



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'Keefe; 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: