

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

To: Chairman and Members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
Cllrs Baldwin (Chairman), Banks, Mrs Collins DL, Gillbard, Johnson, Joyce-Nelson, Marmara, Musk, Reed, Mrs Waddingham (Vice Chairman), 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

19 January 2011

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, 27 January 2011 at 7.45 p.m.

Yours faithfully,
C J ROLLEY,
Town Clerk.

A G E N D A

- 1 Public Question Time.
- 2 To commence not later than 8 p.m. - Apologies for absence.
- 3 To receive the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2010 (previously received).
- 4 To receive any Declarations of Prejudicial and Personal Interest.
- 5 To receive the accounts for November and December 2010 (attached) (Min 228 25.11.10).
- 6 To receive any recommendations of Committees.
- 7 Town Council Finances - Position Statement (Min 229 25.11.10).
- 8 Reports from Council Representatives on Outside Bodies (Min 230 25.11.10).
- 9 East Grinstead Youth Council (Min 86 24.06.10)
- 10 Performance Indicators (Min 231 25.11.10).
- 11 The Equality at Work Act 2010 (Min 234 25.11.10)
- 12 Report of the Independent Panel on the Review of Members Allowances 2011/2012 (Min 265 21.11.09)
- 13 Annual Town Meeting (Min 268 21.01.10)
- 14 Revenue Budget 2011/2012 (Min 267 21.01.10)
- 15 Any Other Urgent Business
- 16 To resolve that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest.
- 17 Establishment Matters (Min 239 25.11.10)
- NB The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday 24th March 2011

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

To: All Members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee (27.1.11)
(Other distribution for information only)

Agenda Item 7: TOWN COUNCIL FINANCES – POSITION STATEMENT (Min 228 25.11.10)

Members are asked to note that the balances on the various Town Council accounts at 18th January 2011 were, rounded to the nearest £, as below.

	Revenue	Capital	Total
	£	£	£
Natwest Direct Reserve	350,365	70,740	421,105
Santander Time Deposit 6 months	50,000		50,000
NatWest Capital Reserve A/c		97	97
Natwest Current/ Reserve A/c	32,955	3,040	35,995
Royal Deposit Plan 3 year	250,000		250,000
Total	683,320	73,877	757,197

Agenda Item 8: REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES (Min 230 25.11.10)

The following two reports have been written by Councillor Mrs Collins, the Town Council's representative on the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Youth Committee and the East Grinstead Council for Voluntary Service. A third report has been submitted by the Town Clerk, the Council's stakeholder Governor representative on the Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

Neighbourhood Youth Committee

I am sure Members will share my sadness that Jackie Cooper, the Neighbourhood Youth Worker, has accepted Voluntary Redundancy. Her last working day will be Friday 25th March. Jackie has introduced many initiatives in the 22 plus years she has worked in East Grinstead and surrounding area. She has been pivotal in the now established excellent inter-agency working. Her commitment, expertise and friendship will be missed by many. Some other part time Youth Service staff from the local area will also be leaving this Term. The new structure for the Youth Service will be in place from 1st April and will be fully operational from 1st September.

At the neighbourhood Management Committee meeting, held 10th January, it was agreed to make further representation to the County Council's Senior Youth Officer expressing the Committee's very real concern over the future diminution of provision for young people. It is understood West Sussex County Council will no longer provide generic youth work from September 2011. All youth work will be targeted. There is no information regarding provision of youth work in the surrounding rural area.

Currently, the Wallis Centre is continuing to provide a range of generic and targeted activities. The following activities give an example of activities available to local young people. The Safe Place project is running. The Single Mums Thursday Group continues. The Baby Sitting and More Training Course has continued. The Special Needs Group has been very active. Some off-site activities including bowling, a walk

around the town to see the Christmas lights and a trip on the Santa Special at the Bluebell Railway were particularly enjoyed by the Special Needs young people and their peers.

Several years ago Jackie Cooper introduced the MOTIV8 Project which initially took place during the summer holidays. This proved to be so successful that the scheme was expanded to include other school holidays throughout the academic year. Sussex Police has recognised the success of the scheme. Chief Inspector Ed De La Rue now wishes to roll out the MOTIV8 Project across Mid Sussex as the scheme appears to have had such an ongoing positive impact on juvenile crime figures and behaviour in the East Grinstead area. It is planned to have a "launch" week during the school February half term when Burgess Hill and Hayward's Heath will mirror the East Grinstead successful model & will run activities with partner agencies.

Jackie Cooper, working with other Agencies, is organising, this coming February, half term's local MOTIV8. East Grinstead's youngsters are looking forward to having the opportunity to take part in activities at the Wallis Centre such as art, music, cooking, and off-site activities with a day's trip to London for a visit to the Movie Museum, the Aquarium, and a Tour of London, plus another day's outing for paintballing.

Apart from the outreach youth work based at the Wallis Centre, Jackie Cooper and her staff have been mentoring pupils at both Sackville and Imberhorne Schools.

East Grinstead Council for Voluntary Service

The exhibition "Three Cheers for Volunteers" is currently on display in the Museum. This is to celebrate the wide-ranging voluntary activities provided for the local community through the years by so many residents whilst also encouraging others, of all ages, who are currently not volunteers, to explore the opportunities for them to consider the many positive advantages in sharing their experiences, skills and talents with others. The exhibition will be open until 20th February.

You are also encouraged to attend the Health and Wellbeing event for residents of all ages living in East Grinstead, the surrounding villages and rural area which is to be held on Saturday 2nd April from 10am - 1pm at the Jubilee Centre, Charlwoods Road. There will be a variety of activities offered, including:-

- Health checks by local GPs (e.g. blood pressure, BMI),
- Stands for local voluntary, statutory and private organisations with an interest in health & wellbeing,
- Entertainment by bands, dance troupes and choirs from the local area, including schools - all professionally compered,
- Demonstrations by local fitness and sports groups, and
- Information and advice on health and well being matters.

The East Grinstead CVS has responded to the Government's Consultation paper "Supporting a Stronger Civil Society" Whilst welcoming the Government's emphasis placed on the role of the voluntary and community sector, the local CVS response stressed the point that local needs are best met by local people and local organisations but provision must be sustainable and infrastructure must be in place (such as the expertise and advice offered by the CVS) to meet the needs of, and to support, voluntary groups.

East Grinstead CVS continues to work closely with Mid Sussex CVS.
The Queen Victoria NHS Foundation Trust

A briefing has been received from the Foundation Trusts Network (FTN) on the main provisions in the health and social care bill, which was published on 19 January 2011. It is a lengthy bill, standing at nearly 300 clauses and 22 schedules. A copy of this has been forwarded to all Members electronically on 20 January.

The bill includes a range of freedoms for Foundation Trusts, including the complete removal of the private patient income cap, for which the FTN has been lobbying for some time. It also includes the definitive date by which all NHS trusts must become a foundation trust - 1 April 2014. This signals the move to an all-FT provider sector.

The FTN will be briefing parliamentarians at each stage of the bill's progress through Parliament and will also maintain their close working relationship with the Department of Health bill team, to seek to influence the operational detail of new architecture.

The bill will have its second reading in the House of Commons on Monday 31st January. Those Councillors who are members of the Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust will be kept fully up to date on the progress of the bill via e-mails and the In Touch newsletter. Those who are not members of the Trust may wish to register.

Agenda Item 9: EAST GRINSTEAD YOUTH COUNCIL (Min 86 24.06.10)

The following report based on a submission written by Caroline Halpin, the Youth Council co-ordinator, provides a snapshot of the Youth Council's activities during 2010. Mrs Halpin will be attending the meeting, possibly with one or more representatives from the Youth Council. By way of information it should be noted that the Youth Council comprises ten young people, aged between 14 and 18, five boys and five girls. Both secondary schools are represented.

The 'website' is at last up and running, www.eastgrinsteadyouthcouncil.com and Members are encouraged to view this. The site was developed by a Youth Councillor, James Joy. He is now off to university and a replacement is being sought.

The Youth Council has retained most members who began from the very start. They have all bonded well as a group and enjoy being with each other. They will, however, lose three members very soon as they are in year 13 and will need to focus on their studies. Three new members have been identified to take their place, all currently in year 9, which should ensure continuity.

Members have been involved in the Buddy scheme which is about accompanying special needs young people to social events.

Meridian Radio has recently had two members in to talk about the activities of the Youth Council.

The summer holidays volunteering activities included assisting with the East Grinstead Library Reading Challenge, EG Museum and Children/Family Centre.

Volunteers were all thanked for their efforts by presentation of certificates at Pizza Express which also gave the opportunity to launch the website.

The Youth Council is involved in the South of England Show planning committee for the Youth Service section of the Showground. Participation and involving them in decisions makes them feel valued and gives an understanding of how decisions are arrived at. They are a great group for consulting wherever young people's views are needed.

The Youth Council was also actively involved in the fundraiser for St. Catherine's Hospice, the 'Santa run'. Unfortunately they were the only ones to turn up at East Court, not having been told that the event had been cancelled. The weather had taken its toll!

The Youth Council has also offered input to the proposed extension of the skate park facility at King George V Playing Fields, a scheme that Mid Sussex District Council is now progressing.

The first meeting of 2011 is on 1 February. There Mrs Halpin will be encouraging some ideas for community involvement and asking the Youth Councillors for their ideas as to what/where we engage with this year. She would be grateful for ideas/input from Town Councillors here also.

Agenda Item 10: PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Min 231 25.11.10)

Details of Performance Indicators in respect of responsibilities falling under the purview of Finance & General Purposes Committee are set out below for the period November and December 2010 inclusive. The comparable figures for the same months in 2009 are shown in brackets alongside.

Item	November	December
Invoices paid within 30 days	100% (98%)	100% (91%)
Total staff sickness in days	17 (16)	4 (11)

Agenda Item 11: THE EQUALITY ACT 2010 (minute 234 25.11.10)

Your officers have been monitoring the progress of the introduction of this Act in order to ensure compliance with the law as it is brought into force.

The provisions which came into force on 1 October 2010 and which may affect the Council are as follows:

- The basic framework of protection against direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimization
- Restricting the circumstances in which employers can ask job applicants questions about disability or health.
- Changes to equal pay rules.

- Clearer protection for breastfeeding mothers.

The provisions to come into force on 1 April 2011 and which may affect the council are as follows:

- Positive action in recruitment and promotion.
- Public sector Equality Duty.
- Prohibition on age discrimination in services and public functions.

The provisions of the Equality Act are being brought into force at different times to allow time for the people and organisations affected by the new laws to prepare for them. Where there are changes to existing legislation we will need to revise our policies and procedures and summarise this huge piece of legislation into the relevant clauses of our Employee Handbook. However, a large percentage of the Act merely simplifies and strengthens the previous legislation.

We propose to ensure that we comply with the law as it comes into force, and draft revisions to our policies and procedures following the second tranche of legislation on 1 April 2011. Inasmuch as the rules relate to 'employment matters' we will consult with Peninsula, our HR consultants, whenever there is a likely impact of the new rules.

Members are asked to note and/or instruct accordingly.

Agenda Item 12: REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT PANEL ON MEMBER'S ALLOWANCES 2011/2012 (Minute 265 21.11.09)

The Independent Panel has now reported and has recommended a modest decrease of 5% in allowances payable to Town Councillors, in line with the decrease which Mid Sussex District Council members have accepted. The appropriate extract of the report is set out below:

"1. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That the recommended Allowances for Members of Town and Parish Councils decrease in line with the recommended decrease in the Basic Allowances for District Councillors.

1.2 That there be a commensurate decrease in the level of enhanced Allowances for the Chairmen of Town and Parish Councils.

1.3 That Councils send the minutes of the meetings when the report is considered to Member Support at Mid Sussex District Council.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Panel has been appointed by Mid Sussex District Council to consider and make recommendations for the financial year, 2011/12, on the amount of allowances that should be paid to Town and Parish Councillors and the travelling and subsistence expenses to which they should be entitled.

2.2 The Panel comprises three members, Anthony Bellringer, Anthony Cox (Chairman) and Adam Haynes. The terms of appointment and background of the panel are attached at Appendix A to the report.

2.3 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003, the Panel is obliged, "to produce a report in relation to the members of the authorities in respect of which it was established, making recommendations".

2.4 Town and Parish Councils themselves determine the amount of allowances paid to Councillors, however, the regulations require that the decision be taken with due regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Panel's Terms of Reference are to make recommendations on:

- The level of Basic Allowance which should be payable to Town and Parish Councillors;
- Whether or not an enhanced level of Basic Allowance should be paid to Chairmen, and if so, the level of that enhanced Basic Allowance.
- The level of travel and subsistence allowances that should be paid to Town and Parish Councillors and the duties to which they should relate.

4. WORK OF THE PANEL

4.1 The Panel met on five occasions in September and October 2010, and also communicated extensively over this period by e-mails. The Panel considered the allowances schemes for both the District Council and the Parish and Town Councils in the area.

4.2 Although the Scheme of Allowances for the District Council and Town and Parish Councils were considered separately, travelling and subsistence allowances were considered jointly.

4.3 The Panel noted that the Government appointed Councillors Commission took the view that, "Allowances should be set at a level that enables people to undertake the role of councillor while not acting as an incentive to do so. Allowances are not shown by polls to be something that influences councillors to take on the role though they are instrumental in making it possible for some people to do so. If it is important that there are no financial incentives to being a councillor, it is equally important that there should not be a financial disincentive."

5. FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW

5.1. In October/November 2010, the Panel received updated information from some of the clerks on the allowances currently paid by the Town and Parish Councils. The most recent information is attached as Appendix B of the report.

5.2 The Panel was aware that several of the Parish Councils still choose not to pay allowances, but instead to reimburse specific expenses incurred on Council business. As with previous reviews the Panel recognise that this is accepted

practice and accountable through the Town and Parish Council's normal audit process.

5.3 Not all of the Councils were offering allowances, and where allowances were available not all Councillors claimed them. It is still the case that the majority of Town and Parish Councillors in Mid Sussex do not receive an allowance.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The Panel believes that public service is the key factor in serving on Town and Parish Councils and the recommendations that have been made reflect this. However, the Panel agrees that Councillors should not be out of pocket and the recommendations have been set at levels that hopefully ensure that Councillors' expenses are met.

6.2 As in last year's report, the Panel still believe that paying different allowances to Parish Councils according to their relative electorate sizes is the most appropriate way of assessing allowances in a district with such a wide variety of Towns and Parishes.

6.3 In line with recommendations for District Council Allowances the Panel recommends a slight decrease in the levels of Allowances for Town and Parish Councils. This is a consequence of the recommended 5% reduction to the District Councillors' Basic Allowance, which would reduce Town and Parish Allowances as they are linked to the Basic Allowance for District Councillors.

The allowance for Town Councillors is £1,031 (22.9% of MSDC recommended basic allowance). The allowances for Parish Councillors are as set out below: Electorate (1/12/10)	Allowance	% of MSDC recommended Basic Allowance
Up to 1000	£104	2.3%
1001 – 2500	£257	5.7%
2501 and above	£516	11.45%

The panel also recommended per previous years an enhanced basic allowance for the Chairman/Mayor of £1,545. The Town Council has however always been cognisant of the significant duties carried out by this post holder and a wish to ensure that the allowance paid for this duty does reflect some (albeit not all) of the costs associated with the position. Accordingly it will be noted from the revenue budget papers that provision of £1,270 has been set aside over and the basic allowance.

Members are requested to consider and confirm their acceptance or otherwise of the recommendation that approved Town Councillor allowances for 2011/2012 be £1,031 in accordance with the recommendation of the Independent Panel, noting further that is up to individual Members to determine whether or not they wish to claim such an allowance.

Agenda Item 13: ANNUAL TOWN MEETING (Min 268 21.01.10)

When the diary of meetings for the current 2010/2011 civic year was agreed on 21 January 2010 the Annual Town Meeting was set for Wednesday 6 April 2010. It has been suggested that with a Council meeting on 4 April and Planning on 5 April, and being so close to the election of 5 May, it would be sensible to change the date and time. Accordingly, it has been suggested that it should be rearranged for Tuesday 5 April at 6.30 pm to take place immediately prior to the Planning Committee meeting. Members are invited to consider and recommend to Council.

Agenda Item 13: REVENUE BUDGET 2011/2012 (Min 267 21.01.10)

Members are asked to bring with them to the meeting their copy of the booklet entitled "Revenue Estimates 2010/2011"

Committee is advised that neither Planning Committee nor Public Services Committee, which had no budgetary requirements, made alterations to their figures in the budget book when they considered this matter at their meetings on 10th and 13th January 2011, respectively. Any changes proposed by Amenities and Tourism Committee on 20th January 2011 will be verbally reported at the meeting.

The considerations that Members will need to undertake at the meeting are all as indicated in the booklet and will ultimately culminate in a formal recommendation to Council. In summary Members are asked to consider and approve the recommendation from the other Committees, approve their own budget for cost centres under their own control, namely, democratic representation, corporate management, community support, and central administration and support, and then to recommend formally the overall Town Council budget for 2011/2012 financial year to Council. It is Council that will then formally resolve the precept.

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Agenda Item 16: ESTABLISHMENT MATTERS (Min 239 25.11.10)

Town Clerk's Report Ends