

COUNCIL

17 DECEMBER 2014

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

14. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 22 OCTOBER 2014

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the council meeting held on 22 October 2014 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record of the proceedings.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor	Committee	Minute	Interest
Westley	Council, 17 December 2014	17 – questions from Councillors under rule12	Personal – she is a temporary employee of East Sussex County Council

16. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND LEADER

The Mayor announced that Councillor Atkins had been appointed as Leader of the Conservative Group, with Councillor Pragnell as his Deputy, following Councillor Lock's resignation as group leader.

17. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS UNDER RULE 12

A written question had been received from Councillor Beaver regarding the parkrun initiative. Councillor Poole, Portfolio Holder for Resorts and Amenities answered the question. Copies of the question and the reply were circulated at the meeting.

Councillor Beaver asked a supplementary question about options for the council to assist parkrun in identifying alternative funding opportunities, if their proposed funding package did not proceed. Councillor Poole replied that the council would support the parkrun volunteers in securing alternative funding, if required.

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

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Questioner and Councillor	Subject	Reply Given By Councillor
Atkins	<p><u>Parking Charges</u> given the council's ongoing support for local small businesses, would it be possible to offer free parking on key days, to attract consumers to local shops?</p> <p>Councillor Chowney commented that East Sussex County Council had responsibility for on-street parking. Free parking was available in council-owned car parks on selected Thursday evenings, any additional free periods may involve diverting funding from other areas and would need to be considered as part of the budget setting process.</p>	Chowney
Clark	<p><u>Street Signage</u> could the Lead Member provide an update on plans for new street signage in Hastings and St Leonards?</p> <p>Councillor Poole explained that two projects were currently underway to improve street signage in the town. Intelligent signage was due to be installed in the council's car parks, to ease congestion at busy times. New totem signs had also been installed at Warrior Square and Kings Road. Additional new signage at key landmarks was due to be installed early in 2015.</p>	Poole
Cooke	<p><u>Off Street Parking Charges</u> can the Lead Member provide an assurance that off-street parking fees will not be increased in 2015/16?</p> <p>Councillor Poole replied that this matter would form part of a broader consultation for the 2015/16 budget.</p>	Poole
Charman	<p><u>White Ribbon Day 2015</u> would the Lead Member provide an update on the outcomes of White Ribbon Day 2015?</p> <p>Councillor Cartwright replied that just under 3,000 people had signed a pledge never to commit, condone or remain silent about domestic violence, as part of series of events to mark White Ribbon Day. An increased number of domestic violence cases were dealt with by the police, which illustrated that victims felt empowered to report these issues. Councillor Cartwright encouraged all members</p>	Cartwright

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	to register as White Ribbon Ambassadors and White Ribbon Champions.	
Charlesworth	<p><u>Town Hall lift</u> when will the works to install a new lift at the Town Hall be completed?</p> <p>Councillor Cartwright referred Members to an earlier email from the Head of Corporate Services. It was anticipated that the new lift at the Town Hall would be operational by early 2015.</p>	Cartwright
Street	<p><u>Advice Hub</u> would the Lead Member provide an update on a recent event to mark 1000 days since the advice hub was launched?</p> <p>Councillor Forward acknowledged that the voluntary agencies located at the advice hub carried out vital work to support vulnerable residents. In the past 1000 days, the Citizens Advice 1066 had dealt with enquiries from 5160 people. Councillor Forward added that the advantage of locating these agencies in a single hub meant that service users could access advice on a range of matters in one place; she encouraged all Members to visit the hub to understand the work of the advice agencies. The council proposed to continue to support the Advice Hub through its community partnership funding grant programme.</p>	Forward
Beaver	<p><u>Hastings household waste recycling site</u> would the Leader Member pass on the council's thanks to staff at the recycling site for their excellent customer service?</p> <p>Councillor Chowney commented that this service was provided by East Sussex County Council, but he would pass on the council's thanks to the relevant officers.</p>	Chowney
Sabetian	<p><u>Autumn Statement</u> would the Leader of the Council give an overview of the impact of the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, and the further proposed reductions to local government funding, on Hastings Borough Council?</p> <p>Councillor Birch expressed his concern at the possible impact of the further planned reductions in local government funding, outlined in the autumn statement, on the</p>	Birch

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	<p>council's ability to deliver services in the town. He added that the council had already made significant reductions to its spending over recent years. Councillor Birch noted that the National Audit Office had commented that some authorities may not have sufficient resources to fulfil their statutory duties, if the reductions to government grant were delivered.</p>	
Batsford	<p><u>Severe Weather Conditions</u> would the Lead Member provide an update on the council's plans to deal with snowfall and icy conditions over the winter months?</p> <p>Councillor Poole replied that East Sussex County Council was primarily responsible for responding to severe weather conditions. However, Hastings Borough Council had made plans to support these efforts by purchasing extra supplies of salt and prioritising key roads in the town to be cleared of ice by the council's street cleansing contractor.</p>	Poole
Davies	<p><u>Overview and Scrutiny review of changes to the welfare system</u> could the Lead Member provide an update on the implementation of the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny review of changes to the welfare system?</p> <p>Councillor Forward explained that, in line with the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny review, the anti-poverty steering group was due to consider a revised anti-poverty strategy and action plan. The council also considered anti-poverty implications as part of its decision making process.</p>	Forward
Turner	<p><u>Bus Service</u> would the Leader of the Council comment on East Sussex County Council's decision to reduce funding for the local bus service, and the impact this may have on the quality of life of local residents?</p> <p>Councillor Birch noted that Hastings had a lower rate of car ownership than any other town in East Sussex, and an effective bus service was therefore particularly important to local residents. During the recent consultation on proposed changes to the bus service,</p>	Birch

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	concerns had been expressed about the impact of a reduced bus service on the local economy and the evening economy in the town. Stagecoach had agreed to operate some of the routes in the town on a commercial basis, however, Council Birch highlighted the importance of efforts to maintain the frequency of the bus service on these routes. Hastings Borough Council also supported the dial-a-ride service for residents who were unable to access the bus service.	
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18. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

Councillor Atkins confirmed that he had been appointed as Leader of the Conservative Group, following Councillor Lock's resignation. Councillor Pragnell had been appointed as Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group. Councillor Atkins proposed a motion regarding the membership of committees, as set out in the resolution below.

RESOLVED – that the council adopt the following arrangements for the membership of committees: -

- 1) **Councillor Pragnell be appointed to Cabinet, in place of Councillor Lock**
- 2) **Councillor Lee be appointed to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Services, in place of Councillor Pragnell**

19. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES INDEX REVIEW

The report of the Director of Corporate Resources on Members' allowances index review was submitted. The report including the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel following a review of the index applied to calculate Members' allowances in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

Under rule 13.3 the report was approved, without being called for discussion.

RESOLVED – to agree the four recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel and set out in paragraph 8 of the report.

The reason for this decision was:

To review the index applied to calculate Members' allowances in accord with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

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20. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

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. Only those items which had been reserved were discussed, as follows: -

Meeting	Minute	Councillor
Cabinet, 1 December 2014	47 – Combe Valley Community Interest Company	Howard

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

(The Mayor declared the meeting closed at. 6.44 pm)