

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

To: Chairman and Members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
Cllrs, Mrs Brunsdon, Hodges, Mainstone, O'Brien (Vice Chairman), Osborne, Saull, Sillitoe, Webster (Chairman), Whittaker and Wyan, Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor.
(Other distribution for information only)

Council Offices
East Court
College Lane
East Grinstead
RH19 3LT
Tel: (01342) 323636
Fax: (01342) 327823
towncouncil@eastgrinstead.gov.uk

13th September 2012

Dear Sir/Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE to be held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, East Court on THURSDAY, 20th SEPTEMBER 2012 at 7.00 p.m. Where possible please clarify any points or raise questions before the meeting with the Clerk to ensure an answer can be given. Please note that the report to supplement the agenda has been emailed to your official town council email address (and is posted on the Town Council website). Please print and bring those papers to the meeting, should you have any difficulty please address this with the Clerk prior to the day of the meeting.

Yours faithfully,



J W Holden,
Town Clerk.

A G E N D A

- 1 Public Question Time. The public are welcome to ask questions of the Committee on matters that are within the Committee's remit. The question should not be a statement and it would be appreciated to be kept short, to maximise the time for other questions. The chairman will call the question from those who are indicating that they wish to speak.
- 2 To commence not later than 7.15 p.m. - Apologies for absence.
- 3 To receive the Minutes of the meeting held on 21st June 2012.
- 4 Any matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the Agenda
- 5 To receive any Declarations of Personal, Prejudicial and Pecuniary Interest.

Items to receive / discuss

- 6 To receive the accounts for June, July and August 2012 (Min. 60 21.6.12).
- 7 Town Council Finances - Position Statement (Min. 61 21.6.12)
- 8 Performance Indicators (Min 62 21.6.12).
- 9 Risk Analysis Report (Min 360 22.3.12)
- 10 Neighbourhood Plan Working Party (Min. 63 21.6.12)
- 11 Consultation Working Group (Min 70 21.6.12)

Items for decision

- 13 Town Council Surgeries
- 14 Project EG Working Group
- 15 Community Revenue Grants (Min 223 24.11.12)
- 16 Recommendations from Committees
- 17 Councillor Allowances Review (Min 290 26.1.12)
- 18 Town Council response to the Atkins Report
- 19 Any other Urgent Business to note

NB The next meeting of the Committee will be held THURSDAY 13th DECEMBER at 7.00pm

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

To: All Members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee (20.9.12)
(Other distribution for information only)

Agenda item 6 : TO RECEIVE ACCOUNTS FOR JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST 2012 (Min 60 21.6.12)

Members are asked to note the account entries titled as Appendix A on separate PDF document.

Agenda Item 7: TOWN COUNCIL FINANCES – POSITION STATEMENT (Min 61 21.6.12)

Members are asked to note that the balances on the various Town Council accounts at 12th September 2012 were, rounded to the nearest £, as below. (L.Y.£688,773)

	Revenue	Capital	Total
	£	£	£
Natwest Direct Res-on demand 1.4%	40,875	115,715	156,590
Santander Time Deposit 18 mths 2.29%	50,000		50,000
NatWest Capital Reserve – on demand		97	97
Natwest Current – on demand	36,325	3,185	39,510
RBS Term Deposit 36 mths 3.85%	250,000		250,000
Natwest Term Deposit 18 mths 3.00%	150,000		150,000
Natwest Term Deposit 12 mths 3.25%	175,000		175,000
Total	702,200	118,997	821,197

Agenda item 8 : PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Min 62 21.6.12)

Details of Performance Indicators in respect of responsibilities falling under the purview of Finance & General Purposes Committee are set out below for the period June to August 2012 inclusive. The comparable figures for the same months in 2011 are shown in brackets alongside.

Members are asked to note this report.

Item	June	July	August
Invoices paid within 30 days	90% (96%)	96% (98%)	98%(100%)
Total staff sickness in days	0 (2)	3 (0)	0 (2)

Agenda Item 9: RISK ANALYSIS REPORT (Min 360 22.3.12)

At the meeting of committee on 22nd March 2012, members considered the biannual Risk Management Report that identified the highest rated risks to the Council that were targeted to be addressed in the year to 31st March 2012. The risk register (available for inspection on file 6/11/1 or from the RFO on request) details the progress and actions that have been taken in the last six months together with any newly identified risks.

In addition there was a specific risk assessment during the last six months for the Diamond Jubilee and we provided assistance to MSDC for the Olympic torch relay. Both events were well planned and executed.

There has been movement on the following risks in the last six months :

- **Requirement for Highways Licensing** – Amenities Manager has organised a ‘global’ licence with WSCC Highways which covers all Council structures/furniture which are situate on a highway.
- **Computing** – Training requirements in excel, access, webmail and outlook. This risk was identified because of our increased reliance on these programmes. Training is ongoing but main users Alison and Katrina have already completed one course and, together with Nigel, are booked for future courses.
- **Computing** – Implement web filter – this will be addressed on change of server which is scheduled for the second half of 2012/13 financial year.
- **Title deeds** – this risk identified the need to detail in the Asset Register the precise nature of our title to the Council land and buildings. Work has commenced and this action is scheduled for completion by 31/03/2013.
- **Tenants/User Agreements** – Amenities Manager has separately reported to A & T on the review of business rates which is currently ongoing with MSDC. When this is complete we will be able to proceed with a review of our existing tenancy agreements.
- **H & S Risk assessments for public rooms** – We are compliant with Fire Regulations and Public Entertainment licences which involve independent inspection of our premises. Tenants’ will be responsible for their own rooms and this will be addressed in the review of our tenancy agreements already referred to.
- **Public conveniences** – This risk refers to ‘sharps’ bins and has been addressed by the cleaning contractors for the King Street facilities.
- **Web sites** – we have checked compliance with Data Protection and the new ‘cookies’ regulations.

During the last six months we have identified two new risks as below:

- **East Court foul drain** – Amenities Manager has reported on this to Amenities & Tourism Committee and is in the process of obtaining quotes for a new drain. Our insurance company have been notified and are keen for us to expedite the work.
- **Risk of employment tribunal costs** – this risk has been indemnified in the last 5 years through our contract with Peninsula UK . However the cost of £25000 for 5 years for this cover, plus HR advice, is considered by your officers to be disproportionate. We are currently reviewing this arrangement which is due to be renewed in February 2013.

Members are requested to note this report.

Agenda Item 10: NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WORKING PARTY (Min 63 21.6.12)

Regular meetings of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have continued through the summer. Following the Council’s tendering procedure AR Urbanism has been appointed to oversee the process of reviewing studies which have been undertaken and

a number of reports which have been generated in the past. ARU will produce the final Plan according to an agreed timetable.

The consultants will also review the results of the 3 surveys conducted both on-line and face to face by Councillors in the High Street. The final survey on Housing and Infrastructure Development concluded on 23 July two days after the Atkins Report was made public. Councillors have participated in a review the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and this too will form a part of the plan.

A number of written submissions have been received from residents and interested groups; these will also be reviewed as part of the process.

We anticipate presenting the final plan to full Council early in 2013 prior to submission to MSDC. Consultation and examination will follow prior to a referendum in which residents will be able to accept or reject the plan in its entirety.

A yes vote of more than 50% is required in order for the plan to be adopted. A no vote would render East Grinstead vulnerable to uncoordinated and ad hoc development rather than a carefully phased plan of sustainable action to meet the needs of our town. Every effort will be made to ensure the plan put forward will receive approval from the electorate.

We remain optimistic that we will be in a position to adopt our NP in late autumn 2013.

Members are asked to note this progress.

Agenda Item 11 : CONSULTATION WORKING GROUP (Min 70 21.6.12)

Since the last meeting consultation responses have been made in respect of:

West Sussex county council local waste plan: on 7th August

Thameslink southern franchise: on 16th August .

These were circulated to members and reported to the Public Services Committee.

Current papers awaiting submission are: Gatwick Airport PR-NAV and localisation of council tax support, effect on local preceptors. Both to be submitted early October and members with comment are urged to send their comments via the Consultation group members (Cllrs Webster, O'Brien, Whittaker, Sweatman for both and Cllr Mrs Brunson for the PR-NAV).

Members are asked to note this update.

Agenda item 12: SPORTS DEVELOPMENT GROUP

The Sports Development Group have met on three occasions since the completion of the sports development framework. The networking group facilitated by the Town Council is alternating venues between the different sports clubs in the Parish. The group is currently chaired by Cllr Whittaker and clerked by the Town Clerk, although in the longer term it is hoped that the sports groups will take over the governance roles. Representation from around 20 clubs regularly attend along with Councillors, a representative from the District Council, the sports editor for the EG Courier and Observer and the schools sport liaison officers.

The group is going from strength to strength with members sharing advice and experiences, grants and sponsorship opportunities identified and helping to resolve each others problems as well as the networking benefits.

The groups minutes are available on file 5/18. The most recent meeting was in June and the next scheduled for November.

Members are asked to note this report

Agenda Item 13: TOWN COUNCIL SURGERIES

In late 2011 Town Councillor surgeries were temporarily suspended by the Neighbourhood Plan working group while consultation for that project stepped up pace. It should be noted, however, that some Councillors continued to attend the usual surgeries during this period. Councillors held surgeries in the Library with the permission of West Sussex County Council to meet with residents and assist with queries relating to the services delivered by any one of the three tiers of local government serving East Grinstead. During the recent surveying for the neighbourhood plan, councillors have appreciated more the advantage of meeting and talking in a more high profile place on Saturdays.

It is now proposed to reinvent the surgeries in a different way. Surgeries in the Library were often attended by only a few residents and was deemed to be tucked away and not most forefront in residents minds. To be really useful and an arms length conduit to all three councils services the following is proposed:

Once a month "surgery" in the High Street on a Saturday morning. These could be cross party (therefore non politicising) supported by other services from West Sussex or Mid Sussex, the Mid Sussex wellbeing team have already indicated that approximately quarterly they would be keen to take part.

The purpose of the surgery would be to engage with the residents and not only talk about the issues that concern them but provide greater access to the services offered by specifically District and County council. The Town Council is prepared to facilitate these surgeries by the offer of a laptop and a portable shelter (which can be used at other events). Residents would be able to take leaflets / receive advice and or signposting from members or officers and discuss matters with their elected councillors as they so wish.

A list of services would be drawn up where representation would be useful to explore whether they could attend occasionally. Coffee would also be available for visitors while they talked with the representatives. Members would need to be on a rota and should include County and District representation, although the Town Council representative would be responsible for the town council equipment.

Members are invited to consider this proposal, if agreed this could start from October 2012 and be evaluated thereafter.

Agenda item 14: PROJECT EG WORKING GROUP

Further to the PORTAS report a “team” has been established with a mix of Town Council and business membership to consider options for improving the town and to feed in to the neighbourhood plan process. The group have been meeting informally and it is now proposed to formulate this group as a working group under the Finance and General purposes committee.

Terms of reference for Project EG Working Group

- To be an effective forum for the sharing of information regarding the work of the public, business, voluntary and community sectors in East Grinstead in relation to issues of development of the town, the parish and the emerging Neighbourhood Plan;
- To deliver projects and initiatives that will help to enhance the physical and economic wellbeing of the town and its people, and
- To make representations to public and statutory bodies on service delivery by other bodies and agencies in the Town and/or in response to official consultations. The aim will be to promote East Grinstead as a destination for tourism and business by raising the town’s image through effective promotion at shows, exhibitions and other relevant events.

Membership of the group will include Town, District and County Councillor representation and EGBA, Town Council Business Support Officer and Tourism Officer. Other community and business representation may be invited as appropriate.

Members are asked to approve the terms of reference and note the membership make up of the committee.

Agenda Item 15: COMMUNITY REVENUE GRANTS (Min 223 24.11.12)

The Town Council sets aside specific revenue funds each year to enable it to support, in a relatively modest way, a range of groups and organisations in the Town. In accordance with Members’ budgetary policy some groups have ring fenced grants, details as follows for the current financial year:-

East Grinstead Christmas Lights Committee	900
East Grinstead Town Twinning Association	1,640
East Grinstead in Bloom Committee	2,000
East Grinstead Citizens Advice Bureau	4,000
East Grinstead Age Concern (for Christmas party)	360
East Grinstead Christmas Promotions Committee	500
East Grinstead C.V.S. (contribution towards rent)	3,000
East Grinstead Town Museum	2,400
Armed Forces Day	300

There are other grants funds for dedicated purposes for Youth Sports Development, Youth Initiatives, Campaign Initiatives and Neighbourhood Panel support. A report on the allocation of youth sports development grants will be tabled at the December Amenities and Tourism Committee meeting.

In addition to the above £3,800 is allocated for distribution by Members, at this meeting, to other organisations working within or for the benefit of the Town. Members will recall that the East Grinstead Swimming Club were awarded £200 for their summer

celebrations for the 100th anniversary of the club earlier this year. Therefore the total amount available to the committee is £3,600.

Applications for revenue grant aid have therefore been received from the following organisations:-

East Grinstead Visually Impaired (VIP) Readers Group
Tadpoles Swimming Club for the Disabled*
East Grinstead & District Access Group*
East Grinstead Sports Club Limited
Trinity Methodist Church New Build
East Grinstead Council for Voluntary Service*
East Grinstead Macular Group
Grenestede Talking News*
West Sussex Mediation Service
Vitalise
Nautical Training Corps T.S. Resolution
East Grinstead & District Association for Mental Health
Furni-Help Mid Sussex*

In accordance with policy the above organisations have completed official application forms and/or provided the requisite information to enable the applications to be put before Members. These are available for detailed Member reference on file 6/1 (2012/20123). It has been previously agreed that a brief synopsis of each application should be prepared for Members consideration in order that Councillors are not subjected to an excessive amount of paperwork.

Before considering the various grant requests there is some additional information that may be helpful. The number of applications, thirteen, is five less than 2011/2012. A number of these applicants received a grant in 2011/2012 and they are recorded above with an *. It should be noted, that the total funding requests exceed funds available. Although there are specific powers available for paying some grants the bulk of these organisations' applications, if met in whole or part, would be paid in accordance with section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Members will be asked to allocate the grants and to this extent the Chairman of the committee will table a list of recommendations to the meeting.

East Grinstead Visually Impaired (VIP) Readers Group

The Readers Group is under the auspices of the EG and District Access Group which provides administrative support and fundraising. The VIP Readers Group, with the support of the West Sussex Library Service, provides a reading group specifically for visually impaired people in the East Grinstead Area. The Group has requested a grant of £150 towards the cost of transport of group members to and from East Grinstead Library for the monthly meetings. The Access Group has an arrangement with a local car hire and taxi company.

Tadpoles Swimming Club for the Disabled

The Club delivers a high standard of assistance through properly trained teachers in water therapy to children, young adults and older people to help them cope with life and be more self-sufficient. The Group includes people with asthma, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, post-stroke, sight impairment and amputees. The Club also provides recreational and social activities. They have asked for £400 towards the cost of new

and continuing projects including teacher training and equipment maintenance and to assist with pool hire costs.

East Grinstead & District Access Group

The Group campaigns to achieve, wherever practical, equal rights and access for all people with any form of disability or mobility problem, thereby ensuring a more inclusive society. The Group runs an expanding mobility scooter and wheelchair loan service – the only one in the East Grinstead area. The Access Group has asked for a grant of £300 to assist in the continuation and successful outcomes of their projects.

East Grinstead Sports Club Limited

The Club aims to provide sport, recreation and fitness facilities for East Grinstead and neighbouring communities. It also aims to educate, encourage, coach and train all ages to participate in sport and to raise funds to sustain and improve the facilities and participation in sport. The Club is asking for a grant of £500 towards the boiler replacement project for heating and hot water at the Club's premises in Saint Hill Road.

Trinity New Build (Trinity Methodist Church)

The Trinity Methodist Church in East Grinstead aims to welcome all who come to the church and encourage them to become part of the church family and to undertake evangelistic outreach in the local community and to develop caring relationships and share each others needs and burdens, and to be of service to the local community. The Church has requested a grant of £500 to pump-prime its efforts as they approach trusts and foundations seeking financial support for the 378 seater building which will not only replace their existing inadequate sanctuary but also act as a performance area, conference hall or exhibition space for use by the community. The total cost of the project is estimated at £1,485,000 and £700,000 has been raised locally.

East Grinstead Council for Voluntary Service

The Council for Voluntary Service seeks to promote effective voluntary and community action in East Grinstead and the surrounding areas and represent the views of the sector locally, and at district and county level. They also identify community need and work with local individuals, voluntary and community groups and other interested bodies to establish provision to meet need. The CVS aims to help local organisations find suitable people to fill their volunteering opportunities and to refer local residents to the appropriate voluntary or community group and to support local voluntary and community groups with help, training and information. The CVS has asked for £350 towards providing additional hours for the Volunteer Centre Coordinator to continue an outreach service in the centre of East Grinstead in the Library and at Glen Vue and to devote more time to supporting individual groups to establish their own recruitment and retention practice.

East Grinstead Macular Group

The Group's core activity is a monthly afternoon meeting held at Glen Vue. The meeting includes information, advice and exchange, informal chat, tea and a speaker. The members of the Group are all elderly, with sight problems, and sometimes hearing and mobility impairments. The meeting is supported by a number of sighted volunteers, including drivers to enable members to attend meeting. The Group has asked for a donation of £350 to be used to pay for speakers over a year. The Group hopes to identify and book speakers who ask a modest charge of up to £45 for the year so that they can feel confident that they offer an interesting programme for their members at the monthly meetings.

Grenestede Talking News

The organisation provides a weekly tape/CD to individuals who are blind, partially sighted or having other disabilities making reading a strain. The tape/CD contains local information and news. Grenestede Talking News has asked for a grant of £100 as a contribution to the annual cost of their recording room.

West Sussex Mediation Service

The Charity commits itself to improving community wellbeing and quality of life or helping individuals, groups or organisations to resolve conflict and disputes through a process of no-cost mediation without the need for expensive and lengthy recourse to the Courts. The Service has asked for a grant of £200 to promote the use of their services within East Grinstead and to help cover the costs of actual cases within the town. This will include venue hire for mediation meetings and volunteer mileage expenses, plus office administration.

Vitalise

Vitalise provides planned breaks to disabled people based on individual need, enables carers to have the guilt free rest they so desperately need and offers inspirational volunteering opportunities. The organisation has asked for a grant of £181.50 to contribute towards the cost of supporting disabled East Grinstead residents and their carers who are benefiting from Vitalise respite care breaks. Guests pay a fee but Vitalise must fundraise to cover the indirect costs associated with their services.

Nautical Training Corps – T.S. Resolution

The NTC is a uniformed youth organisation aiming to help young people develop their full potential through nautically based training. They have asked for a grant of £1,500 to purchase second hand sailing boats as it has been found that new prices are far out of reach and it is necessary to acquire two boats.

East Grinstead & District Association for Mental Health

The Association aims to increase awareness of mental health issues, to provide practical and financial assistance to any person suffering with mental health problems and to initiate and co-operate in preventative work and to raise funds for this. A grant of £300 has been requested to help with costs for a creative expressions art group every Thursday. This group meets for 2 hours and “employs” local artists to run a six week session. A mental health support worker accompanies the group and is also “paid” by East Grinstead Mental Health. The Association also wishes to fund art materials.

Furnihelp Mid Sussex*

FurniHelp Mid Sussex is a registered charity relieving poverty and stress by the provision of basic furniture and household equipment to those in need who are referred by social and caring services, religious organisations and housing associations. The project’s annual running costs for 2011/12 were £28,000 and funding comes from local authorities, national grant bodies, service clubs and donations. The Charity is supported by 18 volunteers but they do not have a membership as such. They have requested a grant of £350 to assist with general running costs and especially towards the annual rental on their telephone costs, which is £1,005 p.a.

Agenda Item 16: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES

Any recommendations arising from the cycle of meetings will be tabled at the Committee.

Agenda item 17: COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES REVIEW (Min 290 26.1.12)

As members will recall the Mid Sussex District Council independent panel make recommendations on the level of allowances received by Town and Parish Councillors that each Town or Parish Council can take into consideration when determining their own schemes. Attached is a copy of the Panel's last report in November 2010(**appendix B**).

The Panel have asked if Councillors views on the current scheme, could be collated and submitted to MSDC by the end of September. **To this extent the committee are asked to please make any comments that they so wish during the committee or at any point before 27th September, to the Town Clerk to allow a response to be submitted by the deadline.**

The panel will make its deliberations and advise their results in due course (around December). Members are reminded that the EGTC scheme is slightly different to the report and includes that care costs in some circumstances can be claimed, the councillors allowances are slightly different amounts, the mayoral allowance is different and the mileage rate is claimed at the NJC level. However it is the current MSDC scheme that the comments are requested on and the Council will be free to adopt the final scheme or otherwise when it comes back.

Agenda Item 18: TOWN COUNCIL RESPONSE TO THE ATKINS REPORT

The Atkins Report (phase 3) was released in July after much anticipation. The town council saw a draft of the report in March 2012 and commissioned MTRU to consider the findings and comment on the overall conclusions. The report from MTRU is attached as an appendix (C) to these papers, both the MTRU and the full Atkins reports are available on the Town Council website.

A three tiers meeting was held in July where representatives of each of the Councils received a presentation as to the findings and some initial discussion as to the way forward was held. There could be no conclusions at that stage but the County Council representatives suggested that it was for the Town Council to determine its course of action and what it wanted to see happen next.

Clearly the matter of the roads will feature in the neighbourhood plan and the working group with AR Urbanism will consider this, although at this point it is appropriate to have the matter discussed during a committee cycle to formally record the Town Councils view.

The Committee are asked to consider any formal response or statement to the report.

Town Clerk's Report Ends