

FULL COUNCIL

13 APRIL 2016

Present: The Right Worshipful The Mayor (Councillor Bruce Dowling) in the Chair, Councillors Rogers, Batsford, Cartwright, Charlesworth, Chowney, Clark, Cooke, Forward, Howard, Pragnell, Roberts, Sabetian, Scott, Sinden, Street, Turner, Webb, Westley, Wincott, Beaver, Charman, Lee, Fitzgerald, Beaney, Atkins, Clarke and Dowling

Apologies for absence were noted for Councillor Davies, Poole and Edwards

41. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2016, THE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24 FEBRUARY 2016 AND THE BUDGET COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24 FEBRUARY 2016

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 10 February 2016, the Special Council meeting held on 24 February 2016 and the Budget Council meeting held on 24 February 2016 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record of the proceedings

42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Councillors declared their interest in the minutes indicated: -

Councillor	Committee	Minute	Interest
Roberts	Council, 13 April 2016	45 – Motion (Rule 14)	Personal – he draws a pension from East Sussex County Council
Westley	Council, 13 April 2016	45 – Motion (Rule 14)	Prejudicial – she is employed by East Sussex County Council

43. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND LEADER

The Mayor announced the death of former Councillor Ronald Rushbrook.

The Leader of the Council updated members on the outcome of a review by the University of Brighton of its campus in Hastings. In March, the University had announced that it intended to close its campus. Students already studying in the town, and those due to enrol in 2016, would be able to complete their courses at the Hastings Campus. Councillor Chowney said that he believed the University had made the wrong decision and would continue to lobby for them to reconsider the matter. He acknowledged the strength of feeling across the town against the decision to close the University Campus, adding that higher education provision was a key part of the broader regeneration ambitions for Hastings.

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The University of Brighton had indicated that they would be willing to co-operate with partners, including Sussex Coast College, to maintain some form of higher education provision in the town. The Hastings and Bexhill Task Force, which included a range of partners from across the statutory, business, education and voluntary sectors, would oversee efforts to develop a new higher education provision in the town. Hastings Borough Council, together with East Sussex County Council, would also commission an external consultant to advise on future options to ensure that Hastings remained a University town.

44. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS UNDER RULE 12

No written questions had been received.

Questions to the Leader, Deputy Leader or other Lead Members were asked and answered in accordance with Rule 12.1 as follows: -

Questioner and Councillor	Subject	Reply Given By Councillor
Atkins	<p><u>Fly tipping</u> there has been an increase in fly tipping around the town, particularly in areas with communal bins. What is being done to address this issue, given the difficulties gathering evidence to prosecute offenders? Councillor Chowney responded on behalf of the lead member, who had given apologies for the meeting. Councillor Chowney acknowledged that it was difficult to prevent fly tipping. When it has been possible to gather sufficient evidence, the council has carried out high-profile prosecutions of offenders. Wardens regularly patrolled known hot spots for fly tipping and the council aimed to ensure issues were dealt with promptly. The council had also recently upgraded its CCTV service, which would allow for improved monitoring.</p>	Chowney
Westley	<p><u>Rock-a-Nore Road</u> what can be done to address the frustrations of residents and visitors at the difficulty parking in the Rock-a-Nore Road area? Councillor Chowney replied that Hastings Borough Council was responsible for the car park in Rock-a-Nore Road. At peak times of the year the council employed attendants to ensure the space was used efficiently, and encourage motorists to use other nearby car parks when the car park reached capacity. He commented that the car park had already been particularly busy this year. Traffic management was the responsibility of East Sussex County Council</p>	Chowney

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	(ESCC) and Hastings Borough Council would continue to work with them to improve the road and signage in the area.	
Cooke	<p><u>Rocklands Caravan Park</u> will the Leader of the Council explain why the latest application to carry out works on trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) at Rocklands Caravan Park were not referred to the Planning Committee for consideration?</p> <p>Councillor Chowney replied that, under the council's constitution, matters concerning TPOs could not be referred to the Planning Committee and instead decisions are delegated to officers. The matter may be referred to Working Arrangements Group for consideration as part of the rolling programme of updates to the council's constitution.</p>	Chowney
Turner	<p><u>Homelessness Strategy</u> does the leader of the council share his concerns that the transfer of social lets to affordable lets may create increased pressure on the council's homelessness prevention service?</p> <p>Councillor Chowney replied that the council's Homelessness Strategy was included on the agenda for this meeting and members could debate this matter when that item was reached, if they wished.</p>	Chowney
Pragnell	<p><u>Rock-a-Nore Road</u> will the council consider bidding to ESCC's parking surplus fund, to support improvements to the signage at Rock-a-Nore Road? Will the Leader of the Council also join with him in welcoming the additional funding to ESCC, allocated by the government, to repair potholes in the roads around the county?</p> <p>Councillor Chowney responded that improved signage would help to address the congestion at Rock-a-Nore Road, and the council would consider bidding to the parking surplus fund to support these improvements. He also welcomed the additional funding to repair potholes, but added that he did not believe it would be sufficient to carry out all of the works required.</p>	Chowney
Roberts	<p><u>Hastings Borough Council's website</u> will the Lead Member confirm when the council's new website will be up and running?</p> <p>Councillor Cartwright responded that the new website was due to go live shortly after the</p>	Cartwright

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	<p>election in May. The content of the existing website is currently being reviewed before the launch. The new website will also provide opportunities to promote local events.</p>	
Charlesworth	<p><u>Hastings Trust</u> many people have expressed concerns at the voluntary liquidation of Hastings Trust. Can a review be undertaken to establish the circumstances and how any public funding allocated to the Trust has been spent? Councillor Chowney noted that Hastings Trust was independent of the council. Any review of the Trust's position would need to be undertaken by the Charity Commission. Councillor Chowney agreed to provide Councillor Charlesworth with any update the council had received on this matter.</p>	Chowney
Rogers	<p><u>Hastings Seafront</u> is there an update on the regeneration of the seafront? Councillor Chowney replied that the pier was due to open on 21 May 2016 and was now set to become a major new tourist attraction for the town. The Source BMX and Skate Park had also opened and was very popular. The restoration of Bottle Alley was nearing completion and a new lighting scheme would be introduced for that part of the seafront. Further improvement works would also take place at the entrance to the pier, including new planting and resurfacing of the pathway.</p>	Chowney
Clarke	<p><u>Business East Sussex</u> will the Leader of the Council join with him in welcoming the announcement by ESCC of £216,000 funding to support Business East Sussex and explain who the council's own activities will support this initiative? Councillor Chowney welcomed the announcement and explained that the council continued to work closely with ESCC, through Locate East Sussex, to develop a strategy to attract inward investment to the area.</p>	Chowney
Howard	<p><u>West St Leonards</u> will the Leader of the Council join with him in welcoming recent improvements in the West St Leonards area, including the new discovery centre at Combe Valley Countryside Park and the announcement of a new playground facility in the Combe Valley area? Councillor Chowney welcomed the improvements. He noted that new discovery</p>	Chowney

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	centre at Combe Valley Countryside Park would include a café, exhibition space and meeting room. The centre would be constructed from former shipping containers, providing additional flexibility about where to site it within the countryside park.	
Lee	<p>University of Brighton given the disappointing decision by the University of Brighton to close its campus in Hastings, what can the council do in the short to medium term to make the town more attractive to students?</p> <p>Councillor Chowney replied that the council continued to work closely with the students' union and local entertainment businesses to develop the student offer in the town.</p> <p>Councillor Chowney added that he hoped improved student facilities could form part of any future higher education provision in the town.</p>	Chowney

45. MOTION (RULE 14)

Councillor Westley, having declared a prejudicial interest in this matter, left the Council Chamber during the debate.

Councillor Chowney proposed a motion, set out in the resolution below, seconded by Councillor Cartwright.

RESOLVED that Hastings Borough Council pledges to develop and implement a Responsible Investment Policy through which it will:

- a) **Divest from direct ownership and any commingled funds that include fossil fuel public equities and corporate bonds within 5 years;**
 - b) **Set out an approach to quantifying and addressing climate change risks affecting all other investments, and;**
 - c) **Focus future investments in property and other assets on areas that minimise climate change risk and continue to reduce the council's carbon footprint**
- **To work with other District and Borough councils in East Sussex to encourage and assist them to adopt Responsible Investment Policies with the same scope.**

It also calls on both East Sussex County Council and East Sussex Pension Fund to divest from fossil fuels by developing and adopting Responsible Investment Policies with the same scope

46. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

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The Mayor having called over the minutes set out in the agenda, the under mentioned minutes were reserved for discussion.

RESOLVED under rule 13.3 that the reports and minutes of committees set out in the agenda be received, including minute 55 of Cabinet on 7 March 2016 and minute 59 of Cabinet on 4 April 2016 which were matters for Council decision. Only those items which were reserved were discussed, as follows: -

Meeting	Minute	Councillor
Cabinet, 7 March 2016	51 – Culture-Led Regeneration Strategy	Batsford
Cabinet, 7 March 2016	52 – Seafront Strategy Action Plan	Dowling
Cabinet, 4 April 2016	60 – Hastings Sport and Physical Activity Strategy	Beaver
Cabinet, 4 April 2016	65 – Aquila House - Purchase	Pragnell

No motions for reference to an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or reference back to Cabinet were approved in respect of the items reserved for discussion and they were, therefore, received.

(The Mayor declared the meeting closed at. 7.54 pm)