the collapsed ground floor of the tower, beneath which there was still a dry pit about 30 feet in depth where the original weights descended. At that time it had been proposed by solicitors acting for the Trustees of St Michaels’s Church House that the church derived no practical benefit from the tower, and submitted that if it were not for the clock, the entrance could be sealed and the floor repairs were otherwise unnecessary. They had proposed a formal licence or tenancy agreement which would determine liability for future repairs and maintenance. Whilst the point regarding disproportionate benefit to the respective parties was acknowledged, the Council of the day had not agreed that the restrictive formality of a licence or tenancy agreement was appropriate, but it had paid a substantial sum towards the works, and a contribution towards the architect’s fee.

There had been no further issues of note until the mechanism failed and the clock itself ceased to function in 2004. The Council contracted for a comprehensive refurbishment of the clock mechanism; control gear, face and hands at a cost of over £30,000, carried out in late 2008.

Present works required: Prompted by increasing dilapidation and ingress of rainwater, the St Michael’s PCC had commissioned well-respected conservation specialist architects to survey the tower and report. This had resulted in them seeking tenders for a schedule of work to repair the roof; masonry; rainwater goods and access ladders. With advice from the architects, a preferred bid was selected and the PCC now wished to engage the contractor as soon as possible.

The tender allowed two options: one dealing with immediate works and temporarily ‘propping’ the upper floors, ladders and belfry roof, leaving the possibility of re-roofing the belfry at a later date. The other, dealing with all works as a single operation and leaving the tower with no other work required for a considerable number of years. The work could therefore be done in two stages although, as significant elements would be duplicated and the delay would be relatively short before re-roofing became urgently needed, this was not recommended as a practical choice. Based upon an assessment of the proportional benefit to the two responsible parties (church and Council) a contribution was requested from the Council, as:

- a) The Council’s contribution toward the temporary ‘holding’ option would be £2,103.69.
- b) The preferred option, including re-roofing the belfry, and works to floors, access ladders, and other parts associated with the clock, would be £9,685.47.

The apportionment was considered reasonable, and was consistent with earlier proportional contributions. It was recommended that Council agree to option b), and noted that the comprehensive works that were represented by the preferred option would leave the tower, in all likelihood, needing no further work for many years. Nonetheless it was acknowledged that; while the licence/tenancy proposal of 1994 had been a rather heavy-handed solution, some degree of certainty and consistency would be beneficial to all and resolve the potential for a major dispute in decades to come. Works directly associated with the clock would remain the responsibility of the Council, but given the features of the tower; the layout of floors and access ladders between floors; and the disposition of elements of the clock, bells and control gear, the church’s practical use of the building was limited. It was considered that a 30% contribution toward ‘general’ works would be fair and reasonable.

After some debate and a vote on the recommendations, **it was resolved that:**

FC2017/43.1 Lewes Town Council agrees to option b) as described in Report FC007/2017 (*copy in minute book*); to be funded from the Council's financial reserve earmarked for the purpose (shown as R9 'Town Clocks' in accounts) which has an available balance of £2,700 in 2017/18; with the remainder of £6,985.47 appropriated from reserve R8 (Environment enhancements).

FC2017/43.2 Lewes Town Council agrees to a proportional contribution of 30% of costs to be applied to building maintenance or repair works which may be required in future to those parts of the clock tower at St Michael's church not directly-related to the Town Clock; subject to consideration of detailed submissions on each and every occasion, to be effected by a formal agreement with the Parochial Church Council.

FC2017/44 UPDATE ON MATTERS IN PROGRESS

a) *Annual Plan update distributed:* An update on progress with the Annual Plan was distributed (*copy in minute book*). A salient development was brought to Council's attention by TC: the proposed sequence of meetings regarding refurbishment of Malling Community Centre would be affected by a need for further consideration by the Working Party. Draft calculations very recently provided by the Quantity Surveyor indicated an order of estimated costs that was significantly higher than anticipated.

Cllr O'Keeffe raised a query regarding proposed works at the Pells Recreation Ground. She had seen site plans which she had interpreted as showing North Street Quarter developments encroaching on to Council land. TC indicated that while he had been made aware of her concerns, she had not provided any details. On the basis of what had been said, it appeared that there was confusion between plans attached to the 'Section 106' agreement and plans showing proposed housing development. Council had approved the s106 arrangements, and boundaries shown on those plans would include land which was to benefit from the s106 fund; irrespective of ownership. If it proved that plans associated with housing proposals had included Council areas; this would be an error and that could simply be rectified before any damage arose. Town Brook Trust land (the swimming pool and recreation ground) could not be disposed-of under the terms of the Trust, and the only works on Council owned or managed land would be the public realm play and recreation improvements being developed by the joint working group, and subject of recent public consultation.

b) *Town Hall works update:* Works to the roof of the Corn Exchange were progressing well. Completion of the re-covering was anticipated in October, although additional problems were being discovered as work progressed and a schedule of the repairs required was being prepared.

c) *Devolution of Malling recreation ground and Landport Bottom:* There had been no further progress on the devolution of Malling Recreation Ground, and no transfer of Landport Bottom. The Council's solicitor reported that Lewes District Council's legal officer had agreed all points made and there was an agreement offered to which the Town Council could agree (as previously reported). There had, however, been no further development except insofar as it had been agreed that the Highdown Allotment site (part of the Landport Bottom holding) should have been in Town Council's ownership since acquisition of the land, under statutory provisions. To effect this it had been agreed to register a General Vesting Declaration with HM Land Registry, in respect of the site. This would require application of the council's Seal, and consequently

It was resolved that:

FC2017/44.1 Lewes Town Council agrees to the formal sealing of a General Vesting Declaration with regard to land on the west side of Nevill Road, Lewes comprising title number ESX13617, designated as Highdown (*aka* Landport Bottom) Allotments. The property shall be deemed to have vested in the Town Council as corporate property with effect from 10 June 1992 and held for the purposes of the Allotments Acts 1908-1950.

d) *'Our Pictures' project update.* This was progressing well. The Hamilton Kerr Institute (HKI) was steadily working on the Council's paintings, and had reported no problems. More work was required than had been originally anticipated, but the HKI considered this to offer useful teaching opportunities and there would be no additional charge. With regard to the *'Protestant Reformers'*, which was one of several variations known to exist in art collections worldwide, the interesting academic links with comparable work being carried out on another version at Yale University in America had been further extended with the interest of a group from Cambridge and York Universities in the UK. Their project was collaboration between historians and literary scholars, who were conducting a major study of the Reformation; funded and supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The leading Professor and her team were due to visit The HKI to inspect the Council's painting during October. The educational aspects of 'Our Pictures' were proving to be far wider in scope than the originally-planned local schools programme. The project timetable would be extended to accommodate these recent issues, but the Heritage Lottery Fund was understood to have no objection.

FC2017/45 NOTICE of ITEMS IN PROSPECT

- a) The next Planning Committees would take place on Tuesday 5th and 26th September at 7.00pm.
- b) The next Members' Surgery was scheduled for Tuesday 5th September 10am – 12pm in the Corn Exchange. Cllrs Catlin, Chartier and O'Keeffe volunteered to attend.
- c) The next deadline for grants applications: (cycle 2 of 4 2017/18) was Friday 8th September 2017. The Assessment Panel would meet on 20th September 2017 with recommendations being considered by Council at its meeting on 28th September 2017.
- d) Landport Bottom Joint Management Committee would meet on Tuesday 12th September 2017.
- e) A meeting of the Building Working Party would be held on Wednesday 13th September at 11am.
- f) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group would meet on Thursday 14th September – 7:00pm in the Council Chamber.
- g) The next Dementia Friends lunchtime drop-in session would be 12.30-1.30 in the Yarrow Room on Friday 15th September.
- h) The next Council Meeting would take place on Thursday 28th September at 7:30pm, with a deadline for agenda items to reach TC by noon on Monday 18th September.
- i) Meetings to be arranged were: Buildings Working Party; Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.
- j) Member training on law and finance was being arranged. Members were asked to look out for TC's 'Doodle' poll by email once trainers had confirmed their availability, a respond promptly. In answer to a question, it was noted that requests for Diversity training had not been forgotten, but nothing had yet been scheduled. A meeting of the Personnel Panel was not required.
- k) The Personnel Panel would next meet (with consultant) at 7pm on Thursday 23rd November.

Members were reminded that Lewes Societies' Fair would take place on 2nd September, in the Town Hall. Members were encouraged to promote this and to attend themselves.

A Member queried arrangements for traffic redirection during current roadworks, but this was not the province of the Town Council.

There being no further business the Mayor closed the meeting

The meeting ended at 9:00pm

Signed:

Date:



QUESTION RECEIVED:

E-mail received 15th August 2017:

At the council meeting on 6 April 2017 I understand it was agreed that:

In future any travel by LTC staff or councillors to;

a) Lewes's twin towns will take into account the most carbon efficient method, which is unlikely to be flying,

I also understand that the mayor and staff are flying to Waldshut-Tiengen in August.

As there was nothing in the motion above which allowed any considerations beyond carbon efficiency to be part of the decision making process, I would like to know how the decision was arrived at based upon the motion as agreed. I would rather not hear any extraneous reasons such as how long the journey might take or an individual's right to choose how to travel please.

Yours sincerely,

Adrian Ross

E-mail received 17th August 2017:

Dear Town Clerk

Sorry that I didn't make it clear, but this was intended to be a public question for the next Town Council meeting. Unfortunately I am not able to attend in person, but would appreciate hearing the response.

Thanks, Adrian

ANSWER:

I am afraid we cannot agree that the resolution of Council is as restrictive as you would interpret. Conventional understanding of the idiom "take account of..." is "to bear in mind; allow-for; take something into consideration before reaching a decision" as opposed to "to take **no** account of", which would mean "ignore, pay no attention to".

In this instance, our travel arrangements to the annual 'Chilbi' festival in Waldshut-Tiengen were made after having consulted the website www.ecopassenger.org but I am afraid other considerations prevailed. Our Civic Officer could not travel by train for personal reasons, and the Mayor and Mayoress were not available for the extra two days which rail travel would entail. Transport once in Germany and hotel accommodation in Waldshut-Tiengen is arranged and paid-for by the host Council. Accommodation is at a premium during this annual parish festival and to prevail upon their budgets and hospitality for two additional nights was not considered acceptable. Also; their staff give up personal time to act as hosts and drivers which would otherwise be spent with their families during the week-long festival, and it was not considered appropriate to impose further.

Travel to our German and French twin towns in future will be subject to the same consideration on each occasion, and rail or road transport may well be selected for visits other than the 'Chilbi' festival.

Cllr M Chartier

Mayor of Lewes 2017/18