



**HAYWARDS HEATH
TOWN COUNCIL**

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5th February 2025

To all Councillors on the Environment and General Purposes Committee and others for information.

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby requested to attend a meeting of the **Environment and General Purposes Committee** to be held on **Monday 10th February 2025** at the Town Hall in the Council Chamber at **7.00pm** when the following business will be transacted.

Yours sincerely
Steven Trice
Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies for absence.
2. Public Participation The public are invited to attend the meeting to observe in person. They may ask questions under the council's remit or make representation on a matter that is on the agenda. Speaking is guided by the Councils standing order 1 (available on website). You should indicate that you wish to speak by raising your hand. There is no right of reply. Should you wish to circulate anything to the committee this should be sent to the Town Clerk no later than 12 noon on the day of the meeting.

To commence not later than 7.15pm

3. To receive the minutes of the Environment and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 9th December 2024. (pages 3-9)
4. To note Substitutes.
5. To receive Declarations of Interest from Members in respect of any matter on the agenda.
6. To receive a verbal update from the Events and Community Officer on the events for 2025 and the Leave No One Behind Campaign.
7. To receive a report on the proposed 2025 Christmas Event (pages 10-11)
8. To consider the actions and notes from the Allotment Holders meeting dated 23rd January 2025. (pages 12-16)
9. To consider Environment matters and current policies. (pages 13 – 21)

10. To consider legal matters in relation to works to be undertaken by West Sussex County Council on Muster Green. (pages 22 – 23)
11. To receive a verbal update on South and South East in Bloom including World Earth Day.
12. To consider any items that the Chairman agrees to take as urgent business.

Committee Members: Environment & General Purposes Committee: Cllrs: N Chapman (Chair), A Rees (Vice Chair), A.M Cooke, S Ellis, S Inglesfield, D Nicholson, D Pascoe, L Wilson

*'During this meeting the public are allowed to film the Committee and officers only from the front of the public gallery, providing it does not disrupt the meeting. **Any items in the Exempt Part of the agenda cannot be filmed.** If another member of the public objects to being recorded, the person(s) filming must stop doing so until that member of the public has finished speaking. The use of social media is permitted but all members of the public are requested to switch their mobile devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.'*

Town Mayor Cllr Stephanie Inglesfield

Town Clerk Mr Steven Trice

HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Environment and General Purposes Committee 9th December 2024.

Nick Chapman (Chair)
Alison Rees (Vice Chair)
Anne- Marie Cooke
Sandy Ellis
Stephanie Inglesfield **
Deanna Nicholson **
Duncan Pascoe
Leila Wilson

Apologies** Absent*

Also present: Town Clerk, Committee Clerk, ECO

27. Apologies

Member	Reason
Stephanie Inglesfield	Mayoral Engagement
Deanna Nicholson	Illness

28. Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

29. Minutes

The minutes of the Environment & General Purposes Committee dated 1st October 2024 were taken as read, confirmed as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.

30. Substitutes

Cllr Barbara King for Cllr Stephanie Inglesfield.

31. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary or other interests.

32. To receive a presentation from Matt Roberts of CT Sussex Community Transport

Matt Roberts introduced himself and Bluebird and Community Transport Sussex as a whole. He said the following:

- Community Transport Sussex presents as Bluebird in Mid Sussex but is based in North Chailey.
- In 2023 they covered 157,000 passenger journeys across West Sussex, a little bit in East Sussex and Surrey, for people who find it difficult to access public transport due to disabilities, mobility issues or poor bus links especially in rural areas, where rural social isolation is very prevalent.
- Of these, 38,000 journeys were in Mid Sussex.
- CT Sussex had 52 wheelchair accessible vehicles across the county, of which 20 are in Mid Sussex.
- CT Sussex's remit is to help anyone who finds it difficult to access public transport to get out and about, while their charitable aim is to reduce social isolation and loneliness.

He added that the reason he came to tonight's meeting was because CT Sussex have a stated aim of being Zero or Very Low Emission by 2030 and Completely Zero

Emission by 2035 and to discuss how this may fit into the Council's remit as a sustainability committee. They are initially doing this by replacing older vehicles with newer, cleaner Euro 6 Diesel engines which produce 98% fewer particles than older diesel engines and by using electric vehicles. He said that they had been working with Hydrogen Sussex at Brighton University looking at Hydrogen powered trains small enough to go into older diesel vehicles, although due to the current size of these, they wouldn't be small enough for regular vehicles for 3-4 years.

The Town Clerk said that the Council had a sustainability Action Plan but had had to move back from this recently as the electric van was not fit for purpose as a work van as it could not tow or do enough distance. The Council had a policy to look at green matters which had include the Plant Based Treaty and bottle top recycling, looking at solar panels etc. He added that the Council had a remit to support organisations to support their goals and to facilitate the help for the Council's goals.

Cllr Pascoe thanked Matt Roberts for attending and said that as well as learning how the Council could help, he would like to make the most value out of working with CT Sussex to enhance the offering they have for the town's residents.

Matt Roberts said that although Bluebird was well known in Mid Sussex, they had been doing the same thing for the same people and what they needed to do is spread the word that their transport was not just for older people in wheelchairs or special needs children, it was for anyone who found it difficult to get out. He added that every time they fill in a bus, it equates to about 12 car journeys being saved.

Cllr King asked if CT Sussex were fully utilised. Matt Roberts responded that although in the day time they came close to full utilisation, they were currently not, as it was hard to find staff and volunteers for evenings and weekends. He added that they planned to do a driver and volunteer recruitment drive in January.

Cllr Ellis said that people in the villages had no chance of getting a bus to Brighton hospital, which would be a big issue going forwards as there's no access for people. She said this service could be the missing link, as it will only get worse as we need more hospitals, for more patients and have to go further.

Cllr King said she thought the cost per journey was quite expensive to people on pensions etc and enquired about help for this. Matt Roberts responded that Mid Sussex District Council still provide taxi vouchers for those who are eligible and CT Sussex takes these.

Cllr AM Cooke said that there was a lack of wheelchair accessible vehicles in Mid Sussex and enquired about whether CT Sussex could be a viable alternative transport option. Matt Roberts said that this could be, if staffing allowed, and again mentioned the planned driver recruitment.

Matt said that CT Sussex had received funding from West Sussex County Council, the National Lottery and other partnership bids. He mentioned the current Electric Vehicle Community Car Club in Henfield, which was started by funding from Motability, a project which he was keen to bring to Haywards Heath, if there was enough interest.

The Henfield Club involves:

- 2 semi accessible cars.
- People who can't drive themselves can hire it with a volunteer driver and anyone in the village and surrounding area can hire the vehicle to drive themselves.
- The cost is £5 per month and £5 per hour to hire.

He said that this had reduced the amount of car journeys into town and encouraged people to give up their second cars, slowly changing peoples' behaviours. He added that sustainable Henfield are doing a study over Christmas regarding emissions where the 2 vehicles are based and hope this will show a substantial drop

The Town Clerk queried the cost of the Henfield project. Matt Roberts said the cost was predominantly due to the paid co-Ordinator, which they already had in Mid Sussex but needed newly in Henfield, which was £40,000p/a.

Matt Roberts said they CT Sussex were not currently requesting any funding, but were after support and time to get the message out about their services, especially their 2025 volunteer recruitment drive.

The Town Clerk stated that the Council had a new website launching soon, which they could put CT Sussex on and they could write an article in the newsletter that goes out to every house in town.

Members **NOTED** the presentation.

33. To consider the Council's community events in 2025/2026.

The ECO referred to her report and advised that the 2025 Community Awards had not been mentioned in this report as they would fall into the 2024/25 financial year, but the date had moved from 16th to 9th of March. The marathon had also been included in the report, but it had come to light that, although not officially confirmed, the government may move the May Bank Holiday from the Monday to the Thursday to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day. This would potentially cause issues as Burgess Hill run their marathon on the Bank Holiday Monday and the marathon is a Three Towns event. The marathon needed to be kept in the budget as nothing was guaranteed, but there was potential that it may not go ahead of may look different. The next marathon meeting would be in February, so updates would follow.

The ECO advised that the budget requested was lower than the budget required for the year, as the reserves budget for events was quite good, due to higher sponsorship, stallholders fees and advertising fees being received in the past two years. She advised that sponsorship had been harder to source last year and she expected this to be the same in 2025/26.

She further advised that there was currently almost £15,000 in the events budget reserves, although £1,000 would need to be removed for the Community Awards, as this had changed to be a larger, more positive event in its own light, with the March date having been chosen to ensure that the event never fell within the pre-election period. She advised that the Leave No One Behind campaign has been in the events budget last year but had been removed from the 2025/26 budget to be considered separately, as had the Youth Enterprise Market, although both had still been included in the report as they needed to be considered in regards to officers' workloads. The Holocaust event would fall into the Council remit from 2026, no budget was required for 2025.

The ECO also advised that various events usually run at Muster Green, but with the potential work that would be happening in this area, events may need to be moved to Victoria Park, which would incur additional costs for toilet hire etc.

The ECO advised that £1,000 for Twinning Events had been included in the budget for two years but nothing had been called upon for that.

Cllr Pascoe enquired whether this was driven by the Twinning Association or by the Council. The Town Clerk stated that there had historically been a large budget for Twinning. This had been removed, but a smaller budget was reinstated in 2021/22. There had previously been discussions about an event, but nothing had materialised. He said that Cllr Inglesfield had been strongly in favour of keeping a budget for Twinning, but she had done her part and attended all events she had been invited to. He added that the money that had been included in the budget to cover any potential visit from the Twinning partners.

Cllr Ellis said that she thought it was important to keep the Twinning budget, to celebrate friendship between the towns. She said that although the Council may not be able to allocate the same size budget as the Twinning partners, the money we have could be used towards some sort of host event here. She said she thought that as the friendship had been going for so long, the Twinning budget was just a small amount of money to keep aside.

The ECO advised that the cost of Remembrance Sunday cost has increased due to the road closure cost and the order of service cost increasing.

Regarding the 2024 Christmas festival, the ECO highlighted how much work the Project Officer had done and how St Wilfrid's had gone out of their way to accommodate the event, adding that if they hadn't, the event would have been cancelled. She noted that the reorganisation of the event came at a massive workload for the Town Hall team.

Cllr Ellis said that she knew that so much work had gone into the 2024 and that the ECO had done a fantastic job. She said she would be happy with improving this and getting bigger and different in 2025. She asked whether there had been a reaction to not having the fireworks and questioned whether there was a possibility of holding anything like a silent light show instead.

The ECO advised that there had been relatively little backlash regarding the fireworks and there had been much more positive feedback. The Town Clerk advised that light shows had previously been considered, but they were very expensive, meaning the budget for the event would potentially need to be doubled.

Cllr AM Cooke advised that the feedback she received was that people missed having a proper 'one and done' light switch on. With regards to lighting, the Town Clerk advised that the Christmas Lights were due to be reprocured in 2025.

Cllr Chapman said the Council or town centre car parks could be used for extra space next year. The Town Clerk said that the Christmas event was intended to support The Orchards, so using the Town Hall would be too far away but other car parks could be potentially considered.

Cllr Pascoe said that the most important thing was that the event was kept as a free event for families during the festive period.

Cllr Rees said that people had greatly enjoyed the trail aspect of the 2024 event and if possible could this be built on and extended at future events, possibly linking between halls or venues.

Cllr Wilson said that the 2024 event had worked really well, and it was very busy, so there wasn't a lot of space to move around. She would like to see a large venue used in future. Cllr Rees suggested that perhaps St Wilfrid's church itself could be used. The ECO advised that St Wilfrid's were keen to continue working with the Council.

Cllr AM Cooke added that she would like it to be noted that she knew how much work the Town hall team had put into reorganising the Christmas event, with Cllr Rees adding that the Council were very grateful for it all.

The ECO advised that the budget had increased due to the inclusions of staffing costs and reminded Councillors that as they have chosen to run these events, they are urged to attend as many events as possible.

Cllr A-M Cooke questioned why the Holocaust event budget has been set so low. The ECO advised that this was due to advice being received from the current organisers. She further added that as the event involved only a service at the War Memorial, a voluntary guest speaker (whose expenses would be covered) and schools providing the art displays that would be placed in the Town Hall, with refreshments served afterwards, the budget would be minimal.

Members **RESOLVED** to recommend a **£32,850 Budget for inclusion in the Environment and General Purposes budget 2025/2026, with the 2025 Christmas Festival budget to be discussed with The Orchards and potentially re-considered and presented at an informal meeting before the next Environment and General Purposes committee meeting on February 10th 2025.**

34. To consider the draft Environmental and General Purposes budget for 2025/2026

The Town Clerk presented the draft budget. Cllr Ellis commented that she would like the Best Kept Gardens, Allotment Competitions and Haywards Heath South & South East in Bloom budgets to be kept into the budget, because although the town would not be submitting an entry for the town for 2025 South East in Bloom due to the potential works on Muster Green, the In Bloom Committee would be involved in multiple projects and initiatives within the community, including the 50th anniversary of World Earth Day in April 2025.

Cllr Chapman queried the Leave No One Behind campaign and the grant received from the National Lottery. The ECO advised that the 2024 campaign was under budget as the Council received a grant of £3,442 from the National Lottery and had also recently received £1,000 from CSL Behring in support.

Without further comment;

Members **RESOLVED** to recommend the draft **Environmental and General Purposes Committee Budget to the Policy and Finance Committee for inclusion in the 2025/2026 budget.**

35. To receive a request from Fairer Lindfield regarding Town Council Planting processes.

Cllr AM Cooke presented the request received regarding planting at the roundabout in Commercial Square and stated that she had previously been approached by Fairer World Lindfield and had also had some contact with Greener Lindfield.

Cllr Ellis stated that she would be supportive of discussion with Fairer World Lindfield about planting but suggested that this should be fed through the Haywards Heath In Bloom committee, before being fed back to the Environment and General Purpose committee, as they have recently won the Gold In Bloom award, especially as this involves the head Groundsmen who is doing the planting. She added that she would welcome anybody who wanted to enhance and improve our environment to get involved. She added that with the 50th anniversary of World Earth Day coming up in 2025, it would be nice to have a link with Lindfield and other villages to celebrate, and perhaps this could include the Lindfield Repair Cafes and be placed on the Council website.

Cllr B King queried the percentage of the Council's planting being sustainable. The Town Clerk said that this was currently 5% as agreed policy. He added that the groundsmen had made great strides, as there had never been a bed of perennial planting on Muster Green until the In Bloom committee took it up, and that the Council were working towards more sustainable planting and that the policy could be revisited in the future. He said that planting had had to be reduced due to increasing costs.

Cllr Ellis said that the town should be proud as they were the first town to put in pollinators working with Brighton University and their seed banks and people often don't realise what the town had achieved.

Cllr King said that Haywards Heath could also lead the way, as well as being responsive to what's currently enjoyed by the town, but also say this sustainability is the way we should be going in the town.

The following notes were suggested in the reply letter to Fairer World Lindfield:

1. Thank you.
2. As you are aware Haywards Heath is very proud of its plant and management of owned green spaces. Our ambition is to provide an uplifting and colourful environment that will equally support insects and biodiversity.
3. We purchase our bedding plans from Ford Open Prison, so local, well-priced and also with a social value.
4. As you are also aware our achievements have been acknowledged by Britain in Bloom as a Gold prize winner for the south and south east, as Best Large Town 2024.
5. You have identified the roundabout by the station as needing improvement on several counts. As entrance to the town from the railway and also one of the busiest parts of the town for all types of transport, we agree this could be improved.

We have great interest in your ideas for this space as an effective stepping stone for insects and birds in this part of the town.

Members RESOLVED to DELEGATE to the TOWN CLERK to respond to the enquiry as suggested and invite Fairer World Lindfield and Greener

Lindfield to attend the In Bloom committee meetings to discuss planting.

36. To receive a verbal update on South and South East in Bloom.

Cllr S Ellis said that In Bloom could do a full town entry in 2025, due to the potential works on Muster Green, although the cemetery would be entered. She said that the groundsmen wanted to recharge their batteries and look at different projects, by working in the community, to encourage people to take part. This would involve working with schools and care homes, before building up to the 2026 entry. We would like to potentially see a banner outside the railway station promoting the Gold prize success.

Members **NOTED** the update.

37. Urgent Items

There was none.

Meeting closed at 8.45 pm

Committee Meeting: Environment and General Purposes

Report of: Events and Community Officer

Date: 10th February 2025

Subject: Christmas Event

Purpose of Report:

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors with information on the proposed Christmas Event for 2025.

Summary:

2. The following report is to update Councillors on the proposed event for Christmas 2025.

Recommendation(s):

Members are recommended to;

- a) **Comment as appropriate**

Background:

3. At the Environment and General Purposes meeting on 9th December 2024, under minute 33, Councillors agreed to revise the Christmas Festival plans to look at an alternative to South Road being used for the event, following on from the inclement weather for the 2024 event.

Summary:

4. The ECO and Project Officer have met with Nicola Bird from The Orchards Shopping Centre to discuss the Christmas Event that took place in 2024 and how the event could look in 2025. Nicola was very supportive of the Town Council running an event utilising the Church Halls across the Town Centre. It was agreed that this would help to increase the footfall in the town on the day and therefore encourage supporting the local high street and local businesses.
5. Nicola has decided to run a two day Christmas Festival event this year over the 22nd and 23rd November, with the lights being switched on, on the 22nd. In previous years, Nicola ran the main Christmas Festival, with supplementary performance days throughout Nov/Dec. Due to budget constraints and to assist with logistics, it has made sense to do two consecutive days instead.
6. Nicola shared the same weather concerns had by all and was in agreement that we should be looking to use inside venues from the beginning.
7. With this in mind, the ECO has booked the United Reform Church, St Wilfrid's Church Hall and Haywards Heat Baptist Church. This would ensure visitors are

spread across the town, with the main shopping areas having an event to drive footfall.

Legal Implications:

8. The Town Council can undertake this project using the General Power of Competence, which the Town Council meets the criteria of as exercised and resolved at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council dated 15th May 2023 under minute 20.

Events and Community Officer

Committee Meeting: Environmental and General Purposes

Report of: Town Clerk
Date: 10th February 2025
Subject: Allotment Holders Meeting

Purpose of Report:

1. The purpose of this report is for Members to note the outcome of a third-party meeting.

Summary:

2. The Town Council owns four allotment sites in the Town. Two of which are managed by the Council namely, America Land and Oathall Avenue and two by independent associations Vale Road and Summerhill Lane. All allotment holders are normally invited to attend two meetings of Allotment Holders per annum, which provides a forum for allotment holders to air any matters of mutual interest and concerns and/or issues with the Town Council.

Recommendation(s):

- a) **Members formally note and make comment upon the minutes and actions from the Allotment Holders Meeting held on the 25th January 2025.**

Background:

3. Members will find attached for comment the notes of the Annual Allotment Holders meeting dated 23rd January 2025.
4. The meeting was chaired by the Chair of the Environment and General Purposes Committee supported by the Town Clerk and the Assistant to the Town Clerk who managed the allotment sites and prepared the minutes as attached.

Financial Implications

5. None directly from the meeting and works will be reported to Members if the cost of works is outside existing budgets or outside of the authorisation powers of the Clerk.

Town Clerk

Allotment Holders meeting 23rd January 2025

In attendance: - Cllr Nick Chapman, Steven Trice (Town Clerk) and Helen Hewett (Assistant to the Town Clerk)

5 Representatives from America Lane
6 Representatives from Oathall Avenue
2 Representatives from Vale Road
4 Representative from Summerhill Lane

Cllr Chapman welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened up the meeting to allotment holders to discuss the items on the agenda.

Communication

The main discussion was about setting up WhatsApp group for allotment holders on the four allotment sites, which would be set up and monitored by HHTC. This hadn't been done in the past as HHTC didn't have a mobile phone available to use. A mobile phone is now available to use, but the Town Clerk did warn about the implications of breaches in GDPR when collecting allotment holders personal details.

However, it was agreed that this form of communication would be useful.

Action:- HHTC to contact all allotment holders on the HHTC managed sites to invite them to join the WhatsApp group and to ask the committee of the association run sites to invite their members to submit mobile phone numbers.

Murray Crump commented on the new HHTC website and said it could be an opportunity for HHTC to promote the benefits of allotments. Steve Trice said the website is under a soft launch and welcomed comments for any allotment holder to improve this section of the website.

How was it for you?

Everyone agreed that it had been a challenging year with a cold start to the growing season and a very wet summer, but the challenges of differing weather was all part of having an allotment.

General administration of Council managed sites

Plot inspections:- plot inspections for HHTC managed sites have gone well. People know the inspections are happening and seem to be working their plots. Anyone not working their plot gets a warning letter and then a notice to quit if still no work done.

It was suggested that more people should be encouraged to be part of the inspection team rather than rely on Murray Crump and Sylvia Harris.

Waiting lists:- HHTC have 44 people on the waiting list. Vale Road have 9 and 5 at Summerhill Lane.

Ancillary Service:- nothing to report.

Site Security:- ST was pleased to announce the appointment of a new Community Warden, Martin, who routinely visit the allotment sites, and if there was a specific issue identified. Any security issues, thefts, or problems with anti-social behaviour at any of the allotment sites should be reported to the Police on the non-emergency 101 number. The more reports received, the higher the priority the issue becomes.

It was asked where the cameras from America Lane allotments had gone. They were at the Town Hall for new batteries.

Action:- To replace the batteries and return to the allotments.

Plot sizes: nothing to report.

Allotment Association versus direct management :- no comments.

Site Matters

Oathall Avenue

The driveway leading from Oathall Avenue needs some attention. It is very uneven and with the heavy rain recently, the driveway is continually full of water. The gate needs some attention as it is not shutting properly.

Action:- Groundsmen to look at repairing the gate and the driveway.

There is low water pressure.

Action:- See if water pressure can be checked and increased.

Polytunnel on plot 6 has collapsed in recent windy weather.

Action:- Groundsmen to be sent to make safe and the owner to be contacted.

When will new plot markers be installed?

Action:- This was in hand with the groundsmen and will be done shortly.

It was asked if there was a policy regarding keeping hens on an allotment?

Action:- Currently no, but Steve Trice will put together a policy to promote good practice for looking after hens properly on an allotment site and this will be included on the HHTC website.

It was asked if there was any soil testing done? No soil testing is done by HHTC, but individual allotment holders could test the soil on their plots.

Are there any height restrictions on cages on the allotments. There is currently no restriction on HHTC sites, but consideration must be given to the impact it might have on adjacent plots. VRAS have a 2m height restriction.

America Lane

Toilet isn't flushing properly, the sink tap is not shutting off properly and the stop cock just inside the door is not working.

Action:- plumber to be called to attend.

There is water coming out of the bank of the stream and causing erosion. Steve Trice said water was deliberately being fed out and HHTC were keeping an eye on it.

Action:- Groundsmen to monitor the stream bank regularly

When was the bank going to be planted with Willow/Hazel, as now is an ideal time to plant bare root trees. Need to advise plot holders backing onto stream as communication with them is important.

Action:- Ask groundsmen to look at a programme of planting bare root trees.

Drainage ditch is filling up quickly and maybe more regular clearance is needed? There is also rubbish being dumped in the ditch from neighbouring properties.

Action:- Ask groundsmen to do more regular clearing and checks for rubbish to ensure the ditch is clear to reduce flooding.

What is happening to the turning area at the end of the allotments?

Action:- Groundsmen will remove rubble and reseed this area.

Vale Road

Boundary chain link fence along footpath between Edward Road and Sandy Vale has been cut and needs repairing.

Action:- Groundsmen will be asked to inspect and do any necessary repairs.

Why were Vale Road excluded from the Best Kept Allotment competition? It was explained that the officer responsible for this competition had not received a reply to her email regarding judging.

The VRAS were not happy with the way the competition was judged last year. The VRAS were invited to attend an In Bloom committee meeting to see how the competition was run and judged. This would be given some thought by the committee member present at the meeting.

Summerhill Lane

Water pressure is very low.

Action:- See of water pressure can be checked and if possible increased.

They would like covers on their water tank, but who would pay?

Action:- Peter Stuart has been sent the contact details of the company HHTC used.
Allotment association should pay out of the rent paid by allotment holders.

A general question about how devolution would affect allotments was asked. Steve Trice explained that devolution would not mean the loss of any allotment as it was District and Borough councils that are likely to suffer from devolution rather than town and parish council, and as allotments are the only statutory function of a town or parish council there would be no loss. With the relaxation of some planning laws there may be more opportunity to secure allotments. HHTC are acquiring land off Hurstwood Lane for a new cemetery, allotments and country park. The cemetery is the priority at the moment with the current cemetery nearing capacity.

Any other business None

Date of next meeting

Date to be confirmed, but sometime late October 2025

Meeting closed 7.45pm

Committee Meeting: Environmental and General Purposes

Report of: Town Clerk
Date: 10th February 2025
Subject: Town Council Internal Environment Policy

Purpose of Report:

1. The purpose of this report is for Members to consider a Town Council policy.

Summary:

2. As part of the Town Council's commitment to the Environment the Project Officer has continued to develop the attached Internal Environment Policy to guide the Town Council in its operations. This is in line with a commitment to improve Town Council working practises so to be best in class and to practice what it expects of and will be promoting to the community. The Action Plan has been updated and revised. Members are asked to consider the policy and action plan.

Recommendation(s):

Members are recommended to adopt the Internal Environment Policy and Action Plan (updated) as attached in the appendices of this report.

Background:

3. Please see the document as per Appendix 1 for comment, which will be accompanied by a short presentation from the Project Officer.

Financial Implications

4. None directly form the report.

Legal Implications

5. None

Project Officer

**SECOND DRAFT
Haywards Heath Town Council
Environmental Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to reduce the impact Haywards Heath Town Council (HHTC) has on our environment. We recognise that the day-to-day operations of the council can impact directly and indirectly on the local environment through good management and by adopting best practice within our local community wherever possible. This will demonstrate our commitment to enable HHTC to be the best in class and practise what we are signposting and asking our residents and local businesses to consider in their day-to-day lives.

- Haywards Heath Town Council will make a positive contribution to, protect and enhance both the local and global environment.
- To minimise waste and opportunities for environmental pollution in our activities and positively encourage the re-use, recycling and conservation of resources.
- To consider sustainability and environmental considerations into HHTC policies.
- In addition, Haywards Heath Town Council will adopt the following objectives:
 - ❖ Reflect upon and follow best practice in order to reduce the energy use and emissions into the air from the HHTC Buildings.
 - ❖ Be mindful of the environmental credentials of our suppliers, when making purchasing decisions.
 - ❖ Actively reduce the use of single-use items.
 - ❖ Curtail material consumption of items purchased, and vigorously consider the environmental impact of the purchase.
 - ❖ Maintain and manage biodiversity at Council owned sites across the town, encouraging plant-life and wildlife, where appropriate.
 - ❖ Increase the planting of trees within the town to improve the air quality for residents and capture of CO₂, by homeowners, business sponsorship and ourselves.
 - ❖ Offer support users of HHTC allotments to improve their environmental contribution, by helping reduce waste, such as installing rainwater harvesting systems in allotment sites.

- ❖ To ensure that the plant and machinery omissions are at the optimum level possible (lowest possible level within their specific categories).

Appendix 1 – Council decision making

- A** Council Funds – Where are the Council funds invested? Are they held in fossil fuel companies? Could they be held in low-risk sustainable funds and banks?
- B** Consider working towards an accreditation for the Town Council (such as Green Accord), to display our environment credentials to the local community and wider audience.
- C** Planning Applications – The Planning Committee will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity issues when commenting and deliberating on planning applications made to the council.
- D** Ensure the purchasing power of HHTC is used positively to influence supply chains. We need to lead by example in the community and embed sustainability and social value into the procurement process where possible. This includes promoting local service delivery, where appropriate.
- E** We should be making purchases from local delivery and those companies who have integrated environmental credentials within their processes. Possibility of providing residents ‘special offers’ if HHTC can make savings.
- F** Grounds staff vehicle – potential change to an electric truck. This has been explored but unfortunately due to the constraints of the currently available electric vehicles it is unfit for purpose (towing capacity for the water bowser).
- G** Purchase of fuel and fuel card.

Appendix 2 – Energy Efficiency

- A** Regularly review the cost of current energy providers, paying particular attention to the offerings made by green energy providers to ensure the best possible package is secured.
- B** When the buildings are closed ensure all lights, computers and printers are turned off.
- C** Heating – to be used in the most efficient way possible. Turn off over the weekend – is this best practice?
- D** During working hours, ‘screensaver’ mode should be applied to all computers, following inactivity for a specified time.
- E** Install LED lightbulbs to overhead lights and explore the opportunities to install motion-activated lights to reduce the cost of electricity in lesser used areas in the building.

- F Explore the viability of renewable energy (particularly solar panels) being installed to buildings owned by HHTC.
- G Explore the possibility of having a ground source heat pump fitted.

Appendix 3 – Office equipment

- A How does the Council dispose of unwanted and end-of-lifecycle products such as computers/printers/catering and grounds equipment?
- B Movement towards being as much of a paper free office as possible.
- C Paper usage within the office environment and for council meetings will be minimised. HHTC already provide councillors with electronic copies of the agendas and minutes for meetings.
- D Paper purchased for the printer should be 100% recycled, however, not all printers/copiers run optimally when using this type of product.
- E If printing is required, use double-sided to save paper.
- F Investigate the possibility of using refillable ink cartridges for the printer.
- G The use of non-toxic writing equipment.
- H Use of plastic folders and dividers as they are more durable than card, will last longer, avoiding the need for repeat purchases.
- I Investigate the possibility of having a ‘recycle your ink cartridges’ box in reception for both staff and public to use. Funds generated from this could be donated to the Mayor’s charity (<https://www.printercartridge recycling.co.uk>).
- J Any catering supplies used for events organised by the Town Council should either be fully recyclable, or biodegradable so they can be disposed of correctly after use, alternatively, china crockery etc can be used and cleaned in the dishwasher.

Appendix 4 – Cleaning materials/practices

- A A review of cleaning materials should be carried out on a regular basis.
- B Transition any current chemical based products (such as bleach) to chemically benign (green) products, where possible, to prevent harmful chemicals being released that may cause damage to health and/or the environment.
- C Minimise the use of disposable items for example; bin liners, by emptying bins daily into recycling and waste, instead of placing a new liner into each bin daily.

- D** Use of paper towels in the building, particularly in the toilets. Would an electronic hand drier be more cost effective longer term?

Appendix 5 – Biodiversity

- A** Rainwater harvesting system – could something be erected to the main HHTC building to gather rainwater to use for watering the flowerbeds/hanging baskets?
- B** Wild flower planting and use of drought resistant bedding plants – are there any additional areas that could be used/benefit from this?
- C** Weed control processes, using environmentally friendly chemicals and natural alternatives to control pests and weeds.
- D** Explore planting more pollinator plants to encourage numerous species of insects.
- E** Compost – there is an arrangement already in place to take grass clippings and leaves from the Muster Green area to Borde Hill to include with their composting, hopefully we should be able to purchase compost at a reduced rate from them.
- F** Investigate the opportunity of having our own piece for land to reduce costs longer term (storage of trucks and equipment, tools, creating our own compost heap, polytunnel for growing our own plants from seed)
- G** ‘No Mow May’ – a scheme to allow wildflowers to support pollinating insects, (apart from Council owned sports pitches and playing areas)
- H** Work closely with allotment holders to improve processes (such as reducing water waste, purchasing of goods/soil?)
- I** Desk plants – increase the amount in the office. These will increase the oxygen flow and improve the air quality (may assist to remove chemicals from the air).

Ends

Committee Meeting: Full Council

Report of: Town Clerk
Date: 10th February 2025
Subject: Drainage Works on and Around Muster Green

Purpose of Report:

1. The purpose of this report is to consider a legal matter relating to Town Council owned land.

Summary:

2. As Members have been made aware West Sussex County Council is undertaking major drainage works along Muster Green South, Boltro Road and the Gyratory System later this year. The following report seeks delegation of the legal arrangements between Haywards Heath Town Council and West Sussex County Council, in terms of the damage/reinstatement to Muster Green and access arrangements, to be administered and executed by the Town Clerk with support from a chosen solicitor.

Recommendation(s):

Members note the update on the works to Muster Green and delegate to the Town Clerk administration and execution of the legal arrangement(s) with West Sussex County Council.

Background:

3. As Members are aware the works which are aimed at alleviating the flooding around the gyratory system will take potentially three months over this summer (probably starting in July) and will have a major impact on Muster Green and the surrounding road network.
4. At present there is also discussion about some preparatory works being undertaken alongside the current gas works which could reduce the work's timescale in the summer. This is to be decided with the current contractors on site imminently.
5. As said, Muster Green will be subject to major works to place piping and a chamber under the ground which will include major excavation work and damage to the Green.
6. Whatever route West Sussex County Council decide to undertake with the works, there is additional need, to that of works mentioned above, for a compound to be placed on Muster Green and access given across Muster Green to Muster Green South from the compound.
7. To protect the Town Council's position and to ensure that the Muster Green is reinstated properly after the works, a legal agreement needs to be put place to allow for payment to be made to the Town Council and an access easement.

8. As a result, the Town Clerk has approached Rohan Solicitors to act on the Town Council's behalf and asks for Members approval that he undertakes all of the negotiations with West Sussex Council with Rohan's support

Financial Implications

9. West Sussex County Council have agreed to meet all legal costs. At the present time the quoted price from Rohan Solicitors to undertake such work with the legal agreement is £1,500.

Legal Requirements

10. West Sussex County Council have asked that Haywards Heath Town Council, as the land owner, seek legal representation when dealing with this matter.

Town Clerk