

Minutes of the ANNUAL TOWN MEETING held in the ANZAC ROOM, Meridian Centre, Peacehaven,
Tuesday 26th April 2016 at 7:30pm.

Members

Councillors: Wayne Botting Jackie Harrison-Hicks
Daryll Brindley Andy Loraine
Rachael Coles Ron Maskell
Jean Farmiloe (Vice Chair) Dave Neave
Reg Farmiloe Amber Robertson
Brian Gosling Robbie Robertson (Chair)
Lynda Hallett Melvyn Simmons
Job Harris Andy Smith
Ann Harrison

Present:

Councillors: Rachael Coles Jackie Harrison-Hicks
Jean Farmiloe (Vice Chair) Andy Loraine
Reg Farmiloe Ron Maskell
Lynda Hallett Dave Neave
Job Harris Robbie Robertson (Chair)
Ann Harrison Melvyn Simmons

ESCC Cllr's: Phil Howson
Ian Buchanan

In Attendance

Claire Lacey – Town Manager
John Kocher – Corporate Services Manager & RFO
Sally Landers – Administration Officer

12 x Councillors, 2 x ESCC Councillors, 3 x Council staff and 25-30
members of the public

ATM006 OPENING REMARKS & REPORT BY TOWN MAYOR Cllr. ROBBIE ROBERTSON

The Mayor Cllr. R Robertson welcomed everyone to the Annual Town Meeting stating the past year had been very busy and that a new administration had been elected in May 2015

Cllr. R Robertson listed some of the events that had taken place during the past year with photographs displayed on the i board:-

- Visit to the Vietnam Embassy by some Councillors at the invitation of the Vietnam Ambassador
- Presenting the local 'Beach School' with yellow high viz vests
- The centenary year for the WI celebrations
- Issuing badges to commemorate 100 years of Peacehaven
- The Christmas festivities which raised £3,500
- Some Councillors exercising at the outdoor gym
- A visit by the High Sheriff
- Two representatives of Peacehaven winning the High Sheriff Award
- The renovation of the Town pillars
- The very successful Easter Parade, this being a first for Peacehaven with 400 in the parade
- The Cliff Top Projection with guests from Isernhagen in Germany and Withensea, this being the most northerly town on the Meridian Line
- The creation of the Dog Agility Park which is a first for a Town Council

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ATM007 TO APPROVE & SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2nd JUNE 2015

Cllr. R Maskell proposed
Cllr. R Robertson seconded

Approved

Debate:-

A member of the audience queried if the 2015 Annual Town Meeting had been advertised as only three members of the public attended as they were not aware the meeting took place

Cllr. R Robertson stated that due to elections held in May 2015 resulting in purdah restrictions, the Annual Town Meeting was held in June 2015

Cllr. R Maskell noted that 'apologies' had not been recorded at the meeting in 2015

Cllr. R Robertson confirmed apologies from Councillors were not required for an Annual Town Meeting and made reference to Standing Orders

ATM008 ANNUAL REPORT

Policy & Finance Committee

Cllr. J Harrison-Hicks presented the report and requested questions from the audience

Alan Sargent – West Ward

The resident noted the second paragraph of the report and queried why the name of the Councillor who 'stepped in' as Town Manager pending permanent replacement had not been recorded

Cllr. J Harrison-Hicks confirmed the Councillor had not been named in the report

The resident stated he had resigned as a Councillor in order to take up the post of Town Manager without remuneration and that he had been appointed by the Council, with a contract agreed by SALC. The resident noted that the cost of a locum Town Clerk/Manager would be in the region of £40k and that this action had saved Peacehaven rate payers £35k suggesting this be put towards new premises for the Grounds Team and Peacehaven Horticultural Society

ESCC Cllr. P Howson proposed a vote of thanks to A Sargent

Cllr. R Robertson noted the proposal

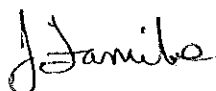
Mae Pond – North Ward

The resident queried the title 'Town Manager' as opposed to 'Town Clerk'

Cllr. R Robertson noted the cost of employing a Town Manager was less than that of a Town Clerk

Cllr. J Harrison-Hicks noted there had been a Town Manager/Clerk post previously

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Cllr. R Coles noted that as a resident, before being elected as a Councillor in November 2015, she would like to express her thanks, to the Council, that they had kept within budget

Leisure & Amenities Committee

Cllr. A Loraine presented the report and requested questions from the audience

Stella Newman

The resident noted that the budget was overspent

Cllr. R Coles stated the overall variance was within 0.1% of budget

Sue Griffiths

The resident queried why the decision agreeing to the Dog Agility Park had not gone through the Leisure & Amenities Committee

Cllr. R Robertson confirmed a decision at full Council over rides that at Committee level

Mae Pond – North Ward

The resident queried the total cost of the Dog Agility Park and questioned if it was £3,000 or £5,000

Cllr. D Neave requested clarification, on behalf of the resident, with regards to the Leisure & Amenities overspend

J Kocher stated unplanned events occurred which could not be forecasted, the water leak at Centenary Park, the provision of £5,000 for the Neighbourhood Plan, increased maintenance costs and equipment repairs for example however other spends were within budget

Cllr. D Neave noted that it should be possible to recover some of the cost as a result of the water leak at Centenary Park

Planning & Highways Committee

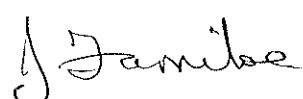
Cllr. J Harris presented the report and requested questions from the audience

ESCC Cllr. P Howson noted the construction sites at 1 and 2 South Coast Road were working beyond 6pm and burning waste, which contravened regulations

Cllr. J Harris confirmed that this had been reported to the appropriate authorities

Cllr. A Harrison queried the statistics within the report stating she had recorded that on eight occasions, applications which had been refused by Planning & Highways had subsequently been approved by Lewes District Council

Cllr. D Neave noted that outline planning permission had previously been agreed with regards to 1 South Coast

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ATM008 ANNUAL REPORT continued

Cllr. J Harris stated he had attended the meeting at Lewes District Council and raised objections to the application and that the annual report was compiled from information on a spreadsheet received from the Committee Clerk

Cllr. R Robertson noted that Peacehaven Town Council were only advisory with regards to planning applications

The resident A Sargent suggested forwarding the spreadsheet with the list of planning decisions to Cllr. A Harrison

ATM009 LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Local organisations were present at the Town Meeting with information available for the public

ATM010 ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Mae Pond – North Ward on behalf of Peacehaven & District Residents Association

Dog Agility Park - £3000 was paid out for materials. What materials would that be? I went to the location but could see no sign of equipment

The total cost of materials for the Dog Agility Park was £3000. This includes a ramp, a podium, posts for dogs to wind in and out of and a memorial wall for people to place plaques to remember their beloved friends. Costs are available for residents to utilise this service via the Town Council Offices. This will bring in a small revenue for the Town. Photographs have been shown this evening as part of the Mayors Report for the year.

Debate:

The resident noted she had viewed the Dog Agility Park and was not impressed

Cllr. R Coles stated she had spoken to residents who had requested a safe play area for dogs and that the equipment which has been installed is suitable for the size of park. Cllr. R Coles noted there had been good feedback from users of the Dog Agility Park

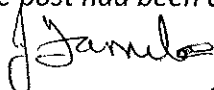
A member of the audience stated there was a lot of dog waste in the park which was unhygienic as children also play in the area

Cllr. R Robertson stated there will also be a 600 brick memorial wall in the park whereby owners can remember their pets

S Griffiths stated the park had been used for picnics in the past and that the Council had consulted dog owners and not the residents in the locality. The resident noted there was a yellow pipe protruding from the ground which had been reported four years ago and as yet had not been actioned. The resident queried the cost of maintaining the Dog Agility Park and noted that a post had been attached to a resident's fence without permission during construction

Cllr. R Robertson confirmed there will be some revenue from the purchase of memorial plaques for the wall and that the post had been attached to the fence following advice from the contractor

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Stab vests provided to security – If the stab vests were found to be malfunctioning, surely you could claim compensation eg money back?

The vests for Security Guards were delivered during March 2016, but proven to be faulty as the date for Kevlar padding had expired. They were subsequently returned to the manufacturer. As of April 25th 2016, no money has been paid to either ESG Security, nor to Stiles Harold Williams for the provision of Stab vests for security Guards in the Meridian Shopping Centre.

Debate:-

Cllr. R Robertson stated that following an incident at the Meridian Centre a meeting took place and as a result it was agreed stab vests should be purchased from the Mayor's Fund. Cllr. R Robertson stated that the Council did not receive the correct type of stab vest and they were subsequently returned and the money refunded

A member of the audience stated that the security staffs' employer should pay for the stab vests

Cllr. R Robertson stated there were concerns with regards to this situation and now that the issue had been highlighted by the Mayor, Stiles Harold Williams had now agreed to pay for the stab vests

Cllr. R Coles noted there were concerns with regards to the safety of residents visiting the Meridian Centre

A Sidders stated he worked for an independent security company and that it was not advisable to wait for Stiles Harold Williams to take action. A Sidders also highlighted the delays in police response times due to cut backs

Cllr. R Coles queried the police response time with regards to the knife incident in the Meridian Centre

Cllr. R Robertson confirmed the response time was 27 hours

ESCC Cllr. P Howson stated that there had been cuts to police funding noting that fear of crime is low and Sussex is a safe place with a low crime rate

Where is the money from the Old Pier Fund?

This is not something we have any current information about. Officers will investigate and respond at the next available agenda item at Policy and Finance Committee. Please accept our apologies for not being able to provide an answer this evening.

Debate:

Cllr. J Harrison-Hicks confirmed there were no records of this fund within the Council and it required further investigation

Cllr. R Robertson suggested this may refer to Brighton & Hove Council and the West Pier Fund

M Pond confirmed this was the fund she was referring to

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Cllr. R Robertson stated the fund paid for the i360 and that the revenue from this would reimburse the West Pier Fund

When you donated £500 to Brighton Housing Trust, did you check their account first?

The Mayors Charity event was held at the Meridian Centre in January 2016, to support local homeless people. The Brighton housing Trust provides key workers and mental health workers in the town, towards which a donation of £500 was made. As one of the Mayors chosen charities to support this year, it was not a grant donation and therefore bank account statements were not required.

Debate:-

M Pond noted that she had not seen anyone sleeping on the streets in Peacehaven

Cllr. R Robertson stated that some homeless people slept in their cars

Cllr. R Coles stated that, as a trustee of Homelink, there are homeless people who do not sleep on the streets as they are being accommodated in bed and breakfast establishments. Cllr. R Coles noted the high cost of rent in this area and that there are a lot of homeless people in Peacehaven

Cllr. R Maskell stated that on average there are 50 families who are un-intentionally homeless and that some are located to Eastbourne and other temporary accommodation. Cllr. R Maskell noted that the figure varies between 45-65 families who are un-intentionally homeless

Cllr. R Robertson noted there are three refuge houses for women in Peacehaven

Cllr. R Maskell noted that other authorities have the right to take over properties in order to house families

Residents are complaining about the lack of information for the Annual Town Council Meeting – there is lack of information on the Banner board at The Dell and on the Website. Why is this?

During high winds in March 2016, the advertising board at the roundabout on the Dell was blown down, some of which was found in the road and causing a health and safety concern. It was unable to be repaired and quotations for replacement had to be sought. Due to an IT error, BACS payments for the Banner board to be replaced at The Dell were delayed, the board has only been scheduled for replacement this week, which has subsequently delayed the advertising of the Annual Town Council Meeting. The meeting has however been advertised in all notice boards around the town, on the Council Website as well as on social media. Since withdrawing the printed publication from the Town, the Council does appreciate that some members of the Community do not have access to the internet and this has caused some dissatisfaction. We are looking into other medium to promote all events for the future and we sincerely apologise for any lack of information.

Debate:-

M Pond noted that a resident was unable to access the Council website to receive information

A member of the audience confirmed the information was not on the website and noted that despite the damage to The Dell banner board, events such as the Murder Mystery were still being advertised on the crater fence and not the Annual Town Meeting

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Cllr. R Robertson suggested the Annual Town Meeting was held on the same Tuesday each April and noted that the sponsor who was going to replace the damaged banner board at The Dell had withdrawn

M Pond stated that she had been informed by the Council that the banner advertising the Annual Town Meeting had been mislaid

Sue Griffiths – North Ward

Does Peacehaven Town Council still meet the conditions of being a 'Quality Council'?

We as a Council are committed to change. We aim to work closely with residents, to improve life skills for those less able, to improve all public areas, including those at rest. We aim to sort out the collective problem solving that puts your issues on the agendas of this Council. Once on our agenda, you can rest assure it will be looked at with an open mind. We are moving forward to create a better environment within Peacehaven, taking on board everyones needs. We are aiming to develop Peacehaven into a safe and visitor friendly town, where people want to visit. This in itself will improve business, add value to housing and ensure we receive the credit the town deserves for providing quality of service.

To be considered as a Quality Council, we have to provide evidence to the County Accreditation Panel of Quality Councils. We have to pass specific quality tests, as well as hold a current registration.

The Quality Parish Scheme has in fact been suspended. As soon as it is reinstated, or revised, we are very interested in joining for the following reasons – In order to gain Quality Council Status, the Town Council must demonstrate it has the attributes, ability and capacity, to take on the enhanced role and responsibility expected.

Any Parish or Town Council would have to demonstrate a number of points - to support its residents, work closely with the District Council, County Council as well as the other Towns and Parishes that surround it.

The Council would have to test its processes and procedures against the national standard.

The Council will have to be found to be competent and well run.

The Council will have to have validate its ability to be a valuable partner and achieve more for its community.

As soon as Peacehaven Town Council has the relevant information and financial ability, we will reapply. As this will request the support of residents, this could very well be a recommendation of the Neighbourhood Development Planning Steering Group.

Debate:-

S Griffiths noted that the Quality Council plaque was still on display in the Council offices

C Lacey confirmed this had now been removed

S Newman noted that the new Quality Parish Scheme had been running for 18 months

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Cllr. R Robertson stated this would be a policy decision for the Council and that Peacehaven would require a Town Manger with the relevant qualification in order to apply and that there were different levels of entry

S Newman stated that entry to the scheme did not require the Town Manager to be qualified

Cllr. R Coles proposed that Peacehaven Council should apply at the appropriate level once agreed

Cllr. R Robertson agreed with Cllr. R Coles

Caroline Reid - North Ward

At the Leisure and Amenities Committee Meeting on 12th April 2016, it was agreed that Councillors accept a proposal IN PRINCIPAL to install a wheelchair swing at The Dell Childrens Play Park. If the funding had been offered to the Town as a donation and the site already researched as the most suitable location, why was this not agreed when it is so obviously required in Peacehaven, as well as being the Councils responsibility to be Disability Compliant – to abide by the law – allowing access and inclusion for all residents to our public areas.

The Council agreed in principal to a wheelchair swing being installed in the Town, subject to further information on the running and maintenance costs to the tax payer. The cost of the equipment has been sourced, although the installation and running costs will be assessed within a working group, with delegated power to proceed on this one project. The Site at The Dell Childrens play area is being discussed at a working group meeting in the Council offices next week and both residents and local disability support groups have requested they be involved. Peacehaven are currently advising other towns on how to access this research and have been in contact with Seaford Town Council, who have stated we are 'inspirational' in leading the way forward to support disabled people in the South of England. We have been promised funds from various organisations who wish to support disabled children, to have their legal right to play in a park. We do not wish to stop anyone from donating money to this worthwhile project, as it will allow the swing to be installed sooner. We will honour any donations given to the Council to be ringfenced and earmarked just for the swing. We will be holding fund raising events and volunteer parties throughout the next few months, to involve as many residents both able bodied and wheelchair users, to make our parks wheelchair friendly, supporting inclusion and accessibility for all age groups.

Debate:-

S Griffiths queried why the disability swing was discussed if required by law

Cllr. R Coles noted that the ground at The Dell was not level and wheelchair access had to be taken into account. Cllr. R Coles stated that the swing must be included within a play area so as not to isolate children and that other equipment was also being investigated

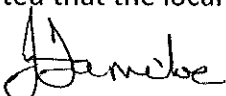
Cllr. A Harrison suggested Centenary Park would be a more suitable location

Cllr. R Coles noted the Council do not own the land at Centenary Park

S Griffiths stated that no Councillors attended the Accessibility meetings in the past year

A member of the audience noted that no-one had been invited to any Council access meetings. The resident stated that the local Access Group had been overlooked and as a consequence could not continue

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and requested a Councillor be named to represent the group as Access Officers at Lewes District Council had been made redundant. The resident also noted the poor condition of the highways

M Pond queried how the disability swing would be protected

Cllr. R Maskell noted he had attended Access meetings and that he had information with regards to available grants. Cllr. R Maskell thanked the Access group for its work in the past and noted that he was sorry that the group was no longer active

Cllr. M Simmons stated that highway issues should be reported to 'Fix My Street'

M Pond stated she did not have access to a computer

Cllr. M Simmons confirmed ESCC were responsible for the highways

Cllr. R Robertson stated that the Policy and Finance Committee had agreed a paper reporting method for residents to report highway issues

ESCC Cllr. P Howson noted that residents could also report issues at the monthly Council Surgery and at the Council office

J Carden stated that his road required a lot of repair work and that a blind lady had fallen due to a curb stone not being replaced. The resident noted that he had reported these issues and they had not been resolved. The resident stated he had removed weeds himself to improve his road and that pot holes on the A259 were an issue, road signs had not been repaired and there was inadequate signage with regards to the cycle route. The resident stated the elected Councillors were not aware of these issues

Cllr. R Robertson stated there are three tiers of government, Peacehaven Town Council, Lewes District Council and ESCC and that Peacehaven was putting forward new ideas

A member of the audience queried if Councillors had any influence with regards to the highways

Cllr. R Robertson confirmed ESCC were responsible for the highways

J Carden queried the responsibility of the Planning & Highways Committee

Cllr. R Robertson confirmed the Planning & Highways Committee was only advisory

Cllr. J Harris noted the only connection with highways with regards to the Planning & Highways Committee were dropped curb planning applications

Cllr. D Neave stated he attends SLR (Strengthening Local Relationships) meetings with ESCC and Highway Stewards and he reports missing curb stones and other issues via this meeting

ESCC I Buchanan stated the original curb stones were laid on concrete roads and that ESCC Highways have advised that if a curb stone breaks away from the concrete it is not feasible to replace like for like and therefore tarmac is used. ESCC Cllr. I Buchanan re-iterated that ESCC Highways were not prepared to attach replacement curb stones to concrete roads. ESCC Cllr. I Buchanan noted that two roads per year

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ATM010 ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS continued

should be replaced appropriately and that funds were not available as there were other pressures on the ESCC budget

J Carden stated the information with regards to not fixing curb stones to concrete roads is incorrect as the resident noted he had made a repair using resin without any problems

Cllr. R Coles stated that every ward in Peacehaven has their own Councillors and that contact details are on the notice boards

Cllr. J Harrison-Hicks re-iterated that there are monthly Council Surgeries every second Saturday

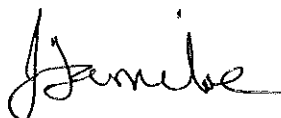
ATM011 QUESTION TIME – TOWN MATTERS ONLY

All matters were covered in the previous agenda item

Cllr. R Robertson introduced local organisations CTLA, Know Dementia, Alan Sidders (Security Advisor), SCDA and CAB should residents wish to have more details

The meeting ended at 21:10

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