

HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environment and General Purposes Committee** held on Monday 5th December 2011

J. Hollister (Chairman)
N. March (Vice Chairman)
R. Clarke
W. Hill*
C. Mclean
M. Pulfer
S. Ellis
Apologies ** Absent *

Also present: **Cllrs R Bates and J Sabin**

30. Apologies
None

31. Minutes
The minutes of the meeting of the Environment and General Purposes Committee held on Monday 24th October 2011 were taken as read, confirmed as a true record and duly signed.

32. Substitutes
None

33. Declarations of Interest
None.

34. Environmental and General Purposes Budget 2012/2013
The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) introduced the Committee's budget for the period 2012/2013. The (RFO) introduced his report by stating that the budgets presented would be fed into the Council's full budget proposal, which was to be considered on the 16th January 2012 by the Policy and Finance Committee and then Council on 23rd January 2012. Members noted that the Environment and General Proposes budget represented a net 12.8% reduction, on the current year's budget for the Committee (not the whole Council budget), which was as a result of the Council receiving additional income from sponsorship of roundabouts and a reduction in spending on planting. The under spend would be used to balance the rest of the Council budget. The (RFO) then proceeded to present the rationale behind each budget heading and the proposed level of budget suggested. Members were asked to make comment as the (RFO) went through the accompanying report. As a result the following issues were raised as each budget heading was presented;

4.) External Contract for the Cemetery

Members noted that the Cemetery contract budget had been set as per the current year's budget, with an inflationary rise. Additionally, the contract was up for renewal on the 31st March 2012. The Clerk added that the contract would be reviewed through a procurement process early next year, and envisaged that any new arrangements would not exceed the amount allocated in the budget and could be taken back in house if Members were minded to when reviewing the financial implications presented through the procurement process.

5.) Hanging Baskets and Barrier Troughs

Members questioned the level of the budget in light of the Greening Project for Haywards Heath, which was challenging the need for the amount of street furniture in the Town and the potential removal of railings, some of which held barrier troughs. The RFO explained even if the aforementioned street furniture was rationalised and barrier troughs were lost it would be prudent to reallocate the money to other scheme that would enhance the Town Centre street scene.

6.) Flower Beds

It was noted that this budget heading was forecasted to be overspent this year. This was due to the planting set up costs for the Fox Hill roundabout. However, this would be more than offset by sponsorship income from Crest Nicholuson. It was noted that there was not an increase in the budget for 2012/2013 due to a reduction in planting in some areas of the Town due to improvement projects such as Jubilee Gardens and outside of the Town Hall.

7.) Public Clock (St Wilfried's)

Members questioned the allocation of monies for the clock at St Wilfried's church. They were informed of the historical arrangements for maintenance of the clock and the fact that it was not a church clock but a Town monument.

14.) Christmas Lights

It was noted that the Christmas light contract was also up for renewal during the 2012-2013 financial year. The projected budget was put in place on the existing contract, but there was still a significant reserve in place to meet any additional costs incurred when renewing the contract. At this point it was asked that lighting on The Broadway be considered. The Clerk agreed to do so when procuring the new contract.

18.) Town Council Events

Members noted that the budget included a heading relating to the Spring Festival/Jubilee, which they felt in line with the reduction in the overall budget that the budget should be increased to £1,000.

Members **RESOLVED** to;

Recommend to the Policy and Finance Committee the draft 2012/2013 Environment and General Purposes Budget as presented with one amendment to the level of budget for the Spring Festival/Jubilee (£500 to £1,000).

35. Upgrade to Jubilee Gardens

Members considered a request from officers to implement an improvement project for Jubilee Gardens. The project was welcomed and the idea of formally opening the regenerated gardens in line with the Jubilee was deemed to be an excellent idea. Members also felt the gardens should be marketed as it has not been made very clear that they are open for public use and there is a perception that they are private gardens for the nearby flats

Members **RESOLVED** to;

Allocate £2,634 from the Council's Town Fund for a new tree seat for Jubilee Gardens (£2,134) and (£500) towards ground works to the site.

36. South and South East in Bloom Minutes

Member were presented with the minutes of the meeting for the first time. It was welcomed as Members felt that where verbal updates were useful in the past seeing the work that was being undertaken written down showed how hard the group was working on the 2012 entry. It was also deemed appropriate that Members monitored the work as the Town Council puts its name to the application and funds the entry. It was noted that at the next meeting the Chairman Mr Richard Goddard was stepping down to enable Cllr Hill to take up the Chairman's role so that the Council's interests were continued. Mr Goddard and Mr Parker (Vice Chairman) were happy to stay on the committee to help with the transitional period. The Committee wished to record their thanks to Mr Goddard for all his efforts in leading the Committee over the last two years.

Members **AGREED** to;

Note the Clerks update.

37. Haywards Heath Greening Project Update

The Clerk reported that Haywards Heath Town Council and Mid Sussex District Council were keen to move this project forward but, West Sussex County Council were still yet to act upon the Clerk's request to receive authority to undertake the project, which was sent back in October 2011. The Clerk added that this hold up had become somewhat frustrating due to West Sussex County Council's Big Society team requiring that the project be put within a larger community works programme. The added frustration was that an onsite meeting had been promised and that at the time of the meeting the West Sussex County Council officers had not been in contact with the Council to agree a date. Any further delay in the first stage of the project, which will include the removal of redundant street furniture will mean that the Town Council's ground staff will need to fit the project in and around a planting season.

Members **AGREED** to;

Note the Clerks update.

38. Urgent Business

The Chairman brought to the Committee's attention Members concerns that no formal plans had been made to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The Clerk explained that there had been discussions, but a number of issues relating to potential events in and around the Town has caused some confusion and there needed to be a quick solution to ensure that events do not clash, and complement each other. Members were mindful on the resources available for Jubilee celebration on top of the Council's current events programme and events that Council staff support around the Town such as the Bike Ride and this year the Three Town's marathon. It was suggested that a small Members working party be put together to progress an event/celebration, which then could be supported by officer time. The majority of Members wished to be involved so the Chairman agreed to write an open email to the whole Council so that they could input into its organisation. Discussions centred around a street party themed event focusing on the decade the Queen came to the throne, preferably at Beech Hurst Gardens. Concerns were raised that the day chosen clashed with the

promotion of nationwide street parties, which could be detrimental to attendance level. The Clerk agreed this would be a worry so he would monitor the number of requests received by Mid Sussex District Council for street parties in the Town, then,

Members **RESOLVED** to;

Agree between Members of the Council the celebration events to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and inform officers and that the Chairman would write to the whole Council asking for their input in to any event(s).

Meeting Closed at 9.04pm

DRAFT