

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL
ON MONDAY 10th JANUARY 2022 AT 7PM.

Present: Councillor J Dabell (Town Mayor)
Councillor A Peacock (Deputy Town Mayor)
Councillors Amos, J Belsey, Mrs Belsey, Mrs Bennett, Duly, Mrs Farren, Favor*, Mrs Mainstone, Matthews, Mrs Mockford Ody, Osborne*, Scott*, Sweatman, Visser, Whittaker and Woodgate.

* = absent

Others present: Town Clerk, 4 Representatives of the youth sports awards recipients and Mr and Mrs Railton; organisers from the Poppy Appeal

41. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were none

42. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

RESOLVED: To accept the following apology and reason for absence

Cllr Favor	Self isolating
Cllr Scott	Delayed at Work

43. **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES**

It was proposed to include in the minutes the fact that the zoom recording stopped part way through minute number 40.

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes, with the inclusion of an annotation that the zoom recording had stopped during minute 40, of the meeting of 4th October and that the Town Mayor sign them as such.

44. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no new declarations

45. **TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Town Mayor advised that representatives of four of the groups who had been awarded Youth Sports Grants were present, they had already had a photograph with the Town Mayor and were then invited to advise the Council how the money had been spent. Representatives from Ashurstwood FC Juniors, East Grinstead 4th Scout Group, East Grinstead Swimming Club and NTC Resolution spoke to the Council and thanked the Council for the awards. The Town Mayor hopes to visit the remaining groups over the coming weeks or so in order to see them in action.

The Town Mayor then referred to the Poppy Appeal - Lynda and John Railton who organise the town appeal each year were present. The total raised was £16,266.05.

Which in the aftermath of pandemic is really good. The Town Mayor thanked them and congratulated them on their total raised.

46. TO RECEIVE SUCH COMMUNICATIONS AS THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL MAY DESIRE TO LAY BEFORE THE COUNCIL

The Leader advised that he simply wanted to remind the Council of the standing committees on Thursday to discuss and recommend the Budget to the Council meeting at the end of the month.

47. TO DISPOSE OF ANY BUSINESS OUTSTANDING FROM THE LAST MEETING

There was none

48. PRINCIPAL COUNCIL UPDATE – MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cllr Ian Gibson West Sussex County Council -

Cllr Gibson spoke to the following brief:

Points to Cover

- WSCC Schools,
- Adult Education,
- Social Care,
- Public Health,
- Roads (Transport),
- Minerals & Waste,
- Fire & Rescue Priorities
- Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations
- A sustainable and prosperous economy
- Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential
- Making the best use of resources (Climate Change)

Delivery through partners – budget £1.6Bn IMBERDOWN – Imberhorne + Crawley Down New Housing Developments There have been numerous expressions of concerns from residents over the existing pressures on infrastructure (traffic, school and doctors places) and biodiversity and the impact of ongoing and future development. Ongoing construction of 140 new homes in Felbridge and 120 in Crawley Down will add to the existing pressures. A further three sites (SA19, SA20 and SA22), giving 800 new homes by 2031, are included in the soon to be announced Mid Sussex Sites DPD; and more to come in the District Plan Review to 2038. SA19 – (200 homes).

Key issues are the access on Crawley Down Road in Surrey, the impact of the traffic generated by the development on highways, loss of biodiversity and vehicular traffic across a bridleway. SA20 – (550 homes). Key issues are the impact on highways, impact on the strategic gap between East Grinstead and Crawley Down, and loss of biodiversity. The viability of much of the site is dependent on a land swap between WSCC and the developer to provide an access off Imberhorne Lane opposite Heathcote Drive. The WSCC land can therefore be regarded as a ransom strip and must be valued accordingly. The developer has offered a land swap to support the transfer of the middle school to Imberhorne Lane and a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been agreed. The SoCG was not subject to call-in, but a formal decision to proceed with the land swap will be. There is resident support for the move

of the middle school and the extent to which the land swap is necessary to enable this relocation to happen is something that needs to be formally evidenced by WSCC. SA22 – (50 homes) There is a significant question over the viability of the proposed access. Inclusion in the DPD acknowledges that the sites are suitable for housing, but does not fix the quantum.

The main role of the County as a statutory consultee for the DPD are in school provision and highways. I am currently investigating the extent of strategic planning for school places (see below) and the extent of WSCC analysis of highways impacts on the A22 and A264 School Places The three primary schools in Imberdown are all over-capacity now according to figures published by WSCC (Planning for School Places 2021). 250 new homes are currently under construction within the District and another 750 in the wider area (200 Hill Place Farm; 550 Copthorne West). The construction of a new all through primary school at Copthorne West is being considered but this will be linked to the relocation of Fairway Infant School and the earliest date for completion is 2024 (quoted in April 2021). Clearly, there is a serious cause for concern over the existing increase in demand for places even before the Sites DPD places an extra 800 new homes by 2031 in the District.

Traffic is assessed to be the major contributor to carbon emissions in Mid Sussex and adequate provision of school places within communities has the potential to make a significant contribution to reducing the road miles travelled. Capital projects rely almost exclusively on S106 contributions. Recent investments in school places by WSCC have centred on increased/improved SEND provision. Alongside this there is continuing growth in EHCP applications with over 15,000 pupils with special needs (out of 177,000 students). Highways County Strategic Road Network The recent highly disruptive major works at the Felbridge junction were authorised by Surrey CC. I have written to their highways director to criticise the timing, length and management of the works.

According to the manager of the new housing site on Copthorne Road, the works could have undertaken during the lockdown. I visited the site on several afternoons when no work was in progress, suggesting that the work could have been completed more quickly. Contractors have to pay to close the carriageway and I have suggested to WSCC that the scheme should be changed from a fixed daily charge to a rapidly escalating fee structure to focus the contractor on early completion.

Many residents have written to me about the state of the carriageway surface on London Road at and either side of the Imberthorne Lane junction. Full resurfacing of this area is scheduled to start in February and will run from Yew Lane to the County border, just before the traffic lights. This includes an extension requested by Cllr Russell. There will be traffic disruption, but hopefully residents will appreciate the improvement. Local/Rural Road Network Many cars travel through Crawley Down and Turners Hill to avoid the congestion at Felbridge. Speeding on Crawley Down Road in Felbridge and Hophurst Lane/Vicarage Road in Crawley Down is a big concern of residents. I am pushing for the latest generation of mobile ANPR SIDs to be purchased and deployed on the local roads around the District. The WSCC Cabinet Member for Highways has agreed to discuss these ideas with Sussex Police. Speeding problems on B2028 Turners Hill Road are expected to be reduced with the installation of two signalised pedestrian crossings by the developer.

WSCC draft Transport Plan 2022 to 2026 The draft Plan identifies the problems of traffic congestion on the A22 and A264 as priorities without offering any financially viable improvement schemes. The cycle lane installed and removed on London Road has highlighted the problems facing any attempt to improve traffic flow within the current highway boundary. The draft plan anticipates that speeding on rural lanes will be addressed through “driver behaviour”. Consultation closed in October and the Plan is due to go to Council in February. Community Highways Schemes I have

supported a scheme to improve the pedestrian safety at the Park Road/Maypole Road/ Crescent Road junction. The scheme has a good chance of being funded based on the assessment score, although the lack of walking plans for the primary schools in the area limited the possible score. I have suggested that EGTC deploy the WSCC shared SID there when they next have it.

If the 550 homes go ahead on Imberhorne Farm, the impact on Park Road should be assessed as part of the transport plan. Junction/Networking Modelling The quality of the current traffic models and simulations is poor, particularly for networks. Model validation based on data for a single day needs to be challenged more effectively when outline or full applications are received and appropriate mitigations argued for. Health Centres/Doctors Residents regularly report issues with access to Doctors and there is a very negative perception of the Modality Group. The national changes to health and social care mean WSCC is taking on additional responsibilities. The WSCC model for delivery is through a range of partners and providers. There is no evidence that the situation here is worse than elsewhere in the county (or country). There are a large number of planning applications for 60+ bed Nursing/Care homes in the District at present.

Gatwick I support an economically strong Gatwick and believe that technology will deliver sustainable alternatives to the current kerosene burning engines. The key points that I am pursuing are the elimination of night flights, the giving up of the safeguarded land to the south of the main runway and more recognition of the adverse impacts of airport traffic on, and off-airport parking in, local villages. Despite the adverse reception to the Northern Runway Project (NRP) in the recent consultation, and the continuing impact of the pandemic on air travel, Gatwick's stated position is that they remain committed to submitting the DCO later this year.

The other major interest this year concerns the CAA FASI (Future Airspace Strategy Implementation) programme which will be considering proposals for new flightpaths. Gatwick have asked for the flightpaths relating to the NRP to be included.

Standen Landfill 25,000 lorry loads of construction waste to travel along Imberhorne Lane, Saint Hill Road and West Hoathly, and back over next 2 years. My proposal for temporary traffic lights between the Site and the access to Standen House on safety grounds was not accepted. To avoid conflict with school traffic on Imberhorne Lane, the access times for the site were restricted to 09:30 to 14:30 in term-time. Other Fly Tipping (Furze Lane) – failure of local Police to recognise the opportunity to investigate. Watershed funding– Blocked drains/gulleys & general highways/pavement issues The appointment of Connected Kerb to provide EV charging points. Residents should be encouraged to give their views on where charge points should be located.

Waste/ Recycling Centres moving to an online booking system (not East Grinstead).

Centre Parcs. Rampion 2 : This is a major extension to the existing off-shore Windfarm near Bognor (Rampion 1). It is projected to provide green electricity for 1M homes (cf 350,000 homes Rampion 1). The CLCs and their budgets are no more. The new format is the Locality meeting and covers the whole of Mid Sussex. The next meeting is in Haywards Heath Library on 10th March. It would be good to have questions that relate to East Grinstead to balance those from Burgess Hill residents”

Cllr Gibson was thanked for his work to get the A22 (Imberhorne Lane lights to the county border resurfaced), he acknowledged this and said Cllr Jacquie Russell had been a factor in getting this agreed. He remained concerned that this is not planned work and unplanned work can be delayed.

There was discussion as to the road repairs process and the need to change to make contractors and utility companies to pay appropriately for delays on the highway caused by their works.

Cllr Gibson was thanked for his practical suggestions to the potential planning application at Crawley Down Road.

The Deputy Town Mayor gave a vote of thanks to Cllr Gibson for attending the meeting and giving his ward update.

49. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEES

Cllr Visser Proposed the Planning Minutes as listed in the papers, He thanked his Vice Chair particularly for his support and diligence in scrutinising plans. He advised that the Committee had received a presentation from Barrett David Wilson on Monday concerning the site off Crawley Down road. The committee had given excellent scrutiny to what was a poorly presented plan. The developer was sent away with things to think about before any submission could be made.

Cllr Woodgate thanked his committee and proposed the Minutes of the Public Services Committee. Comments were noted that it was good to see progress on the railway station access for all, and that the Queens Walk toilets were understood to be opening to the public next week.

Cllr Mrs Farren thanked her committee and proposed the minutes of the Amenities & Tourism Committee. She gave an update on the Jubilee fountain redevelopment project being furthered by the East Grinstead Society, She paid tribute to their work and specifically Mr Whalley who had put much time in to this. She reiterated that the Town Council were not part of the project at this time as we were not the owners of the land nor the fountain, but the Council are 100% supportive of the project as a whole. The Council at this stage have not agreed to take forward any financial obligation to maintain the fountain. It may be that as the project continues it returns to committee for later consideration. She also encouraged everyone to read the article by Mr Whalley in EG Living this month as it outlines the project and gives good history to the fountain.

She also referred to the Queens Platinum Jubilee committee and updated that the 5th June East Court Live will be part of the Town Celebrations and in addition she was organising a meeting with stakeholders to establish what is happening town wide and this meeting would be taking place over the next week or so. Future updates will follow with the committee.

She thanked the committee and Mr Quenault who was working hard on the Queens Road Cemetery. The Town Clerk and County Councillor Jacquie Russell who's persistence on the St Margaret's Loop project was unblocking obstacles.

Cllr Sweatman proposed the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Meeting. He thanked the Committee for their work on the Committee.

In response to a question it was explained that there was expected be an underspend on the budgeted capital expenditure, but that there would be an overall overspend as the reinvestment of capital in to a savings account is required to be shown as capital. The overspend is expected to be in the region of £70,000.

RESOLVED: To accept the minutes and decisions therein of the below meetings:

	Date	Page Nos	Minute No
(a) Planning	06/10/2021	85-91	102-107
(b) Planning	25/10/2021	92-100	108-114
(c) Planning	15/11/2021	101-108	115-121
(d) Public Services	02/12/2021	109-115	122-134
(e) Planning	06/12/2021	116-121	135-141
(f) Amenities & Tourism	09/12/2021	122-124	142-151
(g) Finance & General Purposes	16/12/2021	125-128	152-169

50. TO AUTHORISE THE SEALING OF THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS:

RESOLVED:

- i) To authorise the seal of the exclusive rights of burial deeds: 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248 and 2249.

51. TO APPROVE THE DATES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS 2022/23

RESOLVED: to approve the dates of council for 2022/23 as shown below:

Annual Town Council – 9th May 2022
 Special Council (for accounts) 23rd June 2022
 4th July 2022
 3rd October 2022
 9th January 2023
 30th January 2023 (budget and precept)
 3rd April 2023

52. TO APPROVE THE COUNCILS INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2022/23

The Town Mayor gave a slight correction to the agenda information, in that there is no actual contract, it is currently an annual roll over, but needs approval.

RESOLVED: Mulberry and Co were confirmed as the Councils Auditors for 2022/23

53. TO REVIEW THE STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

The Town Mayor introduced the item and asked if there were any proposed changes to the Standing Orders for 2022/23. It was proposed that Standing Order 25D should be reworded to take the power away from the Chairman but to allow the interpretation of the standing orders to be made by the public, or in the absence of any public, by a toss of the coin. This would be less partisan, as the Chairman would have an interest in how he interpreted the order. This motion was defeated.

RESOLVED: The Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were confirmed unchanged for 2022/23

The Town Mayor advised that the next meeting was **Monday 31st January 2022** and the meeting was closed at 8.04 pm.

Town Mayor