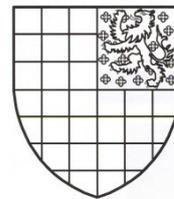


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**LEWES  
TOWN  
COUNCIL**

### **To All Members of Lewes Town Council**

A Meeting of **Lewes Town Council** will be held online\* on **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021**, at **7:30pm** which you are summoned to attend.

**\*VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE:** This meeting can be joined using computer video and audio using any suitably equipped digital device (eg laptop; tablet or smartphone) or, by audio only, using a telephone.

**To join this meeting** either follow this link: <https://zoom.us/j/95938720952>

Or telephone 0131 460 1196 or +44 (0)330 088 5830. Use **Meeting ID: 959 3872 0952**

**\*Please also see the note below regarding password-controlled access to this online meeting**

S Bridgen, Town Clerk, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021

### **AGENDA**

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTION and MEETING PROTOCOL

2. QUESTION TIME

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

3. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

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

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

5. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive any announcements from the Mayor.

6. MINUTES

To agree Minutes of the Council meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

(attached **page 4**)

7. WORKING PARTIES & OUTSIDE BODIES

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

a) *Allotments Working Party 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021*

(Minutes and draft Policy Statement attached **page 10**)

b) *Personnel Panel 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021*

(Notes attached **page 23**)

c) *Grants Panel 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021*

(Report FC019/2020 attached **page 25**)

d) *County Association*

(oral report by Cllr Catlin)

8. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY BILL

To consider support for this parliamentary Bill

(NOM016/2020 attached **page 27**)

9. FOSSIL FUELS NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY

To consider support for this initiative

(NOM017/2020 attached **page 27**)

10. MUNICIPAL CALENDAR and MEETINGS LEGISLATION

To note scheduled meetings for 2021/22 and update on emergency legislation

(attached **page 29**/ oral report by TC)

11. UPDATE ON MATTERS IN PROGRESS

(oral report by TC/plan **page 31**)

12. NOTICE of ITEMS IN PROSPECT

(oral report by Town Clerk)

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

### **PUBLIC ATTENDANCE – Covid-19 emergency arrangements:**

Members of the public have the right, and are welcome, to attend\* this meeting of the Council – questions regarding items on the agenda may be heard at the start of the meeting with the Mayor's consent.

Questions or requests to address the Council must be submitted by email to the Town Clerk at least 3 days in advance.

This meeting will be held online via Zoom Pro video link. To attend the meeting follow the instructions above.

**\*Members of the public wishing to attend this meeting must request a password by email at least 24 hours before the published start time. Please submit your request to [townclerk@lewes-tc.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@lewes-tc.gov.uk)**

**For guidance on attending online meetings please see the notes on the following page**

## Guidance on attending ‘virtual meetings’



### Joining a meeting:

1. Invitations to COUNCILLORS and officers to join a virtual meeting of the Council; a committee, or Working Party will be included in an email accompanying the agenda, and will look similar to this (*examples only*):

Lewes Town Council is inviting you to a meeting of ??????????????????

To join the meeting, use this **link**: [zoom.us/j/nnnnnnnnnnnn](https://zoom.us/j/nnnnnnnnnnnn)

**Meeting ID**: 123 4567 8910 (*example only*)

**Password**: 123456 (*example only*)

OR dial by your location

+44 (0)131 460 1196 United Kingdom or +44 (0)330 088 5830 United Kingdom

The link (but not the password) will be also repeated at the head of the Agenda and can be accessed from either. The **password** should not be shared, as **PUBLIC** attendees are asked to request a password by email at least 24hrs before the scheduled start.

2. Using a digital device with camera and microphone (*eg* laptop; tablet, smartphone), access can be gained by following the link. If audio-only is preferred (or problems interfere with video connection), telephone connection can be made using either of the numbers and following the prompts. Meeting ID and Password may be required dependent upon your chosen method.
3. If using computer audio and video a screen will open, similar to this:

Launching...

Please click **Open Zoom Meetings** if you see the system dialog.

If nothing prompts from browser, [click here](#) to launch the meeting, or [download & run Zoom](#).

If you cannot download or run the application, [join from your browser](#).

4. If you cannot download the application (or choose not to), or cannot run it, you may join from your internet browser by selecting that option.
5. On first connecting with the meeting you will be admitted to a virtual **Waiting Room**. Please follow any prompts, whether on-screen or audible. Attendees will be admitted once the meeting starts and what you see or hear after entry to the meeting may depend upon the equipment you are using.
6. To begin each meeting, the Chair will introduce some **meeting protocols** and all those attending will have live audio connections but will be asked to ‘mute’ their microphone when not speaking. Those wishing to speak will be asked to indicate by raising their hand or using the ‘hand up’ icon or sending a Chat message and they will be invited to do so by the Chair. The Chair can mute all attendees and selectively unmute individual speakers if there are interruptions or background noise issues.
7. While it is possible to use on-screen options to signify **voting** this will NOT be used. Should a vote be called during any meeting the Chair will ask Members to signify by raising their hand or, if there are any voting members attending by audio only, asking each in turn to voice their vote or abstention.
8. Attendees can send short **‘Chat’ messages** to one another privately and publicly during the meeting.
9. Meetings will be recorded, but records kept only until the Minutes have been subsequently validated.

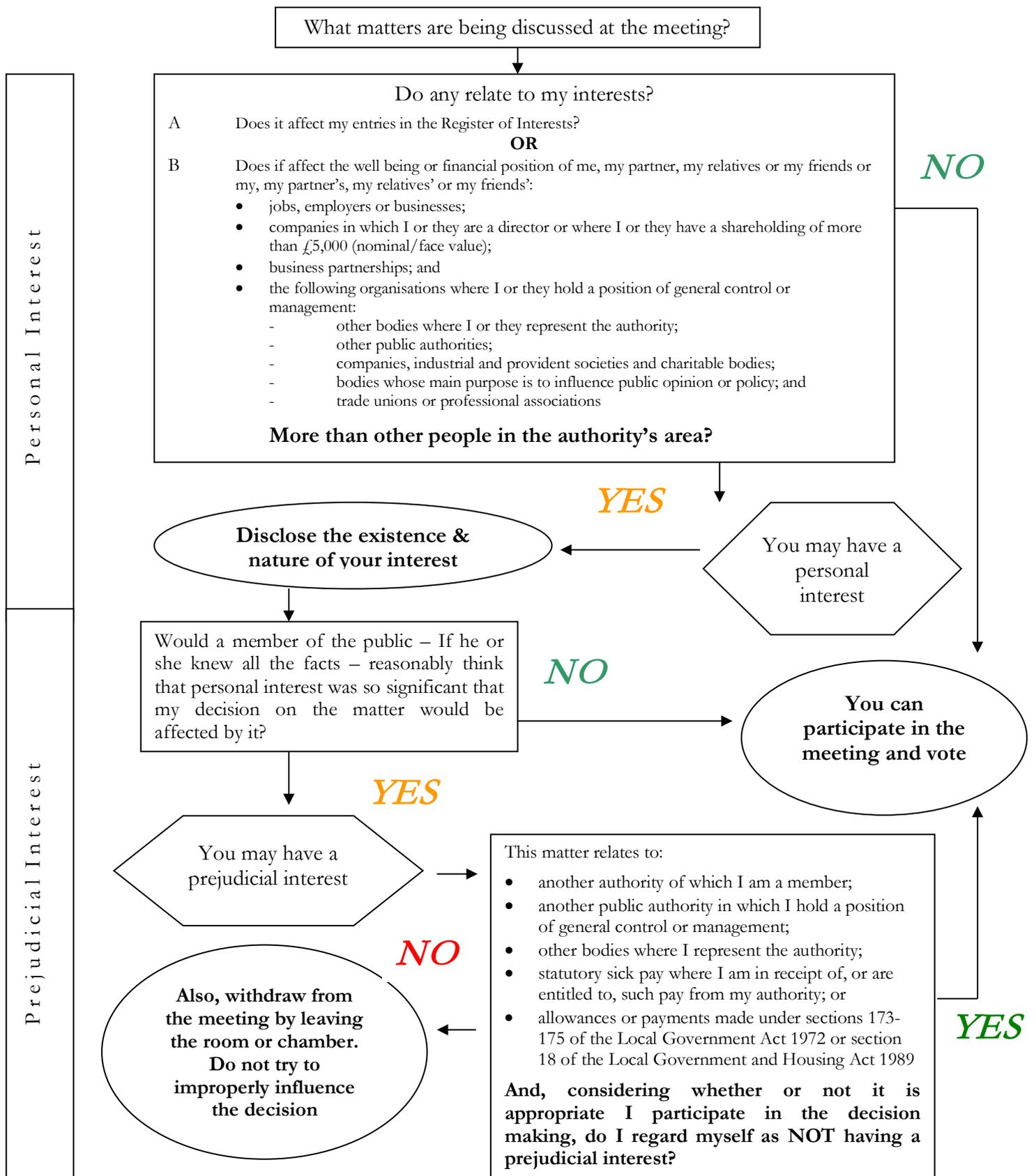
### PLEASE NOTE:

**Before connecting**, it is good practice to ensure that your equipment is adequately charged; that you will not be interrupted, and that your camera’s field of view or microphone do not capture anything you would prefer is not seen/heard publicly. Functions will be available once you have entered the meeting to alter the background, and your camera and microphone can be muted at will.

Please also ensure that other equipment nearby does not introduce audio ‘feedback’; that background noise is minimal, and that you select appropriate levels of microphone sensitivity and speaker volume on your device.

To learn more, a number of helpful FAQ’s and video tutorials are available at [www.zoom.us](https://www.zoom.us)

# DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



## YOU WILL ALSO NEED TO CONSIDER:

### Am I biased or have I predetermined a matter?

TEST: Would an informed member of the public think that there is a real possibility that you could be biased?

### Have I made up my mind about the issue?

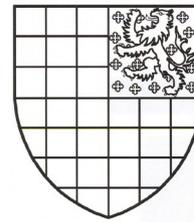
You should not make your mind up about an issue before you come to take a decision on it. You can still form a provisional view but you must be willing to consider all arguments presented at the meeting and you must be genuinely open to persuasion on the merits of the case. If you do not have a genuinely open mind about a matter, this will potentially leave the decision susceptible to legal challenge because of the common law concept of predetermination.

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**LEWES  
TOWN  
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## **MINUTES**

Of the meeting of **Lewes Town Council**,  
held on **Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021**, online via Zoom Meetings at **7:30pm**.

**PRESENT** Cllrs M Bird; R Burrows; S Catlin (*Deputy Mayor*); G Earl; R Handy; O Henman; J Herbert; J Lamb (*Mayor*); I Makepeace; Dr W Maples; Dr G Mayhew; M Milner; R O’Keeffe; S Sains; J Vernon; R Waring and K Wood.

*In attendance:* S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); Mrs F Garth (*Assistant Town Clerk & Civic Officer*) and Mrs E Tingley (*C’tee. Admin.*)

*Observing:* Ms L Zeyfert (*All Saints Centre Manager*) and B Courage (*Town Ranger*)

Before the meeting, the Reverend Canon Judith Egar offered a few words of reflection, citing the concept of unity and the need to learn to disagree constructively; making differences ‘fruitful’ rather than divisive.

**FC2020/92 QUESTION TIME:** There were none.

**FC2020/93 MEMBERS DECLARATIONS of INTERESTS:** There were none.

**FC2020/94 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Were received from Cllr Dr J Baah who had suffered a family bereavement.

**FC2020/95 MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

a) The ‘Covid Hero Awards’ project had closed at the end of December. All recipients had received a certificate; and a medal would follow to be presented at a reception hosted by the Mayor later in the year. The Sussex Express would be featuring some recipients of the award in weekly editions of the paper.

b) Local company Mirador Television had organised a two-way interview between the Mayor and the Mayor from Lewes, Delaware, USA. The interview covered the COVID Pandemic and how businesses in their respective towns were coping with the current situation. The interview could be viewed on the Internet at [www.miradortelevision.com](http://www.miradortelevision.com) under ‘What’s New’.

c) The Mayor announced that the Art Exhibition of work by students on the East Sussex College Fine Art and Design Extended Diploma programme that was due to be held in the Town Hall Foyer and Baxter Corridor on 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 had been cancelled. Cllr Makepeace, who had been liaising with the College, informed members that it was hoped the project may be able to move forward if the National Lockdown due to Covid-19 was eased for higher education students after the February half term.

**FC2020/96 MINUTES:**

**It was resolved that:**

**FC2020/96.1** Minutes of the Council meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020 were received and agreed as an accurate record.

**FC2020/97 COUNCIL TAX PRECEPT 2021/22:**

Council had previously agreed the Finance Working Party’s recommended service budgets, which resulted in a Council Tax precept unchanged from the current year, although a final decision on Precept had been deferred until the latest possible time to allow for any emergent issues due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This decision now needed to be formalized and no change was proposed, but TC explained that: since the earlier consideration of the values Lewes District Council had announced its calculations for the ‘tax-base’ – a theoretical number of chargeable properties – and had introduced a negative factor in respect of an anticipated increase in uncollected tax. This was understood to be happening across the country and it was confirmed that it was lawful. Whilst the amount of tax received by the Town Council would not rise, the effect was to inflate the amount payable

per Band 'D' property by slightly less than 1%; equivalent to an increase of four pence per week in the amount collected by the District Council. To attempt to redress that perceived increase would impact upon the Council's operating budgets and was not recommended, particularly as the 'principal precepting authorities' (District and County Councils; Police & Crime Commissioner; Fire & Rescue Authority) would share any *actual* over-collection should the prediction prove pessimistic, the 'minor' precepting bodies (Parish Councils *etc*) would see no benefit.

Councillors were interested to know if this represented a trend, but it was believed to be a genuine and prudent measure to address present circumstances. It was confirmed that the agreed budgets included non-recurring increases in costs associated with the recruitment of a successor TC and a new Responsible Finance Officer, plus costs of direct management of the Malling Community Centre.

Consequently, **it was resolved that:**

**FC2020/97.1** The total sum to be raised by precept on Council Tax for 2021/22 be set at £1,213,829 – unchanged from the present year - and Lewes District Council be asked to collect this sum.

**FC2020/98**

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

*Members are 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) Personnel Panel 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021:** Council considered the Notes of these meetings (*copies in minute book*)

These meetings had been held with support from Jennifer McNeill and Sarah Cope of South East Employers (SEEmp), who were retained to advise Councillors on the recruitment of a successor Town Clerk and assist in managing the process.

The Panel had reviewed the proposals by SEEmp and begun to address early decisions.

*Training:* it was agreed that a training session would be beneficial for Members. This was subsequently held on 12<sup>th</sup> January, conducted by David Maycock, SEEmp's Employment Director. David had covered a general run-through of a recruitment process, pointing-out potential pitfalls to avoid and touching upon the possibilities of remote interviews.

*Timetable:* a rough timescale had been previously agreed but was then reviewed in light of recent changes in the Covid-19 Regulations and was revised. Key milestone dates were still subject to a final decision. It was intended to aim for a provisional start for the new recruit in August, and although TC would officially retire on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021, it was acknowledged that he would have accrued substantial outstanding leave entitlement, suggesting a last date of working of 29<sup>th</sup> October.

It was considered appropriate to defer recruitment of a Responsible Finance Officer until this programme was underway.

It was agreed that interviews would be conducted by all members of the Personnel Panel and the Town Clerk, assisted by Ms McNeill. Mrs Garth would administer the meetings.

*Application pack:* The meetings discussed drafts of the 'Welcome pack' for potential applicants, which showed structure and some content, with placeholder pages for discussion of appropriate content. Council had already agreed Job Descriptions and Personal Specifications for the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer posts.

The detail was considered, and several suggestions for modified or additional material were discussed. Members were reminded that they should submit any ideas for text or photographs *asap*. Further content was being compiled and a final draft would be prepared shortly.

*Process:* a number of detailed areas were considered

- > It was agreed that applicants should be offered an informal preliminary discussion if they wished, and this could be with TC and/or the Mayor. It was agreed that the Mayor should be asked simply to confirm that a call had been made and he would not be asked to offer opinions for consideration during the selection process, as this had implications

*pro* equality of treatment.

- › The approach to shortlisting and interview programme was revisited. Ms McNeill offered advice on optional patterns, and it was agreed that the Panel would work with SEEmp to seek a shortlist of (notional) six candidates, all of whom would be subjected to the CREDO profiling assessment and invited to interview having prepared a presentation on a set topic. The interview programme would include, so far as possible in view of Covid-19, introduction to members of staff and other Councillors. This could be followed by further informal meetings with preferred candidates if appropriate.

Various matters ancillary to the process were discussed, such as the option to offer relocation support to the appointee. This was considered best left for discussion following any offer of appointment if the subject arose, as appropriate to circumstances. Salary scales for the separate roles of TC and Responsible Finance Officer had been evaluated by the independent consultant Richard Penn, and previously reported to Council. Following some discussion on the context and process of evaluation, it was agreed that the scales recommended should be adopted.

Councillors thanked the Panel for its work in this regard and **it was resolved that:**

**FC2020/98.1** The records of the Personnel Panel meetings on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021 are received and noted, and the Panel's decisions are approved.

**b) Allotments Working Party 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021.** Council considered the Minutes of this meeting (*copy in minute book*).

The meeting had briefly viewed the current form of Tenancy Agreement and the associated conditions, together with the set of guidelines on eco-friendly allotment practices that had been introduced for the 2020/21 year.

There followed a detailed review of a discussion document which covered a broad range of aspects and features of the Allotments service and suggested various policy elements and detailed proposals for new conditions.

Areas covered included:

- › Tenancy regulation and options for action in breach.
- › Permitted activities and produce.
- › Restriction of tenancies to parish residents.
- › Restriction on permitted groundworkers.
- › Site security and tenant behaviour.
- › Structures (eg fencing/sheds/toolstores/ponds).
- › Permitted/prohibited materials.
- › Composting.
- › Wildlife and biodiversity.
- › Pesticides; herbicides and fertilizers.
- › Disposal of waste.
- › Water supply and charging.
- › Rental fees.
- › Encouragement for adoption of eco-friendly practices.

Members considered elements of this document in great detail, and reached provisional agreement on some proposals, but time constraints prevented completion of the task.

The work being incomplete, at the request of Members the Chairman adjourned the meeting, with the remainder of the business of the Working Party deferred pending resumption. A date would be fixed as soon as reasonably practicable.

**It was resolved that:**

**FC2020/98.2** The Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Working Party held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021 are received and noted.

**c) North Street development Sounding Board meeting 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021:**

It was explained that the purchase of the North Street Quarter (NSQ) from Lewes District

Council and Santon North Street Ltd had not yet been formally concluded. The prospective owners 'Human Nature' had moved into offices in the High Street and the company included a number of local residents. They anticipated that a new planning application would be submitted for the site in the next 18 months and then engineering for flood defences that must precede any development would commence almost immediately thereafter. Engagement exercises would be held with the community on the NSQ site hopefully in the summer dependent upon on COVID restrictions. It was their aim to retain many of the existing tenants on the site. A full range of specialist consultants would be working on the project, including eight architects. Whilst the company was undecided whether it would continue with the Sounding Board in the same form as their predecessors, it had been suggested that the Board meet again in the near future. A regular newsletter was being prepared.

**It was resolved that:**

**FC2020/98.3** The oral report on the North Street development Sounding Board meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 is noted.

**FC2020/99**

**MAYORALTY 2021/22:**

The matter of nomination of a Mayor-elect and Deputy Mayor-elect for the 2021/22 municipal year was tabled, and the Mayor invited nominations for the roles.

Consequently, **it was resolved that:**

**FC2020/99.1** Cllr Catlin is elected Mayor-Elect for the 2021/22 municipal year.

Two nominees were proposed for the role of Deputy Mayor, and some debate arose in which it was suggested that candidates be questioned which, although lawful, was unconventional and considered inappropriate. TC advised that the formal elections were those held at the annual meeting in May, and early designation was a simple courtesy to individuals to allow them time to prepare for the effects on their personal lives of a year in office. Some members suggested that the process of election was not transparent, and candidates should be allowed to make public presentations of their merit. A number of others disagreed and spoke about the requirement for strict neutrality in service to the whole community, and suspension of personal opinions; preferences and principles during the year. Both candidates spoke briefly on their own behalf and the matter was put to a vote. A recorded vote was requested (*Standing Order 1(s) [following provisions of Local Government Act 1972 Sch12 p13 (2)]*) and the record of votes cast is appended to these Minutes.

Consequently, **it was resolved that:**

**FC2020/99.2** Cllr Sains is elected Deputy Mayor-Elect for the 2021/22 year.

**FC2020/100**

**UPDATE ON MATTERS IN PROGRESS:**

An update on progress with the Annual Plan was distributed (copy in minute book) and TC elaborated on various salient points.

*Town Hall:* An acoustic survey must precede the start of the Town Hall heating replacement, to establish ambient noise levels near local homes before air-source heat pump plant could be specified. During the present Covid-19 situation the level would be untypical and therefore survey work would await a return to more normal levels.

*Pells area:* projects (items 2 & 3: lake ecology and pool kiosk development) which had been deferred pending the start of major flood defence works would be affected by the recently-announced change of ownership of the North Street development site and attendant change of direction in planning design, and these would be reviewed when that situation was clearer in case an earlier start was now appropriate. TC offered to brief any Member unfamiliar with these long-standing projects.

*Malling Community Centre* refurbishment work was progressing as fast as Covid-19 effects allowed, although the contractor could not offer a completion date at this point. Staff would move into their new roles with effect from February to facilitate planning for re-opening.

*Devolution* matters were on-hold, although it had been previously reported that Lewes District Council (LDC) had withdrawn their offers of sale of the Market tower and Fisher

Street. It was understood that LDC were still prepared to transfer the Trusts related to Stanley Turner and Mountfield Road recreation grounds, although they were considering a number of aspects which would offer the Town Council only liabilities with no compensating benefit. This would develop, and Council would be informed in due course.

**FC2020/101**

### **NOTICE of ITEMS IN PROSPECT**

*Dates to note etc* for forthcoming meetings and events were:

- > The next cycle of applications (Cycle 4 of 4) to the Council's grants programme has a deadline for applications (now online-only) of, 29<sup>th</sup> January with an online meeting of the Grant Panel on Weds 10<sup>th</sup> February and decisions by Council on 4<sup>th</sup> March.
- > The next Council meeting will take place on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 7:30pm, with a deadline for agenda items to reach TC by noon on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February.
- > TBC – a further Personnel Panel workshop and the resumption of the Allotments Working Party were imminent; other meetings would be scheduled in due course.

There being no further business the Mayor closed the meeting; thanked everyone for their contributions.

*The meeting ended at 9.20pm*

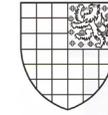
Signed: ..... Date: .....

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**VOTING RECORD SHEET**

**MEETING of: Council**

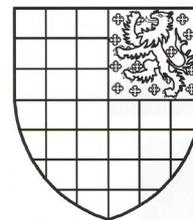
**date: Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021**



**LEWES  
TOWN  
COUNCIL**

Please note: this is a record of voting *where this has been requested* under Standing Order 1(s) [following provisions of Local Government Act 1972 Sch12 p13 (2)]

MOTION or AMENDMENT VOTED UPON	Lib Dem	Green	Lib Dem	Ind	Lib Dem	Green	Lib Dem	Green	Lib Dem	Green	Green	Ind	Lib Dem	Ind	Lib Dem	Green	Green	Lib Dem	No. FOR	No. AGAINST	No. Abstentions	Not Present or Not Voting	CARRIED ? Yes/No
	BAAH	BIRD	BURROWS	CATLIN	EARL	HANDY	HENMAN	HERBERT	LAMB	MAKEPEACE	MAPLES	MAYHEW	MILNER	O' KEEFFE	SAINS	VERNON	WARING	WOOD					
Deputy Mayor Elect for 2021/22 <i>(Record requested by Cllr Dr Maples)</i>																							
<i>Nominee:</i> Cllr Makepeace	NP	✓	A	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	A	✗	✓	✓	✗	7	8	2	1	No
<i>Nominee:</i> Cllr Sains	NP	✗	A	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	A	✓	✗	✗	✓	8	7	2	1	Yes



## **MINUTES**

of a meeting of the **Allotments Working party** held on **Tuesday 2nd February 2021** online via Zoom Meetings at **7:00pm**.

**PRESENT** Cllrs Bird; Burrows; Catlin; Lamb (*Chair*); Makepeace; Dr Maples and Sains.

**In attendance:** S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); Emma Tingley (*Customer Services Officer*); Brian Courage (*Town Ranger*)

**AllotsWP2020/08** **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** There were none

**AllotsWP2020/09** **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Cllr Dr Maples declared an interest in that she is a Council allotment tenant, and Cllr Bird advised that his home borders and overlooks an allotment site

**AllotsWP2020/10** **QUESTIONS:** There were none.

**AllotsWP2020/11** **MINUTES:** The Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021 were received and agreed as an accurate record.

**AllotsWP2020/12** **REMIT of the COMMITTEE**

Members noted the remit of the working party as defined by Council:

- To consider proposals for changes in allotment policy and management, *eg* revision of policy and rules; introduction of eco-friendly practices; wider tenant responsibilities; allocation of tenancies and potential to reduce the nett cost of the service.
- The Working Party to focus upon rules and guidance that accord with the Council 'visioning' priority of environmentally-sound practices (and wider Government policy); that address current 'work-around' anomalies, and that create a positive environment for allotment holders wishing to engage more fully with sound environmental practices. Further; to consider potential for additional low or zero-cost activities to promote good ecological practice on allotments.

**AllotsWP2020/13** **BUSINESS OF THE MEETING:**

*Policy Statement & guidelines for tenants:* The meeting briefly reviewed progress and resumed the work adjourned at its previous meeting. This entailed a detailed review of a discussion document which covered a broad range of aspects and features of the Allotments service and suggested various policy elements and detailed proposals for new conditions. The original document had been analysed in three contexts: Policy elements, specific tenancy conditions, and general guidance for tenants. Areas covered included:

- > Tenancy regulation and options for action in breach
- > Permitted activities and produce
- > Restriction of tenancies to parish residents.
- > Restriction on permitted groundworkers
- > Site security and tenant behaviour
- > Structures (*eg fencing/sheds/toolstores/ponds*)
- > Permitted/prohibited materials.
- > Composting
- > Wildlife and biodiversity

- › Pesticides; herbicides and fertilizers
- › Disposal of waste
- › Water supply and charging
- › Rental fees
- › Encouragement for adoption of eco-friendly practices

Members considered these elements in detail and reached agreement on the content.

*Reduction of water consumption:* There followed some discussion on reduction of water consumption, and Members were interested to investigate the feasibility of replacing water taps with valve-controlled water troughs, and possibly offering large water butts at favourable prices, while remaining alert for opportunities to encourage frugality by tenants.

*Rental charges:* The ability of the Council to increase rents for allotment plots was discussed. TC explained that there had, until recently, been a legal restriction which limited increases to no more than the overall increase in other charges for leisure facilities. Due to the historic origins of the allotment principle, rates were traditionally nominal and the base values therefore remain low. Recent case law had altered this limitation, to some extent, and the position now was that rent can be fixed in one of three ways:

- a. by agreement *ie* the Council giving notice of an increase and the tenants agreeing to pay. A tenant may, and probably would, refuse to pay an increased rent.
- b. a specific term could be inserted in the tenancy agreement permitting the Council to vary the rent upon notice. This would be the preferred option but the Council's current tenancy agreement does not provide for this and would need to be amended to, in effect, give one year's notice of the option.
- c. By giving notice to quit and reissuing the tenancy at the higher rent. This would be open to legal challenge.

The principles in arriving at a reasonable rent were complex and there are few legal authorities upon which to rely. It would be sensible to have sites professionally valued, but this in itself would not be straightforward and likely expensive. The Council must determine the rent that a notional tenant rather than a particular tenant might reasonably be expected to pay. In assessing this it must take into account all relevant circumstances in a common-sense way, but the level has to have regard to local circumstances. The terms of tenancy restricting use of the land for leisure gardening only; the prohibition on commercial growing and the annual term were relevant factors affecting valuation. Other factors might include, location, demand, size of plots, services provided or available on site or nearby.

AllotsWP2020/14

#### CONCLUSIONS:

TC undertook to revise various technical and legal elements of the Policy Statement and noted that there were elements that might usefully be added (*eg* covering existing policy on items such as beekeeping and bonfires), and Cllr Dr Maples agreed to research and prepare an advice section on ponds.

A Draft would be produced for consideration by Council at its 4<sup>th</sup> March meeting which, if adopted, could be issued with 2021 tenancy renewals.

It was agreed to recommend that 2021 tenancy agreements should include a clause which will allow for focussed rental increases in future, and that a small pilot experiment be conducted to offer water butts and rain harvesting kit to tenants at cost price. It was proposed that valve-controlled water troughs should be considered whenever taps were replaced or water services updated.

*The meeting closed at 8:40pm*

Signed.....

Date .....

Draft

**Policy Statement and guidance for tenants**

**Allotments Service**



**LEWES  
TOWN  
COUNCIL**



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## **1. Introduction**

Lewes Town Council is committed to prioritising environmental concerns. This includes encouraging eco-friendly practices on Council-owned Allotments, and prohibiting the use of harmful pesticides, herbicides and non-organic fertiliser.

This statement of policy underpins the conditions of tenancy under which allotment plots are let.

It is essential that tenants read their Agreement in full prior to signing, and at all times comply with its terms and conditions.

Council Officers will always try to focus on solutions to problems and be supportive and attempt to come to a reasonable agreement, but it must be remembered that the Council is concerned to be fair to all allotment holders, current and future, and to recognize the part this service can play in addressing climate change and resilience.

The Council will be proactive in ensuring plots are actively used as allotments and that its tenants follow good practice.

## **2. Allotment Tenancy - breaches and sanctions**

Where conditions of the Tenancy Agreement are broken: if a problem is not resolved quickly and to the satisfaction of the Council, the tenancy will be revoked and the plot will be reallocated to a new tenant as quickly as possible.

What the Town Council will do:

At the discretion of the Council, Allotment Tenants may be given up to a maximum of two written warnings (by email and/or letter) within a three year period before terminating a tenancy. Warning notices will include instruction on what requires improvement and a reasonable time limit for completing the work to the Council's satisfaction.

If the improvement is not made within the specified time limit, or if policy is breached on a third occasion, the Tenancy will be revoked with immediate effect.

Warning notices will accrue over a period of three years. In other words, if after a warning notice no other warning is issued for three years, the slate is wiped clean.

If there is a severe breach of Policy, a Tenancy may be revoked without a warning notice.

## **3. Notice and Termination of tenancy.**

The tenancy is subject to the specific rules and general conditions issued with it and any amendments which may be made from time to time by the Council and to the Allotments Acts 1908 to 1950.

In summary, a Tenancy can be terminated in any of the following circumstances:

If the Tenant has not duly observed the Rules governing the Tenancy, or has failed to comply, within the specified time given, with the maximum two warning notices requiring the remedy of any breaches of the conditions of the agreement.

If the allotment is not in a good state of cultivation or preparation for cultivation. This clause does not apply during the first three months of a Tenancy. As a general rule, *in the first two years of a Tenancy, a minimum of 40% of the total plot should be cultivated and in active use during the main growing season. From the third year onwards, a minimum of 70% of the total plot should be cultivated and in active use during the main growing season.*

If the rent is in arrears for not less than 40 days (whether lawfully demanded or not).

On the death of the Tenant. The Tenant's surviving spouse or partner may continue with the Tenancy until the end of the current agreement (normally 31<sup>st</sup> March) or, with the consent of the Council, sign a new Allotment Agreement. The Council must be notified in writing (by letter or email) of the death of the Tenant, as soon as reasonably practical. This notice should include any request for carrying on the Tenancy by the surviving spouse or partner.

If the Tenant is no longer resident in the Town. For the purposes of the Tenancy, status can be demonstrated by, for instance, Council Tax bills or evidence of benefits received at the primary, local residence.

Whenever the Tenancy or right of occupation of the Council terminates.

Upon Termination, the Tenant must give up possession and use of the allotment, leaving the plot in a state suitable for immediate re-letting. Should any works be required to return the allotment plot to a workable condition, the existing Tenant will be charged to bring the plot to an acceptable standard. Any personal property, structure, produce or other items remaining, 14 days after the termination of the tenancy, will be removed and the cost of removal charged to the Tenant, or with their agreement, will be assigned to a new Tenant.

#### **4. You and your allotment**

The Allotment Act of 1922 defines the term 'allotment garden' as:

"An allotment not exceeding forty poles in extent which is wholly or mainly cultivated by the occupier for the production of vegetable or fruit crops for consumption by himself or his family".

This description remains important because it defines the permitted use of an allotment plot. Provided it is used mainly for growing vegetables or fruit, part of the plot can be used for growing flowers or as a leisure area. Surplus produce can be shared with others; however, allotments cannot be cultivated for commercial gains: produce cannot be sold commercially.

Sharing is, however, encouraged. Donations to good causes are encouraged.

##### **a. Lewes Town Council allotments are for RESIDENTS of Lewes Town.**

It is recognised that there are a few allotment holders who have moved to neighbouring villages but are in other respects in good standing and continue to care for their plot. They will be permitted to retain their allotments until they choose to relinquish their tenancy, but all new lettings from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 will be restricted to Lewes residents. For the purposes of the Tenancy, residence can be demonstrated by, for instance, Council Tax bills or evidence of benefits received at the primary, local residence. If you are required to demonstrate your residence, you will need to present documentation at the Town Hall, or in writing within 30 days of the Council's request.

##### **b. Allotment tenancies do not accord long-term, legacy or sub-tenancy rights.**

The named tenant is the allotment-holder and is principally responsible for working the plot.

Allotments cannot be 'passed down' from one family member to another. They cannot be 'loaned out' to friends or house tenants.

Allotments that are no longer tended primarily by the named tenant are required to be relinquished at the end of the growing season.

We will allow exception to this for temporary periods, *eg* where a tenant has been ill (or suffered a serious difficulty, such as a bereavement) and has made arrangements for a friend or family member to tend their



allotment during a given growing season. This leeway can be agreed in consultation with the Town Council. It is necessary, however, to declare any such arrangement immediately, in writing (hard copy or email) to the Council.

The named tenant must be present at the allotment for the majority of work activity. However, the tenant may receive assistance from time to time or – with the Town Council’s approval – a named person or persons may help out on a regular basis. It is appropriate, for instance, for more physically-able relatives or friends to help with more physically-demanding jobs. The balance of work on the plot should nevertheless be done by the named tenant. In the case of less-physically-able tenants, work may of course include ‘direction’.

#### **c. Security awareness**

From time to time, vandals or thieves may take an interest in allotments; please keep your and your fellow-allotment-holders’ plots safe by locking gates and by reporting uninvited visitors.

**Do not** give the lock numbers to anyone else; this constitutes a breach of your tenancy.

#### **d. Noise nuisance**

Allotments are spaces where tenants can expect to get away from noise and unwanted distractions.

Try to limit noisy activities to times of day/seasons when there are fewer other allotment holders around. If you must make noise during a busy time, try to talk with your neighbouring allotment-holders and agree a reasonable limit on your activity. Use strimmers and trimmers sparingly. Dogs’ barking may also be an unwelcome noise; for this reason, even if your dog is well-constrained on your plot, your dog may not be welcome on site.

Remember also that while for many the allotment is a social environment, for some allotment holders, the allotment is the only space they have to enjoy a bit of solitude.

#### **e. Bonfires**

Allotments generate an amount of material which is traditionally disposed of by burning. The Council understands that this may sometimes be helpful but encourages allotment holders to compost as much material as possible, and to remove rather than burn any larger items. Materials that may result in noxious fumes must in all cases be removed and not burned. Allotment gardeners are reminded of potential nuisance which may be caused by the lighting of bonfires and the problems that can be caused by smoke emanating from the fire.

We are confident that most allotment holders are responsible and thoughtful in this respect, and simply ask tenants to examine the manner in which they have bonfires and to ensure any occasional helpers are reminded of the need to observe common sense and respect for the comfort of the residents in the surrounding areas.

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 where a Local Authority is satisfied that smoke prejudicial to health or a nuisance exists or is likely to occur or recur, they may serve Notice requiring the abatement of the nuisance or prohibiting/restricting occurrence or recurrence. The penalty for contravention is a fine of up to £2000.

## **5. Use of pesticides; herbicides, vermicides and fertilizers etc**

Due to large scale habitat loss in the countryside, and large scale pesticide use in agriculture, wildlife such as birds, insects and bees are seeking refuge in our towns. This makes it very important that within our allotment sites we create safe, synthetic chemical-free, areas.

The use of synthetic chemicals can have a devastating effect on our environment and its biodiversity.

There are a number of detrimental effects from the use of synthetic chemicals (and some 'natural' chemicals). These include: run off that contaminates water courses and poisons aquatic life; direct poisoning of plants and animals, including worms and insects that are beneficial to gardening; indirect or residue toxicity of the soil that may affect the immediate area of application; contamination of adjacent areas' plants and animals.

When used on soft surfaces, such as vegetation or grass swards, there is a possibility of contamination of adjacent areas.

Many of these chemicals are highly persistent, meaning that they stay around in the soil for a long time, increasing the likelihood that they will disrupt good soil organisms and enter into both the human and animal food chains, watercourses and aquifers.

### **Tenants MAY NOT:**

Use synthetic pesticides, vermicides, herbicides or similar non-organic means for controlling pests and weeds.

Use synthetic fertilisers or soil conditioners.

The use of non-organic weed-killer, such as Round-Up, or pest-controls such as metaldehyde or chelator-enhanced ferric phosphate slug pellets, or peat-based or synthetic fertilizer, will constitute a severe breach of the tenancy agreement.

In the interests of biodiversity and addressing climate change, the use of peat – which is a non-renewable resource and one of this country's essential carbon sinks – is not allowed.

## **6. Water-use**

Where possible, allotment tenants are strongly encouraged to collect rainwater for use on their allotments. Where this is not possible, or where rainwater harvest is not sufficient to sustain watering needs through a dry season, allotment holders are strongly encouraged to use tap water sparingly. The use of sprayhoses is discouraged, as evaporation from the spray is considerable: watering leaves is far less efficient than ground-level irrigation. Where practicable, watering should be done by watering can, either early in the morning, or late afternoon/early evening to enable water to better penetrate the soil and reach the plants' roots. (<https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=312>).

## **7. Bees & bee-keeping**

The Council is prepared to allow the keeping of beehives on allotments, provided strict conditions are observed. The beekeeper is expected to have read the available publication(s) from the British Bee-Keepers Association regarding 'Allotment Beekeeping' and further guidance from the National Allotment Society and Leisure Gardeners.

Bees shall not be kept on any allotment until the allotment tenant has submitted a request in writing to keep bees on his or her plot to the Council, and that request has been agreed in writing.

Beekeepers making such application are expected to be experienced, or to have close guidance from an experienced beekeeper.

Before consent is agreed, we will first ascertain the views of neighbouring tenants, and in particular any potential visitors to the site who may be allergic to bee-stings, as stings can be life-threatening.

We will then ask the applicant to sign a separate Agreement undertaking special responsibilities for the keeping of their bees.

For full details please ask for a copy of the Council's **Bee-keeping Agreement and Conditions for the installation of bee-hives on Allotment sites** or find it on our website.

## **8. Ponds**

Well-positioned, well-constructed and well-maintained wildlife ponds are welcome!

It is estimated that over one-thirds of native wildlife ponds have disappeared in the past 50 years, with over three-quarters of those remaining considered to be in poor condition (see, e.g. [www.froglife.org](http://www.froglife.org)). This has led to loss of wildlife of all sorts, including insects, birds, reptiles and mammals, but most especially the wildlife that live in and immediately around ponds such as dragonflies, toads and frogs – species that are incredibly helpful to allotment gardeners (notes on dragonfly prey: <https://homefarm.club/journal/2019/7/19/allotment-ally-the-dragonflynbsp>).

There are **important guidelines for constructing a wildlife pond** on your Lewes Town Council allotment (see below). See also links below for useful guidance on how to create a wildlife pond.

### **DO NOT:**

- use any form of plastic that is likely to degrade, split, shred or fragment
- use kitchen washing up bowls or old paddling pools
- use bin liners, shower curtains or any light plastic sheeting
- use permanent materials: no concrete
- use materials that will be difficult to remove: no enamel bathtubs, no hardcore
- build a pond that is disproportionate to the size of your plot
- build a pond that is in any way a hazard for people or wildlife
- Generally speaking, do not transfer plants or creatures between ponds as this may result in transfer of diseases which, once established, are difficult to eradicate.
- Generally speaking, do not have fish in your allotment pond: fish eat newt and frog spawn and fish or the water in which they are transported may carry diseases.

### **DO:**

- Think carefully about pond practicalities.
- Sun and shade: deeper and larger ponds may be fine in full sun; shallower ponds will need a bit a shade
- Ponds should not be (re-)filled with tap water. Think about how you will top up your pond in hot weather. Do you have a water butt?
- Ponds must be wholly visible and safe for human and animal visitors. Site away from paths and ensure the perimeter of the pond is carefully demarcated.
- Ponds must have a shallow end/beach area, with climbable materials (flat rocks, wooden ramps, rope ladders) to enable hedgehogs and other small creatures to climb out of deeper water.

- Let nature rule
- If your pond is well-sited and well-constructed, it will quickly become inhabited by plants and creatures; the best thing you can do is fill it with fresh (not tap) water and let nature take over.
- Provide a healthy surrounding habitat. This might mean ‘bug hotels’ or a small log or flint stone pile, a sheltering fruit bush or vine, etc.

**a. Creating an allotment-friendly pond or bog garden**

FrogLife offer this handy guide, ‘Just Add Water’. Please *ignore the advice to use old household materials like paddling pools*. Apart from this, the advice is excellent: <https://www.froglife.org/info-advice/just-add-water/>. There is also a FrogLife ‘Wildlife pond visualiser app’ for Android only – search for ‘Froglife’ on Google Play Store: <https://www.froglife.org/what-we-do/education/come-forth-for-wildlife/come-forth-for-wildlife-neighbourhood-wildlife-corridors/idea-zone/> that helps with location, shape and construction.

The Sussex Wildlife Trust has a ‘How to’ guide for creating a mini-wildlife pond: <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/MINI-WILDLIFE-POND.png>, or for more options: <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/sites/default/files/2019-08/Big%20or%20small%20ponds%20for%20all%20Wid%20About%20Gardens.pdf>. *Again, ignore the advice to use old household materials like washing up bowls.*

Lastly, consider a bog garden, rather than a pond (or in addition). These shallow areas of water are easier to construct and maintain, and still provide good habitat for wildlife that are useful on the allotment. For suggestions: <https://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/humble-bog-garden>.

## **9. Structures**

A ‘structure’ includes sheds, storage, green or glasshouses, larger polytunnels, large compost enclosures, fencing, borders and ponds. Any structure should be for the sole purpose of supporting the allotment and improving the local ecology. It must:

- Be in proportion to the size of the allotment,
- Be of the minimum practical size for its purpose, and in no case should the footprint of a solid structure exceed 10% of the overall plot, nor should structures, taken together, exceed 20% of the overall plot.
- Not impede, create shade or cause any possible danger for other allotment holders
- Not be permanent, i.e. no permanent footings or bases, no use of hardcore or poured concrete.

Tenants must not erect any building, shed or covering structure (with the exception of small, low-lying, non-permanent poly-tunnels/cloches) without the written consent of the Council. Tenants must allow 30 days between their written request and any decision (though we will endeavour to come to a decision sooner). Where a favourable decision is reached, instructions on size and location of the structure will be included and must be followed.

**Before creating any structure on your plot: first seek permission, in writing, from the Council.**

Where an unsuitable (*eg* over-large, poor repair, permanent) structure is erected by a Tenant, a warning notice will be issued requiring the Tenant to dismantle and remove the structure within a fixed period. If the Tenant does not comply, the Tenant will be issued a second and final warning notice. If the Tenant does not comply, the Council further reserves the right to remove unsatisfactory structures and to recover the cost of dismantling and removal from the Tenant. The Tenancy will then be terminated.

Where structures are allowed, they must be kept in a good state of repair and condition, to the satisfaction of the Council.

**Permanent structures, foundations or groundwork are not permitted** to be erected, installed or created by allotment tenants.

This includes poured concrete steps, foundations, concrete-lined ponds or deep-sunken solid structure ponds (*eg* bathtubs). Where such structures have been erected in the past, there will be a year's grace from the date of notification allowed for their removal.

**Structures that are out of proportion to the size of the plot or that overshadow or in other ways encumber other plots are not permitted**

**a. Sheds and storage**

Sheds, storage boxes and storage frames are only permitted on some allotment sites. If they are allowed on your site, permission to erect a structure must be agreed in advance. It is *essential to seek the advice of the Council*, particularly with respect to size, materials and siting; and to ask permission, in writing (hard-copy or email), from the Council. As a general rule, where allowed, sheds or storage boxes should be of the minimum practical size for their purpose and should not exceed a footprint larger than 10% of the overall plot for an individual structure, or 20% in aggregate for multiple structures.

Sheds and storage must not be permanent. Stability should be achieved with temporary anchors, loose-laid paving slabs, robust pallets (see the note on pallets in this document) or other wooden base.

Sheds and storage boxes should be made secure against thieves. The Council accepts no liability for items stored on the site.

**b. Glasshouses, greenhouses, netted arbours and polytunnels**

The Council recognises that glasshouses are a traditional means of extending the growing season. Where an existing glasshouse is kept in good condition, with any broken panes immediately removed and replaced, preferably with for-purpose polycarbonate panes, the Council will take no action. Where, however, a glasshouse is in poor condition, notably with broken panes, the Council will insist on immediate repair or removal.

Polycarbonate greenhouses or polytunnels may be considered; it is, however, *essential to seek the advice of the Council*, particularly with respect to size, materials and siting, and to *ask permission, in writing (hard-copy or email), from the Council*.

As with any other structure, glasshouses, greenhouses and polytunnels must be in proportion to the size of the plot, of the minimum practical size for their purpose (and should not exceed a footprint larger than 10% of the overall plot for an individual structure, or 20% in aggregate for multiple structures) not be detrimental to neighbouring plots, and be kept in good condition.

**c. Compost enclosures and wooden Pallets**

Allotment tenants are strongly encouraged to create their own organic compost. Wooden structures built for the purpose of containing manure, woodchip and other organic material are acceptable. Compost enclosures should be of the minimum practical size for their purpose and they should not in any way intrude upon neighbouring allotments. Modest-sized, purpose-made compost 'bins' or makers, which are portable, are acceptable.

**An important note on Pallets: Not all pallets are safe to use.**

- If you wish to use pallets for, *eg* compost enclosures, check the stamps/markings on your pallet. Pallets stamped with the letters ‘MB’ (which stands for methyl bromide) or CP (CP1, CP2, etc., which indicates pallets used in the chemical industry) **MUST NOT** be used.
- Avoid pallets, or any composite wood product, that include compressed woodchip and glue.
- Blue and Brown Pallets should not be used as they may have passed through a chemical fumigation process on their journeys.
- Pallets with no stamps/markings are generally safe to use.
- Pallets marked with ‘HT’ are heat-treated and are safe to use.

#### **d. Fencing and borders**

Border structures and fences are not permitted on every Lewes Town Council Allotment site. IF they are permitted on your site they must not be permanent. This means they must not be anchored with concrete. Below-ground rabbit-proofing, such as chicken wire, or corrugated metal, must be kept in good condition and removed entirely when deteriorated.

Internal borders (between neighbouring plots and within your own plot) should be as inobtrusive as possible.

A note on glass bottles: re-purposed glass bottles have in the past been used to create borders. Where such borders are well-maintained and the glass is entirely visible and not at risk of breaking, this repurposing of bottles will be allowed. Where there is any sign of deterioration, however, the glass must be immediately and safely removed.

### **10. Plastics**

The use of plastic on allotments is generally discouraged, but the usefulness of specific items is recognised. *Please read this section carefully.*

Tenants **MAY USE** the following, *provided they are in good condition*:

- Plastic containers, such as water-butts and heat-activating composters.
- For-purpose weed-suppressing fabric (though alternatives, such as non-tanalised wood chippings, are recommended)
- For-purpose netting
- Poly-tunnel materials
- For-purpose heavy-duty pond liner
- Heavy-duty builders’ sacks (e.g. for compost or for the gathering **and removal** of unwanted materials)

‘Good condition’ means: not degrading, shedding, fragmenting or splitting. When any item *begins* to degrade, fragment or shed it must be immediately and safely removed. This includes especially any plastic that is covered or below the soil surface.

### **11. Carpeting, rugs, underlay, foam products**

In the past, carpeting, rugs and some forms of underlay have been used, *eg.* as weed barriers and were considered an effective part of permaculture gardening. Unfortunately, the vast majority of carpets, rugs and underlay now contain plastic weave as well as a chemical binders and many carpets, rugs and underlay

are made entirely of synthetic materials, including foam backing. These materials rapidly degrade in contact with soil and exposure to the elements, effectively littering and poisoning the soil beneath.

Consequently, carpets, rugs, underlay and foam products are not allowed on Town Council allotments.

There are two exceptions to the 'no carpet' rule: rugs or carpets made from 100% cotton or 100% wool (to include all elements of the weave, backing, etc.), but tenants will be required to provide evidence of this. Council policy will be: if in doubt; leave it out.

Foam is rarely used on allotments, but can 'sneak in', usually in the form of underlay, 'insulation' or backing. Foam degrades incredibly quickly and should not be used on the allotment.

## **12. Tyres**

The most recent research on the use of tyres on allotments suggests that even old tyres continue to leach toxins in contact with soil and exposure to the elements. While the main ingredient in tyres is natural rubber, the stabilisers and other chemicals used to enhance the performance of the tyre are toxic. While the Council would like to support alternative uses for tyres, it appears that the longer-term risks to soil are too great.

*As a general rule: Where poor quality, degrading or non-purposed plastic sheeting, bags, bottles, or carpet, rugs, underlay, foam or tyres are in existing use, Tenants will be issued with a warning notice that these items must be safely removed within a specified period. Failure to remove items within the specified period will result in the Council charging you for the removal of the items and immediate revocation of your Tenancy.*

## **13. Unused materials and storage**

Materials brought to the allotment should be for the purposes of improving your plot in the immediate or near future. Materials brought on site for future projects should be kept neatly, ideally (where possible) in a shed or storage box or stacked in a discreet area of the allotment.

**Allotments are not a place to store over-flow materials from homes or gardens or to keep rubbish that should go to the tip.**

Unusable rubble sacks, old bits of wire, rusted fencing, corroded metal, degrading plastic (see above), unused toys *etc* must be safely removed and disposed of properly. Keeping such items on your plot is a breach of your tenancy agreement. Failure safely to remove items within the time stipulated in a warning letter will result in the Council charging you to remove the items and revoking your tenancy.

The Council recognises that new tenants may have inherited unwanted materials on their allotment and that removing *eg* buried wire fencing can be a painstaking endeavour. If you are a new tenant (new, for these purposes, is within the first year of your tenancy) and you discover significant amounts of unwanted/dangerous materials left by the previous tenant(s), you should document what you have found (take photos, provide notes on materials' location, particularly if they are sub-strata) and immediately advise the Council.

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If you have any questions regarding this policy statement, please contact us at:

[Customer.services@lewes-tc.gov.uk](mailto:Customer.services@lewes-tc.gov.uk) or telephone 01273 471469

Lewes Town Council, Town Hall, High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2QS

## NOTES – Personnel Panel workshop #10, 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021

<i>Between</i>	Personnel Panel and South East Employers	
<i>Reason for meeting</i>	To confirm format and timescale of the recruitment process <i>re</i> successor on retirement of Town Clerk	
<i>Venue</i>	Online meeting using Zoom Meetings	
<i>Date</i>	11:00am Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> February 2021	
<i>Attending</i>	Councillors Burrows; Catlin; Makepeace; Dr Maples; Dr Mayhew; Wood <i>(Chair)</i> Jennifer McNeill – Regional Director, South East Employers Sarah Cope - Business Development Manager, South East Employers Steve Brigden, Town Clerk Fiona Garth, Assistant Town Clerk & Civic Officer	
<b>NOTES:</b>		
1.	The meeting welcomed Jennifer McNeill and Sarah Cope of South East Employers (SEEmp), and continued with the work of agreeing format and timescale of the recruitment process	
2.	<p><i>Timetable:</i> a rough timescale had been previously agreed, but was reviewed in light of recent changes in the Covid-19 Regulations, and was now confirmed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Conclude work on Applicant Pack materials by 12<sup>th</sup> February.</li> <li>&gt; Advertise from W/commencing 15<sup>th</sup> February.</li> <li>&gt; Closing date for applications 30<sup>th</sup> March</li> <li>&gt; Distribute applications to Panellists 1<sup>st</sup> April</li> <li>&gt; Initial ‘sifting’ of applications received – W/commencing 6<sup>th</sup> April</li> <li>&gt; Panel meeting 9<sup>th</sup> April.</li> <li>&gt; Shortlist applicants (notional 6 candidates) for interview – 16<sup>th</sup> April.</li> <li>&gt; Invitations to shortlisted candidates with CREDO profile invitation by 26<sup>th</sup> April – <i>(offered a choice of two tranches - either 10<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> May)</i></li> <li>&gt; Feedback to other applicants by 26<sup>th</sup> April</li> <li>&gt; Conduct first interviews (tranche 1) on 10<sup>th</sup> May. Conduct first interviews (tranche 2) on 14<sup>th</sup> May <i>(assumption that physical interview environment may NOT be possible)</i></li> <li>&gt; Invitations to second interview 15<sup>th</sup> May</li> <li>&gt; Conduct second interviews 21<sup>st</sup> May</li> <li>&gt; Job offer to successful candidate 21<sup>st</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> May.</li> <li>&gt; Expected start for new recruit in late August/early Sept.</li> <li>&gt; TC would officially retire on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021, but would have accrued substantial outstanding leave entitlement, suggesting a last date of working of 29<sup>th</sup> October.</li> </ul> <p>It was considered appropriate to defer recruitment of a Responsible Finance Officer until this programme was underway.</p>	
3.	<p><i>Applicants “Welcome pack”:</i> The meeting discussed the final draft of the application pack, which was very well-received, and final detail amendments were discussed. After some discussion it was agreed that some components which had been requested (policy statements; contract example <i>etc</i>) made the pack less effective and should be replaced with links to those documents on the website. There was a last-minute request for the introduction of photographs depicting some modern elements, and this was agreed. Cllr Burrows undertook to take some photographs of the Linklater pavilion and the “rust house” later that day and send them to TC. Subject to final detail refinement by TC and</p>	

	SEEmp the pack was agreed.								
4.	<p><i>Advertising:</i> The Panel considered a summary of options for advertising and agreed that the programme should use the options presented as:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>JPMedia (Sussex Express plus choice of online media)</td> <td>“package 1”</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Newsquest (Evening Argus plus choice of online media)</td> <td>“package 2”</td> </tr> <tr> <td>National Association of Local Councils (online/professional sector)</td> <td>“Gold package”</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Society of Local Council Clerks (online/professional sector)</td> <td>“Gold package”</td> </tr> </table> <p>Options presented for <i>LinkedIn</i> and <i>JobsGoPublic</i> were dismissed.</p> <p>The advertisement would be based upon the introductory text in the Welcome pack and include salary details and relevant dates; linking to the Council’s website to download the Welcome pack; contract example and job description/personal specification.</p> <p>The advertisement would also be distributed to various professional networks and feature on the Council’s website and Facebook page and on noticeboards. Councillors would be encouraged to distribute widely to appropriate contacts and networks.</p>	JPMedia (Sussex Express plus choice of online media)	“package 1”	Newsquest (Evening Argus plus choice of online media)	“package 2”	National Association of Local Councils (online/professional sector)	“Gold package”	Society of Local Council Clerks (online/professional sector)	“Gold package”
JPMedia (Sussex Express plus choice of online media)	“package 1”								
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National Association of Local Councils (online/professional sector)	“Gold package”								
Society of Local Council Clerks (online/professional sector)	“Gold package”								
5.	<p><i>Process:</i> a number of detailed areas were considered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; It was agreed that applicants would be required to complete an application form, but could also provide a CV if they wish.</li> <li>&gt; The approach to shortlisting and interview programme was revisited. It was agreed that the Panel would work with SEEmp to shortlist a (notional) six candidates, all of whom would be invited to complete the CREDO profiling questionnaire and invited to interview having prepared a presentation on a set topic.</li> <li>&gt; Various matters ancillary to the process were discussed, such as the need for everyone to conform to a standard method for shortlisting, as this must be recorded to allow for feedback to unsuccessful candidates and any challenge, <i>eg</i> in the context of discrimination. Ms Mc Neill would provide a template for Panellists to use in assessing each individual’s match to the personal specification.</li> </ul>								
	<i>The meeting ended at 1:10pm</i>								

**Agenda Item No:** 7c)

**Report No:** FC019/2020

**Report Title:** Grants panel recommendations – 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021

**Report To:** Full Council

**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021

**Report By:** S Brigden, Town Clerk

**Purpose of Report:** To propose payment of grants as recommended by the Grants Panel, following its meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (the last of four cycles for 2020/21)

**Recommendation(s):**

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

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**Information:**

1 The Grants Panel met on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021. **6** applications were considered, with requests for support in the sum total of **£7,053**.

2 Assessing applications were: Cllrs Makepeace; Maples and Burrows. Apologies were received from Cllrs Catlin, O’Keeffe, Herbert and Wood, who were unable to attend but had considered the applications and submitted scores. No message had been received from Cllr Henman

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

- ⊕ Closeness of match to Lewes Town Council’s grant scheme policy
- ⊕ Overall “robustness” of the proposal – general likelihood of success/sustainability
- ⊕ Financial planning exhibited - adequacy/prudence/appropriateness *etc.*
- ⊕ Scope and sustainability of the proposal – beneficiaries; scale; thoroughness
- ⊕ 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, appended.**

Recommended grant awards for this cycle amount to **£4,403** in total, which leaves a balance of £31,097 remaining in the miscellaneous scheme budget for the year. No further applications have been received for the Covid Emergency Fund and there is a balance of £2,984 remaining in that fund.

These sums will be included within the General Fund balance in year-end accounting.

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 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021

FINANCIAL GRANTS PANEL - 10th February 2021				Cycle 4 2020/21					
A	B	C	D	E		F	G	H	
line	Ref.	ORGANIZATION	STATED purpose of organization	STATED purpose of grant requested	total project cost	own funds employed	Grant Requested	£ RECC'D	Salient comments (if any) by Panellists
1		Southover Good Neighbours scheme	the scheme provides the means for Southover residents to access help from their neighbours across a range of activities: eg shopping; help at home (putting out bins, changing a light bulb), collection of prescriptions; accompanying to hospital or GP; pet care when people are temporarily unable to walk the dog, feed the cat; chat and a cuppa when needed; help with simple IT questions; signposting people to other services; a friendly visit when someone is ill; collecting mail, watering the plants when people are away.	Costs of Insurance; telephone; DBS checks for volunteers; stationery and copying	347	0	347	347	0
2		Malling Short Mat Bowls Club	Indoor bowls club, mainly catering for retired people, offering a means of social interaction, exercise, and friendship.	purchase of a roller to carry two mats, to ease the physical work involved in setting up and clearing sessions (average age of members is around 80yrs)	900	0	900	750	0
3		Lewes Priory Trust	To preserve and enhance the remains of the Chuniac Priory of St Pancras in Lewes, for the benefit of the public and especially the inhabitants of Lewes. To facilitate public and archaeological access to advance the education of the public in the subject of the Priory and its importance in the history of England. The Trust manages Priory Park as a tenant of Lewes Town Council.	Costs of online symposium, marketing and publicity; especially licence costs for Zoom webinars.	1,446	100	806	806	Concern that Charity discount rates are explored, and may require return of part of grant.
4		Common Cause - Lewes House Garden scheme	Common Cause is a not for profit community organisation and social enterprise based in Lewes. Our projects and ventures aim to support the local community through food growing projects, therapeutic gardening and by supporting the local food growing economy in Sussex. We run the Lewes Farmers Market, the Lewes Community Allotment Project, the Ringmer Community Orchard and the Lewes House Garden project.	balance of costs (other 3rd-party grants received) of Lewes House Garden project delivery: leaders and project management; materials and equipment; training and volunteer expenses; refreshments; travel/telephone/insurance.	16,000	0	1,000	1,000	0
5		Dark Skies - Tom's Midnight Garden	Dark Skies/Frankly Speaking Productions is a not-for-profit outdoor dance theatre organisation based in Lewes. As part of the project, we have partnered with Kickstart Eastbourne to employ six young people currently on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment.	To support our summer 2021 production, a contemporary ballet adaptation of 'Tom's Midnight Garden' by Philippa Pearce, one of the most imaginative, moving and all-round celebrated works of children's literature of the 20th century. We are planning four days of performances in Lewes for the local community, alongside performances elsewhere across Sussex and further afield.	11,638	4,638	2,000	1,500	concerns regarding commercial context, but acknowledge need to support live arts.
6		Audioways	The project aims to develop a series of free, instantly accessible 'audio trails' around the Lewes town using simple QR code signage. Working with a small local team, we will create one minute audio recordings to tell the story of Lewes, using street name origins to frame historical stories as well as present-day community stories	Contribution to project costs: Research; writing; website construction & maintenance; graphic design & illustrations; recording; signage production; marketing, etc	5,500	0	2,000	0	applaud idea, but must await further development and separate bank account
7	Emergency fund (Covid-19 pandemic) applications:								
8	0	0							
9	0	0							
10									
11					£35,831	£4,738	£7,053	£4,403	
12									
13									
14								Miscellaneous Grants Budget	£50,000
15								"Cycle 1" total grants	£1,600 awarded
16								"Cycle 2" total grants	£4,200 awarded
17								"Cycle 3" total grants	£8,700 awarded
18								"Cycle 4" total grants	£4,403 recommended
19								Total paid/recommended	£18,903
20								Budget balance	£31,097
21								Emergency Fund (Covid)	£15,000
22								awarded to date	£12,016
23								Recommended this cycle	£0
24								Balance	£2,984

## NOTICE OF MOTIONS PROPOSED

Notice has been received, as described below, of motions which are proposed for consideration by Council at its meeting on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021

**NOM 016/2020** – received from **Cllr Bird** on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021, in the following terms:

**It is proposed that:**

1. This Council lends its support to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill that was presented to Government on the 2nd September 2020.
2. This Council welcomes and supports the Bill and asks the Mayor to write to all District MPs asking them to support the CEE Bill in Parliament and in public.
3. Where not already happening we will align all relevant council policies and strategies with the aims and goals of the CEE.
4. We express our support for the Lewes Climate Hub.

**Supporting Information:**

Many councils have declared climate emergencies in response to a special report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change pointing out that ambitious action is needed to keep rising temperatures to within 1.5°C.

The Environment Bill and other supporting legislation provides the context for government action on climate change but it has been delayed for a 3<sup>rd</sup> time and will not now pass through Parliament until at least Autumn 2021. This is unacceptable given the urgency of tackling climate change.

In August 2020 the CEE Bill Alliance launched the campaign for the CEE Bill and presented it to Parliament.

The Bill sets out an emergency path for the UK to follow. It suggests the creation of a Citizens' Assembly that will contribute to the work of the Government in delivering a climate and ecological emergency strategy. Objectives of the Bill are to:

Ensure that the UK plays its fair and proper role in limiting global temperatures to 1.5°C by:

- taking account of the UK's entire greenhouse gas footprint domestically and internationally, necessitating real action on emissions reductions
- circumscribing any proposed reliance on speculative future carbon capture technologies

Actively conserve the natural world by:

- protecting and restoring the UK's ecosystems, with a focus on biodiversity, soils and natural carbon sinks
- mitigating the damage to nature caused by supply chains, domestically and internationally.
- accounting for the UK's ecological footprint

This Council has set up a Sustainable Development Goals working party and has hosted public forums on sustainable transport and a more sustainable town.

Tackling the Councils own carbon emissions and supporting community groups promoting sustainability and tackling climate change is a priority in all our actions and decision-making.

Cllr M Bird 21<sup>st</sup> February 2021

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**NOM 017/2020** – received from **Cllr Dr Maples** on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021, in the following terms:

**It is proposed that:**

Lewes Town Council affirms its commitment to the goals of the Paris climate agreement and endorses the Fossil Fuel Non-proliferation Treaty.

**Supporting Information:**

**Background:** The scientific consensus is clear that human activities are primarily responsible for accelerating global climate change, and that the climate crisis now represents one of the preeminent threats to global civilization. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported in 2018 that we must achieve net zero in greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) by the middle of this century in order to have a reasonable chance of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The evidence of changes in the UK climate are already being felt, with likely impacts here in Lewes, such as hotter/drier summers resulting in agricultural and small-holding losses, and warmer/wetter

winters resulting in flooding. Our entire community will be impacted by the health and safety risks of the continuing use of fossil fuels, particularly those who also face socio-economic and health inequities, as increased food prices and e.g. respiratory illnesses hit the poorest in our communities hardest. Our youth and future generations have the most to lose from a lack of immediate action to stop fossil fuel expansion as they face major and lifelong health, ecological, social, and economic impacts from prolonged and cumulative effects of climate change, including food and water shortages, illness and disease, and natural disasters.

Unfortunately, while there is of course much to commend in the Paris Climate Agreement, it is silent on coal, oil and gas, an omission with respect to the supply and production of fossil fuels (the largest source of GHGs) that needs to be collectively addressed by other means.

At the same time, global governments and the fossil fuel industry are currently planning to produce about 120% more emissions by 2030 than what is needed to limit warming to 1.5°C and avert catastrophic climate disruption. We should also note that the fossil fuel industry is currently claiming over 50% of COVID recovery funding from senior levels of government in the G20, thereby siphoning away recovery funding badly needed by towns, cities and other industries.

The construction of new fossil fuel infrastructure and expanded reliance on fossil fuels exposes communities to untenable risks to public health and safety at the local and global levels: at town and district planning level, a commitment to fossil fuel non-proliferation would ensure we effect change for the benefit of our current residents and for future generations. Indeed, the economic opportunities presented by a clean energy transition far outweigh the opportunities presented by an economy supported by expanding fossil fuel use and extraction. We should be leading on what is a necessary shift. To be wholly in accord with the Town Council's Visioning and our recognition of the Climate Crisis, Lewes Town Council must be committed, as part of our climate emergency response, to a just energy transition and to investment in green infrastructure, industries and actions. Town Council discussions, including at Visioning, suggest that certainly most and hopefully all members recognize that it is the urgent responsibility and moral obligation of wealthy fossil fuel producers to lead in putting an end to fossil fuel development and to manage the decline of existing production and for democratic representatives to lead and support such change wherever possible in their jurisdiction.

### **Why a 'non-proliferation treaty'?**

The three pillars of the [1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty](#) - non-proliferation, global disarmament, and peaceful transition - provide a framework for the creation of the new fossil-fuel treaty.

1. Don't add to the problem (non-proliferation). End new exploration and expansion into new reserves.
2. Get rid of the existing threat (global disarmament). Phase out existing stockpiles and production in line with the goal of not exceeding temperature rise of 1.5°C.
3. Accelerate an equitable transition (peaceful transition). Increase access to renewable energy and other low-carbon solutions. Develop just transition plans.

The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty is a straightforward means of Lewes Town Council indicating our alignment with initiatives to end new fossil fuel exploration and expansion, phase out existing production in line with the global commitment to limit warming to 1.5°C, and accelerate equitable transition plans. In signing the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, Lewes Town Council will be in the forefront of forward-thinking towns and cities, transparently and openly affirming commitment to the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement and the GHG reduction targets as called for by the IPCC. For further information:

<https://fossilfuel treaty.org/home>

<https://fossilfuel treaty.org/endorsements>

<https://news.trust.org/item/20200504090700-pb1c5/>

<https://www.responsible-investor.com/articles/decarbonising-the-economy-through-a-fossil-fuel-non-proliferation-treaty>





## Status update

These are in addition to various projects and initiatives itemised in the Council's budgets and accounts and represent larger-scale activities deserving special attention.

Project	description	status at January 2020	Status at February 2021	
1	<b>Town Hall repairs &amp; conservation</b>	Replace boilers; Council Chamber redecoration and replace carpet; Corn Exchange and Lecture Room replace lighting; Yarrow Room replace carpet	Awaiting consultants further report on heating system options viability.	Specialist commissioned and system design and works preliminaries underway. Acoustic survey required to 'benchmark' ambient sound level for nearby homes – on-hold until normal activity levels resume.
2	<b>Pells Lake ecology project</b>	Improvements to water quality. Introduction of aquatic plants. W/Party remit to consider structural integrity of lake perimeter. partially completed – specialist report obtained	pending commencement of 3rd-party works in locality to achieve best VFM – links to item 3	Pending commencement of 3rd-party works in locality (flood defence structures and improvements to recreation facilities as conditions of North Street redevelopment planning consent) to achieve best value for money – links to item 3. May be revisited once status of new owners' revised planning application can be assessed.
3	<b>Pells Recreation Ground and kiosk/café development (with Pells Poll Community Association; North Street developers, and others)</b>	Engagement with North Street developers and others to improve the "urban realm" in the area as an integral component of necessary flood-defence works; taking the opportunity to replace children's play equipment and introduce equipment for a wider age-range, and to provide an enhanced café facility for the swimming pool, recreation ground, and surrounding parkland.	Pending agreements with PPCA	See also item 2. Partially-developed plans on-hold pending improvements to local area as condition of North Street redevelopment planning consent to achieve best value for money.
4	<b>Malling (Bridgeview) Community Centre refurbishment</b>	To carry out a comprehensive refurbishment of the community centre, with modern heating and lighting, with improved facilities for community use, including more flexible interior spaces and better integration of the sports changing-rooms with the adjoining sports pitches and recreation ground.	Borrowing approval received 20th November. Contractor agreed possession of site March 2020. works duration 20 weeks	Completion imminent. LTC self-management agreed by Council 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2020. Steering Group formed and Members appointed, to supplant Building Working Party interest once works complete. Anticipated handover by contractor end March.
5	<b>Continuing programme of environmental enhancements and specific site improvements</b>	Engage with appropriate projects arising from third-party initiatives (eg highway safety/traffic management). Continuing improvements to own assets (eg allotment sites)	Urgent tree works update received at Council 19th December.	Continuing programme. Emergency project <i>in</i> Ash die-back concluded March 2020. Summary report received by Council 18 <sup>th</sup> June 2020. Suggested liaison with Friends of Lewes <i>in</i> possible biodiversity initiative (refinement/extension of FoL town tree audit)
6	<b>Devolution of assets &amp; services</b>	Provide for transfer of ownership of various assets/services from Lewes District Council. (currently subject to ongoing negotiation)	Working Party recommendations considered by Council 19th December. Next stage: further detail from LDC to inform negotiations	Continuing. LDC have withdrawn the offers of sale regarding 2 Fisher St and Market Tower. Discussions postponed <i>in</i> Mountfield Pleasure Ground and Stanley Turner Trusts.
7	<b>DECISIONS re Retirement of key staff</b>	Prepare strategy for recruitment of Town Clerk Designate and further staff establishment changes.	Personnel Panel mandated to begin detailed examination of successor Clerk and discuss 6 other posts affected by eligibility for retirement.	Personnel Panel engaged in project. Specialist adviser engaged and progress reported to Council up to 5 <sup>th</sup> February 2021. Currently advertising. Application deadline 30 <sup>th</sup> March.