

UNADOPTED

POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday 19th June 2006 in the Council Chamber, 49 High Street, Polegate at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. G. Carter (Town Mayor), Mrs C. Berry, Mrs E. Coleman, M. Fitzgerald, G. Gibbs, J. Harmer, Mrs D. Joy, R. Martin, Mrs M. Piper, Mrs I. Scarborough, Mrs J. Voyce, T. Voyce

Mr B Knights Town Co-Ordinator

1 member of the press

2 members of the public

7216 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs. M. Cunningham and Mrs V. Morson

7217 Declarations of interest

There were none

7218 Minutes of the Annual Statutory Meeting held on 15th May 2006

The minutes, having been previously circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 30th May 2006

The following item was reserved:

Minute 7205 (a) Personnel matters - it was agreed to take this item into confidential session and the signing of the minutes was deferred until after consideration of same.

7219 Matters arising from the minutes

a). **Town Map** - members were advised that a meeting had been scheduled for the Assistant Town Clerk to meet with members of Willingdon School to see how best the town map project could be pushed forward bearing in mind that the school term was near to closing.

b). **Tower Mill Sheltered Housing Scheme** - it was reported that the preferred option, sale of the premises on the open market, was passed by Cabinet (WDC). A number of people had signed a paper to 'call it in' giving rise to the possibility of this matter being taken to Full Council but in the event it was decided that it would be taken to the Scrutiny Committee. The question was raised as to whether the Full Council was 'sovereign' or not but the response received was ambiguous. The Scrutiny Committee is due to meet at Hailsham Council Office at 10.00 a.m. on 28th June.

c). NHS Consultation - Two members attended on behalf of the Council and reported that the meeting was well organised and very well thought through. There are a number of proposals that will be considered and likewise a number of concerns from the public and various organisations that will need to be addressed. One proposal is to provide opportunities for people to have access to more one-day stays for treatment which would necessitate more after-care which currently is practically nil. There is also a great deal of concern regarding the possible downgrading of the DGH especially in view of the proposed housing developments in Polegate and Sovereign Harbour and the difficulty in accessing services. Another suggestion on the table is to retain the A&E Department but to scale it down. The official view is that it is necessary to look at the whole system over the area. With modern technology it is considered better to have facilities together at one site so that people do not have to travel to different locations for different treatments. However, lack of public transport is a major problem and the ambulance service is already working to capacity. With a population of 475,000 in East Sussex, excepting Brighton & Hove, there has to be sustainability throughout the whole area.

Members were advised that the recurring theme during the meeting was centralisation. The dominant question to participants was that as everyone wants the highest expertise possible to be available, what would you be prepared to give up or forego in order to achieve excellence. This approach was considered to be very manipulative and not a fair way to represent the needs of the community. The question was asked that as we have already lost five hospitals locally, where has all the money gone from the sale of those sites? It was not possible to secure an answer!

Some discussion then ensued as to whether the Town Council should formally respond and, if so, how. It was then subsequently proposed, seconded and agreed by all to write a strongly worded letter to the Chief Executive, with copies to our MP, the Minister of Health, the Primary Care Trust and any other organisations as appropriate objecting to the amalgamation of the DGH and Conquest Hospital. How can local services be used if people are unable to access them because they have been moved out of the local area? The letter to include other areas of concern. It was agreed that a draft would be produced and circulated to all councillors for their comments/input.

7220 Polegate Partnership

It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to suspend Standing Orders to allow the Town Co-ordinator to address the Council.

Suspension of Standing Orders

The Town Co-ordinator referred members to the review that had been previously circulated and talked through it. It was queried why one particular councillor had been prominently named in the review as the representation from the Council consisted of Town, District and County Councillors and that the decisions referred to in the review had not been taken by any one councillor. The Town Co-ordinator then suggested that the councillor's name be replaced by the word 'Council' and this was agreed.

Members expressed their concern at the condition of the flower beds on Hailsham Road and the lack of a maintenance agreement and asked what was being done to rectify the matter. Had a conversation taken place between the Town Clerk regarding maintenance and had the Co-ordinator followed up when it became obvious that the plants were not healthy? It was explained that the maintenance aspect of the project was not within the remit of the Partnership and it appeared that the confusion had arisen because maintenance was included within the plant specification. Had maintenance been the subject of a separate document then it would not have been overlooked. Members commented that in their opinion the Co-ordinator should have monitored the project more closely.

The replanting of the third flower bed was then discussed and it was generally felt that the Council had some redress with the contractor. Members did not feel that the Council should be recharged for the planting and that this should be done at the expense of the contractor and that the maintenance should be carried out 'in house'.

A proposal was put forward to give a member of staff an additional 2 hours per week to look after the flower beds which would be cheaper than a maintenance contract. Members were advised that staff were not looking for an increase in hours, however, the maintenance of the flower beds was not onerous and could well fit into the current work plan.

It was then proposed, seconded and agreed by all that the Town Co-ordinator should negotiate with the contractor for the replanting of the flower bed at no cost to the Council at the earliest opportunity.

It was also queried whether copies of an agreement with the sponsors had been provided which set out the terms and conditions of sponsorship. Although no agreement or contract as a document had been provided, a letter had been sent to each sponsor confirming the cost and time scale of sponsorship.

With regards to the Healthcheck, updated copies to be sent to relevant councillors.

There is still a problem with procuring signage at the Cophall roundabout, despite continuing attempts by the Town Co-ordinator to progress this matter, no firm response has been forthcoming from Interoute and they appear to keep 'moving the goalposts'.

The Mayor thanked Mr Knight for his input and reinstated Standing Orders.

Standing Orders Reinstated

It was then proposed, seconded and agreed to take the matter of the flower beds into confidential session.

7221 Financial matters

a) **Accounts for payment** - all agreed

7222 Adoption of Minutes of Standing Committees

a) **Planning of 6th June 2006** - the minutes were accepted as a correct record of the meeting and it was therefore proposed by the Chair of Planning that they be adopted. This was agreed by all.

7223 Communications from the Town Mayor

a) The Mayor advised of a Stakeholder Meeting to be held on 10th and 11th July with regard to the proposed new development and whilst places were limited if members wished to attend they should contact the Assistant Town Clerk.

b) A request had been received from the University of Wales on behalf of DEFRA to complete a survey form. The Mayor advised that the Assistant Town Clerk would undertake to complete this as far as possible because of the statistical information required.

7224 Notification of matters dealt with as 'urgent'

There were none

7225 Resignation of Councillor

It was reported Cllr. Brian Winn had resigned from the Council and that his input would be greatly missed. As a result there was a need for a volunteer keyholder, a School Governor and also a vacancy on the planning committee. It was then agreed that Cllr. Harmer would act as keyholder. A proposal was then put forward that Cllr. Mrs Voyce join the planning committee and Cllr. Mrs Joy act as School Governor. This proposal was seconded and agreed by all.

7226 Town Clerk's Report

a) **Vandalism report** - nothing further to report

b) **Lighting at Joan Hughes Court** - a response had been received from WDC with regard to providing additional lighting at this site to the effect that the owners, Thomas Scanlon Trust, had been approached and a response was awaited - noted.

7227 Report of the tree warden

Nothing to report

7228 Skatepark

a) Installation of grind plates - it was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to carry out the installation of grind plates to the skatepark equipment.

7229 Youth Services Report

A very positive meeting was held recently with the Youth Development Service who already had a youth worker in place available to start in Polegate. However because of the lone worker policy it would be necessary to engage a detached worker to work in tandem. The detached worker would need to be funded by the Town Council at a cost of £3,332.00 per annum for 52 weeks. This would provide two three hour sessions per week in the town. The YDS would provide a worker for 9 hours per week, the additional three hours being dedicated to forward planning and building links. The age group priority is 11 - 19 years. The Pavilion at Wannock Road has already been identified as a venue for holding youth sessions and the idea is that the youth themselves would be involved in the planning of activities and the type of meeting place they would like. Capital monies were available and could possibly be used to develop the Pavilion, perhaps to extend it. However the criteria for funding is that the application has to come from the youth themselves, they have to apply for it and drive the project forward. The Youth Forum would be built up as there are already a number of young people interested in being involved and it would be beneficial for a liaison representative from the youth to attend the Youth Working Group meetings. It had been agreed that an appropriate Service Level Agreement would be drafted and forwarded to the Council for consideration.

Notes from the meeting with the YDS would be circulated to all members for their information.

7230 Correspondence requiring some action

a) Seminar invitation re. affordable housing - no members were available to attend

b) International Tree Foundation - it was not considered appropriate to make a donation at this time

c) Britannia Superfine - a letter regarding vandalism and break-ins had been received and copies previously circulated. It was agreed to write to the Police and ask how their reporting system worked as the incidents described in the letter were not shown on the weekly reports and also enclose a copy of the letter requesting their comments.

7231 Correspondence for noting

a) East Sussex Local Transport Plan - it was agreed to download a copy of the plan or, if necessary, purchase a CD.

7232 Dates of the next cycle of meetings

Full Council	Monday 3 rd July 2006
Planning	Tuesday 4 th July 2006

7233 Resolution

It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all that owing to the confidential nature of the next business to be transacted the press and public be excluded from the rest of the meeting.

Post meeting note: Following an alteration to the wording of minute 7205(a) the minutes of the meeting held on 30th May 2006 were adopted and signed by the Mayor.