

**HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING OF HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15th July 2024

Councillors: Abdul Bashar
Nick Chapman
Anne-Marie Cooke
Rachel Cromie **
Sandy Ellis
Stephanie Inglesfield
Barbara King
Anne-Marie Lucraft
Paul Lucraft
Allan Murray **
Deanna Nicholson
Alison Rees
Duncan Pascoe
Anthony Platts
Sinead Walsh
Leila Wilson

Apologies Absent***

Also present: 4 Members of the Public and Cllr Richard Bater (part of the meeting).

Before the meeting the Town Council received a presentation from representatives from Glendale Services and Mid Sussex District Council Head of Contracts and Services.

22 Moment of Reflection

The Town Mayor lead Members in a moment of reflection before the meeting commenced.

23. Apologies

Members	Reason
Cllr Murray	Personal commitment
Cllr Cromie	Work Commitment

24. Public Forum

Two questions were raised by Mrs Marion Wilcox in relation to the Future of Clair, which was to be discussed by the Town Council under minute 9.

- 1) The Report at Agenda Item 9 confirms the HHTC Neighbourhood Plan Policy L1 states that the existing Clair Hall should be retained unless there is the reprovision of an equivalent or better facility. Please advise what would be regarded as an equivalent facility and would this include 360 seat performance/community space; secondary hall; studio; full catering kitchen and a bar?

Cllr P. Lucraft responded on behalf of the Town Council

Thank you for your question and for drawing the attention of the council to the Neighbourhood Plan policy regarding Clair Hall. Firstly, it must be noted that HHTC is not the owner of Clair Hall nor is it in charge of the processes – these are matters for the MSDC. The motion at item 9 which the council will discuss later this evening expresses the intention that HHTC would like to discuss with MSDC the opportunity to get involved and potentially influence the processes for a better outcome with Clair Hall for the Haywards Heath community. This may include the council putting resources and investment into a scheme to help improve the outcome for the

community – a better more community focused development with more community content and more involvement in the governance and operation of the community assets through and after the project.

We are all here aware that at present and for the past four years and more the hall hasn't been available to the community and that the Neighbourhood Plan policy has in this respect have been rendered hollow.

Without disclosing our hand before discussions and negotiations take place with MSDC and any other agencies and potential developers who may become involved and without treading into areas that aren't the responsibility of this council we can nevertheless agree that the present state of affairs is clearly not satisfactory to many local people. We at HHTC would like to see the best outcome that can be achieved for the benefit of the town community and we would like to work with MSDC to try to achieve that goal.

Cllr P. Lucraft responded on behalf of the Town Council

- 2) It is noted that the Report accepts that if the Town Council proposals are agreed by MSDC "long-term negotiations" will be required. Significant time will also be required for design and planning. The Report also confirms that HHTC Neighbourhood Plan Policy L1 requires "continuity of provision". Haywards Heath has already been without community provision for four years. Would the Town Council support a Meanwhile Community Use of the existing building whilst these activities are undertaken.

As I said in my previous answer HHTC is not the owner nor is it in charge of the processes – these are matters for the MSDC. As also noted in my previous answer the HHTC would like to discuss with MSDC the opportunity to get involved and potentially influence the processes for a better outcome at Clair Hall for the Haywards Heath community.

25. Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 13th May 2024, without comment, were taken as read, confirmed as true and duly signed by the Mayor.

26. Declarations of Interest.

In relation to Item 9 Future of Clair Hall Cllrs P. Lucraft, D. Pascoe, A. Rees, A. Bashar, A. Platts, S. Ellis and A.M Cooke all declared a personal interest as Members of Mid Sussex District Council.

Furthermore, Cllr AM. Cooke stated that on the grounds that she was the Mid Sussex District Council Cabinet Member for Finance, Revenue and Benefits, which had responsibility of Clair Hall that she would not vote on the matter nor take part in and debate.

27. To Dispose of any Business Outstanding from the Last Meeting.

Nothing to update.

28. Mayor's Engagements and Announcements.

The Town Mayor introduce her list or engagements as presented in the agenda. She thanked the Deputy Mayor for his support and the Mayors Secretary for administration and support also.

29. To receive resolutions of the following Committees:

- (i) Planning Committee - **MINS. 1 - 31**
The resolutions of the Planning Committee held on the 28th May 2024 - **Minutes 1 - 13**, Planning Committee held on the 17th June 2024 - **Minutes 14-22**, and

Planning Committee held on the 8th July 2024 - **Minutes 23-31** were noted without discussion by the Council.

- (ii) Environment & General Purposes Committee - **MINS. 1 - 12**
The resolutions of the Environment and General Purposes Committee held on 1st July 2024 - **Minutes 1 - 12.** were noted without discussion by the Council.
- (iii) Policy & Finance Committee **MINS. 1-19**
The resolutions of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held 24th June - **Minutes 1 – 19** were noted without discussion by the Council.

30. To consider the Town Councils position on the future of Clair Hall

The Leader of the Town Council Cllr P. Lucraft presented the motion by stating that on the grounds that the Town Council is the champion of the interests of the town's residents, community organisations and businesses there is an opportunity for the Town Council to get involved with saving an important community asset for the Town. This would also aim to seek a better outcome in terms of a new facility for the Town than if the Council did not. It was noted that Town Council could access other forms of capital/revenue funding that Mid Sussex District Council may not be able to and there were other groups/organisation/agencies who would be able to feed into the Town Council proposals. Therefore, Members were urged to approve the motion and allow the Town Clerk to enter by delegation into discussions with Mid Sussex District Council. Members were then invited to make comment. Cllr Ellis understood the wish to see Clair Hall reopened but as per her views on the Town Council corporate plan, she was not supportive of agreeing to something she did not know how much it would cost or in this instance how it could be managed.

Cllr Nicholson, who was supportive of the long-term ambition of the motion, she felt that parallel conversation must be had about the existing building used while this discussion being taking. Clair Hall had been lost for four years already and would be lost for considerably longer while discussion took place. It was felt that Clair was fit for human use as the NHS had vulnerable people using the facility on a daily basis. This view was supported by other Councillors, namely Wilson and A M Lucraft.

Leader thanked Cllr Ellis for stating her position and stressed that there was not a blank cheque available as there needed to be a business case for consideration that would form part of the discussions with Mid Sussex District Council. This would be required so to assess needs before any financial commitment can be agreed. With regards to comments about getting Clair Hall back into use it was felt that that this was an issue for Mid Sussex District Council as the land owners and he was sure that the Town Clerk had noted frustration that the asset was not currently delivering the aspirations of the community. Cllr Ellis understood this and stated that a consultation would be needed with residents as the matter moved forward. Cllr Pascoe supported the motion and reminded the Town Council was to form Arts and Culture board to show that the Town Council are listening to their general need and could look at gauging views on the future require for a multi-use community facility in the Town

After the matter was formally recommended by the motion to the Town Council and seconded by Cllr D. Pascoe it was moved that a recorded vote be taken. The Town Mayor then asked for Members to vote by a show of hands.

Those for; P. Lucraft, D. Pascoe, A. Rees, D. Nicholson, AM. Lucraft, S. Walsh, S. Inglesfield, N. Chapman, A. Bashir, B. King and L. Wilson and A. Platts.

Those against; S. Ellis.

A.M Cooke in line with her declaration of interest did not vote on the matter.

With this;

Members **RESOLVED** to;

- a) **Members resolve that Town Council would be willing to make financial contributions towards the development of a new Clair Hall and future management costs based on a developed business plan.**
- b) **Members resolve to give the Town Clerk delegated authority to write to Mid Sussex District Council on behalf of the Town Council to request that negotiations are held regarding the future of Clair Hall and how the Town Council could fit into the future financial, governance and management arrangements for a new Clair Hall.**
- c) **If agreeable to the above and Mid Sussex District Council engage with the Town Council that the Town Clerk works with the Town Council's Clair Hall Working Group to develop any business plans, which would then be presented to Full Council if and when appropriate.**

31. To consider any urgent items, the Mayor has received.

Cllr Ellis reminded the Council about the Britain in Bloom judging on the 30th July 2024 and had promotional literature available for Members to use. She welcomed the offer of Glendale to support project in the Town but asked if there could be communication with the In Bloom committee so there was no duplication.

Meeting Closed at 7.58pm