

# TENTERDEN TOWN COUNCIL – INTERNAL COMMITTEE

## COMMITTEE STRUCTURE SUB-COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF A MEETING ON 27<sup>th</sup> February 2018

**Councillors Present:** Mrs Curteis, Mrs Ferguson, Knowles, Mulholland, Nelson & Mrs Smith.

The Town Clerk, Phil Burgess and Deputy Town Clerk Claire Gilbert were present.

- 1. Apologies for absence:** Cllr Carter.
- 2. Chairman.** Cllr Nelson was appointed chair.
- 3. Minutes.** The minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February were agreed.
- 4. Matters arising.** The amendment to standing orders detailed in minute 7 was still outstanding. *Action*
- 5. Review of Internal/ External Structure.** It was generally agreed that the system was working quite well and had contributed to more public involvement. There was much less “to and fro” between committees. More business was being dealt with at sub-committee/focus group level which was an advantage.
- 6. Order of meetings/ other considerations.**
  - a) Internal and external committees should occur at each scheduled meeting date to avoid long external agendas. The order of Internal and External meetings should be alternated. The same system of drawing by lot should be carried out each council year to select members of these two committees.
  - b) Similar agenda items should be grouped to avoid switching between subjects.
  - c) It had been suggested that the night of the meeting should be changed to allow press releases to be prepared in time for deadlines imposed by Kentish Express. Members felt this was not appropriate. The column in the newspaper by Stuart Barton was Ashford-centric and TTC could request that it be replaced by a statement from a councillor each week on a rota basis. Monday night should remain the main meeting night.
- 7. Meeting Cycle.**
  - a) The main meeting cycle should be moved from 3 weeks to a calendar month.
  - b) Each 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday in the month should be used for meetings. This would result in either a 4 or a 5-week cycle.
  - c) Monday schedules would include Town Council, Internal and External committees (the order of Internal and External committees to alternate). Town Council would appear only on alternate cycles.
  - d) Planning committee would be held on the Tuesday immediately following the Monday meetings (Ashford Planning meeting to be checked to ensure decisions are made in time). *Post meeting note (at least 2 members of planning committee have difficulty with a Tuesday. Main committee should debate).*
  - e) Sub-committees should largely be arranged for Monday nights on the 3 or 4 weeks between main meeting cycles.
  - f) Changes should not take place until the next council year.
- 8. “Frome-style” Panels.** It was agreed that this system was not appropriate for TTC at this stage. Frome was a much larger council (£30,000 population) and the idea would be revisited once the focus groups had resolved their projects. Focus groups, “coffee and cake” sessions and the public engagement sub-committee already achieved many of the aims of the panel

system. "Coffee and Cake" sessions would be included in the meeting schedule quarterly and would offer the opportunity for local organisations such as the TDRA, dementia café and the Day Centre (Tenterden Social Hub) to have stands there. These sessions would be held sufficiently in advance of the main meetings so that issues raised could be included in the agenda.

The survey of residents would identify what is important to them. Higher tier councillors (ABC and KCC) should also be included in the sessions.

- 9. Councillor Training.** Informal sessions should be held quarterly in advance of the "coffee and cake" sessions so that councillors can raise questions on any subject. Town Hall staff will attend to advise. This system has proved successful in the past and has a positive effect on morale.

**10. AOB** None

**11. Next Meeting.** None arranged.

Meeting Closed at 18.10