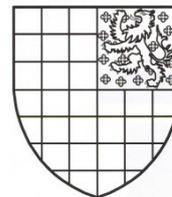


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**LEWES
TOWN
COUNCIL**

To All Members of Lewes Town Council

A Meeting of **Lewes Town Council** will be held online* on **Thursday 29th April 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/97358811048>

Or telephone 0131 460 1196 or +44 (0)330 088 5830. Use **Meeting ID: 973 5881 1048**

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

S. Bigden, Town Clerk, 23rd April 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 4th March 2021.

(attached **page 5**)

7. WORKING PARTIES & OUTSIDE BODIES

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

a) UN Sustainability Goals W-pty sub-group 21st March 2021

(Notes attached **page 14**)

b) Open Council Working Party 29th March 2021

(Notes attached **page 15**)

c) Grants Panel 31st March 2021

(Report FC020/2020 attached **page 17**)

d) All Saints Centre Steering Group 8th April 2021

(Minutes attached **page 19**)

e) Transport Committee 13th April 2021

(Minutes attached **page 21**)

f) Personnel Panel 16th April 2021

(Notes attached **page 26**)

8. LEWES 'CLIMATE DAY' EVENT

To consider support for this event

(NOM018/2020 attached **page 27**)

9. 'CONNECTING LEWES' INITIATIVE

To consider support for this initiative

(NOM019/2020 attached **page 27**)

10. LOCAL BUS SERVICE SUPPORT

To consider a request for continued funding of the CTLA local Dial-a-ride service (CTLA report attached **page 29**)

11. OUSE VALLEY WAY

To consider financial support for improvements to surfacing

(Report FC021/2020 attached **page 34**)

12. COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

To consider proposed amendment to the staffing establishment (oral report by TC/draft job description attached **page 37**)

13. UPDATE ON MATTERS IN PROGRESS

(oral report by TC/plan **page 39**)

14. NOTICE of ITEMS IN PROSPECT

(oral report by Town Clerk)

For further information about items on this agenda please contact the Town Clerk BY E-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**

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

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.

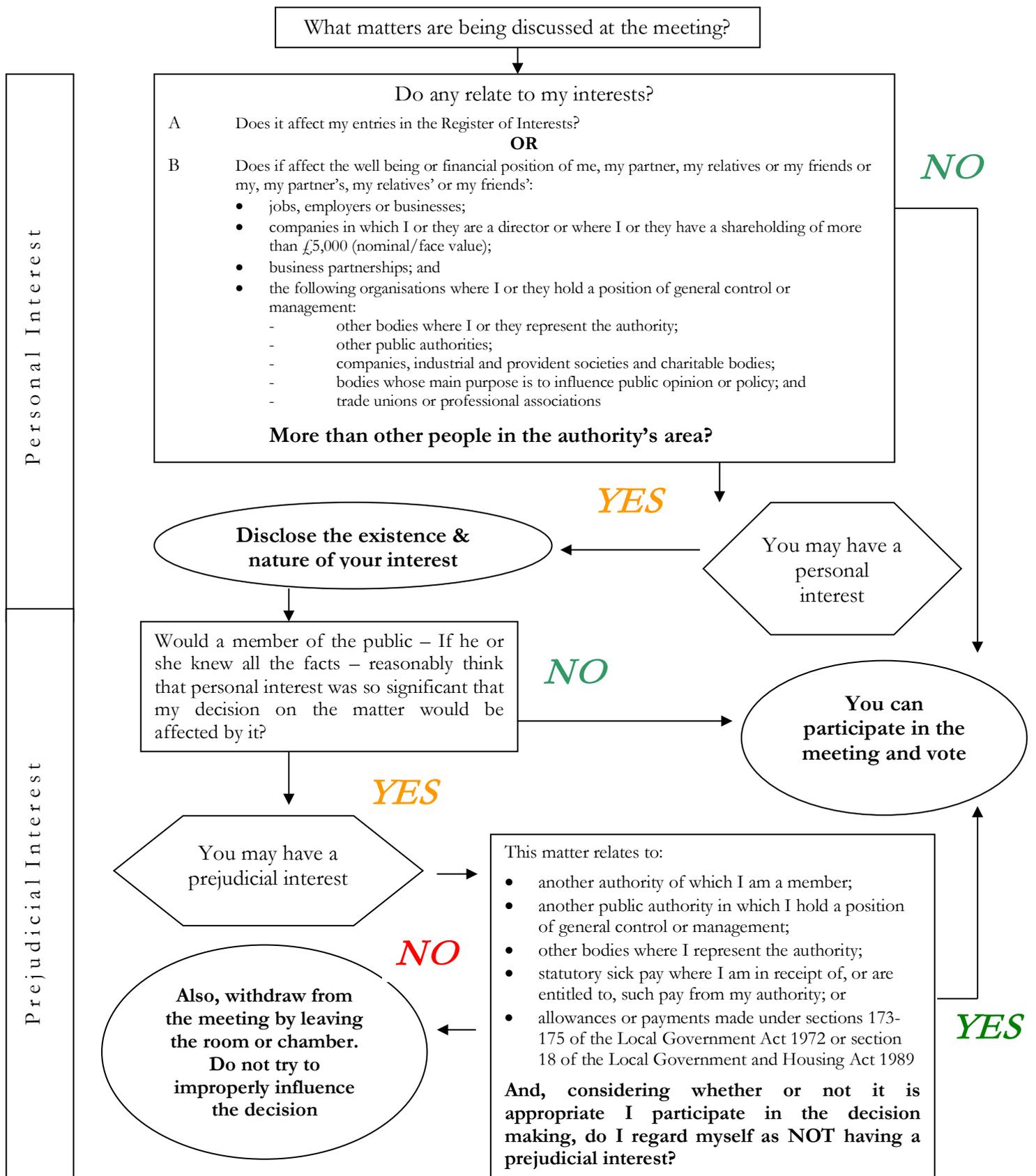
PLEASE NOTE:

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

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



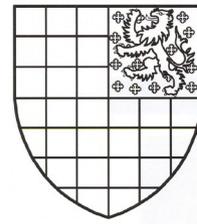
YOU WILL ALSO NEED TO CONSIDER:

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.



MINUTES

Of the meeting of **Lewes Town Council**,
held on **Thursday 4th March 2021**, online via Zoom Meetings at **7:30pm**.

PRESENT Cllrs Dr J Baah; M Bird; S Catlin (*Deputy Mayor*); R Handy; O Henman; J Lamb (*Mayor*); I Makepeace; Dr W Maples; 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'ttee. Admin.*)

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

FC2020/102 QUESTION TIME: There were none. There were three members of the public present.

FC2020/103 MEMBERS DECLARATIONS of INTERESTS: There were none.

FC2020/104 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies were received from Cllrs Earl and Mayhew who were unwell and Cllr Herbert who had a family commitment. No message had been received from Cllr Burrows.

It was resolved that:

FC2020/104.1 Reasons submitted for absence from this meeting are noted.

FC2020/105 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

a) The Mayor announced that following Prince Philip's recent hospitalization there had been speculation on what Councils should do on the death of the Monarch or a senior national figure. There were plans in place for these eventualities which were confidential at the request of the Government. The appropriate Plan would be put into effect by the offices of the Lords Lieutenant of each County, and Councils could take no action until instructed. Mrs Garth, who regularly attends National Association of Civic Officers meetings on the subject, would advise when any action was needed.

b) The Annual Town Meeting would take place on Thursday 22nd April at 7:00pm.

c) An imminent Green United Meeting was deferred to Wednesday 5th May.

c) 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 22nd & 23rd March 2021 had been cancelled, and an online exhibition was planned. The college hoped that the link with Council would continue and there would be future opportunities. Cllr Makepeace, designated to liaise with the course leader, hoped to visit the college when this was allowed.

FC2020/106 MINUTES:

A request had been made to alter the wording of Minute FC2020/99 regarding nominations for Mayor-elect and Deputy Mayor-elect. The text concerned a debate that had arisen as to the appropriateness of impromptu questioning of nominees. TC contended that the Minute was accurate, but he had already added a short phrase to enhance clarity. There followed a request to ask Councillors' opinions on the original debate, and TC advised again that the matter before Council was solely to agree the accuracy of the Minutes, and revisiting the subject at this point was not an option.

It was resolved that:

FC2020/106.1 Minutes of the Council meeting held on 21st January 2021 were received and agreed as an accurate record.

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) Allotments Working Party 2nd February 2021:

The Minutes of this Working Party described its review of progress and resumption of the work adjourned at its previous meeting.

Policy and guidance for tenants: 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 adequately provide for this and would need to be amended to, in effect, give one years' 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 were 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 must 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.

It was resolved that:

FC2020/107.1 The Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Working Party held on 2nd February 2021 are received and noted.

FC2020/107.1.1 The document *Policy Statement and Guidance for tenants – Allotments Service (copy in the Minute Book)* is adopted, and individual tenancy agreements shall be made subject to these policies with effect from 1st April 2021.

b) Personnel Panel 5th February 2021:

Council considered the Notes of this meeting (*copy in minute book*).

The meeting had been held with the 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.

Timetable: a rough timescale had been previously agreed, but was reviewed, and was now confirmed as:

- › Conclude work on Applicant Pack materials by 12th February.
- › Advertise from W/commencing 15th February.
- › Closing date for applications 30th March
- › Shortlist applicants (notional 6 candidates) for interview – 16th April.
- › Invitations to shortlisted candidates with CREDO profile invitation by 26th April – (offered a choice of two tranches - either 10th or 14th May)
- › Feedback to other applicants by 26th April
- › Conduct first interviews (tranche 1) on 10th May. Conduct first interviews (tranche 2) on 1st May (assumption that physical interview environment may NOT be possible)
- › Invitations to second interview 15th May
- › Conduct second interviews 21st May
- › Job offer to successful candidate 21st - 24th May.
- › Expected start for TC-designate in August/early Sept.

TC would officially retire on 14th December 2021, but would have accrued substantial outstanding leave entitlement, and he had suggested a last date of working of Friday 29th October. It was considered appropriate to defer recruitment of a Responsible Finance Officer until this programme was underway, and TC-designate could be involved prior to their start-date.

Applicants "Welcome pack": 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 *etc*) 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 SEEmp, the pack was agreed.

Advertising: The Panel had considered a summary of options for advertising and agreed that the programme should use the options presented as: *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" and the *Society of Local Council Clerks* (online/professional sector) "Gold package". Options presented for *LinkedIn* and *JobsGoPublic* were dismissed. 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. 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.

Process: a number of detailed areas were considered

- › It was agreed that applicants would be required to complete an application form, but could also provide a CV if they wish.
- › 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 10-minute presentation on a set topic.
- › 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, *eg* 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.

It was resolved that:

FC2020/107.2 The record of the Personnel Panel meeting on 5th February 2021 is received and noted, and the Panel's decisions are approved.

c) Grants Panel 10th February 2021:

Members considered report FC019/2020 (copy in minute book) containing recommendations for payments of grants for the last of four cycles 2020/21. A significant amount remained unspent in the 2020/21 grants budget, and it was proposed that a supplementary round of applications be invited, which would need to be received, considered, and awarded before the end of the financial year. Consequently, TC suggested that the Panel be authorized to disburse any awards; subject to a limit of the amount remaining.

It was resolved that:

FC2020/107.3 The grant payments recommended in report FC019/2020 (*copy in minute book*), as shown in column G of the table appended to that report, be approved.

FC2020/107.3.1 An additional round of grant applications be introduced to disburse significant remaining grant funds before the end of the financial year, with a deadline for applications of 26th March 2021, and the Grants Panel is authorized to disburse any awards for this round.

d) District and County Associations of Local Councils:

Council received oral reports from its appointed representatives on the Lewes District Association of Local Councils (LDALC) and the Sussex & Surrey Associations of Local Councils (SSALC). LDALC had seen a resurgence of interest from District parishes and recent meetings had been well-attended. There was currently a vacancy for a Secretary and parish clerks were being canvassed. SSALC was, unfortunately, to be wound-up on 31st March 2021 and re-incorporated as three separate bodies. This was reportedly the result of internal pressures originating in the West Sussex Association but was now unavoidable as Surrey parishes had already separated from the tripartite body. The East Sussex component, East Sussex Association of Local Councils (ESALC), suggested that member Councils would see no change in the level of support or services provided, and they would shortly confirm new corporate administration arrangements, including a new website and new contact details.

One Member suggested that the County Association was a rather remote body which was poorly understood. The Council's delegate responded with an overview of the services provided and confirmed that the Association would not normally have a high profile among Councillors, as they exist to provide foundation services for local councils and support when needed. The County Associations together represented their members at the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) which liaised with and lobbied central government, and membership helped to maintain those channels of communication.

It was resolved that:

FC2020/107.4 The oral report on the District and County Associations of Local Councils is noted.

CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY BILL:

Council considered a Motion (NOM16/2020 – copy in minute book) that proposed the Council should support the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill that was presented to Government on the 2nd September 2020., and ask the Mayor to write to all District MPs asking them to support the CEE Bill in Parliament and in public. It was suggested that, where not already in place all relevant council policies and strategies should be aligned with the aims and goals of the CEE and, further, that Council should declare support for the Lewes Climate Hub.

It was noted that many councils had declared climate emergencies in response to a special report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which highlighted that ambitious action is needed to keep rising temperatures to within 1.5°C. The Environment Bill and other supporting legislation provided the context for government action on climate change but it had been delayed for a 3rd time and would not now pass through Parliament until at least Autumn 2021. This was said to be unacceptable, given the urgency of tackling climate change. In August 2020, the CEE Bill Alliance had launched the campaign for the CEE Bill and presented it to Parliament. The Bill set out an emergency path for the UK to follow. It suggested 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.

The Town Council has set up a UN Sustainable Development Goals Working-party and had 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 was said to be a priority in all Council actions and decision-making.

It was resolved that:

FC2020/108.1 Lewes Town Council lends its support to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill that was presented to Government on the 2nd September 2020.

FC2020/108.2 Council welcomes and supports the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill and asks the Mayor to write to all District MPs asking them to support the CEE Bill in Parliament and in public. (Cllr Bird was asked to assist in drafting this)

FC2020/108 Where not already in place, Lewes Town Council will align all relevant policies and strategies with the aims and goals of the CEE.

FC2020/108 Lewes Town Council expresses support for the Lewes Climate Hub.

FOSSIL FUELS NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY:

Council considered a Motion (NOM17/2020 – copy in minute book) proposing that Lewes Town Council should affirm its commitment to the goals of the Paris climate agreement and endorse the Fossil Fuel Non-proliferation Treaty.

It was argued that there was clear scientific consensus 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) had 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 were already being felt, with likely impacts locally in Lewes such as hotter/drier summers

resulting in agricultural and small-holding losses, and warmer/wetter winters resulting in flooding. The entire community, it was claimed, would be impacted by the health and safety risks of the continuing use of fossil fuels, particularly those who also face socio-economic and health inequality, as increased food prices and *eg* respiratory illnesses hit the poorest in the community 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. It was explained that: while there was 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 needed to be collectively addressed by other means. At the same time, global governments and the fossil fuel industry were currently planning to produce about 120% more emissions by 2030 than the level needed to limit warming to 1.5°C and avert catastrophic climate disruption. It was also stated that the fossil fuel industry was currently claiming over 50% of COVID recovery funding from senior levels of governments 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 exposed communities to untenable risks to public health and safety at the local and global levels. It was claimed that at town and district planning level, a commitment to fossil fuel non-proliferation would ensure change for the benefit of current residents and for future generations. The economic opportunities presented by a clean energy transition far outweighed those presented by an economy supported by expanding fossil fuel use and extraction. It was proposed that the Council could be leading on what is a necessary shift. To be wholly in accord with the Town Council's 'Vision' and recognition of the Climate Crisis it must be committed, as part of its climate emergency response, to a just energy transition and to investment in green infrastructure, industries, and actions. Town Council discussions, including its Visioning exercise, suggested that Councillors 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.

The 'non-proliferation treaty' was explained in terms of the three pillars of the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty - *non-proliferation, global disarmament, and peaceful transition* - which provide a framework for the creation of the new fossil-fuel treaty, as:

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 was proposed as a straightforward means of Lewes Town Council indicating its 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 would be at 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://fossilfueltreaty.org/home> .

There ensued a wide-ranging debate, during which a number of points were raised regarding the Council's own activities. A small group of members of the Council's UN Sustainable Development Goals Working-party had accepted a kind offer of assistance from Prof. Sir Richard Jolly, who knew of several techniques for self-assessment that the Council might utilize. A meeting between the group and Sir Richard was understood to be imminent. Subsequently **it was resolved that:**

FC2020/109.1 Lewes Town Council affirms its commitment to the goals of the Paris climate

agreement and endorses the Fossil Fuel Non-proliferation Treaty.

FC2020/109.2 Cllr Dr Maples is authorized to work with the Town Clerk to draft any statement that may be required when registering with the initiative.

FC2020/109.3 Cllr Dr Maples and Cllr Wood were asked to liaise to prepare a draft statement regarding the insidious aspects of some industries and the access by damaging industries to Covid recovery funding.

FC2020/110

MUNICIPAL CALENDAR and MEETINGS LEGISLATION:

TC presented a briefing on the imminent expiry of Emergency Regulations which allowed online ('remote') attendance at meetings by Councillors, and implications for meetings the Covid emergency was ended.

1 *Background* - The emergency regulations that allowed local authorities to hold meetings remotely applied only to meetings that are required to be held, or held, before 7th May 2021. This meant that, without any further action from the government, all councils face having to return to face to face meetings from 7th May, despite this being inconsistent with general guidance on the Covid-19 situation. TC explained that if this situation was not addressed, decisions taken at most remote meetings (including full Council) would not be lawful, and any Councillor who did not attend in person would not satisfy the statutory attendance requirements and risked automatic disqualification from office under the "six-month rule".

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and most other representative organizations working in local government were pressing the government to extend the regulations beyond this date and continued to stress the urgency and importance of this issue. The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP, had said that: whilst accepting that the provision has been successful, he had no plans to extend the date "...as it requires primary legislation and there is no vehicle to do that in time for May". He added that whilst it was "not possible" at the moment, if there was opportunity to make it more permanent, he would take it.

2 *Challenge* - The Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO) and Lawyers in Local Government (LLG) had been lobbying for an extension beyond the current deadline and for the facility to hold remote meetings to be made permanent. They had questioned whether a change in primary legislation, or any legislation, was actually required. Counsel's opinion was obtained and there were strong arguments in favour of this view.

With the intention of supporting the Secretary of State in his wish to find a solution, ADSO, LLG and Hertfordshire County Council had instructed counsel to issue proceedings in the High Court to seek a declaratory judgement to enable meetings to take place within existing legislation. A pre-action letter had been served (25th February) on the Secretary of State giving him the opportunity to respond to proposals. Once the notice period expired, if there was no material change to the present circumstances, the case would be submitted to the Court.

3 *Advice* - Whilst this unfolded, as the court would determine timescales for hearing the arguments, councils were advised to prepare for the real possibility of face to face meetings from 7th May. Advice on best practice remained that all local councils should continue to meet remotely while the regulations were in force. It was recommended that where possible, the annual meeting ("Mayormaking" at Lewes) was scheduled while the current Regulations allow it to be held remotely.

It was prudent to hold a remote meeting as late as possible in April so that councillors who are unable/unwilling to attend face-to-face meetings would have as much time as possible before disqualification by virtue of s.85 of the Local Government Act 1972 became an issue ("the six-month rule"). Accordingly, TC proposed to move meetings shown provisionally on the municipal calendar attached to the agenda, as: the Council meeting scheduled for 8th April to 29th April and the date for Mayormaking to 5th May.

4 *Hybrid Meetings* – In assessing practical matters around face-to-face or hybrid meetings (some attendees physically present; others remotely attending) the meeting environment was paramount. The Council must make the meeting environment as safe as possible, and ensure it is acting in compliance with the latest Government safer workplaces guidance, eg:

- a) Staggered arrival and exit times for staff, councillors and members of the public.
- b) Placing seating at least 2-metres apart in a venue large enough to allow proper distancing – this may mean choosing a different venue. The Corn Exchange would be used as long as distancing remains important.
- c) Ensuring everyone wears face masks.
- d) If papers are provided, people should be discouraged from sharing with others and asked to take the papers with them at the end of the meeting to minimise how many people handle them.
- e) Arranging seating so people are not facing each other directly.
- f) Ensuring good ventilation, including opening windows and doors where possible.
- g) Consider how the maximum capacity is not exceeded and how it will manage the situation if more people wish to attend than capacity allows.
- h) If the venue has an NHS QR code to support test and trace then all attendees should register using that app, for those without access to the app they should register attendance in line with the venue’s test and trace procedure. Lewes Town Hall is registered and has a QR code.
- i) Venues must conform with the government guidance for multi-purpose community facilities and for council buildings. TC was confident that measures introduced in 2020 ensure that Lewes Town Hall is compliant.

The benefits of virtual meetings in local government had been widely recognized, and it is anticipated that in the medium- long-term it may be that legislation will allow the physical presence of all attendees to be optional - so-called ‘hybrid’ meetings. Should this happen, Council would need to consider the practicalities entailed – mainly a matter of additional equipment required to ensure that those attending remotely can see and be seen clearly by those present. This would entail significant outlay for microphones; cameras; speakers and upgraded screen/projection equipment. There would also be staff implications as the management of those attending online would require dedicated attention.

Members considered the draft municipal calendar for scheduled meetings and other events in 2021/2022 and noted TC’s points and amendments. There was some discussion regarding the practicalities surrounding elections being held on 6th May and, subsequently:

It was resolved that:

FC2020/110.1 The calendar of scheduled meetings for the 2021/2022 municipal year (*copy in Minute Book*) is noted, with amendments agreed as: Council meeting shown at 8th April rescheduled to **29th April**, and Council meeting (‘Mayormaking’) shown at 6th May rescheduled to Wednesday **5th May**.

FC2020/111

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, highlighting:

Town Hall heating system: work was ‘on-hold’ as the first stage required was a survey of ambient noise levels for nearby homes, which would then direct the specification of the Air-source heat pump but, under present Covid restrictions, levels would not be typical.

Pells Area: Projects related to the lake ecology; improvements to the Recreation Ground, and planned development of the pool kiosk to provide a small café were on-hold awaiting plans from the new owners of the Phoenix/North Street site. Previous planning consent had been conditional upon a number of contributions from the developer and access to their major contractors when flood-defence works were commenced (a conditional prerequisite to any development of North Street). There was a general discussion regarding the area and the potential to ‘bypass’ the Phoenix/North Street development if appropriate, and revisit priorities once the developers’ plans were clearer. Complaints of excessive litter should be referred to Lewes District Council, who offered an online “Report it!” application.

Malling Community Centre: Building works were nearing completion, and handover was anticipated at the end of March. There would then follow a period for the “snagging” items to be addressed, and planning for a return to operation. The MCC Steering Group

would be convened at an appropriate point.

Environmental enhancement: projects would be brought forward in due course.

Devolution: there was no change to the status. Lewes District Council were understood to be still considering transfer of the Mountfield Road and Stanley Turner Trusts, although TC had previously advised that any offer should be approached cautiously as liabilities far outweighed benefits due to the condition of the assets and other associated concerns. It was noted that Cllr Catlin had recently drawn attention to the fact that the District Council (as Trustee) was approximately 400 days in arrears with statutory returns to the Charity Commission, and no satisfactory response had been received to a Freedom of Information Act request.

Recruitment of successor TC: The programme had been described earlier in the meeting, and TC noted that some enquiries and applications had already been received. Closing date for applications was 30th March.

Public Participatory Budget Pilot: Open Council working-party was to work on ideas for public engagement.

FC2020/112

NOTICE of ITEMS IN PROSPECT

Members, asked to consider items arising from this meeting worthy of a Press Release, indicated:

- > Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill
- > Fossil Fuels Non-Proliferation Treaty
- > Supplementary Grants Meeting

Dates to note etc for forthcoming meetings and events were:

- > The next Council meeting would take place on Thursday 29th April 2021 at 7:30pm, with a deadline for agenda items to reach TC by noon on Monday 19th April.
- > Mayor Making will take place on Wednesday 5th May 2021 at 7.00pm.
- > TBC – Personnel Panel, Buildings W/P, Transport W/P, Commemorations.
- > Advertising for Annual Town Meeting 22nd April on Facebook, TC Website, Local Press and Notice Board.

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

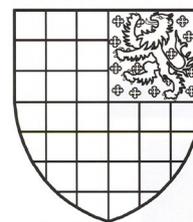
The meeting ended at 9.50pm

Signed: Date:

NOTES – UN Sustainability goals Working party – sub-group 21st March 2021

<i>Between</i>	UN Sustainability goals Working party – sub group	
<i>Reason for meeting</i>	1. To consider priorities for sustainability audit 2. A school project for Glasgow UN Sustainability Summit in November 2021	
<i>Venue</i>	Online via Zoom Meetings	
<i>Date</i>	21 st March 2021 5:00 – 7:00pm	
<i>Attending</i>	Cllrs Baah, Bird, Henman, Makepeace, and Professor Sir Richard Jolly	
NOTES:		
1.	<p>To consider priorities for sustainability audit</p> <p>The group discussed ways in which the Council can carry out its sustainability audit, aiming at setting up concrete measures/actions in the implementation and monitoring of the TC’s commitments to the audit, and promoting residents’ involvement with it. The committee proposals aim at spending the £15,000 pounds allocated for environmental audit as follows:</p> <p>a) £5,000 to be spent on in-house corporate sustainability audit such as building/operations etc. This should be achieved by opening this to tender as soon as practicable.</p> <p>b) £5,000 to improve the biodiversity and environmental governance of Landport Bottom. There are on-going initiatives on this cite and it is proposed that this money should complement that. Cllr Bird will give an overview of what has been achieved already on the site and how we might spend the money with high biodiversity potential.</p> <p>c) £5,000 to be spent on Town-wide biodiversity audit. This might include the Nature corridor, trees, habitats, etc. Cllr Makepeace and Cllr Baah will reach out to and collaborate with local community groups to set out priorities for this. This is one way of promoting civil society dialogue with LTC to support the implementation and/or monitoring of our environmental activities.</p> <p>Professors from the University of Sussex’s Institute of Development Studies, Life Sciences and Science Policy Research Unit, and Law are willing to play a part in this.</p>	
2.	<p>A school project for Glasgow UN Sustainability Summit in November 2021</p> <p>It is recommended that a video competition might be promoted, with a footage from each school in Lewes and Ringmer, focusing on at least one of the five Ps of people, prosperity, planet, peace, and partnerships. It is proposed that representative from each school, residents and councillors will vote to select the best three or so videos to be shown on the bigger screen in Glasgow.</p>	

*Cllr J Baah
April 2021*



MINUTES

of the meeting of the **Open Council Working Party**, held on **Monday 29th March 2021**, online via Zoom Meetings at 3:00pm.

PRESENT Cllrs Catlin; Makepeace; Dr Maples (*Chair*); O’Keeffe; Sains; Vernon and Waring

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*) Mrs F Garth (*Assistant Town Clerk & Civic Officer*).

OCWP2020/15 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies had been received from Cllr Wood, who had a work commitment. No message had been received from Cllrs Bird; Henman, or Herbert.

OCWP2020/16 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were none.

OCWP2020/17 **QUESTIONS:** There were no questions.

OCWP2020/18 **MINUTES:** Cllr Dr Maples contended that the draft minutes did not reflect the fact that estimated costs for items on the agreed list for funding by Community Infrastructure Levy were awaited. TC held that the phrase “*TC suggested that he might simplify the question by estimating the order of costs for listed items...*” at OCWP2020/13 s1 reflected the events accurately and he was not prepared to alter the text. Cllr Dr Maples maintained her dissatisfaction with this point.

It was resolved that:

OCWP2020/18.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2020 are received and agreed as an accurate record, with the caveat that the Chair had expressed dissatisfaction with the description of a particular event.

OCWP2020/19 **REMIT of the WORKING PARTY**

Members noted the remit of the Working Party, which is:

To identify methods for improved public engagement and greater provision of information to residents of Lewes, to include:-

- › A review of information sharing and the methods used to share key events and policy developments.
- › Consideration of good practice on methods of online deliberation and social media, such as on key town-wide issues
- › Identifying ways to provide more joined-up support for community engagement in and around Council-owned buildings.

OCWP2020/20 **BUSINESS of the MEETING**

1 Public Participatory Budget pilot: Council had asked the Working party to consider ways to engage the public with the agreed participatory budget pilot scheme, asking the community to help prioritize the list of projects contained in s11 of the Neighbourhood Plan; all being eligible for funding from accrued Community Infrastructure Levy receipts.

TC had attempted to estimate the likely costs for the items/projects listed and presented some preliminary evaluations but advised that it had soon become apparent that there were too many variable factors affecting the majority of the items to allow estimating in any meaningful way. Most were outside the direct control of the Town Council, and several were dependent upon, or involved integration with, much broader issues or projects. There followed a general discussion on these aspects. TC submitted that these complexities served to defeat the original intention to present to the public a simple list that could be prioritized.

Members contributed a number of suggestions to engage the public’s interest, including a pre-selected list; ‘top-ten’ or ‘top five’ ranking or similar. It was

recognized that any pre-selection could be seen as counter to the basic principle of public participation. For practicality, however, it was thought that the list would need to be reduced to show only those projects which might realistically be expected to begin if funding were available (eg physical features for traffic calming). A question arose as to how other councils conducted public participatory budgeting exercises, but these were relatively rare. Suggestions for engagement included 'World cafe' format events, and/or online surveys, and a particularly well-received idea for an event with a theme based upon the *Top Trumps Cards* concept. It had been recognized that the *PBNetwork* organization might offer some early advice free of charge, but their main services were chargeable and it was sensible to ensure ideas were 'crystallized' into succinct plans before engaging. Discussion ranged widely on various aspects and implications of the matter. It was agreed that a sub-group consisting of Cllrs Catlin, Vernon, and Dr Maples would meet to develop outline proposals along the lines of these discussions.

2 *Candidates for nomination as Mayor/Deputy:* The meeting considered a note prepared by Cllr Makepeace regarding the roles of Mayor and Deputy Mayor. This described a perspective on the process by which candidates were presented for the roles and extended into the nature of the roles themselves. A number of the underlying assumptions were examined, and some misunderstandings were corrected. There were certain fundamental aspects of the roles which are governed by statute, but the extended roles at a 'ceremonial' Council such as Lewes were, broadly, a product of custom and practice although much was based upon nationally-recognized conventions and protocols. It was acknowledged that Council could consider and control broader aspects of the roles. A concern was recognized as to the process by which candidates were presented and voted-for in a Council meeting, and further consideration could be given to that process. It was suggested that all candidates should be subject to a standard process with 'manifesto' aspects (eg proposed charities to be supported) declared in advance and open to questioning at the meeting. Further, nominations should be controlled eg to avoid individuals serving multiple times. As some Members had to leave the meeting and the subject was actually outside the remit of the Working party, it was agreed that this matter would be left at this point, and it was accepted that debate in this regard should, properly, be proposed to a meeting of Council.

3 *Other matters:* There followed a general discussion on subjects including *Freegle*; a proposed Communication officer; email contact with customers and allotment tenants; parish meeting; a Lewes News survey on the Connecting Lewes digital inclusion initiative. It was expected that the Town Hall weekly market would re-open on 13th April and Cllr Dr Maples and Cllr Sains would attend a Councillor's Surgery desk.

OCWP2020/21

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed, and thanked everyone for their attendance. *The meeting closed at 5:00pm.*

Signed date

Agenda Item No: 7c)

Report No: FC020/2020

Report Title: Grants panel – Supplementary round 31st March 2021

Report To: Full Council

Date: 29th April 2021

Report By: S Brigden, Town Clerk

Purpose of Report: To advise payment of grants as considered by the Grants Panel, following its meeting on 31st March 2021 – a supplementary round requested by Council for 2020/21 in recognition of a significantly underspent grants budget for the year.

Recommendation(s):

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

Information:

1 Council at its meeting on 4th March 2021 had asked the Panel to disburse a supplementary round of grants before the financial year-end, as the Grants budget for 2020/21 still held a significant unspent balance.

2 The Grants Panel met on 31st March 2021. 8 applications were considered, with seven requests for support in the sum total of **£9,508**, and one application to the residual Covid Emergency Fund in the sum of **£2,000**.

2 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.

The details of proposals 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.

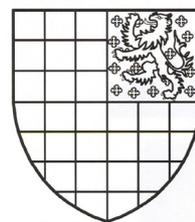
4 The grant awards for this cycle are shown at column G, appended.

Grant awards for this cycle amount to **£9,508** in total from the miscellaneous grants budget, which leaves a balance of £21,589 remaining in the scheme budget at the year-end. The award from the Covid Emergency Fund of **£2,000** leaves an unspent balance of £984.

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), note any caveats or suggestions made.

S Brigden 31st March 2021



MINUTES

of the meeting of the **All Saints Centre (ASC) Steering Group** held on **Thursday 8th April 2021**, online via Zoom meetings, at **3:00pm**.

PRESENT Cllrs R Burrows; S Catlin (*Chair*); M Milner; R O’Keeffe; R Waring and (*not appointed to the Steering Group*) Cllr Sains.

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*); Ms L Zeyfert (*ASC Manager*); Claire Tully (*ASC Asst Manager*) and Brain Courage (*Town Ranger*).

ASCSG2020/01 There were initial connection and audio problems, and the Zoom meeting was closed while this was addressed, which delayed the start of the meeting until 3:20pm

ASCSG2020/02 **ELECTION of CHAIRMAN:**

Cllr Catlin was elected Chairman of the Steering Group for the 2020/21 year.

ASCSG2020/03 **QUESTIONS:** There were none.

ASCSG2020/04 **APOLOGIES for ABSENCE:** No message had been received from Cllr Herbert.

ASCSG2020/05 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were none

ASCSG2020/06 **REMIT of the STEERING GROUP:** Members noted the remit of the Group which was set by Council as:

The All Saints Steering Group is tasked with general oversight of the All Saints Centre operation, meeting ad hoc and formulating recommendations for Council or other committees; functional panels, or working parties.

ASCSG2020/07 **BUSINESS OF THE MEETING:**

The Group addressed matters as:

1 *Prospective ‘remobilization’ and relaxation of covid-19 restrictions:* TC gave an update on the position regarding allowable events under Covid-19 regulations and noted that after 12th April it was anticipated that some educational events should be possible. A limited schedule had been publicized. It was noted that ‘headline’ information in the media was often not consistent with the actual regulations or government statutory guidance. The appropriate guidance was monitored, and plans adapted as appropriate to any developments in that regard.

2 *Staff changes:* Ms Zeyfert was pleased to announce that she was expecting a baby and was planning to commence Maternity Leave in late Summer. The Centre’s staff establishment currently had a vacancy for a Venue Assistant created by the recent promotion of Ms Tully and transfer of Ms Roxx to Malling Community Centre. Although there was no immediate pressure as the Centre would gradually increase operations as Covid restrictions eased, the recruitment would need to begin reasonably soon. TC intended that the Chair of the Steering Group would be invited to attend interviews in due course.

3 *Suggested improvements to external lighting of the Centre:* Members considered a report prepared by a local lighting engineer, working with Cllr Milner and others. This proposed various enhancements to the Centre’s profile through external lighting (building; grounds and noticeboards *etc*). Councillors considered these ideas attractive but they would need to be costed and developed further. Ms Zeyfert noted that lighting of the tower would require Planning Consent, and she confirmed that bats roosted somewhere on the site. It was very important that this was investigated, as disturbing a roost is environmentally damaging and also illegal. It was acknowledged that any lighting proposals could be designed to mitigate against

disruption to any existing bat populations. An informal estimate of cost had been obtained from an electrical contractor for some elements, which might be installed outside any major scheme, although Members were interested to estimate the cost of a unified project. Whilst the project might not prove prohibitively expensive, TC drew attention to the long list of dilapidations that had been identified by commissioned surveyor, and the aggregate of over £400,000 in estimate costs, which was to be discussed as the following item on the meeting agenda.

4 *Recent surveys and reports on priorities for building repairs:* A structural survey of the Centre had been presented to Council in 2020. This detailed report comprehensively described various items of repair that were considered necessary. Members were pleased to note the description of the Grade 2* listed building as:

“Overall, this building is in remarkably good condition considering the mixture of constructions and ages and this reflects care in the ownership, renovations and extensions through the 19th and 20th centuries until it was deconsecrated. Its condition also reflects high quality renovations during the 1980s followed by excellent care and maintenance since, together with further modernisations such as for the heating system and west end lavatories. The level of maintenance repairs currently identified is much less than would be expected for a previously-redundant building of this size and complexity and reflects well on its management”.

This commendation notwithstanding; 20 areas of work and individual items identified as necessary or desirable were shown in a table with estimated costs ranging from £2,000 to £59,000 - in aggregate amounting to £415,000. It was recognized that many of these were not immediate concerns, and that schedule was being used to inform the drafting of a programme for future prioritized work. Several areas required further, specialized, surveys and these were being commissioned according to priority. It was recognized that, whilst specific surveys had been conducted for particular issues arising (*eg* damp; heating system; roof guttering) the comprehensive survey conducted in 2020 was the first of such scope commissioned by the Council since taking control of the Centre.

A recent survey on the electrical installation had reported that the services were in good condition but with a short list of works required before it could be recorded as ‘satisfactory’. These were being addressed. As works were commissioned, contractors were asked to allow for future development, such as additional lighting, to ensure the most efficient use of funds.

TC confirmed that there was an established financial Reserve for repairs and maintenance of the Centre and the recent annual contribution from the Council Tax precept had been £20,000 giving an available sum of over £50,000. Added to the operational budget provision for responsive repairs each year, it should be possible to address the works listed in an appropriate timeframe.

The most immediate concern was the age-related structural deformation of the Victorian cast-iron supporting columns in the main hall, and these had been assessed and would need to be replaced with modern steel fabrications, which could be manufactured to appear similar. This was safety concern, and the structural engineer was liaising with the District Conservation Officers and a local specialist contractor to confirm requirements and quotation of cost.

There followed a general discussion on the cost; timescales, and relative priorities of works required. These would be refined as quotations were received and discrete elements were further investigated. The Steering Group agreed the approach being taken to expedite structural works and would recommend that Council take note of the issues discussed and endorse this.

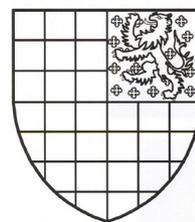
There was a brief discussion on various general matters before the meeting ended.

ASCSG2020/08

There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed and thanked everyone for their contribution. *The meeting closed at 4:10pm*

Signed

dated



MINUTES

of the meeting of the **Transport Committee**
held on **Tuesday 13th April 2021**, online via Zoom Meetings at **3:00pm**.

PRESENT Cllrs. J Baah; M Bird; S Catlin; R Handy; O Henman; I Makepeace (*Chair*); M Milner; R O’Keeffe; Vernon and R Waring. Also (*not appointed to the Committee*) Cllr Dr W Maples

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

Invited contributors: S O’Sullivan (*Cycle Lewes*); K Moore (*Lewes Living Streets*); S Murray (*Lewes Chamber of Commerce*); S Watson (*‘SlowDown Malling’ campaign*); Cllr A Ross (*Lewes District Councillor, Lewes Bridge*)

This was the first meeting of a Council body in the period of national mourning following the death of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. The meeting paused for a moment’s contemplation.

TraCom2020/007 QUESTIONS: There was a question regarding the East Sussex County Council feasibility study that was to be considered at the meeting. It was explained that this had been commissioned by the Town Council under the East Sussex County Council *Community Highways* programme and this was the first meeting of the Committee since its completion.

TraCom2020/008 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: No message had been received from Cllr Herbert.

TraCom2020/009 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were none.

TraCom2020/010 MINUTES: It was noted that the final sentence of the Minutes contained an error, related to the closing statement of the Chair, and this would be corrected. Subject to that correction, **it was resolved that:**

TraCom2020/011.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 26th November 2020 were received and agreed as an accurate record (*subject to amendment of final sentence*).

TraCom2020/011 REMIT of the COMMITTEE: Members noted the remit of the Committee as defined by Council, which is to:

- › Work with statutory bodies (including LDC and ESCC), agencies, community groups and stakeholders on transport related issues.
- › Facilitate a Lewes transport policy that is both sustainable and integrated. This would use the work prepared during the drafting of the Lewes Neighbourhood Plan and earlier work by the Town Council’s Traffic Working Party on a ‘Lewes transport forum’, as a starting point:
- › Work with residents and businesses to consider and possibly fund traffic measures such as crossings, signage and speed limits.
- › Continue to monitor the LTC-funded Compass bus service, reporting back to Council.
- › Work with the Council’s Planning Committee, ensuring that any recommendations are reviewed before consideration by Council.

It was noted that there had been a focus on cycling; walking, and traffic in Committee meetings to date and it was acknowledged that bus and other public transport matters should be considered.

TraCom2020/012 BUSINESS of the MEETING:

It was noted that officers from East Sussex County Council (ESCC) had been invited, to facilitate discussion on specific issues, but the Transport Planning Manager had regretfully declined having “taken advice in respect of the current

County Council Purdah* period” This would unfortunately limit the discussion that would be possible on matters of detail/status of projects, although a brief update had been provided against the two items on the agenda for which ESCC officers were invited to attend. The Chair wished to record the committee’s disappointment that this was the second meeting at which ESCC contributions had been so limited.

**(related to prohibited publicity/ actions during a pre-election period).*

1 *Cycle Route 90:* Improvement of local sections of regional cycle Route 90 was a project identified as a high priority by Cycle Lewes (CL) and had been noted in the Lewes Neighbourhood Plan (s11.7) as a project listed to benefit from future receipts of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). There was a vital “missing link” between Brighton Road and Cliffe High Street/South Street. To complete the mostly on-road route required several elements of signage and physical features to be added within the town.

ESCC’s Transport Planning Manager had provide the following statement:

“Following discussion with Cycle Lewes, the proposed route was split into a number of sections with the aim being to deliver at least some of the sections over time, if the whole route from the A27 at Southerham to the A27 at Brighton Road is not achievable as one scheme.

Proposed plans for the eastern section of the route, from the A27 at Southerham to Cliffe High Street, will be going out to key stakeholder consultation after the local government elections in May. The County Council member for Ringmer & Lewes Bridge ward will be notified of the proposals before they go out to consultation. ESCC made a bid to Highways England for a contribution to the signalised crossing of the A26 at Cliffe Industrial Estate but we were unsuccessful and are on their reserve list.

Western section (Cliffe High Street to Brighton Road) via Pinwell Road, Bell Lane Recreation Ground and Winterbourne Lane: A large number of options have been considered but there are very challenging technical and financial obstacles to overcome at a few key points (Pinwell Road, Bell Lane, and the gradient from Winterbourne Lane to Brighton Road).

Western section (Cliffe High Street to Brighton Road) via School Hill, High Street, Western Road.: With the challenges posed by the indirect route (above), officers were asked to look at an on road route following the ‘spine’ of Lewes. An initial RAG study into this alignment has classified sections into the following achievability ratings, using latest guidance from the Department for Transport (LTN 1/20): Red (difficult) Amber (moderate) Green (straightforward). The result of this study now needs to be considered in terms of implication for deliverability.

County Council officers will be happy to discuss the next steps for taking forward RR90 with the two ESCC Members after the County election in May.”

Cycle Lewes had formed a joint working group on the C90 and would provide feedback to the Committee in due course.

There followed a discussion on recent resurfacing works adjacent to Bell Lane Recreation Ground, carried out by Lewes District Council. This was not related to the C90 proposals but had raised some concerns regarding the ‘desire route’ taken by cyclists where cycling was, technically, prohibited. No increase in use had been noted, but it was observed that some cyclists had become ‘bolder’ and were traveling faster. Signage that had been removed was to be replaced in a more up to date format.

2 *Safe School Streets:* ESCC’s Transport Planning Manager had provide the following statement:

“The School Streets six-week trial project started on 15 March 2021 and will finish on 7 May 2021. The first part of the trial ran from 15 March to 1 April. Sustrans is supporting the school [Southover] to deliver the School Streets

project and has received positive feedback from the staff and pupils at the school about the benefits of reducing the amount of traffic on the streets around the school at drop off and pick up time.

The scheme will undergo a full review at the end of the six-week trial period. We will be monitoring the impact of the measures and will listen to feedback from residents, businesses and the school community. Once the review has been undertaken on all six of the School Streets projects around the county, we will be able to determine whether or not the project could operate on a permanent basis subject to funding and local support.”

The committee discussed a number of matters ancillary to the project and were interested to know if this should be interpreted that analysis of a county-wide result might affect local implementation. This could not be answered definitively, but it was understood that discrete projects would be assessed on their merits. Locally, Southover School was a test-site. Feedback from parents and observers suggested that the experiment was already showing beneficial results, although a view was expressed that the levels of activity in the area were untypical due to Covid restrictions, and this would distort any analysis. It was noted that activity related to Western Road school was also a factor, although they were not formally involved. This point was acknowledged, although it was understood that ESCC would take some account of these factors. There was general approval of the scheme, and conclusions were awaited with interest.

3 Community Speedwatch: The Coordinator of Lewes Community Speedwatch (LCS) presented a report on the initiative, which described:

Lewes was one of the many Community Speedwatch groups organised by the Police in Sussex and expanding into Police forces across England. The Police provide equipment (speed gun and badged high viz yellow jackets) and send out warning letters to offenders. Volunteers work in pairs to identify speeding motorists at roadside spots agreed with the Police and input the results to the Community Speedwatch website. It is “educational” in that motorists are not fined, but after two letters they are visited by the local Neighbourhood Police team.

As a result of LCS activities, since 2013, over 11,000 speeding motorists had been sent warning letters, including over 1,000 in the last three months. LCS operate on the 20mph, 30mph and 40mph areas in and around Lewes using the Police threshold for enforcement action (10% plus 2mph above the speed limit). The Group decide where to be present and tend to operate where there is local concern about speeding.

Most motorists were observed to slow down when they see yellow jackets. LCS expect to record a speeding motorist every two minutes. Much of the speeding is thought to be carelessness and it was believed that warning letters were taken seriously and led to attempts to change driving habits. Around 80% of those identified as speeding are travelling 5 to 10mph above the speed limit, but that was still too fast for people to feel safe enough to encourage walking and cycling.

The new Sussex Police Chief Constable had indicated support for Speedwatch groups and had appointed a Chief Inspector to that end. This was likely to include Police Officers joining Speedwatch sessions and stopping and talking to motorists and/or serving fixed penalty fines (with the option of speed awareness courses).

It was agreed that the Council could help Community Speedwatch by publicising its work and encouraging people to sign up as volunteers for the Lewes group at <https://communityspeedwatch.org/FRONT-v2-Home.php>

There followed a discussion regarding the ability of police to prosecute *all* offenders, and the practicality of theoretical thresholds for prosecution. There was debate as to the real effect of 20mph limits, and statutory controls on their introduction. The Town Council had supported 20mph limits for many years and had contributed funds toward introduction. There was general support among committee members for a town-wide 20mph restriction.

4 *Feasibility appraisal iro A26 Malling Hill:* Lewes Town Council (LTC), had requested a feasibility study to be carried out by East Sussex Highways (ESH) on measures to reduce vehicle speeds along the A26, Malling Hill, Lewes and investigation of options to reduce the volume of traffic along this section of the A26. It was envisaged that the reduction of vehicle speeds and volumes would provide a safer environment for residents.

The committee considered the report (*ESH ref ABSL-0898, copy in the Minute Book*), which had taken account of traffic speed and volume data including an ESCC survey in 2018, and crash/injury data from Sussex Safer roads Partnership. Based upon the available crash data ESCC “would not consider the site to be a safety issue or priority”.

Traffic speed and volume data had been captured in a count carried out in April 2018. This was collected by automatic data collectors mounted on existing street lighting columns north of the pedestrian crossing on Malling Street. The data had not been updated to reflect the current situation, but it was considered a useful guide to typical vehicle speeds and volumes.

The report stated that: on the basis of the recorded speed data neither ESCC or Sussex Police would consider there to be a speeding issue and given the status of the road, the recorded traffic volumes were “at a level to be expected”.

The focus of the commission had been reduction of vehicle speeds and volumes along Malling Hill, and various measures had been proposed. ESH initial response to these was:

Suggested measure	East Sussex Highways’ response
Reduction in Traffic Volume	Not supported by ESCC / Sussex Police
Safety Cameras	Would not meet criteria
Vehicle Activated Signs	Would not meet criteria
Additional speed reminder signage	Legislation would not permit
Pedestrian Crossings	Not achievable based on demand and available space.
Traffic Calming*	Typical horizontal and vertical measures aren't achievable but option to install central islands could be viable subject to further design.
Footway widening / road narrowing north of Orchard Road	This option is viable but expensive.

Due to the nature and importance of this A26 route as a part of the strategic road network through East Sussex, diverting traffic onto alternative routes would not be supported by either ESCC or the Sussex Police Authority. As such this option could not be considered further.

*Traffic Calming measures were explored in the report, and two options which ESH would contemplate were detailed and costs indicated:

- A. A series of central islands between Orchard Road and Church Lane (approx. £80,000) At this stage it was not possible to determine if any further carriageway strengthening was required to facilitate the central islands. There is a risk that by introducing new islands traffic is directed to the edges of the carriageway and experience had that the road can fail if strengthening is not undertaken. This could only be determined as part of the design process.
- B. Carriageway narrowing between Orchard Road and Church Lane (approx. £150,000). This estimate included the narrowing of the carriageway by realigning the kerb line along both sides of the A26 over a distance of approximately 700m.

The report concluded with the following statements and recommendations:

- a) “Crash data has been analysed for the site from which it has been determined

that there is insufficient evidence to justify a scheme from being promoted.

- b) 34% of recorded vehicle speeds exceeded the 30mph speed limit but the majority of these were recorded as travelling between 31 and 36mph. Only 8.8% of drivers are recorded as exceeding the Police enforcement threshold, which would not be considered a speeding issue by either ESCC or Sussex Police.
- c) Of the options suggested and considered, only two present themselves as a possible way of encouraging driver compliance with the speed limit, the installation of a series of central traffic islands or the physical narrowing of the road between Orchard Road and Church Lane. Traffic islands would be the least expensive option to progress.
- d) All of the other potential ways of reducing vehicle speed and volume have been discounted on the grounds of either being unsupported by ESCC / Sussex Police or not being permitted due to legislation.
- e) Although it cannot be guaranteed that narrowing of the road or the introduction of central islands would have the desired effect on vehicle speeds, the measures should encourage slower speeds.”

The committee discussed these conclusions at length, and local residents and others agreed that physically restricting the carriageway was likely to force vehicles (particularly HGV's) toward the kerb and thus increase the sense of vulnerability felt by pedestrians. There was some criticism of the specific location selected as the sampling point for speed data: it was believed to be too close to a crossing where speeds should be expected to be lower. Traffic speed was still considered by the majority of those present to be the worst dimension of the issue. It was suggested that different phasing of the crossing lights might have a beneficial effect.

Conclusions: Consensus was that better enforcement was preferable, while a more refined approach to 'hard' measures could be researched. A town-wide 20mph speed limit was favoured, which would affect all residents. The Malling Hill matter was considered to be specific to the local residents. The report should be shared with the community and there should be consultation with residents on these issues and the calming options presented in the report. Council would be asked to endorse these views.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed.

The meeting closed at 5:25pm

Signed:

Date:

NOTES – Personnel Panel meeting, 16th April 2021

<i>Between</i>	Personnel Panel and South East Employers	
<i>Reason for meeting</i>	To consider applications received for the post of Town Clerk, and shortlist candidates for first-stage interview.	
<i>Venue</i>	Online meeting using Zoom Meetings	
<i>Date</i>	3:00pm Friday 16 th April 2021	
<i>Attending</i>	Councillors Burrows; Catlin; Makepeace; Dr Maples; Dr Mayhew; Wood (Chair) Jennifer McNeill – Regional Director, South East Employers Steve Brigden, Town Clerk Fiona Garth, Assistant Town Clerk & Civic Officer	
NOTES:		
1.	The meeting welcomed Jennifer McNeill of South East Employers (SEEmp), and continued with the work of the recruitment process	
2.	Ten applications had been received, and Members had been furnished with copies of the forms showing details of applicants’ skills, qualities, and experience in relation to the published Job Description and personal specification. Individual Panellists had been asked to ‘score’ these in terms of the evidence presented, with a view to selecting six candidates for interview.	
3.	This exercise, and subsequent detailed discussion, was facilitated by Ms McNeill and resulted in seven candidates being identified for further consideration at interview.	
4.	It was agreed that all applicants would be immediately advised of the shortlisting outcome, and SEEmp would subsequently issue each interview candidate with the CREDO™ profiling questionnaire and arrange the analysis of these upon return. A briefing note for a ten-minute presentation would be sent separately to each candidate nearer the date of interview, allowing the same preparation time for all. The subject of this presentation was discussed at some length, and a consensus was reached. TC would prepare a briefing note accordingly and collate a draft selection of appropriate questions for Panellists; and circulate these late the following week.	
5.	Interviews would be scheduled for approximately 90 minutes each and arranged as: four to be held on Monday 10 th May (9:00am; 11:00am; 1:30pm; 3:30pm), and three on Friday 14 th May (9:00am; 11:00am; 1:30pm).	
6.	Panellists would be sent the CREDO™ analysis reports when available, and a review meeting before interviews was agreed for 4:00pm on Friday 30 th April.	
7.	It was agreed that Panellists would receive documents for interviews in printed form.	
	<i>The meeting ended at 5:10pm</i>	

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 29th April 2021.

NOM 018/2020 – received from Cllr Dr Maples on 19th April 2021, in the following terms:

It is proposed that:

Lewes Town Council agrees the following, with regard to the Lewes Climate Day being planned for 19th September 2021:

1. The Council agrees a Member or Members of the Town Council to attend planning meetings and report back to the Town Council on progress.
2. The Council will support the event through publication on Town Council website, Facebook pages and noticeboards.
3. The Council asks its Commemorations Committee to consider an appropriate Town Council contribution to the event, with prospect of a lasting legacy.

Supporting Information:

Further information is extracted from a recent request circulated by Juliet Oxborrow, of Lewes Climate Action:

“A number of groups in Lewes (The Railway Land Wildlife Trust, Extinction Rebellion, Transition Town Lewes, Friends of Lewes and other affiliate groups of Lewes Climate Hub) are getting together to organise a Climate Day at the Linklater Pavilion on Sunday 19th September. We wondered if Lewes Town Council would like to join us as a partner.

“This is intended as a smaller event than the Imagine Festival that you may have heard discussion about (which will now probably take place in Spring 2022 to give us time to raise the £2,000-£3,000 funding needed to do it properly). However, a number of groups feel it's vital to hold something in Lewes in the run-up to the COP26 Climate Summit in Glasgow on 1st-12th November.

“Our event could also be part of the national "Great Big Green Week" (18th- 26th September) that The Climate Coalition is organising [see: <https://greatbiggreenweek.com>]. Perhaps the town council could encourage climate events by groups and organisations in Lewes throughout the week?

Do let us know if LTC would like to support a Climate Day on 19th Sept and if so, which councillors would be happy to join the organising committee. We're planning to have a kick-off meeting in the few weeks to discuss what the day could involve - but can wait to hear from you. Do give me a call if you need more information.” *Juliet Oxborrow*

Cllr Dr W Maples 19th April 2021

NOM 019/2020 – received from Cllr Lamb on 19th April 2021, in the following terms:

It is proposed that:

This Council expresses its support for the Connecting Lewes project, an initiative that aims to increase digital inclusion in Lewes through mentoring, technological assistance, and financial support.

Supporting Information:

Online access is critical to many aspects of everyday living: learning, working, shopping and accessing public services. Even more so during recent lockdowns and social distancing. And yet a significant proportion of people are unable to take part in this digital world, because they are elderly, disabled or lack the finances to pay for laptops, phones and wi-fi. These digitally excluded people

are amongst the most vulnerable in society and would benefit most from being able to access the Internet and to keep in touch with people via video-conferencing.

Nationally, older and disabled people are most likely to be digitally excluded. Only 65% of people over the age of 65 have used the internet in the last three months and just 85% of disabled people, according to the Office of National Statistics.

There is no reason to believe that Lewes is an exception, especially with its older demographic. A group composed of local charities, GP practices, Town Councillors, East Sussex County Council and Lewes Community Volunteers is aiming to tackle the problem locally.

The group, called *Connecting Lewes*, is led by Neville resident Eric Kihlstrom. It has published a questionnaire in the latest issue of Lewes News, which has been distributed to all households in the town. Some 200 responses have been received.

Once the need has been established, *Connecting Lewes* will respond with a programme of mentoring, provision of equipment and financial support delivered by the organisations involved in the initiative.

Cllr J Lamb
19th April 2021



CTLA
TRANSPORT FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

Bouncing Back from Covid – helping vulnerable and older Lewes residents resume an active and socially engaged life.

A funding bid for the Lewes Dial-a-Ride in 2021 to 2022

April 2021

Background to the report

Since the spring of 2014 Community Transport for the Lewes Area (CTLA) has successfully worked in partnership with Lewes Town Council to reverse the decline in Public Transport services of both traditional fixed route and timetabled local bus services and also of door-to-door on demand transport (marketed as the Lewes Dial-a-Ride. Thanks to the generosity of the Town Council annual grants have been successful in establishing and growing the patronage of:-

- Weekday's local bus service 131 which operates on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and links Wallands Park and the Town Centre, Bus Station and Tesco/Lidl Superstores.
- Sunday and Bank Holiday local bus service 132 which provides links between Malling, Landport, Nevill and Winterbourne with the Town Centre, Rail station, Bus Station and Tesco/Lidl Superstores.

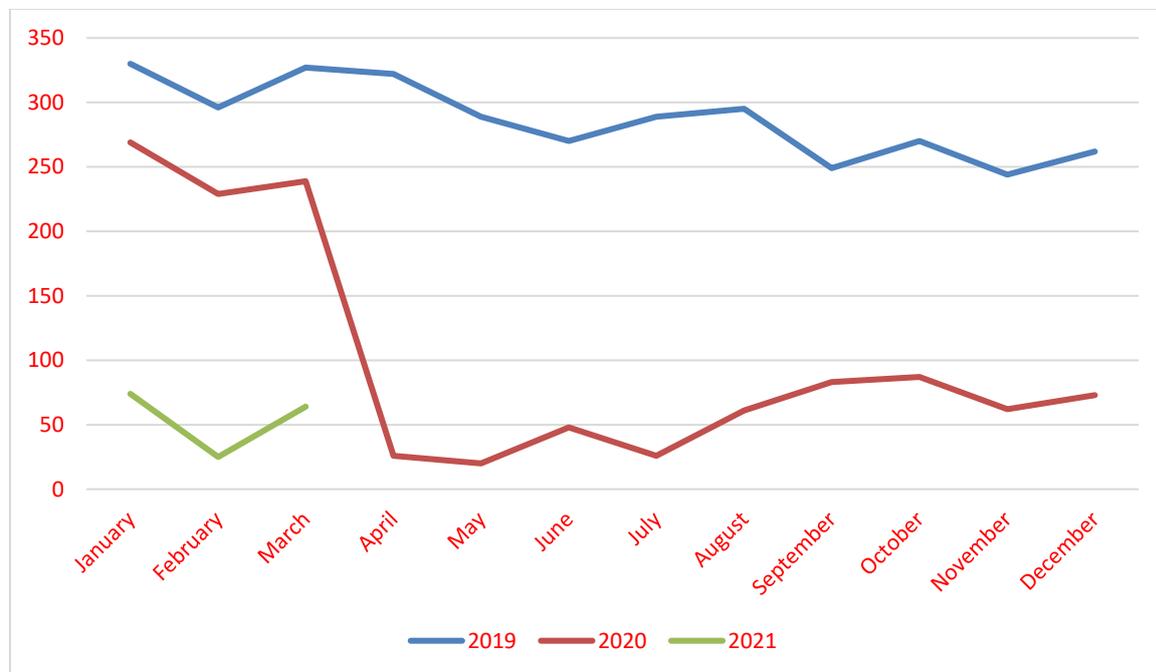
The Council has also contributed and helped to sustain and extend the hours of operation of the Lewes Dial-a-Ride service which operates on Mondays to Fridays (except Bank Holidays) between 9 am and 5 pm.

The Bid

Prior to the start of the 2020 – 2021 fiscal year CTLA was successful in its bid to Lewes Town Council for a three year term rolling grant to foster the ongoing development of scheduled local bus services 131 and 132 but the request for a three year funding grant for the extended Lewes Area Dial-a-Ride was not approved. Instead the Town Council agreed to fund only £4,000 of the £6,000 requested for a period of 12 months with the offer of considering a further bid for the 2021 – 2022 year.

Unfortunately 2020-2021 turned out to be the most atypical year in the organisations history due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the multiple Lockdowns and yearlong restrictions on freedoms to travel on public health grounds. All hopes of an uptake in patronage on the improved Lewes Dial-a-Ride were completely dashed by the inevitable downturn in passenger traffic. In common with all transport operators throughout the World, CTLA experienced a huge drop in demand for passenger travel. Suddenly the organisation, like so many businesses, found itself in a fight for survival. The comparison between 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 for patronage on the Lewes Dial-a-Ride is shown over page.

Figure 1: Total Passenger-Trips Per Month on Lewes Dial-a-Ride 2019 and 2020 (including Quarter 1 of 2021) Showing the Impact of Covid-19 on Patronage



Although the organisation was forced to abandon all of its “Community Group Hire” and “Travel Club” operations and to curtail and partially suspend scheduled local bus services in accordance with Government guidelines, it was decided after consultation with various emergency planning agencies that the Lewes Dial-a-Ride service would still be operated, despite the dramatic fall in demand from usual service users, as it was a means to convey Key Workers to and from their workplaces at a time when conventional bus services operated by those local bus companies who suspended all services, were not available. A number of key workers made use of the Lewes Dial-a-Ride, qualifying for membership on a temporary basis and so managed to stay in employment at a time when the alternative may have been voluntary furlough or worst still cessation of employment due to having no means of travel. The Trustees and the Management of CTLA also felt that continuing provision of the Lewes Dial-a-Ride was an opportunity for the Charity to continue to look after elderly and vulnerable members of the community by collecting telephone food shopping and prescription medicine orders from those who were most at risk and carrying out those shopping and medicine collections and then delivering those life preserving essentials to the doorstep. Finally it was agreed that the Dial-a-Ride should continue to be available for those who still needed to attend routine but non-emergency health appointments.

As a result of these decisions, many local residents continued to be favourably impacted by the continued availability of the Dial-a-Ride service at a time of dire national and local emergency.

More latterly the Dial-a-Ride has been usefully employed on providing door to door transport for many older and vulnerable persons to be able to get to and from their designated Covid Vaccination Centre. Often these centres were not local to Lewes and would have been impossible for those who struggled with personal mobility to have been able to reach via conventional public transport and prohibitively expensive to attend via taxis.

Throughout the course of the year, CTLA has maintained a Dial-a-Ride facility to meet all of these new challenges in a Covid-safe environment and fully compliant with all social-distancing guidelines. The cost of reduced capacity limits imposed on minibuses and the considerably enhanced cleaning regime and PPE has been considerable but has been borne by CTLA with some emergency funding to cover the cost of materials. The matter has been compounded by the fact that CTLA's own fundraising efforts often rely heavily on a physical presence at local community events or organising its own community events, none of which have been possible in the current climate.

With the successful and rapid roll out of the vaccination programme and the easing of travel restrictions that we are witnessing now, CTLA expects the patronage on all of its services including the Lewes Dial-a-Ride to return to normal pre-covid levels during the second half of 2020-2021.

All of this has only been possible due to the support of Lewes Town Council in 2020-2021 and the other Town Councils who continue to support out Dial-a-Ride services offering similar facilities in other towns throughout East Sussex. Not only has that support enabled us to play a major role in responding to the difficulties faced by local residents but it has also enabled us to keep our driver and vehicle resources intact and so able to pick up the 80,000 plus passenger-trips per year that we were delivering before Covid and fully expect to deliver again in the near future.

Lewes Dial-a-Ride Bid Proposals for 2021-2022

Due to the huge financial challenges of the past year, CTLA is requesting Lewes Town Council to now consider supporting that element of the Dial-a-Ride that is used directly by Lewes Town residents by granting a further £4,000 grant funding for the next 12 months. During this period CTLA hopes to be able to achieve the growth that was originally envisaged in 2020-2021.

Prior to the Pandemic (November 2018 – October 2019) no less than 3,575 passenger-trips were delivered on the Lewes Dial-a-Ride service, of which 2,373 (66%) were undertaken purely by residents travelling within the Town boundary whilst the remaining 1202 (34%) were undertaken by residents in the neighbouring villages of Ringmer, Cooksbridge, Barcombe, Plumpton, East Chilmington and Kingston to bring people into the town and take them home again. In December 2020 CTLA made representation through the Lewes District Association of Local Councils for additional support totalling £2,000 which represents the cost of providing journeys under the Dial-a-Ride supporting residents in the surrounding villages who use the service to travel into and out of Lewes Town. Those discussions are ongoing.

Marketing of Services

CTLA will renew its efforts to market the service vigorously and will be producing brand new leaflets in the summer and undertaking advertising via a variety media including local radio. The support of Lewes Town Council in providing financial assistance is always acknowledged widely in all the various forms of marketing.

Monitoring of Services

Modern electronic scheduling and booking software maximises data collection about patronage on the services, enabling the charity to better understand its market and respond to any unmet or changing needs. Indeed it is because the organisation has such capability that we are able to report so accurately on activity and compare trends year on year.

Due to licensing conditions the service is normally only available to members who are registered with CTLA but membership can be completed over the phone or by post or online and is free. Membership is subject to eligibility criteria. The criteria requires that individuals are prevented from being able to use public transport either because a) there is no adequate provision or b) the individual is prevented from accessing available services due to mobility or health related barriers. During the pandemic we were able to register quite a number of temporary members because the extraordinary circumstances resulted in them being eligible under a) when many other commercial operators suspended services entirely.

Our Bid – The Main Points at a Glance

Financial Cost

£4,000 for the financial year 2021 – 2022 to fund the increased hours of operation envisaged to further enhance the service and grow its appeal to even more residents.

The Benefits

By supporting the bid Lewes Town Council is:-

Contributing towards a healthy environment and improved air quality within the town

Helping people who do not have access to a car and find it difficult to use conventional public transport through impaired personal mobility or underlying health conditions gain better access to goods and services within the town.

Helping older and more vulnerable persons to live more independent and fulfilling lives, contributing towards better access for all through social equality

Reducing social isolation and loneliness

Helping less mobile people gain access to and contribute towards a more sustainable local economy and a more vibrant community

MWE/CTLA 16.04.2021

Agenda Item No: 11 **Report No:** FC021/2020
Report Title: Ouse Valley Way riverside footpath surface improvements
Report To: Full Council **Date:** 29th April 2021
Report By: S Brigden, Town Clerk

Purpose of Report: To present a request for a contribution towards improving the surface of the Ouse Valley Way North of Willeys Bridge, Lewes.

Recommendation(s):

- 1 That Council decides any level of support it is prepared to offer.
-

Information:

1. Appended to this report is a plan depicting the route of the footpath running along the Western bank of the Ouse, North of Willeys Bridge, to the parish boundary adjoining Hamsey CP. This is an extremely well-used path which is a designated public right-of-way and forms part of the popular Ouse Valley Way.
2. Stakeholders including local residents; the Environment Agency (EA); the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA), and Hamsey Parish Council have worked for some years to secure improvements to the surface, which can be effectively impassable for long periods during wet weather. Photographs are shown below, which illustrate this.
3. With reference to the appended plan, sections A to B and C to D have been improved with all-weather material and this has been well-received. Sections B to C and D to E, however, remain impassable for long periods. Between the EA and SDNPA, improvements have been made with all-weather surfacing and a new field gate replacing a difficult kissing-gate, but around 570 metres of the path remains unimproved.
4. The surfacing improvements completed so far are costed at approximately £12.30 per metre, which suggests the remaining length might cost around £7,000, although a higher standard is desirable, to include a sub-base to resist damage by cattle. This would cost roughly £20,000.
5. To achieve these improvements to the route, the EA, SDNPA and Hamsey Parish Council are prepared to contribute funds, and Lewes Town Council is asked to join with this endeavour.
6. The Environment Agency continues their flood bank repair works at Landport when weather and other constraints allow it. Their primary concern is that these banks are part of the protection for the railway, Landport, Talbot terrace and the North street quarter areas.

The scope of that work is:

- a) Raising of the low sections of the bank back to their original design height, using the material that is already onsite.
- b) Topping the finished surface with a Granite MOT type 1 granular aggregate to protect the top of the bank and increase its life.
- c) Assisting SDNPAs and Hamsey PC's ambition in connecting the footpaths for all to use.
- d) Planting trees in certain locations, either along the berm or in fields nearby subject to the land-owners permission.

It is also their intention to start a section from the railway bridge up to the next gate (Offham Sluice) using the natural products that are there, *ie* trees and lay them in a green engineering solution. This should create a live bank repair and increase habitat in that section.

The EA's Adur Catchment Officer has noted that with all these projects the raw look of the works once finished can look a little 'daunting', but is confident that once the grass establishes and the material settles and weathers, it will all blend with its environment.

Sections of Ouse Valley Way footpath North of Lewes

Photographs 2020



Photographs courtesy of Chris Yarrow

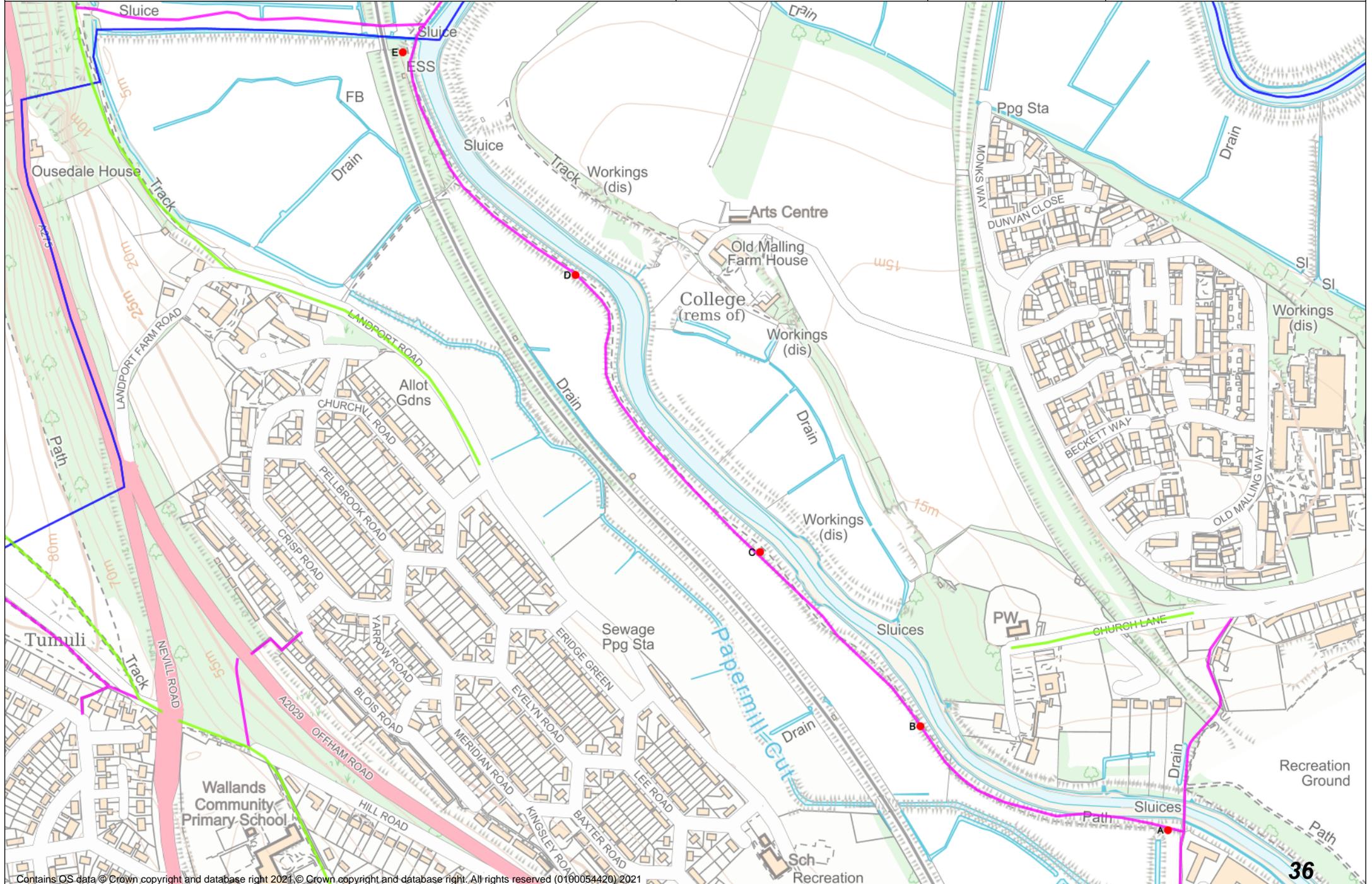
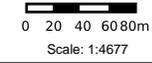
Section of Ouse Valley Way

Wiley's Bridge, Lewes - Northward

Lewes CP

Author:

Date: 23/04/2021



PERSON SPECIFICATION
Communications Officer

Competence area	Desirable	Evidence
Qualifications	5 GCSE's (A* - C) or equivalent, including English. Recognised media qualification.	Formal qualifications
General experience	Experience of working with social media, website content management tools, presentation of reports and information releases, working on own initiative and/or as part of a team. Experience of surveys and/or publicity campaigns.	Experience of working in a communications role within a corporate environment.
Skills & knowledge	Analysis skills and the ability to translate complex issues into clear language for a wide audience.	Demonstrates understanding of complex issues, and of drafting clear explanations.
	Excellent written and oral communication skills, with the ability to communicate effectively with others, at all levels, both internally and externally. Ability to design & operate common applications (<i>eg</i> WordPress; FaceBook <i>etc</i>).	Demonstrates previous experience demanding application of these skills; involvement in services and/or in external relations.
Personal Qualities	Approachable and responsive with staff and members of the public Able to secure good relationships with Councillors and other stakeholders Ability to work to deadlines, prioritise and manage own workload Self-reliant, open, and honest. Practical with common sense approach to problem solving. Trustworthy with confidential information. Capable of anticipating problems and showing initiative to solve them. Receptive to change and new ideas. Methodical and thorough approach.	Previous experience demanding application of these skills; involvement in services and/or in external relations Demonstrated at interview.
Operational	Available for some evening meetings and occasional Civic events	Acceptance at time of appointment

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 February 2021	Status at April 2021	
1	Town Hall repairs & conservation	Replace boilers; Council Chamber redecoration and replace carpet; Corn Exchange and Lecture Room replace lighting; Yarrow Room replace carpet	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.	No change
2	Pells Lake ecology project	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 (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.	No change
3	Pells Recreation Ground and kiosk/café development (with Pells Poll Community Association; North Street developers, and others)	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.	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.	No change. New owner of North Street land beginning to organize public consultations on future vision, and has declared intention to submit new application for Planning Consent within a year.
4	Malling (Bridgeview) Community Centre refurbishment	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.	Completion imminent. LTC self-management agreed by Council 8 th October 2020. Steering Group formed and Members appointed, to supplant Building Working Party interest once works complete. Anticipated handover by contractor end March.	Practical Completion certified 26 th March 2021. Significant 'Snagging' list – reparations underway. Research underway iro catering concession opportunities. Equipment planning underway. Provisional discussions re integration of sport changing facilities with District Council pitch bookings. Steering Group to be convened early May. Anticipated re-opening mid-June.
5	Continuing programme of environmental enhancements and specific site improvements	Engage with appropriate projects arising from third-party initiatives (eg highway safety/traffic management). Continuing improvements to own assets (eg allotment sites)	Continuing programme. Emergency project <i>iro</i> Ash die-back concluded March 2020. Summary report received by Council 18 th June 2020. Suggested liaison with Friends of Lewes <i>iro</i> possible biodiversity initiative (refinement/extension of FoL town tree audit)	Continuing programme. Proposals to Council 29 th April 2021 re contribution to costs of surfacing improvements to Ouse Valley Way.
6	Devolution of assets & services	Provide for transfer of ownership of various assets/services from Lewes District Council. (currently subject to ongoing negotiation)	Continuing. LDC have withdrawn the offers of sale regarding 2 Fisher St and Market Tower. Discussions postponed <i>iro</i> Mountfield Pleasure Ground and Stanley Turner Trusts.	No change
7	DECISIONS re Retirement of key staff	Prepare strategy for recruitment of Town Clerk Designate and further staff establishment changes.	Personnel Panel engaged in project. Specialist adviser engaged and progress reported to Council up to 5 th February 2021. Currently advertising. Application deadline 30 th March.	Personnel Panel short-listed seven candidates for interviews 10 th & 14 th May 2021. All candidates accepted invitation and will submit CREDO™ profiling questionnaire for assessment by specialist adviser. Second interviews scheduled for 21 st May.