

UNADOPTED

POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 17 September 2007 in the Council Chamber, 49 High Street, Polegate at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllr. J. Rogers (Mayor), Mrs C. Berry, Mrs J. Bigsby, G. Carter
M. Cunningham, J. Harmer, Mrs D. Joy, R. Martin, Mrs M. Piper,
Mrs J. Voyce, T. Voyce and T. Wright

4 members of the public

7683 Apologies

Cllr. S. Barber, Cllr S. Shing.

7684 Declarations of interest

There were none.

7685 Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 20 August 2007

Cllr. J. Harmer reserved minute number 7654. During the course of the discussion to which this minute number refers Cllr. Harmer believes an allegation of racial prejudice against the council was made by Councillor S. Shing which was not recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the 20 August. Cllr. Harmer requested that a record of the allegation should be made. It was therefore agreed that Cllr. Harmer should make a written statement for retention in the Clerk's office.

7686 Matters arising from the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 20 August 2007

Minute no. 7656 – Flat at Joan Hughes Court. Council had written to both East Sussex County Council (ESCC) and Wealden District Council (WDC) seeking clarification as to the future of the facility. A joint reply from ESCC and WDC had been circulated the contents of which were noted. It was felt that the reply was somewhat ambiguous therefore it was resolved to write a further letter to ESCC and WDC seeking clarification that the facility will continue to be operational for the foreseeable future and requesting statistics on occupancy and usage for the past three years.

The Town Clerk explained that, due to an administrative error, the minute numbers of the meeting held on 9 August 2007 had been renumbered. The minutes had already been approved and as the renumbering does not affect the content it will not be necessary to represent them to Council. This was noted.

In order to allow members of the public the opportunity to speak on any item on the agenda it was resolved that standing orders be suspended.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENDED

The Mayor asked whether any member of the public wished to speak on any item on the agenda.

A member of the public commented that in her experience the usage of the Flat at Joan Hughes Court has been extremely low during the immediate past. This comment was duly noted. There being no other comments from the public the Mayor reinstated standing orders.

STANDING ORDERS REINSTATED

7687 Co-option - Mr Andy Watkins and Mrs Chloe Wise attended for this item

Due to the resignation of Cllr. Mrs I. Scarborough a vacancy has arisen on Council which was duly advertised. By the close of the statutory period, no candidates were forthcoming. Council therefore chose to exercise its co-option right and advertised for candidates willing to be considered. Mr Andy Watkins and Mrs Chloe Wise put their names forward.

The Town Clerk explained that each candidate would be invited to address Council to explain why they wished to be chosen for co-option and to answer any questions. Following this a ballot would be held to determine the successful candidate.

In order to allow each candidate to address Council it was resolved to suspend standing orders.

STANDING ORDERS SUPENDED

The candidates were invited to address Council and answer any questions. At the conclusion of their presentations the Mayor thanked both candidates for their professionalism and enthusiasm and reinstated standing orders so that a ballot could be taken.

STANDING ORDERS REINSTATED

It was resolved that a signed ballot should be held in accordance with standing orders. A ballot paper was duly circulated. At the conclusion of the ballot the Town Clerk announced that Mr Andy Watkins was the preferred choice and would therefore be invited to join Council, once the necessary formalities had been completed.

7688 Financial matters

a) **Approval of the accounts and annual return for the year ended 31 March 2007** – Mr Simon Goacher – Acting Responsible Finance Officer for the period covered by the accounts attended for this item. Council were invited to approve the accounts and annual return for the year ended 31 March 2007. It was resolved to suspend standing orders to allow Mr Goacher to answer any questions regarding the accounts and annual return.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENDED

Mr Goacher explained the basis under which the accounts and annual return had been prepared and commented that the out-turn for the year was in accordance with the expected budget and had resulted in the Council breaking-even with no significant movements either to or from reserves.

A question was raised concerning the amount included in the accounts for insurance premiums which appeared to be out of step with the previous year's actual figure. The Town Clerk agreed to investigate this apparent anomaly and to report back to Council. There being no further questions the Mayor thanked Mr Goacher for his help in preparing the accounts and reinstated standing orders.

STANDING ORDERS REINSTATED

It was resolved to adopt the accounts and annual return for the year ended 31 March 2007 and to authorise the Mayor and responsible officers to sign where applicable.

b) **Monthly Financial Update** – A schedule setting out the cash position of council at the end of August was considered. A question arose regarding a payment relating to an item of a confidential nature. It was resolved to defer discussion on this item until Council were in confidential session.

c) **Accounts for Payment** – Council considered the list of forthcoming items for payment and approved these.

7689 Adoption of minutes of standing committees

Planning of 23 July and 20 August 2007 – the Chair of Planning presented the minutes, reference numbers 7623 to 7631 and 7657 to 7665 respectively. It was resolved to adopt these minutes

Personnel of 7 August 2007 – the Chair of Personnel presented the minutes, reference numbers 7639 to 7646 inclusive. It was resolved to adopt these minutes.

7690 Communications from the Town Mayor

a) The Mayor reported that he had been invited to attend a meeting on the availability of funding organised by Wealden District Council. He asked councillors for suggestions as to what items might be considered for funding.

b) The Mayor has been invited to attend a Service of Thanksgiving on the Diamond Wedding Anniversary of Her Majesty The Queen and Prince Philip at Chichester Cathedral on the 18th November. The Mayor is unable to attend this event and asked if any councillors would like to attend on his behalf.

7691 Notification of matters dealt with as 'urgent'

There were none.

7692 Town Clerk's report

The Town Clerk referred to his report which had been previously circulated and asked if there were any questions. Concerning the offer of tree and hedge packs for planting by 1st Polegate Scouts it was resolved that the Town Clerk should liaise with the Tree Warden to identify suitable sites for planting and to advise 1st Polegate Scouts accordingly.

With regard to the request from a resident in Station Road that a street light in Porters Way be relocated to provide a parking space it was resolved that the Town Clerk should write to the residents in that part of Porters Way to determine whether there were any objections to the relocation. Residents will be given 28 days in which to respond.

A proposal to introduce a schedule detailing all items for action and to report this regularly to council was welcomed by council. It was resolved that the Town Clerk should introduce such a schedule both at full council level and at sub-committee and working group level. It was also resolved that reports from all working groups should be circulated to council for information.

Following the changes to the composition of council it was noted that it would be necessary to amend and re-circulate the make up of the various committees and working groups, once council's newly co-opted member had indicated which groups/committees he wished to join. It was resolved that Cllr. Mrs J Bigsby be appointed to the role of Press Officer. Cllr Mrs J Voyce offered to replace Cllr Mrs C Berry, temporarily, on the Quality Council Working Group whilst the latter was incapacitated.

7693 Report from District Councillors

District Cllrs. Mrs O Shing and D Broadbent had been invited to attend. Cllr Mrs O Shing sent apologies but had produced a short report which was circulated to council. It was noted that Cllr Mrs O Shing had expressed a desire to work closely with Polegate Town Council and council hoped that

she would be able to attend meetings in future to facilitate a process of two-way communication.

7694 Review of Standing Orders

Council's current standing orders were introduced in 2003 and are in need of review. In view of this, the Mayor suggested that a working group be formed to conduct a review, making recommendations for change to council. It was resolved that such a group be formed and Cllrs. Mrs J Bigsby, G Carter, J Rogers and Mrs J Voyce volunteered to be members.

7695 Polegate Partnership

The Mayor noted that a considerable amount of effort had gone into the formation of the Polegate Partnership which at the present time appears to have stagnated. In order that this effort should not be wasted it was resolved that a small working group be formed to consider what could be done to resurrect this work and Cllrs. J Harmer, Mrs D Joy, R Martin and J Rogers volunteered to be members.

7696 Correspondence

The various items of correspondence that had been circulated were noted. Cllrs. J Harmer, Mrs M Piper and J Rogers volunteered to attend the District/Parish Conference on 21 November 2007.

7697 Dates of the next cycle of meetings

Full Council	15 October 2007
Planning	as and when required

7698 Resolution

It was resolved that due to the confidential nature of the next business to be transacted the press and public be excluded from the rest of the meeting.