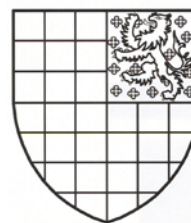


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**LEWES  
TOWN  
COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES**

of the meeting of the **Working Party** formed to consider Communications & public engagement held on **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2016**, in the **Yarrow Room, Town Hall, Lewes** at **7:00pm**.

**PRESENT** Cllrs A Ashby; S Catlin; I Makepeace; S Murray; R O’Keeffe (*Chairman*) and A Rowell

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

**ComWP2016/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies had been received from Cllr Elliott, Jones, and Watts who had unavoidable work commitments.

**ComWP2016/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were none.

**ComWP2016/18 QUESTIONS:** There were none

**ComWP2016/19 MINUTES:** The minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2016 were received and signed as an accurate record.

**ComWP2016/20 BUSINESS OF THE MEETING:**

1 TC updated Members on progress with the project to introduce a new Council website. He had met two of the selected prospective service contractors, and was shortly to meet the third. These companies were asked to produce a proposal, and would then be invited to present to the Working Party. It was suggested that a meeting would be structured to allow attendance by all three on the same day, with a suitable period between presentations for Members’ discussion. This would most appropriately take place during daytime and entail duration of around three hours; therefore when all proposals were received a suitable date would be sought when the greatest number of Members would be able to attend.

2 Members considered some examples of modern social media policies from other Councils. It had earlier been acknowledged that whilst the council had an adopted policy (as an appendix to the Communications Policy) this was modelled upon an “early” example and a review would be appropriate. It was unanimously agreed that one of these in particular (Wokingham TC) was most suitable, and with minor amendments and the addition of some elements which should be retained from Lewes’s existing policy, should be recommended to Council for adoption.

3 There was some discussion on the principle of two-way communication using social media and it was proposed that, initially, only Twitter and Facebook should be adopted using outgoing post facilities only. Responsive use could be introduced at a later date. A suggestion that a part-time communications officer might be desirable and the implications of this were discussed. Practical issues were acknowledged and it was recognized that, to be effective, such an officer needs to be ‘embedded’ in the working functions of an organization and closely familiar with projects and their background in order to create accurate and meaningful content for publication. TC reminded Members that there was an established principle for alterations to the staff establishment and he brought proposals for significant change to duties, or proposals for additional staff, for consideration by Council via the Personnel Panel whenever appropriate. An apprentice position, possibly a student placement, was suggested and briefly discussed. It was agreed that this would be revisited and researched for a Working party meeting in six months’ time, in mid-2017.

4 The Council’s newsletter was discussed, and a publishing schedule was considered and agreed:

MARCH Newsletter material to TC by end second week of February for publishing first week of March. (4pp x 300 copies self-distributed for pickup at Town

*Hall; All Saints; Southover House; TIC; Library and misc shops.)*

JULY Newsletter material to TC by end second week of June for despatch to printer first week of July. *(8pp x 7,500 copies: 7,200 for Door-to-door distribution by contractor [includes annual report etc], and 300 copies self-distributed for pickup at Town Hall; All Saints; Southover House; TIC; Library and misc shops.)*

OCTOBER Newsletter material to TC by end second week of September for publishing first week of October. *(4pp x 300 copies self-distributed for pickup at Town Hall; All Saints; Southover House; TIC; Library and misc shops.)*

JANUARY Newsletter material to TC by end second week of December for publishing second week of January. *(4pp x 300 copies self-distributed for pickup at Town Hall; All Saints; Southover House; TIC; Library and misc shops.)*

It was agreed that the January 2017 edition should follow the pattern for JULY, as 8 pages with distribution door-to-door, as there were significant developments in the Neighbourhood Plan to be announced, with a public exhibition and a six week consultation phase imminent, and the 'blanket-distribution model' would assist that. The increased cost would be attributable to the Neighbourhood Plan budget, which could accommodate it. Other items proposed for inclusion were discussed, and it was considered that a limit of eight pages was practical to ensure reader interest and engagement was maintained. Members were asked to submit any articles/photographs for future editions as soon as they were written, as a continuous process, to allow a stock of prospective items to be maintained.

**ComWP2016/21 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It was agreed to recommend the adoption of a revised Social Media Policy, as discussed, to replace the current Appendix A to the Council's Communications Protocol.

**ComWP2016/22** There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed, and thanked everyone for their attendance.

*The meeting closed at 7:45pm*

Signed ..... date .....