

## EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

### PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE – 5<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2024 7.00pm

Committee Members: Cllr Reeves (Chairman)  
Cllr Whittaker (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr Ody (Town Mayor)  
Cllr Belsey (Deputy Town Mayor)  
Cllrs: Barnett, M Belsey, Gibson, Hughes & Scott\*

Others present: Town Clerk, Community and Tourism Manager\*\*, Insp  
Derrick, Grahame Russell (EGBA) and 2 members of the public

\*\* present via zoom (this does not count as present under the Local  
Government Finance Act 1972 for voting purposes)

\*= Absent

#### 43. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were two members of the public attended, but no questions therefore the committee moved to the substantive agenda.

#### 44. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were given

#### 45. MINUTES

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 7<sup>th</sup> March and 13<sup>th</sup>  
May 2024

#### 46. CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chairman gave the following updates for the committee

The Citizens Advice Bureau will be offering free English language classes during June/ July starting from 13<sup>th</sup> June and will run for four sessions, meeting every other week between 10.30-12.30 in the library. Sessions are also taking place in Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill and we are helping to publicise.

East Court / Glendale

The Town Council have reported a number of defects on East Court to the new green spaces contractor for MSDC. Including a broken flagstone on the jubilee path, overflowing rubbish and dog poo bins.

Dementia Week

The Town Council forget me nots were displayed on Sackville Colleges sloping lawn, for the week along with other events including memory cafes and a pop up stand at Carlos Lounge. Several of the partners of the EG

EG Community Support Group

Julian from the foodbank is pushing forward with this initiative, to include meal vouchers up to a value of £12, details still to be agreed. They are also looking at working with Turning Tides and flyers and information sheets. This initiative continues forward. The Town Council is part of the group for promotion and support.

47. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

In respect to Item 9, Cllrs Gibson and Whittaker declared they were elected members of Mid Sussex District Council.

48. POLICE MATTERS

Insp Derrick advised that East Grinstead was a priority area for the police as we are the outreach area. Firearms units are used for additional support when the police have specific issues such as drug dealing. The NPT are also available there are five different departments that are in the town during the day. Old fashioned policing is being used for knocking on the doors. They are working with the Atrium manager for the reports of ASB. Recently some Afghan refugees have moved into the town, they are professional people and are settling in. the police involvement is regarding hate crime only. Drug dealers are being watched and action will be taken.

The Chequer Mead hub has once again been closed, Councillors can report to the police via Dave Derrick directly.

The spate of cycle thefts in the town have been quite brazen, what can be done? CCTV is available from Mid Sussex DC on application. There are options around smart tracking for cycles which the police will use.

Birches estate, some problems with joyriding, the speed of the response means that we aren't really able to address this. Yes it is being taken seriously, there is a particular police operation name for this matter and the police will respond as soon as they are able.

Cllr J Belsey joined the meeting at his point

The Vice Chair gave a vote of thanks, Insp Derrick then left the meeting

49. EAST GRINSTEAD BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

The Chair introduced Mr Russell the Chair from the EGBA and invited him to address the committee. He shared some data regarding the work of the EGBA, their aspirations and growth over the past year.

Being an active stakeholder in the town is important, partnerships are important and working as a community is at the heart of the EGBA ethos.

Focus groups are used to help identify what is felt to be the most important for the group development. They have had good events and networking events. EGBA want to be involved in development in the town, being involved in the shared spaces group and others are a key priority.

Representing the members is the most important role with the members feeling heard with their issues taken forward. Building membership to increase resources is key.

Developing further local links is important moving forward, with the councils, the business, other representatives etc.

Questions and answers followed:

There are 100 members at this time and the target is 250. This is achievable over time.

How can the Council and the EGBA work better together to revitalise the town centre? We need to review and embrace the changes in retail, how does everything fit together, offer, car parking, variation etc.

In the short term what could we do? pop up shops? Yes, being nimble and accessing spaces, solving problems, having a blueprint for the town, what do we want and how can we bring those business forward to the town?

What about Gatwick Airport? This is an opportunity, threats need to be managed but there are real opportunities for East Grinstead regarding the Gatwick expansion.

What other contacts do EGBA have with the other business associations in the towns around us? to get good ideas and to save reinventing the wheel. Revitalising pride in the town is important but retail is now as a different situation. Hospitality sector in the town is the driver now and needs building as a destination.

Digitally excluded, how do we bring them in? Transport rather than car parking should take part in this. Innovative businesses bring more people in and this benefits others. Thinking and working circularly is important.

The Vice Chair gave a vote of thanks.

## 50. COMMUNITY TEAM REPORT

The Community and Tourism Manager introduced her report and invited any questions.

Alice Fletcher advised that MSDC had initially pushed back on assisting with empty shops having decorative vinyls in the windows, saying that the Town Council should contact the letting agents. However they have now decided that this is something that MSDC will do.

Youth workers are now employed and they will be working on getting the youth club up and working from September.

The SID 28 days notice has gone up and we are able to move forward in July.

Sunnyside bookings are really taking off.

Market traders numbers have improved, the licence is for the Thursday not Saturday so this would need to be a licence change if there was wish to move the farmers market to a Saturday.

The request was made for the SID positions to be advised, It was commented that this was included in the last cycle report, but would be linked again in the minutes for this meeting.

51. DELEGATED DECISIONS

The chair introduced the item

A Councillor commented that he did not feel that a delegated decision in this instance was necessary as it was not an emergency. It was not following on from the policy of this council. Therefore the decision was disappointing as it was in view of one councillor that this was an abuse of the powers. The Councillor would hope that the restrictions on delegated decision would be reconsidered.

A second Councillor believed this was not a use of good governance.

The Clerk advised that the standing orders allow the Clerk to make a decision which time will not allow for the calling of a Committee, this was the case in this instance and therefore it was appropriately used, in discussion with the Chair and Vice Chair. If Council wish to restrict this delegation then this can be considered at a later time.

Other Councillors supported the delegated decision and felt it had been appropriately determined.

The Committee noted the decision in the report

*Post meeting clarification: Standing order 25 f allows: The Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice chair of the relevant committee to take action deemed desirable on any matters which the Committee concerned has delegated powers, but which require urgent action.*

52. CAR PARKING CHARGES IN MID SUSSEX

The Chair introduced the paper and explained the current restrictions on discussion of controversial matters. It was noted that the consultation from MSDC would come forth after the General Election and this was welcomed. The Chair also advised that the matter would be put on the September Agenda if a special meeting was not needed to be convened before then.

The Committee noted the report

53. PUBLIC TOILETS CONTRACTS

The Chairman introduced the report and gave an update from Mid Sussex supplied today that confirms that the Kings St Toilets are included in the MSDC contract and that the East Court ones, along with the other parishes would be able to negotiate separately with the contractor at the Mid Sussex prices. It was felt that with this assurance, there was no need to write to the District concerning this matter.

The next full meeting of the Committee will be held on **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2024** at 7:00pm.  
The chairman ended the meeting at 8.15pm

SIGNED:

CHAIRMAN

DRAFT