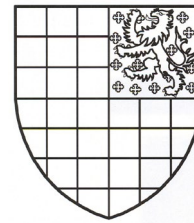


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MINUTES

Of the meeting of **Lewes Town Council**,
held on **Thursday 17th December 2020**, online via Zoom Meetings at **7:30pm**.

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

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

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

Before the meeting, the Reverend Canon Judith Egar offered a few words of reflection on the subject of hope, and its heightened importance in current circumstances.

FC2020/79 **QUESTION TIME:** There were two representatives of Lewes Living Streets and Cycle Lewes in attendance with reference to item 8 on the Agenda (Low Traffic Lewes - "The Way Ahead").

FC2020/80 **MEMBERS DECLARATIONS of INTERESTS:** Cllrs Bird, Burrows, Handy, Henman Lamb, Makepeace, Vernon and Waring all declared an interest *iro* item 8 in that they were all members of Cycle Lewes. Cllrs Makepeace and O'Keeffe declared an interest *iro* item 8 in that they were members of Lewes Living Streets.

FC2020/81 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** There were none.

FC2020/82 **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- a) The Mayor announced that 34 'Covid Hero' nominations had been received, all of which had been accepted. Recipients would receive a letter and certificate before Christmas and a medal in the New Year.
- b) The Mayor would be submitting a report to the December edition of the Lewes News giving updates on Council activities. Any contributions should be forwarded to the Mayor before the deadline of 21st December.
- c) The Mayor had attended a meeting of the Digital Inclusion Initiative which had been prompted by the County Council to encourage training for more people to use technology and the Internet, to independently access vital information and services and participate in the benefits of the digital world.
- d) The Mayor would participate in a telephone interview with the Mayor of Lewes, Delaware (USA) on the 18th December 2020.
- e) An independent shops 'draw' would be held on 18th December 2020. 70 independent shops had taken part in the competition. Cllr Lamb thanked those colleagues who had assisted in the distribution of cards and helped promote this initiative.

FC2020/83 **MINUTES:**

It was resolved that:

FC2020/83.1 Minutes of the Council meeting held on 12th November 2020 were received and agreed as an accurate record.

FC2020/84 **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) Audit Panel 25th November 2020. Council considered the Minutes of this meeting (*copy in minute book*).

Routine financial monitoring: Members had been furnished with detailed information (*copies in minute book*) following the end of the second quarter of the financial year and miscellaneous comparative values *in* present status compared with budget and with the same period in the previous year as, whilst the full effects of Covid-19 continued to develop, these helped with context.

Budget monitoring update – this showed actual expenditure and income values as posted to the Council’s *Sage* accounting system for all transactions processed in the period. There was some discussion on salient points of detail, and TC had responded with reference to the identified sources.

Oversight as required by the Governance & Accountability Code of Practice: Due to remote working, TC was unable to show the file of periodic bank reconciliations for review of the scrutiny already conducted. Ordinarily the Chairman would append his signature to verify this, but this could be done in arrears at any point during the year.

Review of assessment protocol for major funding requests: Following the first use of the protocol recommended by the Panel earlier in the year, Council had asked that it be reviewed in light of that experience (Council meeting 8th October 2020). The Panel considered report AP001/2020 (*copy in the Minute Book*) which covered the matter.

The Audit Panel had proposed, and Council had adopted, a set of criteria and assessment protocol, along similar lines to that employed by the Grants Panel, by which all applications for ‘major funding’ will be assessed if falling outside the established miscellaneous grants scheme.

The system adopted is described in a Briefing Note, designed to accompany any agenda for a meeting at which an eligible request is to be considered.

The template can be used at any meeting of Council; Committee or Working party, with applicants asked to submit their request in whatever form is appropriate to them, and Members attending the meeting will then apply a score, to allow a moderated aggregate to be evaluated to indicate the overall level of support.

It had been recommended that the meeting at which this was conducted should set a minimum threshold score required before a request might be eligible for further consideration (65% was suggested), and the matter then concluded following scoring and discussion.

The protocol was used for the first time in October 2020 and the Council did not elect to set a threshold but, acknowledging that there was significant support evident in the value of scores awarded, the issue was decided on a final subjective discussion. This gave rise to a request for a refinement of the protocol by the Audit Panel.

It had been suggested by a Councillor that this might be achieved by the introduction of these steps:

- a) A threshold level of 40%, with automatic rejection if this is not achieved.
- b) For requests scoring above the threshold, the percentage score would serve to determine the degree of support and an initial amount recommended, eg. a request for £5,000 with a score of 60% would result in an automatic proposal that the applicant is awarded £3,000 (always subject to any financial considerations highlighted in accompanying report(s)). The meeting would then vote on this, or amendments may be proposed if individuals wish to propose a higher or lower amount.
- c) If the Council agreed to fund an applicant who was looking for partial funding for a larger project, members may wish to agree the sum “in principle” only; on the understanding that funding from other sources to meet the total required could be evidenced before funds were released.

There had then followed some discussion on the principles of the moderated scores and the use of a median value of those scoring, as a proxy score on behalf of any Member who did not submit a value. Panellists reviewed their recommendations to emphasize that the first step should always be the deciding of a threshold score, and that they hold to their original recommendation of 65% as a ‘default’ value for most applications, to initiate any further consideration. Failure to reach the threshold should indicate automatic rejection without

further debate.

The establishment of a base threshold was fundamental to the original proposal, as a benchmark against which to determine the support for further, detailed, consideration. The Panel considered that a potential drawback in linking the amount of any award in direct proportion to the support 'score', as suggested, was that many applications of this nature may be unable to proceed without the full amount requested *eg* a score giving proportional grant as high as 95% could nonetheless represent an unworkable shortfall to the applicant.

It was considered that once the threshold level of support had been reached, further discussion should be open and reflect the context of a particular application with the value of any award *not* directly linked in proportion to the score. Any award should ultimately be decided by a vote in the usual way, following debate., and any limits or conditions imposed as appropriate.

Councillors questioned various points of the proposed system, and it was emphasized that it was intended to be a simple means of establishing support, and not a prescriptive or limiting mechanism. The point was made that major funding applications were currently allowed to submit their request in any form, and levels of detail varied. It was suggested that a standard form should be required, requiring the level of detail as for smaller grant applications, and this approach was generally supported. It was agreed that a modified version of the small grants application form should be employed.

It was resolved that:

FC2020/84.1 The Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Panel 25th November 2020 are received and noted, and the recommended assessment system for major funding applications be adopted subject to the introduction of a requirement for initial applications to be made on a standard form to elicit the level of detail currently asked for in small grant applications (*Revised Briefing Note and application form to be presented to Council in due course*).

b) Transport Committee 26th November 2020. Council considered the Minutes of this meeting (*copy in minute book*).

It was noted that officers from East Sussex County Council (ESCC) and the cycling organization Sustrans had been invited and agreed to attend to facilitate discussion, but all had belatedly declared themselves unavailable. That had unfortunately limited the discussion possible on matters of detail/status of projects.

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 is 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.

The South Downs National Park was understood to have committed funds and ESCC had advised that stakeholder and public consultation was to begin in the New Year on the eastern section from Southerham Roundabout to Cliffe High Street and that they were in the process of applying for Highways England designated funds for a Toucan crossing over the A26 at Cliffe Industrial Estate. This was currently on their reserve list for schemes. Red/Amber/Green (RAG) ratings were to be drawn up for the western section of the route via Brighton Road, Western Road, High Street, School Hill. The RAG methodology was a tool in the Government's Department for Transport most recent (Local Transport Note LTN1/20) guidance on the design of cycling infrastructure; used when considering/implementing a cycle route.

TC recounted recent Town Council decisions regarding the use of accrued CIL levies and noted that the fund was identified as the Council's Participatory Budget pilot scheme, to be launched in the New Year. The public would be asked to help prioritise the list of projects in s11 of the Lewes Neighbourhood Plan, and the application of the CIL fund. CR90 had previously been identified for CIL funding, and was already believed to be underway, albeit at a preliminary stage, and would therefore probably fall outside the scope of any opinion survey. The committee agreed to await the result of the ESCC consultation before further

consideration of the project.

Safe School Streets: The meeting had welcomed Noel Fadden, Head of Southover School, who recounted the background to his school's inclusion in an ESCC pilot scheme to introduce Safe School Streets. ESCC had secured funding through the Emergency Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 to run a six week 'School Streets' project. This would involve the closure of roads to vehicles directly outside of a small number of schools across the county, and a provider was currently being procured to deliver this project. ESCC received their official notification from the Department for Transport of the Emergency Active Travel Fund allocation on 20th November 2020, which included associated grant conditions, timescales for delivery and guidance in relation to scheme consultation. They were currently reviewing these to ensure that the project met requirements and could be delivered in a timely manner. They expected to issue further information to the schools participating in the trial project either that week or very early the following week.

Members discussed a number of matters ancillary to the proposals, including the possibility of using County Hall carpark as a drop-off area for parents; "park & stride", and expressed the hope that any trained individuals acting as Marshals during the pilot would not be lost when/if the scheme continued without government funding.

Lewes Traffic Study: Lewes Living Streets (LLS) and Cycle Lewes had prepared a submission asking for Town Council financial support in respect of two elements of their "Low Traffic Lewes – the way ahead" initiative, described as "Re-imagining our town by prioritizing the needs of pedestrians and cyclists, reversing the damage inflicted by traffic over recent decades". The groups were securing funding and partners for a project to come up with low traffic solutions for Lewes High Street. There followed a discussion in which Councillors raised a number of questions and offered suggestions regarding the need for full engagement with ESCC, as the Highway Authority, and the availability of the ESCC 'Community Match Fund' scheme. It was agreed that the LLS/CL request should be submitted to Council for consideration using the major funding assessment protocol.

ESCC Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan: Consultation by ESCC on this Plan would close on 11th December. Councillors had been made aware weeks earlier, and may have made individual responses, although a corporate response had not yet been drafted. This was considered important, and Members agreed to send comments to the Chair in time for consideration by the Planning Committee, who were to respond on behalf of Council.

Miscellaneous items: Cycle Lewes had earlier that day submitted a list of items for which they sought funding. It was suggested that the Council might pay for these, although on analysis it appeared that most were the province of other Councils, who had not yet been approached. It was explained that the committee had no authority to agree expenditure and for even a preliminary assessment items must be published in advance, with the agenda, to allow adequate time for Members to engage with the issue(s). TC agreed to write to ESCC regarding one item listed: faded and misleading road markings in Railway Lane, requesting that these be removed or obliterated.

It was resolved that:

FC2020/84.2 The Minutes of the meeting of the Transport Committee 26th November 2020 are received and noted.

c) LOW TRAFFIC LEWES "The Way Ahead":

Council welcomed Kevin Moore, Chair of Lewes Living Streets (LLS), and Sheila O'Sullivan, Chair of Cycle Lewes (CL). The groups had submitted a joint request for financial support in respect of two elements of their "Low Traffic Lewes – the way ahead" initiative, described as "Reimagining our town by prioritizing the needs of pedestrians and cyclists, reversing the damage inflicted by traffic over recent decades". They were securing funding and partners for a project to design low traffic solutions for Lewes High Street.

An earlier draft of this submission had been received by the Council's Transport Committee on 26th November 2020, and the committee agreed that the request should be considered by Council using the agreed assessment process for major funding applications.

The proposal *copy in the Minute book*) sought funding for two elements of the scheme: a

Shopper's survey, and a camera-based study of traffic movement – particularly through-traffic. Councillors used the adopted system to 'score' aspects of the applications and establish the level of support. Results for both elements were above the threshold level set to allow the application to proceed further, and there followed a debate on the details of each. Consequently, **it was resolved that:**

FC2020/84.3 Lewes Town Council will provide financial support in respect of two elements of the Lewes Living Streets/Cycle Lewes initiative "Low Traffic Lewes – the way ahead"; these being a shopper's survey (£3,000 inc VAT) and a NPR Camera survey of traffic flow (£2,400 inc VAT).

FC2020/84.3.1 Cllr R Waring is appointed to serve as Lewes Town Council's representative on the 'outside body': the Low Traffic Town Working Group.

d) Personnel Panel: Council considered the notes of Personnel Panel workshops held on 27th November and 3rd December 2020 (*copy in minute book*)

HR Consultant: Three potential consultants had been invited to submit proposals and cost estimates for support to the Council in recruiting a successor Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer. Each were professional practices offering specialist services; staff holding qualifications from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, and experience of recruitment in local government. Two had submitted documents for the Panel to consider but the third, after deliberation, has politely declined. It had been agreed that both candidates for the commission should be invited to a brief online meeting* to enable Members to better evaluate their proposals. **Follow-on meetings 3rd December 2020:* The consultants attended two independent meetings and answered a range of questions from Panellists (all were present). The consultant selected was the South East Employers organization, one of the nine regional employers' organisations which represent the interests of local authorities and public sector bodies in England. They are independent and not-for-profit. All county, unitary and district councils and police authorities in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey and East and West Sussex can be full members of SEE, and most authorities in the region are in current membership. Parish and Town councils, voluntary bodies and other organisations engaged in the delivery of local services within the region can be associate members of SEE, and Lewes Town Council had been an associate member for over 20 years.

Salary scale evaluations – proposed posts: For consistency with the existing Council salary structure - the result of a comprehensive exercise in 2015/16 by independent consultant Richard Penn - provisional scale evaluations were obtained from Mr Penn for the two proposed posts. Panellists were reminded in a briefing note, of Mr Penn's credentials and given an outline of the nationally adopted job evaluation scheme employed. The resulting 'scores' indicated scales as: a). Town Clerk Scp 50 – 54 at 2020 rates equal to ('Full-time Equivalent' [FTE]) £55,684 - £62,779 and b). RFO Scp 33 – 36 at 2020 rates equal to FTE £36,922 - £39,880 (at the agreed notional 1 day per week, this is equal to (full year) £6,985 – £7,545) These values are gross salary payable, and subject to on-costs for Employer's National Insurance and Pension contributions. The values and the effects of different starting dates were modelled live in the meeting. It had been noted that a recent recruitment for a new TC at Seaford (also separate from the RFO role) advertised a scale of Scp 49-54 which prompted the suggestion that LTC might consider advancing the scale or offering a market/locality supplement. Members were interested to await further advice on this from the consultant adviser when finally selected.

Draft material for candidate application packs: Panellists considered an early working draft of some introductory text. It was agreed that Members would wish to consider this further, and it would ultimately benefit from enhanced presentation including photographs and hyperlinks. Members agreed to await advice from the selected consultant but meanwhile would reflect upon suggested items for inclusion. **It was resolved that:**

FC2020/84.4 The Notes of the meetings of the Personnel Panel workshops 27th November and 3rd December 2020 are received and noted.

e) Grants Panel 2nd December 2020: Members considered report FC017/2020 (*copy in minute book*) containing recommendations for payments of grants for the third cycle (of four)

for the year 2020/21. **It was resolved that:**

FC2020/84.5 The grant payments recommended in report FC017/2020(*copy in minute book*), as shown in column **G** of the table appended to that report, be approved.

f) Open Council Working Party 7th December 2020: Council considered the Minutes of this meeting (*copy in minute book*)

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. Cllr Henman had contacts in the *PBNetwork* organization who had indicated they could offer ½ day advice without charge. There followed a discussion on practical aspects, as the list contained 37 projects. These were under the headings:) Improvements for Pedestrians) Improvements for Cyclists) Road Infrastructure) Public Transport Infrastructure) Social Infrastructure) Improvements to the Built Environment) Flood & Drainage Infrastructure The neighbourhood plan section explained that it was intended to act as a “hook” or starting point for these projects to be developed further. The projects may require further feasibility work, perhaps outside the Town Council’s remit, to establish how they can be funded and delivered. Councillors were doubtful that they could expect the public to prioritize effectively all 37 in a survey exercise and thought it practical to seek *eg* a “top ten” indication, or rankings within a preselected shortlist rather than the full list. TC suggested that he might simplify the question by estimating the order of costs for listed items; many of which would be unaffordable if Council’s CIL fund was the sole contributor. Members agreed to wait until a clearer picture was available, and meanwhile would consider methods of surveying opinion. It was suggested that local informal networks should be established before the *PBNetwork* was asked for advice, to allow their time to be efficiently focussed. Members agreed to submit their ideas to TC via the Chair by the following Wednesday. TC and Cllr Henman would liaise regarding an approach to the *PBNetwork*.

Use of Facebook: There was some discussion on the use of Facebook (FB), and suggestions for more attractive photographs for the profile page. It was held that FB should primarily be used as an interactive medium, and messages should be promptly answered. TC reminded Members that Council had previously rejected proposals for the creation of a Communications Officer post and time was allocated, when available, by three members of staff who had attended social media training. He had recently advised Council that the 19hrs per week Reception/Admin Officer role that would be vacant following staff transfers in the New Year might be replaced with a part-time Communications & Projects Officer and would pursue this with Council in due course. Meanwhile he would establish an interim protocol that aimed to avoid delay when responding to incoming FBmessages.

Noticeboards: There was a brief discussion on the use of noticeboards, although acknowledged that the majority of those in the town were not in the Council’s ownership. Cllr Herbert was to liaise with TC on this subject.

Outreach: On the matter of community surveys and soundings, one member emphatically reminded colleagues that their role as elected representatives placed this responsibility primarily with them as individuals. It was noted that the Mayor had recently established a relationship with Lewes News that could be explored further.

Increasing use of email: A question arose regarding the use of email for correspondence with Town Council clients *eg* allotment tenants. TC advised that for many years anyone having business with the Council had been encouraged to provide an email address and accept this as the default mode of communication. All opportunities to obtain e-addresses were pursued, although information was not held as a single database of contacts; details were held according to context and purpose. It was suggested that this might be explored further by the prospective Communications officer discussed earlier. **It was resolved that:**

FC2020/84.6 The Minutes of the meeting of the Open Council Working Party 7th December 2020 are received and noted.

g) UN Sustainability Goals Working Party 10th December 2020: Council considered

the Minutes of this meeting (*copy in minute book*).

The previous identification of areas where the Council addressed aspects of the 17 goals was revisited, and developments were noted as:

- › Revision of the stated aims and structure of the Councils financial grants scheme to encourage sustainability. The scheme had been accordingly re-focused for 2020/21.
- › Introduction of initiatives to support composting and encourage organic practices on Council allotments (*eg* new prize categories at the annual show, and guidance leaflets). Tenants from April 2020 had been advised and encouraged to adapt gardening practices in anticipation of the introduction by Council of pesticide controls and similar initiatives. Further consideration of these issues was imminent.
- › Further develop the 19th September 2019 “Building a Sustainable Lewes” event and invite stakeholders to form an extended Sustainable Goals Forum. There had been no further work in this area. Members proposed various groups of their acquaintance who might be prepared to assist.
- › Support Lewes FC youth outreach programme and assist promotion of club membership. Lewes FC had benefited from Council grant.
- › Support school uniform exchange programmes. No development in this area
- › Instigate a Lewes Youth Council. Preliminary meetings had been held, but there was no further development.
- › Encourage Lewes Bonfire Council to promote makers skills by introducing an annual award for costume-making. No further development; Bonfire 2020 cancelled (Covid-19).
- › Support a Lewes Youth Band. This band was becoming established.
- › Provide access to computer(s) for public use. No further development.
- › Promote effective sustainability features of Council buildings as encouragement to other owners of heritage-listed or unusual buildings. Various initiatives such as Ground source Heat Pump installation specified for Malling Community Centre rebuild, and Air Source Heat Pump selected for replacement system at Town Hall.
- › Assist in formulation of an integrated transport policy for the town. Transport forum held in July 2020 and various ongoing developments under the aegis of the Council’s Transport and Planning Committees.

There had followed a wide-ranging discussion. The Chair reminded everyone that sustainability was not exclusively about climate issues and should broadly encompass “the five P’s” by which the 17 (seventeen) UN Goals were described – People; Prosperity; Planet; Peace and a just society; and Partnership. Professor Jolly noted that Bristol City Council, although it was a Unitary (principal) Authority, had many admirable initiatives in the field of sustainability that might offer helpful models a parish could follow. Members cited groups who were active locally such as Sustainable Lewes; Lewes Climate Hub *etc* The Town Council had agreed some funds for a ‘biodiversity audit’ and there had been discussion as to how best to approach that, including suggestions that friends of Lewes might be asked to extend the scope of their very comprehensive town trees audit. In discussing sustainability audits for the Council’s buildings/operations, Members were interested to extend this beyond statutory requirements for evaluation of the efficiency in the use of energy and other consumables, into areas such as procurement of protective clothing; food; office supplies etc. It was noted that such an exercise was primarily to establish benchmarks against which improvements might be measured. There were a number of tools/systems commonly used for the purpose and Professor Jolly kindly offered to help compile a list of relevant points on which to base indicators; this was gratefully accepted. There was speculation on whether the Council might encourage local schools to engage with sustainability and perhaps choose one UNSDG upon which to concentrate. There was to be an international Climate Change Summit in 2021, to be hosted in Glasgow, and this might form a useful focus for schoolwork. A suggestion was that a ‘mini-summit’ might be held in the Town Hall to mirror this, with representatives from each school attending. It was understood that there was already a local youth climate forum, and this

could be investigated. Subsequently, **it was resolved that:**

FC2020/84.7 The Minutes of the meeting of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG'S) 10th December 2020 are received and noted.

h) South Downs National Park (SDNP): Cllr Waring gave an oral report, explaining that he co-represents, with Cllr Vanessa Rowlands of Cuckmere Valley Parish Council, the Parishes of East Sussex. One of the current aims of the SDNPA was to help Parishes work towards zero carbon by 2040. Cllr Waring serves on the Culture Committee, an internal committee that looks at the culture of the SDNP; the South Downs National Park Trust which aims to raise money for projects, and has also been appointed to the SDNPA Planning Committee. The SDNPA now owns the Seven Sisters Park for which a Limited Company has been created. **It was resolved that:**

FC2020/84.8 The oral report on the South Downs National Park Authority is noted.

FC2020/85

ALLOTMENTS SERVICE:

Council considered a Motion (*NOM 014/2020 copy in the Minute book*) that proposed formation of a Working Party to consider proposals for changes in allotment policy and management, *eg* revision of policy and rules; introduction of eco-friendly practices; wider tenant responsibilities; allocation of tenancies and potential to reduce the nett cost of the service.

It was proposed that the Working Party should focus upon rules and guidance that accord with the Council 'visioning' priority of environmentally-sound practices (and wider Government policy); that address current 'work-around' anomalies, and that create a positive environment for allotment holders wishing to engage more fully with sound environmental practices. Further, to consider potential for additional low or zero-cost activities to promote good ecological practice on allotments. It was hoped that the Working Party could report to Council in time for any changes to be incorporated in 2021 tenancy renewals.

Over the course of the past year Cllr Maples had been researching the arrangements to support allotments in the Parish, community and commercial sectors. In addition – and in accord with Visioning priorities – she had researched advice on eco-friendly gardening practices as advocated by, for instance, the government's National Pollinator strategy, the Royal Horticultural Society, National Allotment and Leisure Gardeners' Society, as well as organisations with more specific interests in soil, watercourse and wildlife conservation, such as the Soil Association, the Organic Allotment Society, Lewes District Council and local Lewes groups such as Common Cause and the Lewes Wildflower Society.

The Council offers less than 250 allotment plots and waiting lists have increased during Covid lockdown to around 150 prospective tenants. The average waiting time is obviously variable and different from site to site, but could range from approximately two years to over 10 years, dependent upon an applicant's site preference. Plots were generally well-tended, and there appeared a clear appetite amongst many plot-holders to move towards more eco-friendly practices, if they had not done so already.

Facilitating this small but important obligation was relatively expensive and highly subsidised. The Allotment service costs around £28,000 nett each year, equivalent to over £100 per plot. A notice had been issued with the 2020/21 tenancy agreements introducing the prospect of a future Town Council decision to forbid the use of *eg* synthetic pesticides, and provided information and links *re* good practice. Informal responses to these initiatives had been positive., which factors led to a conclusion that it was time for a review of the current provision, in particular Town Council rules supporting eco-friendly practices, wider tenant responsibilities, allocation of tenancies and to consider any means by which the Council's expenditure on allotments might be reduced. **It was resolved that:**

FC2020/85.1 A Working Party consisting of Cllrs Bird, Burrows, Catlin, Lamb, Makepeace, Maples and Sains be set up, with a remit to consider proposals for changes in allotment policy and management, *eg* revision of policy and rules; introduction of eco-friendly practices; wider tenant responsibilities; allocation of tenancies and potential to reduce the nett cost of the service.

'TWENTY'S PLENTY' CAMPAIGN:

Council considered a proposal (*NOM 015/2020 – copy in the Minute book*) that Council publicly supports the national 'Twenty's Plenty' campaign for 20mph limits where people live, and to encourage motorists to strictly observe the 20mph limit on Lewes streets including school roads in Lewes. This was seen as important to encourage more children to walk and cycle to school by making our roads feel safer. It was suggested that the Council could show its support by:

- › Writing to Lewes schools informing them of the campaign and making them aware of the banners that are available to promote the campaign.
- › Share the Twenty's Plenty website and Facebook page on the Town Council Facebook page and website.
- › Print some Twenty's Plenty leaflets for the Town Hall leaflet carousel.
- › Write to East Sussex County Council in support of the campaign and say that extensions of 20mph limits should be included in their Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Frequently Asked Questions were submitted in support, from the campaign website <http://www.20splenty.org/> :

Why does 20mph matter?; Because it is safer, healthier, fairer, greener, quieter, and better for people's quality of life.

How much safer is 20mph?; You are 7 times less likely to die if hit at 20mph than 30mph or 10 times if over 60 years old. In the distance a 20mph car can stop, a 30mph car will still be doing 24mph. Far better to just miss than actually hit someone or be hit at any speed.

Are fewer people injured in wide 20mph limits? Yes.; about 20% fewer

Does 20mph always mean humps? No; we campaign for signs, lines, community engagement and driver education.

What policy do you campaign for? 20mph as a default, wide-area limit for most roads in built up areas.

Where agrees this policy? Most of the largest 40 local authorities. 15.5m people - 25% of the UK population

Isn't 20mph around schools enough? No - slowing the last 100m doesn't help children to walk or cycle to school or prevent many casualties (80% of child casualties are on non school trips).

Where do 20mph campaigns exist? 330+ places

How much does it cost to join 20's Plenty for Us or set up a campaign? FREE and you'll get a free starting a campaign pack with stickers

Who decides if my area goes 20mph limited? Elected Councillors, especially the Cabinet member for Transport, set local speed limits. Ministers control national speed limits.

Do you have any videos? http://www.20splenty.org/our_videos

How does 20mph affect the environment? 20mph limits are cleaner

[http://www.20splenty.org/20 s plenty for the environment](http://www.20splenty.org/20_s_plenty_for_the_environment) and [http://www.20splenty.org/emission reductions](http://www.20splenty.org/emission_reductions)

How is 20mph enforced? By driver education and community engagement to voluntary comply with 20mph. Compliant drivers become pacer vehicles which enforce 20mph on traffic behind. Sometimes also volunteer speedwatch citizens or police speed checks. Camera technology can be used.

Do you have printable leaflets? YES, all of our Briefing Sheets are available as single page flyers at www.20splenty.org/briefings

Can I buy stickers? YES New branch leaders get some free in their starting a campaign pack

When are events? Conferences and events details are at <http://www.20splenty.org/calendar>

Who works for 20's Plenty for Us? http://www.20splenty.org/our_team

How is 20's Plenty for Us funded? Donations from trusts/individuals and some speaker fees.

Are you a charity? No, an unincorporated association

How can I help? See our briefing sheet at <http://www.20splenty.org/helping>

It was resolved that:

FC2020/86.1 Lewes Town Council publicly supports the national ‘Twenty’s Plenty’ campaign.

The Town Council will show its support by:

1. Writing to Lewes schools informing them of the campaign and making them aware of the banners that are available to promote the campaign.
2. Share the Twenty’s Plenty website and Facebook page on the Town Council Facebook page and website.
3. Offering ‘Twenty’s Plenty’ leaflets in the Town Hall reception area leaflet carousel.
4. Writing to East Sussex County Council in support of the campaign and proposing that extensions of 20mph limits should be included in their Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

FC2020/87

MEMBERS ALLOWANCE SCHEME:

Council considered a report of the Parish Remuneration Panel (*copy in the Minute book*) which was convened by Lewes District Council (LDC) as the responsible authority required by the statutory regulations controlling Councillors’ allowances. [*The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 SI2003 No. 1021 and SI 2003 No. 1692*]

The Guidance issued allows Parish councils to pay their members an allowance, known as ‘parish basic allowance’, to recognise the time and effort they put into their parish duties.

If a parish council wishes to pay a basic allowance, it should have regard to a recommendation from its parish remuneration panel. The membership of this is the same as the independent remuneration panel of the district or county council within whose area the parish is situated. The panel may make a recommendation as to whom allowances should be paid, and the level of the allowance.

The report explained that the Panel was of the view that whilst parish councillors did not stand for office for any financial reward, an allowance could actively support someone in the councillor role and that it was essential to be able to attract parish councillors from a wide range of backgrounds. Councillors should also not be out of pocket for undertaking the role. There had been extensive discussion and research before the panel reached its conclusions, which were, in summary:

- › That Parish Councils should be able to pay an amount up to 15%* of the Basic Allowance of Lewes District Council. The basic allowance for LDC for 2020/21 (and 2021/22) is £3,260 subject to any indexation; 15% of this is £489 per annum.
- › That Parish Councils who feel that a Chair’s allowance is appropriate should be able to pay an amount up to 30% of the Basic Allowance for Lewes District Council. The recommended Chair’s Allowance is therefore any amount up to £978, 30% of the proposed Basic Allowance for Lewes District Council.
- › The Panel recommends that the Parish and Town Councils should pay Travel and Subsistence Allowances in line with those agreed as part of the Members Allowances Schedule for the District Council

* Currently 10%, (£331), which was adopted by the Town Council in 2003.

A vote was called, and **it was resolved that:**

FC2020/87.1 Lewes Town Council will adopt a basic Members Allowance rate of 15% of the Basic Allowance of Lewes District Council (indexed as appropriate) with effect from 1st April 2021, in accordance with recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Lewes parish Councils (report dated February 2020).

FC2020/87.2 Lewes Town Council will adopt an additional Chair’s allowance payable to a Mayor at a rate of 30% of the Basic Allowance of Lewes District Council (indexed as appropriate) with effect from 1st April 2021, in accordance with recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Lewes parish Councils (report dated February 2020).

FC2020/88

AUDIT – Year ending March 2020:

Members considered the interim report of the Internal Auditor for 2020/21 (*copy in the Minute book*). Councillors were pleased to note the auditor’s positive comments “...testing

did not uncover any errors or misstatements...nor did we identify any significant weaknesses in the internal controls...it is clear the council takes governance, policies and procedures very seriously...recommendations to change these are not indicative of any significant failings, but rather are pointers to improving upon an already well ordered system...It is therefore our opinion that the systems and internal procedures at Lewes Town Council are well established and followed”.

It was stated that Council could confidently complete each of the relevant statutory “control assertions” required in the annual governance and accountability return, in due course.

It was resolved that:

FC2020/88.1 The interim report of the Internal Auditor for 2020/21 is received and noted.

FC2020/89

DISPOSAL OF LAND by LEWES DISTRICT COUNCIL – North Street Quarter:

Council considered a letter received from Lewes District Council (LDC) referring to LDC’s Cabinet approval of heads of terms for the sale of land owned by LDC at the North Street Quarter. In accordance with LDC’s contract procedure rules, the Town Council was consulted on LDC’s intention to dispose of its interests in this land.

It was noted that the sale is conditional on the purchaser securing planning permission for the new scheme that it wishes to deliver and upon the Council securing best consideration for the land in accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act (1972).

Consequently, **it was resolved that:**

FC2020/89.1 Lewes Town Council notes the intention of Lewes District Council to sell land at the North Street Quarter and makes no comment.

FC2020/90

UPDATE ON MATTERS IN PROGRESS

Resolutions list – TC would refine this list for the next meeting of Council.

Major projects – An update was attached to the agenda.

Malling Community Centre – TC advised that, following disruption in supply of many building materials due to Covid-19 over recent months, all materials were now on site and it was anticipated that work may be complete by the end of January. There had been problems with vandalism, and the contractor had established a rota for local members of their staff who would monitor telephone messages and regularly inspect the building during the Christmas closure, between 18th December and 4th January. Members were asked to monitor if passing during this period, and to encourage others to do the same. The telephone number to report any concerns was Cheesmur’s switchboard 01273 858600.

FC2020/91

NOTICE of ITEMS IN PROSPECT

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

- > Traffic Surveys
- > Twenty Plenty
- > Allotments

Dates to note etc for forthcoming meetings and events were:

- > CHRISTMAS CLOSURE - The Council’s operations will close between 24th December and resume on Monday 4th January.
- > The next Council meeting will take place on Thursday 21st January 2021 at 7:30pm, with a deadline for agenda items to reach TC by noon on Monday 11th January.
- > The next cycle of applications (Cycle 4 of 4) to the Council’s grants programme has a deadline for applications (now online-only) of, 29th January with an online meeting of the Grant Panel on Weds 10th February and decisions by Council on 4th March.
- > TBC – further Personnel Panel Workshops; Buildings W/pty; UN Sustainability Goals W/pty; Open Council W/pty; Allotments W/pty; MCC Steering Group; Transport Committee; Commemorations Committee.

There being no further business the Mayor closed the meeting; thanked everyone for their contributions, and wished them a Happy Christmas. *The meeting ended at 10.20pm*

Signed: Date: