

Full Council

Minutes of meeting held in The Sports Hall, Lewes Leisure Centre, Mountfield Road, Lewes, BN7 2XG on 15 July 2021 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Councillor Christine Brett (Chair).
Councillors Adrian Ross (Vice-Chair), Sam Adeniji, Graham Amy, Robert Banks, Nancy Bikson, Matthew Bird, Liz Boorman, Roy Burman, Julie Carr, Roy Clay, Chris Collier, Phil Davis, Sharon Davy, Johnny Denis, Lynda Duhigg, Stephen Gauntlett, Tom Jones, Isabelle Linington, Jim Lord, Sylvia Lord, James MacCleary, Imogen Makepeace, Milly Manley, Ron Maskell, William Meyer, Zoe Nicholson, Emily O'Brien, Laurence O'Connor, Ruth O'Keeffe, Nicola Papanicolaou, Keira Rigden, Christine Robinson, Richard Turner, Steve Saunders, Christoph von Kurthy and Linda Wallraven.

Officers in attendance:

Robert Cottrill (Chief Executive), Oliver Dixon (Head of Legal Services), Sarah Lawrence (Senior Committee Officer) and Simon Russell (Head of Democratic Services).

16 Minutes of the meeting held on 27 May 2021

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 May 2021 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

17 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Macleod, Miller, Peterson and Rutland.

18 Declarations of interest

Councillor Banks declared a personal interest in agenda item 10(a) – Motion on Planning Reform, as an employee of the LGA whose figures he intended to quote in his speech in support of the motion. He remained in the meeting and took a full part in the discussion and vote.

Councillor O'Keeffe declared a personal interest in item 10(c) – Motion on Disability Access, as she has a son with a disability. She remained in the meeting and took a full part in the discussion and vote.

19 Announcements

1. The Chair advised that a list of her engagements as Chair of the Council since the last meeting were set out in the agenda, and these were noted.

2. Councillor MacCleary (Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Prosperity) advised that the Council had received a Town Deal award offer from the Government worth up to £19.3million, to deliver the 'This is Newhaven' Town Investment Plan. The Council would provide detailed business cases against each of the strategic programmes in the plan to draw down funding for each element. Councillor MacCleary praised the contribution of all partners, the work of the Chair of the Town Deal (Chris Ketley) and Peter Sharp (Head of Regeneration) and his team.

20 Urgent items

The Council was asked to consider the item 'Member Attendance' as an urgent item, which had been circulated to the members.

21 Member Attendance

The Chair advised that Councillor Peterson had been unwell for a while and was hoping to return to meetings soon, but in case this was not immediately possible she moved and Councillor Burman seconded a recommendation to approve his absence beyond 6 months.

Resolved – To approve the absence of Councillor Peterson 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 his current ill health, for a six month period commencing on 7 September 2021, in the event that such an extension is required.

22 Questions from members of the public

No questions had been received from members of the public.

23 Petitions

No petitions had been received.

24 Election of the Leader of the Council, in accordance with Council Procedure Rules

The election of Leader of the Council had been triggered by Councillor MacCleary notifying to the Chief Executive his resignation as Leader of the Council with effect from 4 pm on 15 July 2021.

Two nominations were received during the meeting for the position of Leader:

Councillor Nicholson, proposed by Councillor MacCleary and seconded by Councillor Robinson.

Councillor Linington, proposed by Councillor Boorman and seconded by Councillor Davy.

The nominations were then put to the vote, with 20 votes for Councillor Nicholson and 16 votes for Councillor Linington, with one abstention.

In accepting her election as Leader, Councillor Nicholson thanked Councillor MacCleary for his excellent leadership over the last year, and advised that she would retain the portfolio for finance and her Cabinet would be unchanged as follows:

Councillor James MacCleary – Deputy Leader and portfolio holder for regeneration and prosperity
Councillor Emily O'Brien - Portfolio holder for planning and infrastructure
Councillor Julie Carr - Portfolio holder for recycling, waste and open spaces
Councillor Matthew Bird - Portfolio holder for sustainability
Councillor William Meyer - Portfolio holder for housing
Councillor Johnny Denis - Portfolio holder for communities and customers
Councillor Ruth O'Keeffe - Portfolio holder for tourism and devolution
Councillor Chris Collier - Portfolio holder for performance and people

RESOLVED – That Councillor Nicholson be elected as the Leader of the Council and her Cabinet appointments be noted.

25 Urgent decisions taken by the Cabinet or Cabinet members

There were no urgent decisions.

26 Notices of motion.

26a Motion 1 - Planning Reform

Councillor Nicholson moved and Councillor Banks seconded a motion to call on the Government to put both the climate and biodiversity emergencies at the heart of planning reform.

Councillor Davy moved and Councillor Burman seconded an amendment to add a point 4 to the letter to Government to 'Retain and strengthen our Town and Parish adopted Neighbourhood Plans'. This was agreed by Councillor Nicholson and Councillor Banks and incorporated into the motion.

In addition, it was requested that Councillor O'Brien provide all Councillors with a copy of her letter to Government should the motion be approved and this was agreed.

The motion was debated and was supported from across the Council.

The motion as amended was put to the vote and declared carried.

Resolved:

1. This Council resolves to ask the Government to:

- 1) Use the opportunity of planning reform to introduce an approach that puts the climate and biodiversity emergencies at the heart, that works with not against the Environment Bill, and which retains local control.
- 2) Remove the system of housing targets.
- 3) Remove the punitive housing delivery test.
- 4) Retain and strengthen our Town and Parish adopted Neighbourhood Plans.

That the Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure be requested to write to Robert Jenrick MP, Secretary of State for MHCLG, setting out these requests, and to the two local MPs, asking them to support these requests and champion them on our behalf in parliament.

2. That a copy of the letter to Government be sent to all Councillors.

26b Motion 2 - Healthy Homes and Places

Councillor O'Brien and Councillor O'Connor seconded a motion supporting the implementation of Healthy Homes and Places principles, which had been promoted by the Town and Country Planning Association. A section of the original motion in relation to writing to the Government had been omitted from the agenda version of the motion, but was included in a copy of the proposed motion tabled at the meeting.

It was asked if a copy of the letter to the Government could be provided to Councillors and this was agreed. Assurance was sought that the Council would apply these principles to its own house building and would support the provision of green space alongside developments, and Councillor O'Brien confirmed that it was the intention of the motion that the principles should apply to the Council.

The motion was debated and was supported from across the Council.

The motion, as tabled, was put to the vote and declared carried.

Resolved:

1. This Council resolves to:
 - Strive to ensure that the principles of Healthy Homes and Places are met, in order to create the highest quality places for residents which will be a fitting legacy for future generations;
 - Review related policies, processes and procedures as part of current Local Plan review, and develop and adopt new policies, to ensure that all new development is in line with the Healthy Homes and Places Principles;
 - Make the Healthy Homes and Places principles an integral part of

Council decision making on housing and planning; and

- Ensure the next review of the corporate plan includes healthy homes and places as a priority.
2. This Council also calls on the Government (via a letter from the Leader of the Council) to:
- Return full powers of permitted development conversion of buildings to resident use to local councils.
 - Support the Healthy Homes Bill being promoted by Baron Nigel Crisp.
3. That a copy of the letter to Government be sent to all Councillors.

26c Motion 3 - Disability Access

A Disability Access motion had been put forward by Councillor Macleod, who was unwell and absent this evening. In his absence, Councillor Denis moved and Councillor O’Keeffe seconded the motion to support improved access for disabled residents within the District.

Some concern was expressed in relation to the section of the motion relating to asking East Sussex County Council to stop issuing licenses for A-boards, on the basis of the potential effect on local businesses, and that there were instances they could be safely accommodated.

Councillor Manley moved and Councillor Saunders seconded an amendment that the County Council be asked to not licence any more A-boards ‘unless there was sufficient space for a wheelchair, mobility scooter or pushchair’. This amendment was not accepted by Councillor Denis and Councillor O’Keeffe and was withdrawn. Instead Councillor Denis amended the motion with the agreement of Councillor O’Keeffe to state that the County Council be requested to ‘effectively manage new A-board permissions’.

A suggestion was made that the point related to Civil Parking Enforcement be removed as these powers had already been adopted. However, Councillor Denis wished to see this retained in the motion to encourage their use in all appropriate areas across the District and this was accepted.

The motion, as amended, was put to the vote and declared carried.

Resolved:

- 1) To offer information to businesses about the 2010 Equality Act, and how they can adapt their business to be more disability friendly.
- 2) To investigate how it can work with Town and Parish Councils and the County Council to better grit town and village footpaths on key routes so that everyone can safely access their local amenities.
- 3) To investigate how it can work with travel companies to provide better

access to public transport especially in rural areas where often buses are not frequent and often finish early.

- 4) To include accessible play equipment in all new play areas and as part of play area refurbishments, wherever possible.
- 5) To be mindful of disability access in the design of any new public space.
- 6) To ask the Cabinet Member for Communities and Customers to write to East Sussex County Council:
 - To request that it works with councillors and officers from all councils on how they can make their villages and towns more disability friendly including by providing more dropped kerbs and tactile crossings.
 - To request that it effectively manages new A-board permissions, to help reduce and restrict pavement clutter.
 - To ask that it use powers granted by Central Government to tackle pavement parking as Civil Parking Enforcement.
- 7) To ask the Cabinet Member for Communities and Customers to write to Network Rail and our rail network partners to bring forward plans to make our stations fully accessible.

27 Written questions from Councillors

No written questions had been received from Councillors.

28 Questions to the Leader of the Council

No verbal questions were put to the Leader of the Council.

29 Ward issues

There were no ward issues raised for this meeting.

30 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 Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Councillor Gauntlett
- SDNP Authority AGM – Councillor Meyer
- SDNP Authority meetings on transfer of Seven Sisters Country Park – Councillor Meyer
- Impact Seaford – Councillor Brett
- Seaford Head Nature Reserve Committee – Councillor Brett
- Mental Health Champion – Councillor Macleod
- 3VA – Councillor Cllr Macleod

31 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Full Council was scheduled to take

place at 6 pm on Monday 20 September 2021.

The meeting ended at 7.22 pm

Councillor Christine Brett (Chair)