

HEATHFIELD AND WALDRON PARISH COUNCIL
TUESDAY 8 JANUARY 2008, 7.30 PM
AT HEATHFIELD COMMUNITY CENTRE

PRESENT: Mrs Archer, Mr Bassingthwaite (Chairman), Mr Chambers, Mr Davis, Mr Harmer, Mr Hart, Mrs Kentish-Barnes, Mr Kerby, Mr Newnham, Mrs Oakes, Mrs Plant, Dr Rayner, Mr Waterhouse and Mr Wood.

The Clerk was in attendance.

Also present: County Councillor Simmons
District Councillor Mrs Fox
2 members of the public
3 representatives of the press

08/01 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Mr Loveday thanked the Members of the Council for all their efforts over the last year. He then expressed concern at the number of advertising A frames on the High Street. This comment would be passed on to ESCC.

08/02 **REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

Mrs Fox emphasised the importance of the LDF process and noted that the Parish Council had a meeting arranged with WDC on this subject later in January.

Mr Simmons thanked the Parish Council for arranging the well supported public meeting regarding the proposed closure of Hailsham Road Post Office and expressed concern that local views were not being taken into account by the Post Office.

The Chairmanship of the Local Action Team had now been taken by Mrs Basso and Mr Simmons said this would help to establish greater independence.

The meeting commenced at 7.41p.m.

08/03 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs Basso, Mrs Gander, Mr Hough, Mrs Muddle, Mr Woodhouse and Mr Woolley.

08/04 **CO-OPTION OF PARISH COUNCILLOR**

Following the resignation of Mrs Hanley, the Council vacancy had been advertised in the proper manner and as no election had been called, it was now necessary to adopt the co-option procedure.

An expression of interest had been received from Mr Woodland who was present at the meeting. Mr Woodland explained that he was known locally as

Mr Waterhouse and wished to use this title if elected to the Council.

Mrs Kentish-Barnes proposed that Mr Waterhouse be co-opted onto the Council and this was seconded by Mr Newnham. A vote was taken and Mr Waterhouse was unanimously elected onto the Council.

Mr Waterhouse then took a seat at the meeting table.

08/05 **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS IN MATTERS ON THE AGENDA**

There were none.

08/06 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2007 having been previously circulated, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

08/07 **MATTERS ARISING**

There were none.

08/08 **HAILSHAM ROAD POST OFFICE PROPOSED CLOSURE**

The Chairman reported on a very well-supported public meeting and expressed his thanks to Charles Hendry MP, County and District Councillors for attending.

08/09 **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman reported on events he had attended since the last meeting, including Christmas lights switching on ceremony, Wealden's Parish Conference and Civic Reception, a meeting with the Heathfield Partnership regarding transport initiatives, Public Paths event organised by ESCC, Rotary Club carol service, unveiling of the new town sign and a ceremony to bless the new standard of Heathfield ACF.

08/10 **CLERK'S REPORT**

A list of correspondence received as at 2 January 2008 had been circulated to all Members. The Clerk also reported on the Wealden Parish Conference and the Regional Conference held by the Society of Local Council Clerks.

08/11 **LITTLE PUNNETTS TOWN PRE SCHOOL**

It was proposed to start up a new Pre School at Punnetts Town and the Committee had written to the Parish Council asking for support to enable them to progress with funding and other arrangements. Members agreed that the Punnetts Town community would benefit from a new Pre School and it was **RESOLVED** to write a letter of support for the project.

08/12 **WDC CONSULTATION ON 2008/2009 BUDGET**

It was noted that a consultation paper on Wealden's budget proposals had been received together with a questionnaire. It was agreed that a meeting of the Policy and Consultation Sub-Committee be held to enable a response to be made.

08/13 **COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS**

In response to a question from Mr Hart, the Clerk explained the background to the Value for Money survey currently being undertaken by the Audit Commission on behalf of Wealden District Council in which the Parish Council had been involved.

08/14 **TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES**

08/14a **Finance and General Purposes Committee**

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2007 (unadopted) had been circulated to Members. Mr Bassingthwaight reported on matters discussed.

08/14b **Highways, Planning and Street Lighting Committee**

Minutes of the meetings held on 26 November and 10 December 2007 had been previously circulated. Minutes of the meeting held on 2 January 2008 (unadopted) were to follow. Mr Newnham reported thereon.

08/14c **Burial Grounds Committee**

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2007 (unadopted) were to follow. Mr Newnham reported thereon.

08/14d **Recreation Grounds and Properties Committee**

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2007 (unadopted) had been previously circulated. Mrs Plant reported thereon.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meetings reported above be approved and adopted by the Parish Council.

08/15 **BUDGET AND PRECEPT REQUIREMENTS FOR 2008/2009 FINANCIAL YEAR**

A report and background papers had been circulated to all Members setting out draft proposals for the Council's budget for the forthcoming financial year, including the recommendation from FGP Committee. The Chairman was thanked for his work in producing the papers and for the clarity of the budget proposals. In order to keep the amount of increase to an acceptable level, there was an assumption that brought forward balances would be utilised.

It was duly **RESOLVED** that a total budget of £340,697 be set, with a Precept implication of £313,697. This reflected an increase of £13,211 over the current year. It was also **RESOLVED** that a transfer of £27,000 from General Reserves should be made in order to achieve the overall budget.

08/16 **CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 SECTION 17**

There were no implications in respect of matters raised at the meeting.

08/17 **RISK MANAGEMENT**

It was considered that the Council's budget had been set at a satisfactory level to ensure its obligations and responsibilities for the forthcoming year could be met.

08/18 **TO CONSIDER MOTIONS**

There were none.

08/19 **DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Council meeting will take place on **Tuesday 11 March 2008**, at 7.30 pm in the Ian Price Room, Heathfield Community Centre, Sheepsetting Lane, Heathfield.

The meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.

Signed

Chairman

Dated