



Council Meeting

**Thursday, 6th
January, 2022**

HASTINGS BOROUGH COUNCIL

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Hastings Borough Council to be held at the Council Chamber, Muriel Matters House, Breeds Place, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 3UY, on Thursday, 6th January, 2022 at 6.00 pm at which meeting the business specified below is proposed to be transacted.

Yours sincerely,

Chief Legal Officer

Muriel Matters House
Breeds Place
Hastings

24 December 2021

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Announcements from the Mayor and Leader
5. Membership of Committees
To give effect to any request received from a political group for a change in their representation on committee(s).
6. Supplementary questions (if any) from members of the public under Rule 11
7. Reports of Committees
 - a) To resolve that the public be excluded from the meeting during

the discussion of any items considered while the public were excluded by the relevant committee because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in the respective paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 referred to in the minutes of the relevant committee.

- b) To receive and consider the recommendations and any decisions of the following committees.

Minute No.	Subject	Cabinet Member / Chair
CABINET – 1 NOVEMBER 2021		
375.	Hastings Town Deal Programme Update	Barnett
376.	Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) Update	Chowney
377.	Agreeing the way forward for the future of the Grounds Maintenance Service	Evans
378.	Solar for Business	Evans
379	Contain Outbreak Management Fund – Remaining Allocation Proposals	Forward
380	500 Affordable Homes Programme	Batsford
381	Commission of Housing Stock Condition Survey and Report	Batsford
CABINET – 11 NOVEMBER 2021 (MANAGING DIRECTOR DECISION)		
383.	Household Support Fund	Chowney
AUDIT COMMITTEE – 18 NOVEMBER 2021		
131. (C)	External Auditor Appointment	Rankin
CABINET – 19 NOVEMBER 2021		
386.	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23 – 2025/26	Chowney

Notes:

1. The Mayor will call over the minutes and members will rise and

indicate those items which they wish to have discussed.

2. No discussion shall take place at this stage upon part II minutes covered by the resolution 7a) above. Any such discussion shall be deferred to item 8 on the agenda.

8. To consider the recommendations and decisions of committees (if any) which the Council has resolved should be discussed after the exclusion of the public from the meeting.

9. Motion (Rule 14)

Councillor Patmore to propose:

This Council mourns the loss of Sir David Amess MP, who was killed performing his constituency duties on 15 October 2021.

This Council recalls the tragic loss of Jo Cox MP in 2016 and the attack on Stephen Timms MP in 2010. The death of Sir David Amess represents the third such attack on a British parliamentarian in a little over a decade.

This Council restates the power of democratic politics to make a positive difference to people's lives and recognises that politicians of all parties are overwhelmingly dedicated, decent people discharging their democratic duties as best they can.

This Council asks that the Group Leaders collectively to convey our condolences on the loss of Sir David to the Speaker of the House of Commons and write to the Leaders of all political parties in Westminster to support measures that would see politicians at tiers of government kept safe and secure so that they continue working hard on behalf of their constituents.

10. Motion (Rule 14)

Councillor Arthur to propose:

Climate change is threatening hundreds of millions of lives, livelihoods across every continent and is putting thousands of species at risk. The burning of fossil fuels – coal, oil, and gas – is by far the major contributor to climate change and is responsible for almost 80% of carbon dioxide emissions since the industrial revolution. In addition to being the leading source of emissions, there are local pollution, environmental and health costs associated with extracting, refining, transporting and burning fossil fuels.

These costs are often paid by Indigenous peoples of the Global South as well as marginalised communities here in the UK. Hastings is one of the most deprived towns in the country, residents are forced to

spend an ever-increasing proportion of their income meeting the exponentially rising costs of energy. Standards of living and health are directly impacted. It is not sustainable to continue to extract and globally transport fossil fuels when genuinely sustainable methods of production may exist locally to meet demand.

Globally, egregious industry practices have led to human rights violations and a fossil fuel system that has left billions of people across the globe without sufficient energy to lead lives of dignity. Failure to meet the ultimate goal of the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement (to limit global warming to 1.5°C) risks pushing the world towards catastrophic global warming.

Yet, the Paris Agreement has no mention of oil, gas or coal and the much anticipated COP26 deal was disappointingly weak. Meanwhile, the fossil fuel industry continues to plan new projects. Banks continue to fund new projects. Closer to home, despite calls from the Labour-led Hastings Borough Council since 2016, East Sussex Pension Funds continue to invest in fossil fuels.

According to the most recent United Nations Environment Programme report, 120% more coal, oil, and gas will be produced by 2030 than is consistent with limiting warming to 1.5°C. Efforts to meet the Paris Agreement and to reduce demand for fossil fuels will be undermined if supply continues to grow.

The solution is clear: fossil fuels must be kept in the ground. We therefore agree:

1. To endorse the call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty (<https://fossilfuel treaty.org>). That is, for world leaders to work together in a spirit of international cooperation to:
 - End new expansion of oil, gas and coal production in line with the best available science as outlined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and United Nations Environment Programme;
 - Phase out existing production of oil, gas and coal in a manner that is fair and equitable, taking into account the responsibilities of countries for climate change and their respective dependency on fossil fuels, and capacity to transition;
 - Invest in a transformational plan to ensure 100% access to renewable energy globally, support dependent economies to diversify away from fossil fuels, and enable people and communities across the globe to flourish through a global just transition.
2. To write to Rother District Council, Wealden District Council, Lewes District Council, Eastbourne Borough Council, East Sussex County Council and the East Sussex Pension Fund, communicating this decision to them and urging them to pass similar motions of their own.
3. To continue to call on East Sussex County Council to commit to

divesting the East Sussex Pension Fund from fossil fuels.

11. Motion (Rule 14)

Councillor Batsford to propose:

This Council, on behalf of the residents of Hastings, agrees to declare a housing emergency.

With rents soaring out of control, thousands of families are left buried in debt and under the threat of losing their home. Many remain stuck on the Council housing list, with little or no chance of an affordable secure home. The problem is made worse by a huge increase in the use of section 21 notices to secure 'no fault evictions' of tenants, destroying family homes as landlords take advantage of unprecedented price rises and sell up.

The Hastings Local Housing Allowance (which determines the maximum level of Housing Benefit that can be paid) now is at least 40% below the market value of most rented properties, once again driving families into debt, with rent arrears blocking them from seeking another home when they're evicted. The government has just announced that LHA rates are to be frozen for another year, while the rents tenants have to pay continue to escalate with no controls on the level of rents landlords can charge.

The shortage of genuinely affordable rented homes is causing a long-term problem too. But significant numbers of empty homes and identified housing sites, particularly brownfield sites, remaining undeveloped, 'land banked' by property speculators who prefer to wait for local housing values to increase still further. Councils can do little about this, as they lack the cost-neutral CPO powers to bring empty homes and land-banked land back into use for genuinely affordable, social rented housing.

Like many tourist towns, residential homes in Hastings are also being stripped out of the rental market through the increase in homes being used as holiday lets, and being bought for second homes. We recognise that holiday cottages for short-term lets are an important part of the local tourist economy. However, second homes remain empty for most of the year, and are of little local value, as well as depriving local people of a potential home to live in. Councils need powers to control the proliferation of holiday homes, and to discourage people from using properties as second homes.

All these factors have led to a huge escalation in homelessness, with hundreds of millions of pounds wasted each year across the country providing unsatisfactory temporary accommodation, when it should be spent on building affordable homes and paying realistic levels of housing benefit.

All these factors combine to precipitate a real housing crisis. We are only at the very start of this perfect storm which will condemn current and future generations of Hastings residents to insecure, unaffordable and substandard housing. A safe, secure and affordable home is a basic human right.

In recognition of the above, this Council:

1. calls on the Leader of Hastings Council, and encourages the Conservative opposition leader to join her, to write to the Hastings and Rye MP and the Secretary of State for the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing, Michael Gove, demanding that he:
 - abolish section 21 notices;
 - reverse the decision to freeze LHA and increase it so it reflects the true level of private sector rents'.
 - allows councils to charge up to 300% Council tax on second homes;
 - introduces a separate planning use class for holiday let properties, so the council can control the proliferation of holiday homes through the development control process;
 - reinstates the fair rent review system to cap housing rents at a realistic level;
 - grants councils 'cost neutral' compulsory purchase powers that allow them to deduct costs from compensation paid for the compulsory purchase of long-term empty homes and land-banked land;
 - fully funds councils to initiate a social rented house-building programme to finally produce the number of 'council' homes our town desperately needs.

2. Ask the Leader of the Council to write to Marie Lorimer, the UK Public Policy Manager at AirBnb to request a meeting, and seek to introduce a 90-day annual limit.

Note: Nothing contained in this agenda or in the attached reports and minutes of committees constitutes an offer or acceptance of an offer or an undertaking or contract by the Borough Council