



Lewes
Town
Council

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Meeting: Full Council

Date: 19 September 2024

Time: 19:00

Location: Council Chamber, Lewes Town Hall

Present: Councillors Makepeace (Chair), Baah, Blackwell, Burrows, Campbell, Clarke, Gardiner, Herbert, Maples, Morgan, Norris, Ross, Todd, Vernon and West

Public present: 13

Minutes

Question time

The Mayor welcomed members of the public and took questions, all relating to the Bus Station.

Councillor Makepeace confirmed that in response to the Secretary of State's directive to the South Downs National Park Authority not to grant permission for the redevelopment of the Lewes Bus Station without specific authorisation, the Town Council is taking immediate action to ensure that the Secretary fully understands the detrimental impacts of the development on Lewes.

As the closest form of government to the people, Lewes Town Council is actively working with County Councillors and local MP to ensure the Secretary of State has the full context of the situation. Delegated authority to the Town Clerk to gather residents' views and to write to the Secretary on this matter will be sought under Item 18b. There will also be an opportunity to discuss whether there is the possibility of pursuing a judicial review. At this stage it would be no more than seeking legal advice on the validity of such action.

When asked as to the possibility of Lewes leaving the park, the Chair explained that this was something that had been mentioned but that this had a lot of ramifications to consider.

1. Welcome from the Mayor

The Mayor welcome members of the public, Councillors and Juliet Olsworth-Peter JP DL.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bird, Livesey and Tigg.

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Campbell, Clarke, Morgan and Ross declared an interest under Item 14 as they were linked to some grant applications. None of these Councillors were involved in the assessment process.

4. Confirmation of minutes

It was resolved that: The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Lewes Town Council held on 1 August 2024 be received and approved.

Proposed: Councillor Vernon

Seconded: Councillor Blackwell

5. Minutes of Standing Committees

It was resolved that: Minutes from Standing Committees were noted.

Personnel

Meeting held on 3 July 2024

Buildings and Amenities Sub Committee

Meeting held on 17 July 2024

Finance

Meeting held on 18 July 2024

Communication and Engagement

Meetings held on 31 July 2024

Planning

Meetings held on 30 July and 20 August 2024

Proposed: Councillor Maples

Seconded: Councillor West

6. Chair's report

It was resolved that: Members received a report from the Chair.

Councillor Maples thanked Councillor Makepeace for sharing the speech she recently delivered at a Citizenship Ceremony and encouraged other Members to read it.

7. King's Award for Voluntary Service

Standing Orders were stood down to allow Juliet Olsworth-Peter JP DL to provide an update.

Members received an update on this year's [King's Award for Voluntary Service](#) nomination process.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

Councillor Herbert joined the meeting at 19:10.

Order of the agenda was changed in order to allow members of the public to stay for Item 18.

18. Bus Station and Old Malling Farm

It was resolved that: £525 expenditure for bus hiring to attend the SDNPA Planning Committee be approved. It was noted that members of the public had contributed £177, therefore reducing the cost to £348.

Proposed: Councillor Maples

Seconded: Councillor Ross

Councillor Livesey and the Town Clerk were thanked for facilitating this.

It was resolved that: An update on the SDNPA Planning Committee meeting was received.

With regard to the Bus Station:

It was resolved that: Delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk to:

1. Send a strong letter to key stakeholders including the Department of Transport, Minister for National Parks, the Chief Executive of South Downs National Park Authority and others to express views from Lewes Town Council and its residents. Pooled expertise and background is being sought from members of the Save Lewes Bus Station Campaign Group and others in order to present all aspects of divergence from policy to facilitate deeper knowledge of the Secretary of State
2. Engage a solicitor to consider the validity of a Judicial Review, which would cost in the region of £2,000, proposed by Councillor Ross and seconded by Councillor Vernon. It was suggested that local barristers could be approached to see if providing pro-bono advice could be considered

It was resolved that: A Task and Finish Group be set up comprising Councillors Maples, Morgan, Ross (lead) and West to look into information required in support of a potential Judicial Review.

With regard to Old Malling Farm:

Concerns which seemed to be ignored by SDNPA were raised around access.

It was resolved that: Delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk to write to the Leader of Lewes District Council to raise these concerns given that they own the land.

8. Outside Bodies

It was resolved that: Verbal reports from representatives of Outside Bodies be provided. It was noted that in future written reports will be required a week before the meeting.

Lewes District Association of Local Councils – Councillor Makepeace explained that issues around code of conduct were still common in some councils and that being a female councillor still presented challenges. She informed Members that a meeting is taking place on 23 September, facilitated by ESALC, with a focus on safety in the communities, any issues Councillors would like to be conveyed can be sent to her.

Sussex Community Rail Partnership - Councillor Maples mentioned that small grants are available for improvements around stations. She also reminded Members of the 200th anniversary of rail travel next year, but also of the Newhaven-Dieppe ferry line.

Lewes Priory Trust UNESCO Representative - Councillor Norris provided a written update prior to the meeting.

Lewes Conservation Area Advisory Group - Councillor Ross mentioned that the group was represented at the Societies Fair.

Low Traffic Town Working Group - Councillor Morgan confirmed that Nevill Road was now also being considered.

Lewes Town Council Police Liaison – Councillor Clarke mentioned the link between mental health decline and rise in crime.

Climate Hub - Councillor Morgan talked about the recent garden party and how well it had been attended. She also mentioned that she received an award for the voluntary work she does with the hub.

It was resolved that: All voted in favour of Councillor Bird being elected as a representative on Lewes Twinning Association.

It was resolved that: All voted in favour of Councillors Makepeace and Todd being elected as representatives on Lewes Football Club.

9. Tasks and Finish Groups

It was resolved that: Members received a verbal update from Tasks and Finish Groups. It was noted that in future written reports will be required a week before the meeting.

Deliberate Excess Vehicle Noise Pollution – Councillor Campbell confirmed that work was underway to capture evidence from residents that could be used to established a PSPO.

Neighbourhood Plan – Councillor Makepeace confirmed that Terms of Reference had been agreed and that work could now start.

Landport Bottom Management Plan – Councillor West confirmed that areas to improve on were being considered.

Town Hall Kitchen – Councillor Todd confirmed that they had a visit from the Food Partnership and the Community Chef and were going to see the Denton Island Kitchen to see how it operates. Procurement for equipment was being considered to make the kitchen more useable.

Pells Contract – The Town Clerk confirmed that this was being progressed and that a meeting of the Town Brook Trust would be called to consider the contract.

Allotment Show – Councillor Burrows confirmed that for this year, it was a competition which took place over a week-end. Prizes were given out on Heritage Open Day.

Black History Month – Councillor Blackwell mentioned that this was covered under Hut Stories, to be discussed under item 16.

Bonfire Supper – Councillor West confirmed that arrangements were in place.

Lone Working Policy – Councillor Maples confirmed that it had now been agreed and thanked the Deputy Clerk for our hard work on this.

10. Update from East Sussex County Council/Lewes District Council and James MacCleary MP

It was resolved that: Update from representatives from East Sussex County Council, Lewes District Council and James MacCleary MP be received.

11. Mayoral Policy

It was resolved that: All voted in favour of the Mayoral Policy being approved.

12. Attendance record

Members noted the committee attendance record. The Town Clerk expressed her thanks to Members also providing their time to the work of Tasks and Finish Groups and helping out with events.

It was noted that: In future data on authorised/unauthorised absence would be provided.

13. CIL

It was resolved that: Quote from Company C for the Cycle Hub detailed schedule of work be approved.

Proposed: Councillor Morgan

Seconded: Councillor Herbert

It was resolved that: Remaining funds to provide bike parking at Lewes GP practices be approved. Councillor Makepeace expressed an interest in discussing locations.

Proposed: Councillor Campbell

Seconded: Councillor Maples

14. Grants

It was resolved that: Recommendations from the Finance Committee be approved.

Proposed: Councillor Vernon

Seconded: Councillor Blackwell

15. Swift town

It was resolved that: Lewes be declared as a “Swift town”.

Proposed: Councillor Gardiner

Seconded: Councillor Herbert

16. Hut Stories

It was resolved that: Delegated authority be given to Councillors Blackwell, Livesey and Tigg to organise the event with oversight from the Deputy Town Clerk.

Proposed: Councillor Morgan

Seconded: Councillor Herbert

It was resolved that: £854 be allocated to the event towards cost listed in report.

Proposed: Councillor West

Seconded: Councillor Todd

17. Bonfire funding

It was resolved that: A one-off £1,000 be approved to support St John’s Ambulance commitment to Lewes Bonfire 2024 and that a meeting be conveyed in the new year to discuss the situation so that this is better planned for next year. Moreover, the Town Council will ensure it gets its money back should the full amount not be secured.

19. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

It was resolved that: Support to Lewes District Council’s response to the Government on the proposals in relation to the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) be agreed.

Proposed: Councillor Campbell

Seconded: Councillor Maples

20. Clerk’s report

It was resolved that: A verbal report on the operational activities of the council be received from the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk reminded Members that whilst everybody is helping out, including Members, staff shortage is adding pressure to workload, so please be mindful when seeking support.

A number of training courses has taken place and is being planned, including introduction to CILCA which the Town Clerk will be starting in the near future.

The Town Clerk thanked staff and Members who helped make the Allotment Competition and Heritage Open Day (HOD) such successes. It was noted that we had 418 visitors for Open Day, compared to about 100 last year.

Work is being done around budgets which will help with budget setting, later on this quarter.

21. The meeting closed at 21:00.