

## EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

### FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – 13<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2012

Present: Councillor N Webster (Chairman)  
Councillor O'Brien (Vice Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs Bennett (Town Mayor)  
Councillor Mrs Belsey (Deputy Town Mayor)  
Councillors Mrs Brunsdon, Hodges, Mainstone, Osborne, Saul, Sillitoe and Wyan.

Also present: Cllr Mrs Beckford, Mr Mike Hollins and 2 members of the public.

Officers present: Town Clerk and Mr Barry Male, Responsible Finance Officer.

#### 217 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chairman opened the meeting, thanked all for their attendance and opened the floor to public questions.

Mr Pye asked about the noise emanating from aircraft at Gatwick airport and asked what the Council were doing to address this.

The Chairman replied that this was a matter for the Public Services Committee and was recently discussed at that committee. However as the Chairman of Public Services was in attendance he asked if she would give a brief update. Cllr Mrs Brunsdon gave a brief outline of the letters and meetings that had been exchanged and that an operational change which hopefully would lead to improvements from Easyjet (the major carrier) was to be implemented. She assured Mr Pye that the Town Council was doing all it could and had also made representations to the GATCOM representatives to take the matter up at the formal groups.

The Chairman gave the response to the question asked at the Amenities and Tourism meeting from Mr Barnby as to what would happen to the Town Council money earmarked for refurbishment of the Parish Halls. The money is in a reserved account and the Council will need to decide whether to gift the money to the Parish halls to allow them to pass the money with the sale proceeds for the investment in new rooms at Chequer Mead, whether to return the money to the general account of the Town Council or whether to earmark it for another purpose. Once the sale is nearing completion this decision will be taken by the Committee.

Public question time was completed at 7.10pm

#### 218 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

None

#### 219 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012 and having been previously circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

220 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The Chairman gave an update on minute 147 - the sports development group had indeed asked the question as to whether there was increased membership after the Olympics. While almost all clubs had seen an increase in enquiries it was difficult to ascertain whether this was due to the Olympics directly.

221 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTEREST

The Chairman advised that no declarations were necessary for item 12 as it was stated as to who the representatives were.

- \* Councillor Mainstone made a personal interest declaration in respect of item 6 as a trustee of the museum and also as an employee of WSCC for agenda the item 14 application from Imberhorne School.
- \* Councillor Mrs Brunsdon made a pecuniary interest declaration in respect of agenda item 14 as her son could be one of the people to benefit from an award if given to the Cricket Club. As such she played no part in the discussion nor voted on the relevant part of that item.

222 Mr Hollins gave an interesting presentation on the Town Museum starting with its opening in 1925 through to 2006 when the purpose built museum was opened. He explained the current vision for the museum and how the Trustees intended to deliver this. He observed that visitor numbers having decreased appeared to be on the rise and that the museum reached the arts council standards for museums (which were applied to all museums). He referred to the Guinea Pig collection and the hopes to exhibit all of it in time when the extension could be built. As the extension was a large project, small steps were being taken to break some elements in to smaller projects which may be able to find funding sources helping to make the whole aspiration a reality.

The Chairman thanked Mr Hollins for his presentation and asked for any questions: In reply to a question as to how the Town Council could help more Mr Hollins said that indirect support and help with marketing would be welcomed. The Museum was also seeking a meeting with Chequer Mead to talk about joint projects which could benefit both trusts. The Museum had been involved in a meeting with the East Grinstead Town Team and hoped that something may come forward from this.

It was clarified that the museum intended to build the extension in some of the car park spaces which were on land that was owned by the museum. This would leave two spaces at the museum.

223 ACCOUNTS FOR SEPTEMBER OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2012 (Min 141 20.09.12)

Mr Male explained the current position and took questions. It was clarified that the railings expense was in relation to the high street replacement railings, but as these would be replaced at the cost to WSCC, it would need to be looked in to as to whether this was a cost to the Town Council.

RESOLVED: (1) That the accounts for September, October and November 2012 as set out in the schedule submitted be approved and confirmed.

224 TOWN COUNCIL FINANCES – POSITION STATEMENT (Min 142 20.09.12)

Mr Male outlined the overall position and reported that the bond with Santander having matured was now safely back with the Council. Caution was urged by a committee member if considering further investment with Santander or subsidiaries due to their reduced credit rating.

The rest of the report was noted

225 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Min 143. 20.09.12))

Mr Male outlined the performance figures, this report was noted.

226 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WORKING PARTY (Min 145 20.09.12)

The Chairman drew attention to his report specifically the feedback garnered from the children in the schools who had proved insightful and illuminating.

It was asked whether the document that MSDC had issued with the evaluation of possible development sites would be circulated to members. The Chairman replied that the document was drawn from the all councillor working group in September and further work from the steering group. The response to MSDC had contained a number of questions to MSDC, these have since received answers and a final document would then be completed. This document would therefore be resubmitted at a later time and would fit in to the neighbourhood plan which would come before all councillors for consideration. If the site assessment formed council policy it would come back to F and GP when complete.

The report was noted.

227 CONSULTATION WORKING GROUP (MIN 146 20.09.2)

The chairman added to the PR NAV response that the Town Clerk has attended a noise abatement seminar at Gatwick and made contact with the MSDC representative to GATCOM who was happy to represent the views of the Town Council if we feed them in.

It was further added that following the PRNAV submission a feedback document had been issued which stated that a consultation meeting had been held with East Grinstead Town Council. This was not true and the Town Clerk has written to the CEO at Gatwick to ask that this be corrected. She has further challenged as to why the report shows that the majority of responses on route 2 (flying out of Gatwick to the east and coming close to East Grinstead) were objections, and yet the justification of leaving this route in the proposals has not been made in the report.

The report was noted

228 OUTSIDE BODY REPORTS FROM COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES (min 356 22.3.12)

Cllr Sillitoe gave a verbal update on the Christmas Lights Committee, the challenge

of not having storage for the lights once the Parish Halls are sold, has resulted in conversations between officers and the Lights Committee Chairman to determine a way forward. However the Chairman has several points that he would like raised and Cllr Sillitoe would write to the Town Clerk on this.

The rest of the report was noted.

229 REVIEW OF ELECTRONIC DISPATCH OF PAPERS (MIN 157 22.9.12)

The committee welcomed the cost saving of this change and it was speculated as to whether in time the Town Council would issue electronic devices to Councillors to save the need for printing at all.

A councillor who was happy to print papers, asked whether the portal could be enhanced so as not to time out so quickly to allow Cllrs to work on line for longer. It was felt that this was probably security related, but could be looked in to.

The report was noted.

230 YOUTH SPORT INITIATIVE GRANTS (min 289 26.01.12)

The Committee considered the report, requested that in for future reports where a club had been funded previously, a brief explanation as to how grant funded projects had been successful was included and that the clubs be invited to the January Council meeting to collect their cheques.

RESOLVED: (i) To award the grants as set out below.  
(ii) Where the specific grant budget was overspent to authorise expenditure from the community support campaign initiatives to meet the difference for the items marked +.

<b>Dunnings Squash and Racquetball Club</b>	<b>- £200</b>
<b>East Grinstead Bowling Club</b>	<b>- £300</b>
<b>East Grinstead Cricket Club</b>	<b>- £250</b>
<b>East Grinstead Meads FC</b>	<b>- £250</b>
<b>Imberhorne School</b>	<b>- £400+</b>
<b>Saint Hill Blues FC</b>	<b>£250+</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1650</b>

231 TO RECEIVE RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED: The two recommendations from the Amenities and Tourism Committee of 6<sup>th</sup> December 2012 were approved as follows:

Summer Events and staging area

In lieu of an approved business plan a budget allocation to be requested from the 2013/2014 budget.

East Court/ Meridian Hall free use of facilities for community groups

(1) to approve the free use of hire to the organisations as set out in the report.

(2) to approve the hire charges for 2013/14 as set out at (d) and (e) in the report.

232 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2013/14

The committee welcomed the inclusion of a separate meeting date for charities meetings and that they would take place at Chequer Mead. Clarification that the manager at Chequer Mead had indicated that a room was available which would house the meeting and the night had been chosen in consultation with him to avoid loss of revenue at Chequer Mead.

RESOLVED:

- 1) to approve the additional date in January 2013 for consideration of committee budgets
- 2) to approve the 2013/14 calendar of meetings as set out in Appendix B to the report

(NB: The *Council* meetings forming part of this schedule will be formally approved at the January Council meeting).

233 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There being no urgent business the meeting closed at 8.56 p.m.

SIGNED:

CHAIRMAN.