

UNADOPTED

POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Town Council** held on **Monday 17th October 2005** in the Council Chamber, 49, High Street, Polegate at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs. J. Harmer (Town Mayor), Mrs. C. Berry, G. Carter, Mrs. E. Coleman, M. Cunningham, M. FitzGerald, K. Gatrill, Mrs. D. Joy, R. Martin, Mrs. V. Morson, Mrs. M. Piper, Mrs. I. Scarborough, Mrs. J. Voyce, T. Voyce and B. Winn.

Barry Knights – Town Co-ordinator, Press 1 and the Town Clerk

6906 Apologies for absence

None were received

6907 Declarations of interest in any items on the Agenda

Declarations of interest were declared as follows

Cllr. Cunningham – a personal interest in agenda item 10(b)(ii)

Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough – a personal and prejudicial interest in item 7

Cllrs. Mrs. J. and T. Voyce – a personal interest in item 7

Cllr. Mrs. Piper – a non-prejudicial interest in item 7

6908 Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Monday 12th September and the Special Meeting of the Council held on Monday 26th September 2005

The minutes were presented for perusal and adoption.

6870(d) – Cllr. Mrs. Voyce queried the minute as she did not believe that the Assistant Town Clerk gave that information. The Town Clerk said that he could not say what information the Assistant Town Clerk had given but that his belief was that the information had been included in the Councillors' briefing notes. This was clarified and agreed and therefore the minute stands.

6871, 6874 and 6882 – The Town Mayor queried the fact that there is no differentiation in the minutes between the two Councillors Voyce, but the Town Clerk said that there is differentiation in that female Councillors are given their titles. It was agreed that this is the protocol and that no changes should be made.

6875 – The Town Mayor reported that the minute should read birth of the son of the Chairman of the UK China Federation ... not the birth of Cllr. Shing's son. It was agreed to amend the minute.

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

6909 Matters arising from the minutes

- a) **SALC training – copies of handouts** – The Town Clerk reported that SALC will not provide papers to those who have not attended the event. Noted
- b) **Presentation evening for the best garden and best kept allotments** – The Town Mayor reported on a very successful evening which was well received and “long may it continue” he added
- c) **Sustainable Communities Bill** – The Town Clerk circulated a letter from the Town's MP, Norman Baker, stating that he is supporting the Early Day Motion but also pointing out they are rarely an effective means of campaigning. Noted.

- d) **Advance warning of highways etc. work in the Town** – The Town Clerk circulated a letter in response to the request for advance notice of works to be undertaken. Noted. Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough was concerned at the statement in the letter that the Council is to undertake grass cutting activities next year when a final decision has not actually been taken. The Town Clerk agreed to take that up with the writer of the letter.

6910 Youth Services

The Town Clerk presented a report from a meeting he and the Assistant Town Clerk had had with the Participation Worker this afternoon to update on the outreach work currently being carried out on Tuesday evenings and spoke to it. Whilst the work currently being carried out is welcomed concerns were expressed about the winter evenings and it was agreed to contact the Youth Services team to: -

- i) ask if the mobile unit can come back
- ii) ask if more use be made of the pavilion
- iii) identify that a group of 22 youths is too large to bus out to events and to encourage the provision of local services
- iv) promote the idea of a supported youth club, and
- v) to arrange another meeting of the Youth Working Group with Jan Murphy and Caroline Hoveka

6911 Street Light Renewals

The Town Clerk presented a schedule of renewals and repairs considered to be urgent for this year's programme. The Town Mayor proposed that the Town Clerk's recommendation be adopted and it was: -

resolved to adopt the Town Clerk's recommendations.

Cllr. Mrs. Berry thanked the Town Clerk for his resilience and perseverance in getting the decision to replace the light damaged by a refuse vehicle in the Service Road to The Centre agreed. Cllr. Mrs. Coleman reported on a street light failure in Station Road which the Town Clerk said he would follow up with the Highways Agency's contractor. Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough thanked the Town Clerk for walking the street light proposals but asked the Town Clerk to ensure that he has walked the route before the matter comes before the Council in the future.

6912 Access on to Council owned land

Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough left the meeting for this item

The Town Clerk presented a draft letter but also reported that he has not yet received a legal opinion on it. There was also a concern about the complete removal of a boundary fence from a property in Spurway Park. The Town Clerk advised that he has also sought advice on what can be done about that. It was resolved: -

- a) that once clearance has been received from the NALC legal service letters are sent by recorded delivery (signed for)
- b) to obtain quotes for a chain link, or similar, fence to protect the Council's land from the removed fence in Spurway Park and to decide what to do at the next meeting of the Council

6913 Broadband and Web Site

The Town Clerk advised that the Broadband had been successfully installed last week and that the Web Site was now top priority for development.

It was agreed to hold a Web Site Working Group meeting at 4.00pm. on Wednesday 26th October at 4.00pm.

6914 Town Map

The Town Clerk reported that Willingdon School is making progress on the Town Map and that the project takes place between 3 and 4 on Thursdays and it was resolved: -

that the Town Mayor and Town Clerk make arrangements to visit the after school club after half term

6915 Financial Matters

a) Internal Audit - The Town Clerk reported on the resignation of Mr. Wallwork and recommended the appointment of Mr. G. Parish as a successor who would carry out a similar audit at a similar price to that set up by Mr. Wallwork. Members also received a copy of Mr. Parish's proposal. The Town Mayor reported that he and Cllr. Mrs. Voyce knew of Mr. Parish and supported the Town Clerk's recommendation. Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough was concerned that the financial systems in place in the office did not produce a full audit trail and proposed that the Town Clerk researches and reports back to the Council on the purchase and installation of a software package. This was seconded by Cllr. Cunningham. It was resolved: -

- i) to appoint Mr. G. Parish as internal auditor
- ii) that the Town Clerk investigates and makes recommendations regarding software packages for the Council's financial records
- iii) to invite Mr. Parish to a future Council Meeting.

b) Grant Requests

i) **Relate - South East Sussex** - The request together with copies of the charity's accounts was considered by members and it was proposed by Cllr. Carter that a grant of £50 be made. This was seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Joy and it was resolved to make a grant of £50.

ii) **Polegate and Willingdon Branch - East Sussex Disability Association** - The Town Clerk presented a response to the Council's standard conditions for grant aid which were inconclusive as no accounts were presented. Cllr. Mrs. Berry gave a background of the history of the group and the organiser's part in it. Councillors were sympathetic but it was still felt there is a need for more information and it was resolved: -

To write again to get more information and to ask the Eastbourne Head Office of the Charity to explain why the Branch receives no support from the Head Office.

c) Report of the Accounts Panel - September quarter - Cllr. Cunningham reported that he had examined the financial records and that everything is in order and that there are no discrepancies. He reported that the Town Clerk had found a small error (£1) in the Petty Cash and that this had been corrected. Noted.

d) Consideration of new items for the 2006/2007 budget - The Town Mayor reminded members to consider items for next year's budget and to let the Town Clerk have them so that they can be costed. Noted.

e) Highways Verges Grass Cutting - The Town Clerk advised that we have now received the County Council's agreement to the Town Council assuming responsibility for the Town's grass verges. After some consideration it was resolved: -

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| i) | to take on responsibility for highways verge grass cutting |
| ii) | to obtain quotes on the existing specification in the first instance |
| iii) | to ask Willingdon PC if they will let us have a copy of their specification |

6916 East Sussex CC – South East Plan – Part 2 consultation – The Town Clerk had previously circulated a copy of the summary proposals, a briefing note from the District Council and a copy of the consultation questionnaire to all members. Cllrs. Voyce and Mrs. Piper had attended the discussion meeting organised by Wealden District Council on 12th October and reported back. The Town Mayor reiterated that the questionnaire can be sent in for each individual Councillor, but if they are given to the Town Clerk he will be able to complete a composite return for the Town Council based on an analysis of all the responses and return that as well. This was agreed by all.

6917 Adoption of Minutes of Standing Committees

a) Planning of 4th October 2005 – Cllr. Voyce presented the minutes for perusal and adoption.

6891 – Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough asked for an update on the application for the flats in the car park and the outstanding issues. Cllr. Martin reported that Wealden DC has approved the new application. However members are still concerned about the state of the pathway and the overhanging vegetation and the state of the car park. It was then proposed by Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough, seconded by Cllr. Voyce, and resolved: -

To write to the owners, the owner's agent and the rights of way officer regarding the state of the car park and the walkway

Cllr. Mrs. Berry apologised and declared a prejudicial interest in this matter and declared that she had neither spoken nor voted on the issue.

Cllr. Voyce then moved that the minutes be adopted and this was agreed by all.

b) Personnel of 11th October 2005 – Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough presented the minutes for perusal and subsequent adoption.

6900 – Cllr. Mrs. Voyce reserved this item for clarification and it was resolved: -

to move this item to the confidential section of the agenda.
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6918 Communications from the Town Mayor

The Town Mayor reported on visits to the Gardeners Club, the Eastbourne and District Scouts AGM and the judging of a best pumpkin competition organised by Glenisters. The Town Mayor also encouraged members to attend the presentation by the County Council regarding the consultation on the future of the Gilda Resource Centre. The Town Mayor also reported that as he will be away on a Residential Course on the date of the next Council Meeting he wished to move the meeting forward one week to the 14th November and this was agreed by all. It was also agreed

to hold this and all future Full Council Meetings at 7.00pm

The Town Mayor reminded members to be mindful of the Remembrance Day Service and it was agreed that the Town Clerk would check out the arrangements with St. John's Church. The Town Mayor also reported that the "Advertiser" is no longer distributed in North Polegate and another route will be needed to distribute the Newsletter in that area. It was then resolved: -

To write to the local scout group to ask if they will be willing to carry out a distribution in exchange for a contribution to their funds
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6919 Reports from County and District Councillors

Cllr. Martin reported that there has been little activity at the County Council because things quieten down through the summer but of course the consultation on the future of residential care in the County, which includes the Gilda Resource Centre, is ongoing. Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough expressed concerns about the Polegate Nursing Home being sold to BUPA and that it appears that it will no longer be taking NHS patients as a matter of course, but when the Nursing Home was opened the NHS said that it would be used to provide NHS elderly care. It was resolved: -

To send a letter to both MP's to get them to investigate what the situation is with the Polegate Nursing Home and the NHS

Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough asked the Council to consider that the Council follows the Fair Trade procedure when making purchases as far as practicable, or at least to look at it as an option. It was agreed to give this matter consideration. Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough also reported that the District Council is making inroads into reducing budgets to keep Council Tax increases as low as possible.

The Town Clerk advised that he had, today, received an e-mail from the County Council seeking support from all their stakeholders in seeking a review of the government grant received by the County and it was resolved: -

To write to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in support of the County Council.

6920 Reports from representatives to outside organisations

a) Standards Board - Cllr. Carter reported on the last meeting of the Standards Board Committee and the results from the recent consultation on the future of the Code of Conduct. Cllr. Mrs. Scarborough added that there are concerns about all Councillors being required to declare ALL of their interests and to have them included on the Webb. She said that this would discourage people from standing as Councillors especially in the more local context.

b) Moving Forward Event - Cllrs. Martin and Winn reported on the "Travellers" event they attended at Uckfield. They said that it was poorly attended and not very professional, but at least Cllr. Winn identified that he had learned more about the law relating to Travellers and the provision of sites for them.

c) Polegate Partnership - It was resolved to suspend Standing Orders to enable Barry Knights to speak. **Standing Orders were suspended.** Barry reported that the Healthcheck is at a standstill as he is waiting for the social worksheet to be completed. He said that the Healthcheck would soon be completed and then work could start on the vision and the action plan. Barry was asked about where we stood with the planting on the Hailsham Road? Barry said that he has two sponsors at the moment and that two are held in abeyance as he is keen to obtain funding from Wealden DC as Polegate has not received its fair share. He said that a grant application was completed last week. There were concerns about the overall funding package and it was agreed that this be referred to the next Full Council meeting. Cllr. Mrs. Berry asked for an update on the information signs on the Polegate Bypass and Barry gave an update including concerns about the initial response received from Interroute. Barry also spoke of the involvement of the Business Forum and said that he wished the group to consider forming a Chamber of Commerce for the future because of the standing of Chambers nationally. **The Town Mayor thanked Barry for his report and reinstated Standing Orders.**

6921 Updates from Working Groups and Lead Councillors

Buildings Working Group – Cllr. Carter reported on the last meeting of the Group, notes of which had been previously circulated. After discussion it was agreed as follows: -

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| i) | Wannock Road Rec. - to approve the recommendation to pay the additional sum required for the hedge removal to be completed, but that the Group look at the provision of security fencing for when the work is being carried out. |
| ii) | Brightling Road - to check out the wording of the licence for the Model Engineering Club with the Council's Solicitor and to see if the Public Liability Insurance can be lifted to £5m. |
| iii) | Notice boards - that a notice board is needed in the "Oakleaf" area and that the site in front of Bexley Court is the best, subject to consultation |
| iv) | Council Buildings - to consider the arrangements for re-letting 51 High Street in the confidential section of the agenda |

Cllr. Gatrill explained that he is waiting for two quotes for the gates at Brightling Road, one for replacement and another for repair. Noted.

6922 Matters dealt with as "urgent"

The Town Clerk advised that there had been none

6923 Town Clerk's Report

a) Bring Forward Schedule – after considering the matters on the schedule it was agreed: -

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| i) | to complete a check on the Cricket Club's garage and to ensure all equipment is removed from the Council's garage by 31 st October |
| ii) | to take the Council Help Point off the schedule and to advise Mr. Carden that the visit will no longer take place |
| iii) | to leave it to the Working Group to try to obtain a less expensive option than those currently received for the signs at the level crossing |

b) Vandalism Report – The report had been previously circulated and was noted. The Town Clerk also advised that the second tree planted in recognition of the Millennium had now been broken off at ground level.

c) Town Clerk's Qualification – The Town Mayor reported that the Town Clerk has now completed the CiLCA qualification and had been awarded a Pass. He then congratulated the Town Clerk and presented him with his certificate.

6924 Correspondence requiring action

a) East Sussex Association for the Blind – The Town Clerk reported on an invitation to members to attend the AGM of the Association which is being held at the Heathfield Community Centre between 2.00pm. and 4.00pm. on Monday 21st November. A copy of the Annual Report is in the office for perusal.

6925 Correspondence for noting only

a) East Sussex CC – Temporary Road Closure notices – Otham Court Lane, Coldthorn Lane and Summer Hill Lane

6926 Dates and times of the next cycle of meetings

Full Council	14 th November 2005 at 7.00pm.
Planning Committee	as and when necessary

6927 Resolution to take next business into confidential session

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

6928 Confidential Matters

- a) Council Offices - lease of premises**
- b) Personnel Matters**