

UNADOPTED

POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Town Council** held on **Monday 14th November 2005** in the Council Chamber, 49, High Street, Polegate at 7.00pm.

Present: Cllrs. J. Harmer (Town Mayor), S. Barber (from 7.20pm.), Mrs. C. Berry, G. Carter, Mrs. E. Coleman (from 7.11pm.), M. Cunningham, M. FitzGerald, K. Gatrill, G. Gibbs, Mrs. D. Joy, R. Martin, Mrs. M. Piper, Mrs. I. Scarborough, Mrs. J. Voyce and B. Winn.

6941 Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Mrs. V. Morson and T. Voyce

6942 Declarations of Interest in any items on the agenda

Declarations were declared as follows: -

Cllrs. Mrs. Scarborough, Mrs. Voyce and Mrs. Piper – a personal interest in item 5(a) - Access to Council owned land

Cllr. Cunningham a non-prejudicial interest in item 10(a) – grant request from the Polegate and Willingdon branch of the East Sussex Disability Association

6943 Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Monday 17th October 2005

6923(a) – Cllr. Carter asked if the Cricket Club had removed all their equipment by 31st October – the Town Mayor said that this matter will be raised at item 16(a) – the Town Clerk’s Bring Forward Schedule.

Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough asked that all the minutes be reserved as it has been agreed not to mention Councillor’s names in the minutes except where they so request, for moving and seconding motions or where it is necessary for clarity. The Town Clerk apologised for the oversight and agreed not to let it happen again.

The minutes were then agreed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

6944 Introduction to the Council’s new Internal Auditor

The Town Mayor suspended Standing Orders to enable the new Internal Auditor, Graham Parish, to speak.

Mr. Parish introduced himself and thanked the Council for appointing him as Internal Auditor, adding that it was with mixed emotions as he is replacing Alan Wallwork who had died recently. Mr. Parish said that he would be looking at both financial and non-financial controls and for the Council to let him know if there is anything they want him to look at because he is here for them. The Town Mayor thanked Mr. Parish for coming in and it was agreed:

that Mr. Parish’s contact details are circulated to all Councillors.

Standing Orders were reinstated

6945 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 17th October not otherwise on the agenda

a) Access to Council owned land – (Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough left the room and took no part in this matter) – The Town Clerk reported that the draft letter was approved by the NALC legal team and that recorded delivery letters had been sent to residents of Heron Ridge and Spurway Park and that letters to residents with an access to Wannock Road Rec. would be followed up next week. Noted.

Cllr. Mrs. Coleman arrived at this point

- b) **Visit to Willingdon School re. the Town Map** – The Town Mayor reported that he and the Town Clerk would be making a visit to the School on Thursday afternoon. Noted.
- c) **Highways Verges Grass Cutting** – The Town Clerk advised that he has received a copy of Willingdon and Jevington Parish Council’s specification but is waiting for the County Council specification, schedule and plan, so that quotes could be sought. It is expected that these matters will be resolved at the Strengthening Local Relationships meeting on Wednesday.
- d) **Distribution of Council Newsletter** – The Town Mayor advised that the Scouts had declined the offer to distribute the Newsletter and that he had authorised the engagement of a commercial distributor to ensure that all Polegate residents received a copy of the newsletter. Noted and approved the Town Mayor’s action.
- e) **Resolution to amend Standing Orders** – The Town Clerk reported that the Council had decided to hold all future Full Council Meetings at 7.00pm. and that this requires an amendment to Standing Order No. 2. The Town Mayor then asked Councillors if it is still their desire to bring the starting time of meetings forward to 7.00pm. and by a narrow margin it was resolved:

To commence all future Full Council Meetings at 7.30pm.

6946 Youth Services Report

The Town Clerk had previously circulated an e-mail received from the Youth Development Service (YDS) regarding the questions asked at the last meeting of the Council, and, although there are some concerns about the replies it was not thought beneficial to respond until the Youth Services Group have met with the YDS and the next meeting is scheduled for Monday 28th November at 4.15pm.

6947 Tree Warden’s report

The Town Clerk advised that the Tree Warden had no matters to raise at this time.

Cllr. Barber arrived at this point

- 6948 Access to Council owned land – provision of a chain link fence** – The Town Clerk reported that he has received a budget sum of £480 for the supply and erection of 14.5 metres of chain link fencing to secure the Council’s land. Councillors thought that this was a lot to spend when the owners have removed a fence which they are responsible for and it was proposed by Cllr. Mrs. Berry, seconded by Cllr. Martin and agreed by all:

to send a legal letter to the owners requiring the reinstatement of the boundary fence.

6949 Web Site

The Web Site working group had identified that the office does not have the expertise or time to manage a web site and so it has been recommended to go down the “professional” route and a proposal had been put forward by a local man trading as Barkweb Ltd. who has created a demo front page for the Council and whose work has been looked at by the group. It was proposed by Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough, seconded by Cllr. Cunningham and agreed by all:

to engage Barkweb Ltd. to create and manage the Council’s web site in accordance with the quotation given in the proposal.

6950 Financial Matters

- a) Grant Application – Polegate and Willingdon Branch of the East Sussex Disability Association (ESDA) –** The Town Clerk circulated a letter describing the forthcoming transport cost issues for the group and a spreadsheet relating to income and expenditure of the various branches of the groups within ESDA and Cllr. Carter, who had reviewed the Association’s financial accounts for 2004/2005 reported on the overall position of the Association. He said that the Association gets a huge amount of Government Grant but none of it is used to support the local groups. Councillors were concerned about the fact that no grants are given to local groups and also concerned about the plight of the Polegate and Willingdon Group, and it was proposed by Cllr. Mrs. Berry, seconded by Cllr. Carter that:

- i) A letter is written to ESDA expressing concern that no funding is provided to local groups from the centre, and
- ii) The Council sponsors the transport for 4 outings a year at a cost of £360 and that this be reserved for in the 2006/2007 budget.
- iii) That the letter be reviewed by Cllrs. Martin, Carter and Mrs. Berry before it is sent

- b) External Auditor’s report for 2004/2005 –** The Town Clerk circulated a copy of the External Audit report and explained the matters included in the audit report. Noted.
- c) Budget Monitoring report to 30th September 2005 –** The Town Clerk presented the monitoring report and explained the major variances. On being asked if an account had yet been received for the Crossing Patrol at the School the Town Clerk advised that he has not and it was resolved to chase up the invoice.
- d) Cleaning Services – The Wannock Road Pavilion toilets –** The Town Clerk presented a letter from the current contractor advising that he was prepared to continue the contact for another 12 months on the same terms and conditions and, after the Town Clerk confirming that the contract was working well, Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough proposed, Cllr. Cunningham seconded and it was resolved:
- that the contract be extended on the same terms and conditions for 12 months. It was also resolved to write to Network Rail regarding the lack of toilet facilities on the Station and to send it “recorded delivery”.
- e) Consideration of new items for the 2006/2007 budget –** The Town Mayor said that this is the last call to come up with ideas for next year’s budget cycle

6951 Boundary Commission – Consultation on Periodic Electoral Reviews

The Town Clerk had read through the consultation document and presented a paper summarising the 14 questions and making recommendations on the responses and asking Councillors to assist in the answers to questions 12 and 13. It was resolved:

To confirm the answers suggested by the Town Clerk to questions 1 to 11 and question 14 and to respond to questions 12 and 13 as follows:
Question 12 – Listen to local views and give them more recognition as the real voice of the people. To understand that the perception of the general public is that they are not listened to and that this demolishes community spirit. It was agreed to send a copy of the Council’s recent letter to the ODPM and to refer to fact that in a recent WDC consultation a 2 to 1 majority in favour of a particular course of action was ignored. It was also agreed to commend WDC’s action of going into schools to explain the local democratic process.
Question 13 – No

6952 Adoption of minutes of Standing Committees

- a) **Planning of 1st November 2005** – Cllr. Carter presented the minutes for perusal and, there being no matters raised, proposed their adoption, which was agreed by all.
- b) **Personnel of 4th November 2005** – Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough presented the minutes for perusal and, there being no matters raised, proposed their adoption, which was agreed by all.

6953 Communications from the Town Mayor

The Town Mayor reported that he has arranged for Wealden Brass to play seasonal music in the precinct on Saturday 3rd December from 10.30am to 12.00noon.

Concern was expressed that because this is a busy period in the precinct it could obstruct free movement of shoppers and wouldn't it be better if the band was on the grass with a marquee protecting them. No decision was made.

However it was agreed: that the office should check with the local churches to ensure that the plan does not overlap with any carol singing they may be arranging.

The Town Mayor also reported that he had been invited to judge a best pumpkin competition organised by a local florist.

6954 Update from Lead Councillors and Working Groups

- a) **Buildings Working Group** – Cllr. Carter reported on the work of the Group and it was resolved as follows:

- i) to note that there is interest in renting the office at the rear of the Council Offices
- ii) to note that training on the CCTV system at Wannock Road has been arranged for Wednesday morning
- iii) to send a letter to Adshel, by registered post, relating to the contract to provide the bus shelters at Eastbourne Road, and Pevensey Road, and to obtain quotes for bus shelters with a view to reserving for these in the 2006/2007 budget or to replace them from Reserves in the current financial year
- iv) that following concerns from residents in Bexley Court relating to the siting of the notice board that the matter be referred back to the Working Group for re-consideration
- v) that the Council's solicitor's suggested wording of the licence for the Model Engineering Club be accepted and the matter finalised with the Club.

- b) **Polegate Partnership** – Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough reported on a recent meeting she had had with the Town Co-ordinator, Barry Knights, and said that the Healthcheck has now been completed. Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough proposed, it was seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Piper and resolved by 14 votes to 1 (Cllr. Mrs. Berry) :

That because the Partnership is currently without funds, to order the shrub bed planting on Hailsham Road to be paid for from Town Council reserves and that the outlay be repaid by the Partnership from the sponsorships and/or grants received in respect of the scheme.

The Town Mayor suspended Standing Orders to enable Mr. Knights to speak
Mr. Knights explained that the Health Check would have been published last week but for a computer crash. He also explained that he had applied for funding for the shrub bed planting as Polegate has not had its fair share of grant aid for regeneration.

Standing Orders were reinstated

- c) **Christmas Lights Working Group** – Cllr. Mrs. Coleman reported that everything was in hand, that all members had received plans and details of their areas to be viewed for the best decorated house award and asked that members give their proposals for the final judging on 19th December by 16th December.

It was also agreed that any member not able to complete their review to let the office know so that an alternative can be arranged.

- d) **Meadow Group** – Two quotes have been received for maintenance to trees which are overhanging a property in Spurway Park. Both quotes relate to similar work but one would cost £385 with leaving produce on site or £500 if produce was removed; and the other would cost £210 including the removal of the produce. However the quote is based on carrying out the work from the resident in question's back garden. It was resolved:

That, subject to agreement by the resident to have the work carried out from his garden, that the lower quotation be accepted and the work carried out.

Concern was expressed that if the ground is too soft to access the trees from Brightling Road why the Model Engineering Club had taken vehicles on to their site the previous weekend. The Town Clerk said that he would follow that up.

6955 Town Clerk's Report

- a) **Bring Forward Schedule** – The Town Clerk presented the schedule of ongoing matters for review and it was noted/resolved as follows:

- i) that notwithstanding the fact that the Cricket Club did not quite remove all of their equipment by 31st October, the grant agreed be paid.
- ii) To invite the Wealden DC Arboriculturist to make a report on the tree overhanging Black Path from the Railway land and to attempt to get Network Rail to deal with it.

- b) **Vandalism Report** – The Town Clerk presented the up to date report showing acts of vandalism on Council property. Concern was expressed about the new graffiti on the Skatepark and it was noted that although it was considerable it was not noted on the log. Concern was also expressed about the current group of youths causing a nuisance in the Town and a question was asked about how much detail the Police receive about youths who are excluded from school. It was reported that there are problems collecting acceptable evidence and getting the Crown Prosecution Service to bring an action anyway. It was reported that a gang of youths now use the grounds at the Church as a meeting point. It was resolved:

- i) To instruct the Council's handyman to clear away all offensive graffiti straight away
- ii) To enquire of the Police whether they are informed about children who are excluded from school
- iii) To ask the PCSO, the Town Clerk and the Assistant Town Clerk to be aware of and look out for the current group of youths making a nuisance of themselves in the Town
- iv) To ask the Police if they can undertake some plain clothes operations
- v) To send a letter to Inspector Matthews to congratulate him on his promotion

6956 Correspondence requiring some action

- a) **Request for ground cover to protect walkers from muddy conditions at the entrance to The Meadow on Brightling Road Leisure Ground** - it was agreed that wood chippings would be only a temporary solution to this problem and that walkers should expect to meet wet conditions at this point and dress accordingly. However it was also resolved:

To look into the possibility of providing a more permanent solution within next year's budget

- b) **Invitation to attend the East Sussex Economic Partnership Conference on 7th December** - Having identified that the Town Co-ordinator, Barry Knights would be attending the Conference it was resolved:

Not to send a delegate and ask Barry to feed back any useful outcomes to the Council

- c) **Request to move the bus shelter in Hailsham Road 60 feet to the east** - The Town Clerk reported on the request and also on two statements received from residents in the area. It was resolved:

Not to move the bus shelter but to write to the bus operators to ensure that drivers make a point of looking out for customers who may be waiting for the bus in this particular shelter

- d) **Invitation to the Clerk's Networking Day on 30th November** - The Town Clerk said that he could not make a case to attend the day but it was resolved that:

The Town Clerk advises Trevor Leggo of any items which would be beneficially included in the proposed Clerks refresher/information weekend to be held next April

- e) **Invitation to the next Advanced Training Course for Councillors, 2 - 4 December 2005** - no Councillors wished to attend but Cllr. Winn indicated a desire to attend the following one.

6957 Correspondence for noting only

- a) **Wealden District Parish Review** - The Town Clerk circulated a letter of acknowledgement from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Noted
- b) **East Sussex Fire Authority** - The Town Clerk advised of the receipt of the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Policy. Noted
- c) **Relate - South East Sussex** - The Town Clerk reported on a thank you letter received in respect of the grant awarded. Noted.

6958 Dates of the next cycle of meetings

Full Council	12 th December at 7.30pm.
Planning Committee	as and when necessary

6959 Resolution

Cllr. Carter proposed that owing to the confidential nature of the next items of business to be transacted the press and public be excluded from the rest of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Piper and agreed by all.

6960 Confidential Matters

- a) **Council Offices - lease of premises**
- b) **The Wannock Centre - rent**
- c) **Personnel Matters**