

**EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL**  
**ON MONDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2024 AT 7PM.**

Present: Councillor S Ody (Town Mayor)  
Councillor J Belsey (Deputy Town Mayor)  
Councillors Barnett, M Belsey, Farren, Gibbs, Gibson, Godwin,  
Hughes\*, Mockford\*, Peacock, Pond, Reeves, Scott\* Visser and  
Whittaker.

\* = absent

Others present: Deputy Town Clerk, 2 members of the public on zoom.

The Town Mayor welcomed all to the meeting.

41 Public Question Time

Questions

A member of the public spoke in respect of minute item 55 in relation to the conclusion of the complaint to the ICO and asked if the Council will make an apology to them in respect of the findings. The Town Mayor advised that the ICO have not instructed that an apology is made and a further complaint is now with the ICO awaiting a decision.

42 Apologies for absence

RESOLVED : Apologies were ACCEPTED from:

Cllr Hughes	Work Commitment
Cllr Mockford	Personal Commitment
Cllr Scott	Personal Commitment

43 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> July and the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 and the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024 were approved.

44 To receive any Declarations of Personal, or Pecuniary Interest.

There was nothing new to declare.

45 Town Mayor's Announcements

The Town Mayor noted his attendance at events and paid tribute to Bob Marchant who had recently sadly passed away and a letter of condolence was sent on behalf of the Council.

The Town Mayor provided a list of events he had attended and reported that he had met many new people, and it was uplifting and a privilege to meet a lot of younger residents from the town including recently at the Adam Dabell memorial football match Thanks was given to the Community and Tourism Team in respect of the classic car show and to the officers who have been covering the Town Clerk's over the past few weeks.

### **MAYOR'S DIARY EVENTS**

**02/07/2024 to 07/10/2024**

Cllr Steve Ody

#### July

1	Local Business Networking Group Workwise
2	Girlguiding Sussex Central Awards Evening
3	Rotary Dinner
6	Tennis Club Finals awards
10	Work experience Imberhorne
11	Riding for the Disabled
17	EG Society
22	Sackville School Year 12 awards
22	St John's Ambulance Awards Evening
26	Annual Art Exhibition – EG Art Society

#### August

1	Mayor's Charity – donation ceremony with East Grinstead Tri Club
3	Meet with First Responders
4	East Court Live
25	Fire Station Open Day
25	Tulafest at Dunnings Mill
29	QVH 80 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Canadian Wing

#### September

1	Vintage Car Show
6	International College of Oriental Medicine Graduation
7	Food and Drink Trail
7	Judge dog show at Dunnings Mill
9	Collation of re Luke Whiteman
12	MSVA
14	Shovelstrode Stables National Racecourse Day
15	East Grinstead 10k
16	EG Music & Arts Festival AGM
17	Quiz Night
18	Launch of new living roof bus shelter
20	BNI meeting
21	Bluebell Railway Beer Festival

23	Mayor's Reception
25	Working lunch with Uckfield Town Mayor

October

2	Being Neighbourly Chequer Mead Wellbeing Agency Networking morning
3	Adam Dabell Memorial Football Match

46 To receive such communications as the Leader of the Council may desire to lay before the Council

Councillor Farren noted the following:

Thanks was given to Councillors and Officers for the summer events and all the hard work that was put into these to make them a success.

Thanks was given to the Deputy Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer for filling the gap between the Town Clerk's and it was noted that the new Town Clerk starts in November at a busy time with Remembrance and Christmas events going on in the town and we look forward to welcoming her.

Cllr Farren noted her attendance at the Queen Victoria Hospital in respect of plans for a new diagnostic centre which were exciting proposals for health care in the town and surrounding areas, although this would potentially bring controversy with the parking in the future when the planning application comes forward.

47 To Dispose of any business outstanding from the last meeting

It was noted that there was none

48 To receive and consider the Minutes of Committees:

The Town Mayor invited the Chairmen of the Committees to introduce their minutes:

*Cllr Ody – Environment and Sustainable Travel Committee & Special Council Meeting*  
The Town Mayor as Chairman of the committee proposed the minutes.

*Cllr Gibbs – Planning*

Cllr Gibbs as Chairman noted planning has been busy and thanked the Town Clerk for her support in the planning meetings. He noted the delegated decision in respect of Cllr. Gibson attending the District Planning meeting to speak against the development of the land south of Crawley Down Road.

*Public Services*

*Cllr. Reeves – Public Services.*

Cllr. Reeves as Chairman thanked the Vice Chair and noted at the last meeting the Committee said goodbye to the former Clerk as it was her last meeting for the Council. Thanks were given in respect of the work being completed in relation to the messages of hope and attendance by Inspector Derek was noted. Cllr. Reeves Chairman of the committee proposed the minutes

*Cllr Peacock - Amenities and Tourism*

Cllr Peacock as Chairman thanked the Committee and Vice Chair. Thanks was given to Sarah Jones, Compliance and Cemetery Manager for her work who recently left her role. The St Margarets Loop project is still awaiting a response from WSCC as they raised some concerns about how the infill will impact the load on the bridges and the Council's consultant has asked for further information from WSCC, but to date no response has been received. The Deputy Clerk will continue to chase this up in the absence of the Town Clerk.

*Cllr Farren - F&GP*

Cllr. Farren as Chairman of the committee proposed the minutes thanks was given to the Vice Chair for stepping into the Chair in her absence at the last meeting.

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes and the decisions included in the following schedule of meeting minutes.

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Page Nos</b>	<b>Minute No</b>
(a) Planning	15/07/2024	49-54	96-102
(b) Special Council	01/08/2024	17-18	38-40
(c) Planning	15/08/2024	55-59	103-109
(d) Planning	28/08/2024	60-64	110-116
(e) Environmental & Sustainable Travel	05/09/2024	65-67	117-124
(f) Public Services	12/09/2024	68-72	125-135
(g) Planning	16/09/2024	73-76	136-142
(h) Amenities & Tourism	19/09/2024	77-80	143-155
(i) Finance & General Purposes	26/09/2024	81-84	156-170

49 To authorise the sealing of the following documents:

RESOLVED: Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial Numbers: 2330, 2331, 2332 and 2333 were approved.

50 To confirm the reappointment of the Internal Auditor

RESOLVED: To approve the reappointment of Mulberry & Co as internal auditors for a further period of two years to 2025/26.

51 External Audit

The external audit report was circulated for the 2023/24 financial year and the Council noted that no issues of concern were raised within the report.

The Responsible Finance Officer was thanked for his work on the external audit.

52 The Old Court House – Party Wall Agreement

The report was noted, together with the plans showing the amended layout in relation to the Old Court House and the current connection to the Old Police Station.

It was noted that if the suggested work was completed then it would be clear the buildings are separate, and this would be in the best interest of the Council.

RESOLVED: The Council approved the revised layout to the Old Court House as noted in appendix B in the report on the understanding that the legal and construction costs will be borne by the developer. This will mean that the Old Court House and the Old Police Station will be separated from each other with no party wall remaining.

53 Sunnyside Barn Youth Club Policies

To review and approve the Social Media, and the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policies for Sunnyside Barn Youth Club attached as an appendix.

It was noted that the Youth Club has been very successful since it opened in September and is proving very popular and is a great asset for the community. The feedback has been very positive and well accepted by residents in the town and there is a waiting list for places currently.

RESOLVED: To approve the Sunnyside Youth Club; Social Media, and the Equality Diversity & Inclusion Policies.

54 To appoint a new Trustee for Queen Victoria Hospital Foundation Trust

RESOLVED: The Council approved Cllr Julie Mockford as the East Grinstead Town Council representative on the QVH foundation trust.

55 To Note the Decision Notice from the Information Commissioner's Office in relation to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

The Council noted the decision notice from the ICO which was circulated with the report. The ICO required the Council to issue a fresh response to the request which does not rely on section 14(1) of the FOIA. This response was sent to the correspondent, who has since queried this, and a further reply has been supplied. Subsequently the correspondent has made a further complaint to the ICO, which is currently being allocated to a case officer.

56 Temporary procedures during the Clerk Vacancy

RESOLVED: The Council agreed the following procedures and actions to be followed between the 17<sup>th</sup> September and the 31<sup>st</sup> October inclusive during the interim period whilst the Town Clerk position was vacant.

- i. The Deputy Clerk or Responsible Finance Officer will clerk any committee and council meetings called and issue agenda in discussion with the Chairmen of the appropriate Committees or Working Groups. they will ensure that decisions at the meetings are followed through where urgency requires (submission of

planning decisions and consultation responses etc). The Deputy Clerk will affix the seal to any deeds or official documents that need to be so during the absence of the Clerk.

- ii. The Responsible Finance Officer will be the point of contact for HR and Financial Matters for the Council.
- iii. The Deputy Clerk and the Responsible Finance Officer will prepare and authorise the Monthly payroll payment in October.
- iv. All other matters (complaints, public enquiries, projects) will be dealt with by either the Deputy Clerk or the Responsible Finance Officer in discussion with the appropriate Chairman or the leader of the Council.
- v. To temporarily amend Standing Order 25 (f) regarding Delegated authority. That the Deputy Clerk or Responsible Finance Officer will replace the Town Clerk
- vi. Both the Deputy Clerk and the Responsible Finance Officer will act as the Proper Officer of the Council during the period of the Clerk vacancy for all other matters where standing orders indicate the Proper Officer functions.
- vii. While the roles of these two post holders does require them to step up during the absence of the Town Clerk, it is recommended that the post holders are awarded the full value of an annual increment in their October pay to recognise the additional duties involved during this period.

The Town Mayor thanked the Council for their deliberations and stated that the date of the next ordinary meeting of the Town Council is Monday 6 January 2024. The meeting was closed at 7.35pm.

Town Mayor