

Full Council

Minutes of meeting held in Council Chamber, County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1UE on 21 November 2022 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Councillor Adrian Ross (Chair).

Councillors Graham Amy (Vice-Chair), Sam Adeniji, Robert Banks, Nancy Bikson, Matthew Bird, Liz Boorman, Christine Brett, Julie Carr, Ciarron Clarkson, Roy Clay, Phil Davis, Sharon Davy, Lynda Duhigg, Isabelle Linington, Jim Lord, Sylvia Lord, James MacCleary, Sean MacLeod, Imogen Makepeace, William Meyer, Zoe Nicholson, Emily O'Brien, Laurence O'Connor, Nicola Papanicolaou, Christine Robinson, Geoff Rutland, Richard Turner, Steve Saunders, Christoph von Kurthy and Linda Wallraven.

Officers in attendance:

Robert Cottrill (Chief Executive), Kate Slattery (Solicitor), Sarah Lawrence (Committee Team Manager), Simon Russell (Head of Democratic Services), Ian Fitzpatrick (Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning), Ola Owolabi (Deputy Chief Finance Officer - Corporate Finance), Jennifer Norman (Committee Officer, Democratic Services) and Tim Whelan (Director of Service Delivery).

32 Minute of Silence

The Council paid tribute to the following former Councillors, who had died since the last meeting of the Council: Jackie Harrison-Hicks (who had served as a Conservative District Councillor for Peacehaven East between 2003 and 2019), Josephine Lewry (who had served as a Liberal Democrat District Councillor for Newhaven Denton between 1991 and 2007) and Bob Allen (who had served as a Liberal Democrat District Councillor for Seaford South between 2007 and 2015).

In addition, the Chair advised that today marked the 2 year anniversary of the tragic incident that struck in Newhaven with the sinking of the Joanna C, and that it was important for the Council to take the opportunity to remember the lives lost.

The Council held a minutes' silence in memory of the former Councillors and the fishermen who had died.

33 Minutes

RESOLVED – To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2022.

34 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Burman, Collier, Denis, Gauntlett, Jones, Manley, Maskell, O’Keeffe, Peterson and Rigden.

It was noted that Councillor Banks would arrive a few minutes late.

35 Declarations of interest

Councillor Banks declared a personal interest in Item 11B, Motion: Reducing HGV traffic affecting villages and narrow unsuitable roads, as an employee of the Local Government Association, whose research was mentioned in the written preamble to the motion.

36 Announcements

The Chair advised that a list of his engagements as Chair of the Council held since the last meeting were set out in the agenda. There were no other announcements.

37 Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

38 Questions from members of the public

There were no questions from members of the public.

39 Petitions

There were no petitions

40 Urgent decisions taken by the Cabinet or Cabinet members

There had been not urgent decisions taken by the Leader of the Council under special urgency procedures since the last meeting.

41 Member Attendance

The Chair advised that there were two members, Councillor Gauntlett and Councillor Jones, who were currently suffering with ill health. The Chair wished them a speedy recovery.

Councillor MacCleary moved and Councillor Linington seconded a proposal to approve the absence of Councillor Gauntlett and Councillor Jones from attendance at meetings, due to their current ill health, for a period of up to six months commencing on 21 November 2022 or until the date of the next district election, whichever is the earlier.

The proposal was put to a vote and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED -

To approve the absence of Councillor Gauntlett and Councillor Jones from attendance at any Full Council, committee or sub-committee meeting of Lewes District Council pursuant to Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, due to their current ill health, for a period of six months commencing on 21 November 2022, if needed, or until the date of the next District election, whichever is the earlier.

(Councillor Banks arrived in the meeting at the start of this item and took part in the vote).

42 Notices of motion.

The Chair advised that there were four notices of motion on the agenda, and he outlined the procedure to be followed when debating motions.

42a Motion - Rent to Buy

Councillor Davy moved and Councillor Saunders seconded the motion as set out in the agenda papers in support of the Rent to Buy being specified as an option available for provision of affordable housing in the local plan.

The motion was debated by the Council. There was support for the motion from across the Council, as it was promoting 'rent to buy' as one of a number of options available to the Council for provision of affordable housing, rather than the only option.

The motion was put to a vote and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED – That in accordance with the current National Planning Policy Framework: Annex 2: Glossary Affordable Housing section d), rent to buy is included as an option in the refreshed Supplementary Planning Document that will accompany the new Local Planning housing strategic policies.

(Councillor Adeniji left the meeting at the end of this item).

42b Motion - Reducing HGV traffic affecting villages and narrow, unsuitable roads

Councillor O'Brien moved and Councillor Clarkson seconded the motion as set out in the agenda papers to support ways to reduce the impact of HGV traffic affecting villages and narrow and unsuitable roads.

The motion was debated by the Council. Some Councillors indicated that they could support the part of the motion related to installation of commercial sat navs but could not support the motion as a whole. It was confirmed that it was not possible to have a separate vote on just one part of the proposal. Some concern was expressed on the impact of the motion on deliveries to rural communities; in response, Councillor O'Brien advised that what was proposed

would not affect deliveries.

The motion was put to a vote and carried by 18 votes to 0, with 12 abstentions.

RESOLVED –

1. To ask the Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure to write to Government Transport Minister Mark Harper, asking for the Minister's view on the Local Government's Association's call for HGVs to be required to use commercial satnavs, and expressing this council's support for such a measure;
2. To ask the Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure to write to East Sussex County Council to express this Council's support for the campaign for a strategic lorry route network, similar to the one already adopted by West Sussex; and
3. To ask Council officers to expand the current validation requirements for planning applications for major development, so that routing away from narrow, unsuitable and residential roads and away from villages becomes an integral feature of any planning permission discussed or granted, and is thought about at the earliest possible stage.

42c Motion - Gambling advertising in football

Councillor Macleod moved and Councillor Makepeace seconded the motion as set out in the agenda papers in support of the motion against gambling advertising in football and its impact on the District.

The motion was debated by the Council. The majority of Councillors were supportive of the motion, in particularly recognising the impact of gambling advertising on young people and on mental health, and it was a timely discussion with the start of the World Cup. Some, whilst supporting the sentiment, but did not think it was an appropriate subject for a District Council motion.

The motion was put to a vote and declared carried by 26 votes to 0, with 4 abstentions.

RESOLVED:

1. To express the Council's concern on the influence of gambling in all levels of football;
2. To endorse the action being taken by every local football club in the Lewes District in the support of the [Big Step Campaign](#) which calls for football to drop its unhealthy relationship with gambling;
3. To ask the Council Mental Health Champion and Leader of the Council to write to the Director of Public Health for East Sussex noting the Council's concern about the influence on gambling in football, and ask that the Director of Public Health investigates the effects gambling has on our local community and report back to the Council on actions being taken to address these effects; and
4. That the Council Mental Health Champion writes to the Department of Culture media and Sport and asks them to publish the 2-year delayed

Gambling White Paper as soon as possible.

42d Motion - Fracking and the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty

Councillor O'Brien moved and Councillor Banks seconded the motion as set out in the agenda papers in opposition to fracking and in support of the fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty (FFNPT).

The motion was debated by the Council. Some Councillors advised that they could support opposition to fracking in the district, but did not support the FFNPT at this time, and called instead for local practical actions towards net zero. Other Councillors supported both the motion and actions being taken locally. It was confirmed that it was not possible for Councillors to vote on just part of the motion.

The motion was put to a vote and carried by 19 votes to 0, with 11 abstentions.

RESOLVED –

1. To oppose, as a matter of Council policy, any initiatives with an impact on Lewes District to develop fracking for shale gas and any other fossil-fuel extraction;
2. To endorse the call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty; and
3. To instruct the Cabinet Member for Sustainability to write to UK government ministers and our local MPs to ask them to maintain the ban on fracking and to support the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

43 Written questions from Councillors

One written question had been received in accordance with procedure rule 12 from Councillor Saunders to the Leader of the Council.

Councillor Saunders read out the preamble as set out in the agenda supplement and asked the following question:

“As Leader, can you ask the Director of Service Delivery and his team to investigate further the property at Kendal Court to see if it can provide temporary housing. If does not meet the current criteria set by our Housing Needs Department, can it be considered if there is a way to make the site work better for our community and our most vulnerable families and individuals, as we enter a period of hardship and uncertainty. Can you ask Officers to consider working with the current owners, on any changes that can be undertaken, to bring the facilities up to the required standards, in readiness for an almost inevitable need?”

Councillor MacCleary (Leader of the Council) responded that he did not consider that Kendal Court was fit for the provision of any sort of temporary housing, as a poorly converted office block, and that he had been part of the campaign to stop it being used by Brighton and Hove Council. He advised that Lewes District Council did not have the need for emergency accommodation

places of the type available there. The Council's need was for one, two and three bed homes, which it was progressing with building across the District, and would continue to build.

Councillor Saunders thanked the Leader for the response, and asked if officers had visited the site, and if the Council could engage with the owners to see what the site could be used for or if it could be purchased?

Councillor MacCleary confirmed that Officers and Councillors had visited Kendall Court and it was not suitable for housing, and the conditions of the building and lack of support had resulted in difficulties experienced by residents there. However, he agreed that if the owners wished to approach the Council about the future of the site, they were welcome to do so.

44 Questions to the Leader of the Council

There were no questions put to the Leader of the Council.

45 Ward issues

There had been no ward issues submitted for the meeting.

46 Reporting back on meetings of outside bodies

The following reports had been received on outside bodies set out in the agenda and were noted:

- East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Health Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) (Councillor Brett)
- Wave Leisure Trust – Councillor O'Connor
- Armed Forces Champion – Councillor Davy
- South Downs National Park Authority – Councillor Meyer
- Lewes Citizens Advice Bureau– Councillor Makepeace
- Sussex Downs Line Steering Group – Councillor O'Brien
- LGA People and Places Board – Councillor O'Brien
- South East Councils – Councillor O'Brien
- South East Councils SE Summit – Councillor O'Brien
- Team East Sussex (SELEP) – Councillor Nicholson
- Newhaven Town Deal Board – Councillor Nicholson
- Greater Brighton Economic Board – Councillor Nicholson

Further to her Armed Forces written update, Councillor Davy read out information regarding Councillor Jones, who had served as Squadron Leader Tom Jones in the Falklands, 40 years ago. This included information about his experience of war, serving on a chinook helicopter, which following a 120 mph crash into the sea had left him with long lasting vertebrae damage, and paid tribute to his bravery and service, and that of other armed forces personnel.

Councillor Brett advised that the minutes of the East Sussex Health Overview

and Scrutiny Committee of 22 September 2022 had now been published and encouraged members to read them for a fuller detail of what was discussed and agreed.

Councillor Makepeace advised that since her update on the Lewes Citizens Advice Bureau, its AGM had taken place. She reported that CAB was offering face to face sessions every day in the district. CAB has also indicated its need to plan for a new Lewes location, and asked for early notice of when it would need to move out of Southover House. The CAB had a new website, and all Councillors were encouraged to promote it: www.lewesdistrictca.org.uk.

Resolved – To note the outside body updates.

47 Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting would be held at 6 pm on Monday 20 February 2023.

The meeting ended at 8.18 pm

Councillor Adrian Ross (Chair)