

# **Lewes District Council**



## **Council Agenda**

### **20 July 2011**

The venue for this meeting is wheelchair accessible and has an induction loop to help people who are hearing impaired.

Lewes House, Lewes  
5 July 2011

Jenny Rowlands  
Chief Executive

**Lewes District Council**



# Council Meeting

*Councillors are kindly requested to switch off their mobile phones prior to the commencement of the meeting.*

Note: At the commencement of the meeting the Chair will ask for a period of silence to enable councillors to focus their thoughts on the meeting or to pray silently.

5 July 2011

**To: The Members of the Council**

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of **the Council** on 20 July 2011 at 14:30 in The Chamber, Pelham House, St Andrew's Lane, Lewes when it is proposed to transact the following business:

Please note the date, time and venue.

**1 Minutes**

To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council dated 25 May 2011 (copy previously circulated).

**2 Apologies for Absence**

**3 Disclosure by councillors of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the councillor regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct**

**4 Announcements**

To receive any announcements from the Chair of the Council, Leader of the Council, Members of the Cabinet or the Chief Executive.

A list of the Chair of the Council's engagements since the Annual Meeting of the Council on 25 May 2011 is enclosed.

**Attached Documents:**

[Announcements - Chair of the Council's Engagements Since the Annual Meeting of the Council on 25 May 2011](#)

**5 Questions from Members of the Public**

To deal with questions which members of the public may wish to put to members of the Cabinet in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10 (if any).

**6 Petitions**

To receive petitions from councillors or members of the public in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12 (if any).

**7 Written Questions from Councillors**

To deal with written questions which councillors may wish to put to the Chair of the Council, a Lead Councillor on the Cabinet or the Chair of any committee or sub-committee in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11 (if any).

**8 Ward Issues**

To deal with ward issues which councillors wish to raise. A councillor wishing to raise a ward issue must notify the Chair of the Council prior to the commencement of the meeting in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.8 (if any).

**9 Urgent Decisions taken by the Cabinet or Lead Councillors**

In accordance with Scrutiny Procedure Rule 17, to receive details of any urgent decisions taken by the Cabinet or Lead Councillors since the Annual Meeting of the Council on 25 May 2011.

**10 Recommendations from Cabinet**

To consider the Recommendations from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 31 May 2011 (Minute Extract herewith. Please also see the attached document entitled "Note for Council – 20<sup>th</sup> July 2011") and 12 July 2011 (Minute Extracts to be circulated – if any) (and to receive questions and answers on those Recommendations) and to make resolutions thereon.

**Attached Documents:**

[Recommendations from Cabinet - 31 May 2011](#)

[Recommendations from Cabinet - Document entitled "Note for Council – 20th July 2011"](#)

[Recommendations from Cabinet - 12 July 2011](#)

**11 Notice of Motion**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13 Councillor Saunders has submitted the following Notice of Motion:

**"Timing of Council and Cabinet Meetings and Provision of Training for Councillors"**

The Council notes the following:

The District Council has historically met for Full Council and Cabinet Meetings at 2.30pm. This results in many working Councillors having to take time off from their paid employment or own businesses to attend. Although it assumed legislation demands that employers give their employees reasonable time off to attend meetings and many do, this is not the case in law. In the present poor economic climate it is not reasonable to expect such favour from hard-pressed employers that require their employees to give nothing less than 100% to remain competitive in an increasingly depressed marketplace. Several of my colleagues and I on all sides of the Council, choose to take the time off as annual leave and therefore give up a large percentage of the holiday time they have available to spend with our families. This is one of the reasons that many members of the community are dissuaded from ever becoming Councillors in the first place and subsequently reduces the cross-section of the membership of the Council as a whole and how it reflects the views of the entire electorate. Indeed, it is difficult for members of the public to similarly attend meetings and engage in the running of the Council at all, when a large section are at work themselves.

Engagement and consultation with the community and transparency in the operation of Council and Cabinet Meetings is essential to retain the confidence of electors and promote the work we do.

The availability of accessible training opportunities is important too, for new and experienced Councillors alike. The majority of these sessions, that have been offered in the past and have continued since the beginning of this Council, have taken place during the working day. This exacerbates the problem of attendance by working members and results in a low take-up of the important training that is essential for us to do the job that the public have elected us to do.

I would ask the Council to resolve the present situation by adopting the following Notice of Motion:

To enable greater engagement with members and the public:

1. The timing of the meetings of Full Council be changed from 2.30pm to 5.30pm from the next meeting of the Council on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2011
2. The timings of the meetings of the Cabinet be changed from 2.30pm to 5.30pm from the next meeting of the Cabinet on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011
3. That opportunities for training, consultation and presentations to members and the public be provided at every opportunity, both during and outside normal working hours".

*(Note: The proposals set out in 1 and 2 above aim to rescind a decision that was made by the Council at its meeting held on 16 February 2011 which was within the previous six months and, in respect of which, there has not been a significant change of circumstance. Therefore, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.1 on page D16 of the Council's Constitution, the Notice of Motion has been signed by five Councillors namely, Councillors Chartier, Dean, Gauntlett, Gray and Osborne, who support the Motion and recommend its adoption by the Council).*

## **12 Corporate Head – Housing Services – Delegated Power**

Council is asked to approve an addition to the delegated powers given to the Corporate Head - Housing Services which will allow him to arrange for the carrying out of homelessness reviews internally or to outsource them when to do so would be more efficient or convenient. The additional delegated power to be inserted as new paragraph (m) on page U26 of the Constitution:

“(m) to carry out and/or arrange for the carrying out of homelessness reviews in accordance with Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended).

The Corporate Head – Housing Services may carry out such reviews personally or may instruct another council officer to carry out such a review or may instruct a third party individual or body to carry out such a review on his/her behalf.

A third party individual or body may be instructed to carry out such a review by the Corporate Head – Housing Services personally or by a council officer acting on his/her behalf.”

Jenny Rowlands  
Chief Executive

For further information about items appearing on this Agenda, please contact Catherine Knight at Lewes House, 32 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2LX. Telephone 01273 484118.