

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

PERFORMANCE PLAN 2009/2010



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1. AN INTRODUCTION FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

This past year has been a difficult one in economic and financial terms. The significant structural problems in the world's financial markets had a huge impact both nationally and locally. People have seen falls in the value of their homes; their investments collapse and interest on their savings reduce to historic lows. In addition jobs have been lost and people feel less secure.

Local Government needs to ensure it responds to these circumstances. It is in times like these that the value of the strong performance management processes we have at the Town Council becomes particularly evident. The Performance Plan encapsulates the Council's response to these troubled times in both spending and policy terms.

I stressed in last year's Performance Plan the Council's commitment to measuring and reporting on our performance to ensure transparency to our taxpayers. As a result we've focussed on what we said we'd do, what we've done, and how much it cost. We then outline what we intend to do in the coming year. This is supported by use of performance indicators and narrative to give some flavour to the work we have progressed in the year and our specific achievements and where we have failed to meet the objectives we set for ourselves.

During the year we began work on scrutinising our performance management systems, work that will be concluded autumn 2009 and the results of which will be reflected in the form and content of next year's Plan. I hope this will provide a further strengthening of our performance management processes, processes that I believe are fundamental to the success of this Council.

So this Plan sets the context for how we are dealing with the current tough environment. These are not times for the public sector to burden taxpayers. Rather these are times to minimise increases in local taxes, scrutinise all expenditure for best value and to draw more income where possible. This is what the Town Council has been doing and will continue to do throughout the remainder of this administration, until its term concludes in May 2011.

James Baldwin

Leader of the Council

September 2009

2. PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESSES AND STATEMENTS

East Grinstead Town Council is committed to the concept of active and meaningful public consultation and liaison.

For many years the Town Council has encouraged public participation at all meetings of Council and Programme Committees. A period of 30 minutes at the commencement of each Council meeting and 15 minutes before each Committee meeting is specifically set aside for **public question time** and this procedure is written into the Council's Standing Orders. In order to ensure the widest possible public involvement in the process no advance tabling of questions is required and neither is it necessary for questions to refer to items on an agenda for the meeting in question or even relate to the work of the Committee at which the question is asked. Wherever possible questions are answered at the meeting but where this is not possible written replies are forwarded within seven working days. All questions and answers are recorded in the public minutes of the meeting.

The Town Council issues on a quarterly basis its newsletter '**Civic News**' as a means of explaining its policies and the key issues being dealt with at any specific time to local residents. This newsletter, which comprises a minimum four sides of A4, is distributed to all residents, usually by the Royal Mail household delivery service. Each edition records the names of all elected Members, their home address, telephone number and party affiliation. It positively encourages public communication.

All members of the Town Council hold **public surgeries** in East Grinstead Library on a regular basis and details of these are available from the Library or on the Town Council's web site. In 2008/2009 35 surgeries were held.

The Town Council offices at East Court are open to the public from 9 am until 4 p.m., five days per week. In addition a **Help Point** (telephone 01342 300780) is maintained in East Grinstead Library as an opportunity for the public to raise concerns about the services provided by any public authority. This is a partnership initiative between West Sussex County Council (the lead authority), Mid Sussex District Council, East Grinstead Town Council and a number of other agencies.

The Town Council maintains a comprehensive **web site (www.eastgrinstead.gov.uk)** and this is regularly updated. The site, which is a past national winner amongst all parish and town council sites in the Local Council Review/Co-operative Bank communication awards, includes up to date information regarding elected Councillors (including a photograph of each Councillor to aid public identification), details of meetings, services provided by the Town Council, the last audited accounts and editorial regarding specific issues before the Town Council at any specific time. There is also a comprehensive news section and an opportunity for visitors to the site to give feedback. The approved Performance Plan appears on the web site and this includes a summary of the key action plan requirements emanating from each service review as they are completed.

The Town Council uses the **Annual Town Meeting** as a Forum to discuss with interested electors issues pertaining to best value and in particular local services and service delivery.

Consultation Statement

Effective communication and consultation with the community is an essential element of Best Value. Locally Members are concerned to ensure that the policies and service plans

are subject to the full rigours of public scrutiny and debate. The methods of consultation to be adopted will be realistic in terms of cost and available resources.

In summary the key elements of consultation that the Town Council utilises includes: -

- V Active staff involvement in the Member driven process;
- V Annual Town meeting as a forum for public views, opinions and consultation;
- V Public Question Time before Council and Committee Meetings;
- V Issue of press releases to local newspapers and radio stations;
- V Issue of Town Council newsletter 'Civic News' on a quarterly basis;
- V User and non-user surveys and public questionnaires;
- V The involvement of "critical friends"/ independent experts in the review process where considered appropriate;
- V The Town Council's web site as a promotional information source and
- V Active liaison with representative groups and organisations - East Grinstead Society, Residents Associations; Local Action teams; Focus Groups, Local Clubs and Pressure Groups, and the Mid Sussex District and West Sussex County Councils, for example.

The results of public consultation exercises undertaken are periodically reported to the appropriate Programme Committees and the results taken into account by the Service Review teams at the appropriate time.

Summary Quantitative Results of Questionnaire Surveys Conducted

Two service specific questionnaire surveys were conducted this past year, one of the local tourism economy, to help further our work in this important area and the other of funeral directors, stonemasons and clergy in respect of cemetery and burial services. The outcomes of these are reported under the appropriate service heading. We also posted a generic services questionnaire on our website to establish public views on all our services. Although clearly signposted on the Home page this has not resulted in customer feedback and we will review this method of customer engagement during the coming year with a view to coming up with a better solution.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNCIL, ITS MEMBERSHIP AND ESTABLISHMENT

East Grinstead Town Council is a successor authority that was formed in 1974 consequent upon the Local Government Act 1972. The Council serves an homogenous area located in the North East of the County of West Sussex and north of the High Weald in Mid Sussex. The Town is fortunate in it is surrounded by attractive countryside with Green Belt to the north in Surrey, the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the east and south (where the boundary abuts East Sussex) and with an area of development restraint to the west.

The Town Council achieved Quality accreditation status in 2004 (less than 10% of all parish and town council councils nationally attain this success) and was the first parish or town council in West Sussex to be recredited in December 2008. The Town Council was a past national runner-up in the NALC Council of the Year awards (2006).

Staffing

The Town Councils staffing establishment is headed up by the Town Clerk, who is assisted by a team of full and part-time officers. A chart giving details of the approved staffing establishment in 2009/2010 is reproduced in Appendix A.

All office staff are based at the Town Council offices at East Court. The outdoor service personnel carry out their functions at a number of sites within the civil parish of East Grinstead but all work out of Mount Noddy Cemetery in Blackwell Road. The caretaking/cleaning staff team are responsible for East Court Mansion, Meridian Hall, the Old Court House and the Parish Halls (a registered charity owned and managed by the Council). The Business and Tourism Support Officer and his part-time assistant work out of East Grinstead Library with the co-operation and active partnership support of West Sussex County Council Library Service.

This establishment has stabilised in recent years and annual staff changes run at less than 10%, which is well below sector average. The approved establishment reflects councillor's priorities to ensure the council is adequately resourced to meet service delivery demands, including opportunities for devolution, to recognise the incorporation at arms length of Chequer Mead (by means of a sole custodian charity) and to provide enhanced support to the Town Clerk and elected members.

Elected Councillors

A list of East Grinstead Town Council Members is attached to this Plan as Appendix B. The current Council (18 members in a total of six wards) was elected in May 2007 for a new four-year term. The next elections are due to take place in May 2011. Historically elections have always been fought and there is a history of active civic involvement in the Town that is considered to be healthy for effective democracy.

All Members are unpaid but have entitlement to modest allowances, which are set by an Independent Panel, which recognises the significant commitment they are required to give to fulfilling their democratic responsibilities and mandate. A list of payments made in 2008/2009 financial year is recorded in Appendix I.

The Town Council elects a Town Mayor from its own membership each year along with a Deputy Town Mayor at the Annual Town Council meeting in May of each year.

In June 2006 the Town Council approved a policy document that set out the expectations of elected Town Councillors in terms of their **roles and duties**. These are reproduced below.

- (i) Collectively be the ultimate policy-makers and carry out strategic and corporate management functions;
- (ii) Contribute to the good governance of the area and encourage community participation and citizen involvement in decision making;
- (iii) Effectively represent the interests of their electoral divisions and of individual constituents and bring their views into the Council's decision-making process;
- (iv) Respond to constituents' enquiries and representations, fairly and impartially;
- (v) Participate in the governance and management of the Council, and
- (vi) Be available to represent the Council on other bodies.

In addition to having a specified role, **Councillor's rights and duties** were also agreed as follows:

- (vii) Councillors will have such rights of access to such documents and information as are necessary for the proper discharge of their functions and in accordance with the law, and will be supported at all times by the Council's paid staff in training, and advice generally.
- (viii) Councillors will not make public information, which is confidential or exempt without the consent of the Council or divulge information given in confidence to anyone other than a councillor or officer entitled to know it.
- (ix) Councillors will at all times observe the Members Code of Conduct and behave in an ethical manner.

Code of Conduct

The Town Council adopted the revised Code of Conduct on 2 April 2007 the principle of the new Code of Conduct was formally accepted and all Councillors formally signed to adhere to this prior to taking up their roles as Town Councillors.

Committees

At the Annual Town Council meeting in May, Committees are agreed for the following civic year together with their Chairman, Vice Chairman and elected membership. Details of the Committee structure are attached to this Plan as Appendix C. A list of Council and Committee meeting dates for 2009/2010 civic year is attached to the Plan as Appendix D. Details of individual Committee memberships are recorded in section 5 of this Plan.

Much of the Council's work is delegated to the four programme Committees - Finance & General Purposes, Amenities & Tourism, Public Services, and Planning. Council and each Committee have dedicated Terms of Reference, which were last reviewed in September 2008.

A full listing of the new Terms of Reference is set out below.

Terms of Reference for Council

- (a) The power of raising loans and making the Rate;

- (b) The power of incurring capital expenditure not specifically included in the Council's approved estimate of expenditure for the time being;
- (c) The appointment to or co-option on a Committee or Sub-Committee of a person who is not a member of the Council or the Committee;
- (d) Standing Orders and the functions and constitution of Committees and Sub-Committees;
- (e) Dates of meetings of the Council;
- (f) Appointment or nomination by the Council of persons to fill vacancies on outside bodies arising during the Council year;
- (g) Filling of vacancies occurring on any Committee of the Council during the Council year, and
- (h) The appointment or dismissal of the Town Clerk.

Terms of Reference for the Finance & General Purposes Committee

- (a) The making of recommendations to Council in respect of the following items:
 - (i) The appointment to or co-option on a Committee or Sub-Committee of a person (on a strictly non-voting basis) who is not a Member of the Council or the Committee;
 - (ii) Standing Orders and the functions and constitution of Committees and Sub-Committees;
 - (iii) Dates of meetings of the Council;
 - (iv) Appointment or nomination by the Council of persons to fill vacancies on outside bodies arising during the Council year;
 - (v) Filling of vacancies occurring on any Committee of the Council during the Council year; and
 - (vi) The appointment or dismissal of the Town Clerk.
- (b) Dealing with all matters relating to the general day-to-day administration of the Council;
- (c) Dealing with matters specifically referred by the Town Council or any other Standing Committee and with all matters not specifically referred or delegated to any other Standing Committee:
- (d) Dealing with the Terms and Conditions of Service and superannuation of the Town Council's staff and making appropriate recommendations relying on, where appropriate, the Scheme of Conditions of Service of the National Joint Councils, the National Association of Local Councils, and the Local Conditions of Service of the Mid Sussex District Council;
- (e) The making of appropriate recommendations in respect of community and other grants from the Town Council's revenue and capital funds;

- (f) Giving consideration to, agreeing and making appropriate recommendation in respect of the Town Council's revenue estimates, including reimbursable expenditure;
- (g) Acting as lead Committee in respect of any partnership initiative of a corporate nature with the principal Local Authorities for the area including, as appropriate, the development of Joint Partnership Committees and recommendations on Terms of Reference and constitutional matters.

Terms of Reference for the Public Services Committee:

- (a) The making of representations to the appropriate authority in respect of highways matters.
- (b) The making of representations to the appropriate authority in respect of public transport services.
- (c) The making of representations to the appropriate authority in respect of all health care/service matters.
- (d) The making of representations to Sussex Police Authority and other appropriate police personnel in respect of all local policing matters, including the establishment of joint partnership initiatives.
- (e) The making of representations to Mid Sussex District Council regarding Public Entertainment Licensing and Licensed Premises generally.
- (f) All other matters (except planning) which are the responsibility of third party agencies and directly affect the town's basic infrastructure

Terms of Reference for the Amenities & Tourism Committee:

- (a) Dealing with the provision, maintenance and management of the Parish Halls, The Old Court House, East Court Mansion and grounds, the Meridian Hall, and the maintenance and management of any other land holdings and/or buildings of a leisure nature - amenities, sports, cultural or community for example - and the making of recommendations annually to the Finance & General Purposes Committee of rents and charges;
- (b) Dealing with the provision and maintenance street furniture and Town Council public owned facilities including: -
 - (i) Public clock
 - (ii) War memorials
 - (iii) Public seats
 - (iv) Bus Shelters
 - (v) Public Notice Boards
 - (vi) Salt and Grit Bins
- (c) Dealing with the provision and maintenance of allotments and cemeteries;
- (d) The co-ordination and direction of the Council's environmental improvement programme and related initiatives;

- (e) Dealing with the publication of the official Town Guide, Town Map and other publications relevant to the work of the Committee;
- (f) The provision of an emergency community handyman/housekeeping service;
- (g) The provision and maintenance of all street and footway lighting in the ownership of the Town Council;
- (h) Co-ordination of any Town Council community safety initiatives including the local provision of CCTV.
- (i) The making of recommendations to the Finance & General Purposes Committee regarding matters relating to the Town Council's staff engaged on caretaking and cleaning duties and in the cemeteries.
- (j) The making of recommendations to the Finance & General Purposes Committee regarding grant applications from the Council's Capital Initiatives Fund.
- (k) The facilitation of Tourism initiatives and the provision of tourist information facilities for the Town in liaison, as appropriate, with other local authorities and agencies.

Terms of Reference for the Planning Committee:

- (a) The making of representations to the Local Planning Authority on applications for planning permission which have been notified in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, Section 20, Schedule 16 and other relevant legislation.
- (b) The making of representations in respect of appeals against the refusal of planning permission.
- (c) The making of recommendations regarding street naming.
- (d) To consider and monitor the Town and other developmental plans and the making of all appropriate representations.
- (e) The facilitation of economic development initiatives, including those pertaining to town centre matters, for the benefit of East Grinstead and the making of recommendations on all related matters and liaison as appropriate with other agencies.
- (f) The making of representations to the appropriate Planning Authority in respect of other planning matters not otherwise referred to in Terms of Reference (a) - (e) above.

Terms of Reference for the Charities Committee

During 2004 the Town Council established an independent Charities Committee, with the following specified Terms of Reference, to deal with all matters pertaining to Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre and Parish Halls Trust. All members serve on this committee in a capacity of Trustees and not Councillors. Their prime duty is to the two charitable trusts and not to the council.

'To further the objects of the Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre Charity (1108890) and the East Grinstead Parish Halls Charity (charity no. 206371) strictly within the terms of the appropriate declarations of trust and charitable law according to the requirements of the charity commission.'

The work of the Charities Committee, being arms length from the Town Council, is not reviewed as part of the Best Value Plan although the grant aid that is paid to Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre is subject to this Plan and was the subject of the 2006/2007 review. This is reported on in greater detail in section 6 of the Plan.

The Parish Halls Trust is generally self-financing from income though recent building maintenance issues adversely impacted on balances to the extent that a grant of £15,000 was awarded the Trust in March 2008 to ensure continuing viability pending a major redevelopment programme. That redevelopment is now unlikely to proceed and Trustees are currently reviewing other options for the building to produce a financially viable solution that will not have long-term financial implications for local council taxpayers.

4. THE TOWN COUNCIL'S BUSINESS PLANNING PROCESSES

The Town Council has an established business planning process that sets out its priorities and how these are to be achieved. At the beginning of each new administration a strategic forward action plan is approved setting out detailed service and policy intentions for that and the following year and outline draft programmes for the following one or two years. These are then updated annually on a dynamic basis as part of the Performance Plan process. This recognises that a framework of approved services, strategies and work programmes is essential for the effectiveness of the Council's management and operation.

As an integral element within the business plan the Council has approved a series of **corporate (strategic) objectives and a mission statement**. These were agreed in direct response to a recommendation of District Audit arising from the audit of the 2001/2002 Plan. These are set out below. The corporate objectives were last approved as part of the 2008/2009 Plan in September 2008.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To ensure East Grinstead is a desirable and thriving place in which to live and work by facilitating and providing quality, sustainable and affordable services which accord with the community's needs and aspirations.

CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

1. To be an accessible and accountable Town Council, fully responsive to the needs of residents, businesses and visitors, upholding the civic values and heritage of the town at all times. *(This objective is the primary responsibility of Council).*
2. To provide a range of local leisure, recreation, community and tourism services/facilities which complement those provided by the principal authorities, private and voluntary sector, seeking to work in positive and co-operative partnership with such bodies. *(This objective is the primary responsibility of Amenities & Tourism Committee).*
3. To provide effective, coherent and timely representational responses about services provided by other councils, agencies and organisations that have direct impact and relevance to the public of East Grinstead, to monitor the quality and scope of such services and to seek to influence the initiation of new services as appropriate. *(This objective is the primary responsibility of the Public Services Committee).*
4. To ensure that the Council's human and financial resources and built assets are managed efficiently, effectively and equitably, at all times in accordance with the principles of best value. *(This objective is the primary responsibility of Finance & General Purposes Committee).*
5. In conjunction with other bodies and the local community to make East Grinstead a pleasant place to live and work, to promote economic growth and prosperity and seek to ensure that all future development is planned, environmentally sustainable and appropriate. *(This objective is the primary responsibility of Planning Committee)*

In addition each Committee recommends and Council resolves a series of **programme strategies and policy statements**. These were last approved in September 2008 as part of the 2008/2009 Performance Plan. These strategies and statements that are set out below derive from the authority's overall vision and corporate planning process. They, in conjunction with the corporate objectives, assist in identifying service priorities and help to inform the forward revenue and capital programme which is agreed in November/December annually.

Finance & General Purposes Committee Programme Strategies and Policy Statements

Strategy Statement No. 1

The efficient and effective administration of the Town Council's affairs for the benefit of the residents of East Grinstead with specific attention to resource allocation, financial well-being and the pursuit of effective partnerships wherever possible.

Policy Statements No. 1

The Committee will: -

- (i) Look to provide the Town Council's services at the net minimum cost commensurate with maximum and effective fulfilment of the Council's operational role and policy aims.
- (ii) Seek to ensure the most profitable and efficient investment management policies.
- (iii) Adopt positive staffing policies and ensure compliance with national conditions of service, welfare and health and safety at work legislation etc.
- (iv) Recognise the need for good business management in operating its services and will regularly undertake performance and systems reviews to ensure an economic, effective and efficient Town Council, including, where beneficial, opportunities for the introduction of new technology within the Council's office systems.
- (v) Recognise the need for, and benefits of, Member and staff training and will positively initiate and react to positive and appropriate opportunities within the context of overall budget resources.
- (vi) Pursue effective partnerships wherever possible, including those of a financial nature, in order to enhance existing service delivery or to bring new opportunities into the town for community benefit.

Strategy Statement No. 2

To provide a range of public education services to educate and inform local residents and others with regard to Council policies and regarding the Town and its history generally.

Policy Statement No. 2

- (i) To maintain positive and constructive working relationships with the local press and other media regarding all aspects of the Committee's operations and policies.
- (ii) To have published, and issued on a quarterly basis for the benefit of all local residents and taxpayers, the Town Council's newspaper "Civic News".
- (iii) To encourage throughout the Council's business operations more opportunities for

democratic public input and participation including the provision of a period of Public Question Time at all Committee meetings.

- (iv) To recognise the important role the Town Council has, by itself and with others, to promote and encourage community opportunities for the overall benefit of the people of East Grinstead.

Amenities & Tourism Committee Programme Strategies and Policy Statements

Strategy Statement No. 1

The efficient operation of the Council's halls and lettings facilities - Meridian Hall, East Court Mansion, Parish Halls, the Old Court House, and any other leisure premises within the ownership of the Council - with specific regard to range/quality of service and financial viability, whether managed directly or as an agency by others.

Policy Statement No. 1

The Committee: -

- (i) Recognising the diverse needs of potential customers, should provide a range of leisure-based opportunities within its hall facilities, including opportunities for community, commercial and private hire.
- (ii) Will seek to encourage participation by promoting the Centres as social hubs for the community.
- (iii) Recognises the need for good business management in operating its major halls/community facilities and will regularly review their operations to ensure an economic, efficient and effective service.
- (iv) Will seek to ensure the Council's buildings are as energy efficient as possible and that practical energy conservation measures are introduced wherever circumstances permit, and
- (v) Wherever possible, positively encourage the provision and use of facilities for people with disabilities.

Strategy Statement No. 2

Review the need for new or expanded leisure facilities and programmes where clear need and demand exist.

Policy Statement No. 2

The Committee will: -

- (i) Positively recognise the nature of changing public needs, the Council's own limited financial resources and the fact that any new facilities should be cost-effective.
- (ii) Constructively work with other public authorities and the private sector wherever possible to attract capital investment into East Grinstead to the overall benefit of the local community.
- (iii) Ensure that before any new commitments are entered into detailed capital and revenue financial appraisals, project specifications and other related considerations

have been thoroughly analysed and reviewed.

- (iv) Wherever appropriate and subject to the Council's limited financial resources, seek to prevent the sale or disposal of public open space within the town for other than public use purposes and, where such sale may be at or close to public open space value, positively consider acquiring such land for the benefit of the local community.
- (v) Wherever possible, positively encourage the provision and use of facilities for people with disabilities.
- (vi) Positively encourage healthy living throughout the community.

Strategy Statement No. 3

The efficient provision of the Council's land based services - Cemeteries, Allotments, green spaces and general infrastructure - with particular emphasis on standards, customer liaison and costs.

Policy Statement No. 3

The Committee will: -

- (i) Seek to maintain and enhance the appearance of all its land holdings and particularly the Mount Noddy Cemetery, recognising the significance and importance of such standards.
- (ii) Ensure that in undertaking the Cemeteries and Allotments services, regard is had to the appropriate legislative requirements and that these are complied with at all times.
- (iii) Maintain and develop constructive and harmonious working relationships with allotment representatives to further the best interests of all allotment tenants.
- (iv) Ensure that a basic provision and upgrading of public seats is provided to the benefit of the local community and that such provision is most effectively located and maintained to an acceptable standard.

Strategy Statement No. 4

Seek to maintain and improve the town's environmental infrastructure with special attention given to litter and other campaign initiatives.

Policy Statement No. 4

The Committee will: -

- (i) Endeavour to improve the attraction of the town environment, working whenever possible in close liaison with the County and District Councils and other authorities/agencies.
- (ii) Participate in national, regional and local initiatives designed to stimulate public awareness and commitment to environmental issues.
- (iii) Encourage community participation and involvement in litter and other campaigning issues for education and environmental improvement purposes and to encourage environmental awareness and actions through the Town Council's own operations and in its liaisons and influences with other bodies with particular reference to local schools.

- (iv) Provide specific revenue funds to permit positive Council action in tackling issues of litter, grass cutting and one-off environmental improvement projects and to provide, maintain and improve, where appropriate, the Town Council's public lighting services, a basic provision of bus shelters and the ongoing maintenance of CCTV cameras (phase 2).

Strategy Statement No. 5

To provide a range of public information services to educate and inform local residents and visitors with regard to Council policies and regarding the Town and its history and tourism opportunities available.

Policy Statement No. 5

- (i) To maintain positive and constructive working relationships with the local press and other media regarding all aspects of the Committee's operations and policies.
- (ii) To deliver a range of visitor services from the East Grinstead Tourist Information Centre in accordance with policies agreed, as appropriate, with other local authorities.
- (iii) To produce and publish, as appropriate, Town Information Maps and Town Guides and other publications relevant to the work of the Committee.

Public Services Committee Programme Strategies and Policy Statements

Strategy Statement No. 1

Fulfil a positive, dynamic and effective local role and liaison in respect of all matters affecting the town community that are the responsibility of other local authorities and agencies.

Policy Statement No. 1

The Committee will: -

- (i) Develop its existing role as the major local community catalyst seeking to maintain existing services and secure improved services, achievements and benefits for the town and a greater awareness and understanding of the town's needs.
- (ii) Encourage closer relationships with other local authorities, Sussex police, public transport undertakings, health services and other agencies, including the establishment of regular opportunities/meetings for objective discussion and liaison.

Strategy Statement No. 2

To provide a range of public information services to educate and inform local residents and others with regard to Council policies that are relevant to the work of the Committee.

Policy Statement No. 2

- (i) To maintain positive and constructive working relationships with the local press and other media regarding all aspects of the Committee's operations and policies, and
- (ii) To have published, and issued as appropriate, publications relevant to the work of

the Committee providing information about local services.

Committee is invited to give consideration to this report and recommend to F&GP accordingly.

Planning Committee Programme Strategies and Policy Statements

Strategy Statement No. 1

To seek to ensure high standards of planning for all new developmental activity within the Town boundary with specific attention to all appropriate local and statutory plan policies.

Policy Statement No. 1

The Committee will: -

- (i) Ensure positive and constructive input to Mid Sussex District Council in respect of all planning applications submitted.
- (ii) Ensure positive, constructive and well-researched input to all Local and Structure Plan reviews and to other planning and consultation documents issued by a principal authority for the area.
- (iii) Seek to ensure, within overall resources, maximum publicity and awareness of planning applications by means of public notices and through effective press liaison.
- (iv) Positively contribute to discussions, evaluations and consultations in respect of major or contentious new development activity, including the establishment of formal meetings with professional planning staff to exchange views and consider detailed proposals whenever necessary.
- (v) Seek to prevent the loss of private and public open space, including playing fields, whenever possible.
- (vi) Recognise the intrinsic and historical importance of the High Street Conservation Area and East Court Conservation Area and seek to protect the environment of those important parts of the town at all times by close adherence to Local and Structure Plan policies for the areas.

Strategy Statement No. 2

To seek to influence the economic development and prosperity of the Town, in conjunction with other agencies where appropriate, with particular emphasis on retailing and tourism sectors.

Policy Statement No. 2

The Committee will: -

- (i) Constructively contribute to all Town Centre Management issues as appropriate and in conjunction with the Council's private and public sector partners look to positively influence matters relating to East Grinstead's retail economy.
- (ii) Seek to work with the County and District Councils and other agencies to enhance the economic development of the Town generally with specific emphasis towards appropriate and sympathetic tourism and use initiatives.

Strategy Statement No. 3

To provide a range of public information services to educate and inform local residents and others with regard to Council policies and regarding the Town and its history generally.

Policy Statement No. 3

To maintain positive and constructive working relationships with local press and other media regarding all aspects of the Committee's operations and policies.

Council Action Plan 2007-2011

In addition to the priority plans for each Committee the new Council administration at the beginning of its term of office agrees specific short, medium and long-term priorities to be addressed during the four-year term. For the 2007-2011 administration this Action Plan was agreed at an Away Day held at Ashdown Park on 14 July 2007. A copy is attached as Appendix F. Progress in achieving these actions is measured annually and reported in the following years Performance Plan – progress to date can be viewed on the emboldened text. Specific aspects of the Plan are also incorporated elsewhere in this document.

5. TOWN COUNCIL SERVICES - AN OVERVIEW

This section provides information about past and future services performance in respect of the following aspects:

- * Overall financial outturn against budget / net cost of providing the service.
- * Committee responsibility;
- * Service Description and Objectives;
- * Achievements and Targets;
- * The performance indicators being used by the Council to monitor the service.

The Town Council's budget for 2008/2009 financial year was approved at Council on 4 February 2008, and the budget for 2009/2010 was approved at Council on 2 February 2009. The following table shows the 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 original budgets and the outturn figures for 2007/2008 and 2008/2009 financial years. The latter figures have been produced from information available prior to completion, and audit, of the Statement of Accounts. Accordingly there may be marginal differences between these figures and those contained in the final Accounts, partly accounted for by FRS17 adjustments, depreciation, and as some adjustments to reserves have not been fully taken into account. As similar situations have arisen in previous years comparisons are valid on a like for like basis. It should be noted that the constituent parts of some cost centres changed in 2009/2010 so that, for example, economic development moved from planning to tourism services and a new cost centre of charities was created with the service costs moving from community support.

Service Summary	2007-2008 Actual £	2008-2009 Estimate £	2008-2009 Actual £	2009-2010 Estimate £
Democratic Representation/Management	82,829	87,680	93,046	90,874
Corporate Management	12,555	50,700	58,017	65,372
East Court Estate	130,214	127,140	115,994	120,094
Community Support	133,238	161,490	123,794	44,722
Planning	21,110	24,810	22,740	22,531
Economic Development and Tourism Services	30,631	30,960	29,546	40,172
Cemetery Services	51,094	61,560	55,824	58,947
Civic Pride	110,846	121,650	146,241	146,241
Charities	-	-	-	110,150
Transfer to Capital fund/ Capital Exp. (net)	46,000	38,500	32,231	43,000
Total Services Expenditure	618,517	704,490	654,351	742,103

In respect of the capital fund it should be noted that year on year variances are primarily accounted for by the extent to which capital schemes are progressed in any one-year. Whilst funds are transferred into the capital fund on an annual basis the expenditure may well be incurred in a later year hence the variation between budget and actual spend.

Details of the Town Council's precept since 1998/99 is as follows with the Band D tax quoted alongside in brackets:

	£
1998/1999	435,000 (£40.48)
1999/2000	450,220 (£41.82)
2000/2001	464,140 (£45.56)

2001/2002	477,000 (£47.53)
2002/2003	506,000 (£49.86)
2003/2004	520,890 (£51.40)
2004/2005	536,000 (£52.22)
2005/2006	564,000 (£53.77)
2006/2007	583,800 (£55.37)
2007/2008	601,000 (£57.02)
2008/2009	660,890 (£62.09)
2009/2010	682,300 (£63.89)

The latest year on year increase in precept is 2.9%. The tax base stayed broadly static at £10,679.80 compared with £10,644.00 in the previous year. It should be noted that the Band D Council tax for East Grinstead remains well within the lowest decile for those larger town councils that originally formed the 41 best value group. The Council has made a public commitment to keep future rises in council tax during the lifetime of this administration at less than inflation.

Wherever possible services have been linked within a broad cost centre in an attempt to aid and simplify financial management/monitoring and the review process. All Town Council services are incorporated within the service headings listed. The Town Council does administer a number of charities for which separate charitable accounts are held. These charities are not included in detail within this Performance Plan, although the grants payable to them are.

The “resident” figure for East Grinstead, which has been used to calculate the performance indicators, is 24,500. Mid Sussex District Council’s Economic Development Officer has provided this figure. This compares with a figure of 24,050 provided by West Sussex County Council following the 2001 census.

Comparison of Services With Other Authorities and Organisations

Following the withdrawal of the Best Value grant from central government and the statutory requirement for best value at parish and town council level no further work has been conducted in the sector on benchmarking. However the Town Council decided to comprehensively scrutinise its detailed performance management system and this work is currently ongoing and will be concluded during the September 2009 cycle of meetings. The outcomes of that work will be reflected in next years Plan.

Benchmarking

Due to the above the National Association of Local Councils conducted no national benchmarking exercise in either 2007/2008 or 2008/2009. However using the previous years figures as a guide we have extrapolated our own performance against a basket of indicators, the results of which are set out below. Whilst these can be a good guide to performance there may be underlying factors which distort – high costs of interments for instance does, in East Grinstead, result from the cemetery having a traditional layout with kerbstones as opposed to more modern lawned layouts where maintenance is substantially easier and costs reduce accordingly. Similarly the Town Councils allotments performance in terms of subsidy per plot has been consistently sector best because both sites have been let to local allotments associations and the terms of those agreements require the associations to meet all costs associated with the sites.

Performance Indicators

The performance indicators being used above conform to best practice, which was initially recommended in independent research commissioned by the former DTLR and the National

Association of Local Councils. This is an acknowledgement of the enhanced performance management procedures that the Council needs to adopt to ensure better performance in a transparent environment. Corporate and Non-Corporate (service specific) performance indicators are set out below.

Corporate Performance Indicators	Actual 07/08	Target 08/09	Actual 08/09	Target 09/10
Income (exc. precept and sale of land) as a %age of gross revenue expenditure for all services	32.6%	33%	34%	35%
Average number of staff working days lost to sickness absence	5.3	4.0	4.0	4.0
Number of Council buildings that are suitable/accessible for the disabled	5 out of 5			
% turnout for Town Council elections	39.7%	30%	30.34%	30%
%age correspondence received & answered in 10 working days	91%	93%	92%	Discontinue
% of Invoices for commercial goods and services paid within 30 days of invoices being received	99%	99%	99%	99%
Planning Application recommendations to Planning Authority within deadline	100%	100%	100%	To be reviewed

Notes: -

- 1 Income for Council services increased for every cost centre. This was particularly evident for burials income, agency contracts, the Meridian Hall and Old Court House.
- 2 The Town Council's staff sickness levels remain at significantly less than sector average
- 3 There was one by-election following the death of Councillor Alan Lord in Ashplatts Ward in May 2008. This seat was contested by three candidates and turnout was 30.34%.
- 4 All the Town Council's buildings conform to the satisfaction of the local Access Group.

Non - Corporate Performance Indicators	07/08 Actual	08/09 Target	08/09 Actual	09/10 Target
%age of Committee and Council agendas despatched to Members over 3 days prior to meetings	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of engagements undertaken by the Town Mayor	203	200	217	200
% Councillors attendance at full Council meetings	89	88	83	88
Average number of public attending Council meetings	16	16	16.2	16
Attendance at Annual Town meeting	21	32	23	32
Civic News - cost of service per copy published per edition.	7.1p	8.0p	6.95p	8.0p
East Court Estate - Net cost of service per head of population	£5.43	£5.31	£4.73	£4.90
Number of burials in an earthen grave	24	30	42	37
Number of ashes interments	35	35	21	30
Average Cost of Interment	£866	£947	£886	£880
Average Cost of Allotment Plot	-£0.56	-£0.56	-£0.56	-£0.56
Net cost of providing burials service per resident	£2.13	£2.57	£2.28	£2.41
Total number of Town Council owned hanging baskets maintained	60 (exc. Bloom)	122 (+ 105 Bloom)	125 (+ 125. Bloom)	125 (+ 125 Bloom)

Notes:

- 1 A schedule of Councillor attendances at Council and Committees during 2008/2009 is set out in Appendix G.
- 2 Four editions of Civic News were distributed during 2008/2009, two by Royal Mail household delivery and two by the local newspaper circulation. 14,000 copies were published for each of the former distributions and 10,500 for each of the latter.
- 3 Technical problems were experienced in measuring website hits during 2008/2009 and this information is unavailable.

Procurement Strategy

The Town Council approved its current Procurement Strategy at Finance & General Purposes Committee on 20 September 2007 (minute 176). The Council aims to use effective ways to procure, work in partnership with others, and manage services that will: better achieve community plan objectives, deliver consistently high quality services that meet users' needs, with a range of partners from other sectors, provide savings and better value for money, thereby improving the cost effectiveness of the Council, and support delivery of the e-Government agenda.

The principal benefits of a cohesive strategy that reflects the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government (ODPM October 2003) are to deliver improvement of public services and renew public assets like East Court, Parish Halls, Chequer Mead and Mount Noddy Cemetery, establish partnership with West Sussex County Council and Mid Sussex District Council, to build quality design into projects for the improvement of the built and natural environment in East Grinstead, to use creative buying power to stimulate innovations such as the use of recycled materials or fair trade products, to achieve the Council's commitment to improve continuously, to comply with EU procurement regulations, and to remove unnecessary red tape to reduce time and costs for the Council and its suppliers

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Equalities

The Town Council is committed to pursuing an equal opportunities approach in employment of staff and in the way in which services are provided for the public. This policy has regard to equality on grounds of age, gender, sexuality, colour, race, disability and religion.

Furthermore the Council has adopted a specific Race Equality Policy. This states: -

“East Grinstead Town Council acknowledges the general duty placed upon it by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The Council will continue within its functions and policies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote racial equality between people of different racial groups.”

Contracts and the Transfer of Staff

We have not awarded any contracts in the past year that have involved the transfer of staff, but we confirm that in the award of any such contracts we would adhere to the requirements set out in the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Contracts.

Investors in People

The Town Council has been accredited Investors in People organisation since 2002. In March 2007 the Town Council secured re-accreditation for a further period of three years. The next accreditation is programmed for April 2010.

Service Description and Objectives: -

The Council is committed to a capital programme of works that is updated annually. Where capital schemes are suitable for attraction of external funds appropriate applications for partnership contributions will be sought.

Cost of Service

During 2008/2009 financial year an amount of £38,500 was transferred from precept into the capital fund for identified schemes and an amount of £32,214 was actually spent (net of VAT) on five schemes. Two of these (marked with an *) were major, requiring inclusion in the schedule of fixed assets. Details of these schemes, were as follows:

	£
East Court Enhancements	3,905
Mount Noddy Cemetery Memorial Wall	12,733*
Meridian Hall Heating	7,654
Meridian Hall Windows	956
Jetwasher	5,000*
Court House Enhancements	1,858

In addition to the above the residual £108 was incurred on bank charges.

At 31 March 2009 the amount in the capital fund account totalled £67,856. Of this £15,000 is earmarked towards a future youth facilities building project, £4,884 is earmarked for East Court Mansion enhancements, £23,000 for Meridian Hall enhancements, £24,550 is grant held in reserve towards the Parish Halls Scheme and £522 in retention for Mount Noddy Cemetery Memorial Wall.

The 2009/2010 capital programme totalling £43,000 provides for the following schemes: -

	£
St Swithun's Churchyard Wall	25,000
Queens Road Cemetery Wall	9,000
Fire Extinguishers	4,000
East Court Estate Workshop – Phase 1	5,000

Objectives for each scheme are identified at the time the Capital Programme is agreed and detailed reports are taken through the appropriate programme committee, which in all cases above is Amenities & Tourism Committee. There are no specific performance indicators for the capital programme.

Committee Chairman 2008/2009 and 2009/2010: Councillor Baldwin

Chairman's Committee Commentary for 2008/2009

"F and GP is a solid, creative and focussed Committee. Solid - we don't play politics with the Town's finances but act prudently. We explained last year why a large increase in the precept was both right and necessary to deal with one off factors. That increase provided the sound platform for a growth in service provision this year, a much lower 2.9% increase and maintenance of healthy balances, backed again by all-Party support. Residents will be pleased that there are no black holes in our budget that need emergency filling.

Creative - not with our economics, but how we oversee the Council's governance. We led on the introduction of the highly successful Working Groups covering Business Support and the Environment. We led on the reintroduction of the Youth Council. We led on the introduction of Ward Budgets, which have provided a range of worthwhile community projects. We are responsible for the control of the Council's highly effective risk management and internal audit processes.

Focussed - so we're totally focussed on delivering the best possible Town Council for East Grinstead in terms of funding and governance. These are not short term aims but part of a medium term strategy for financial stability underpinned by a robust level of reserves and a clear and published set of electoral commitments.

Our strategy going forward is clear: we need to continue to squeeze costs across the board and to boost income from more use of our facilities to help our taxpayers. We need to provide the Council with the right funding and the right structures to continue to deliver the range of services our taxpayers expect, a range of services that few, if any, other Town Councils get near to delivering."

Services

There are four services, which fall within the purview of F&GP Committee – Democratic Representation, Corporate Management, Community Support, and Central Administration and Support. Further information on these is set out below.

Lead Officer: Town Clerk (The Head of Finance and Support Services has specific Responsible Finance Officer accountabilities)

Service Description and Objectives.

This service comprises the following functions: -

- * Council, Committee and Member support and administration, and
- * Mayoralty and Civic Support.

This item includes all aspects of member's activities including corporate, programme and service policy making and more general aspects relating to governance and the representation of local interests.

The Mayoralty is an important element in reinforcing the civic traditions of the town. Annually there is a Christmas Reception and a Mayoral charity event to raise funds for the Town Mayor's charity for her/his year of office. In 2008 a Mayor's Civic Service was held at St Swithun's Parish Church.

The Council's objectives in providing these services are: -

- * To provide effective and efficient services by elected members in full compliance with statutory requirements and the policies of Council;
- * To provide effective training and support for Councillors to enable them to undertake their duties relating to policy and representation, including, importantly, at ward level;
- * To preserve the historic traditions and identity of the town;
- * To support and encourage the work of local organisations and clubs through the attendance of the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor at their functions;
- * To organise a number of civic functions annually as agreed with the Town Mayor,

6.2 CORPORATE MANAGEMENT

Lead Officer: Town Clerk

Service Description and Objectives: -

This service contains those activities and costs which provide the infrastructure to be provided, whether by the authority or not, and the information which is required for public accountability. Hence this provides for the maintenance of statutory registers, provision of public information, preparation and publishing of the annual business plan, statements of accounts, the annual report, public performance reports and the annual Performance Plan. It also embraces the costs of external audit, treasury management and bank charges.

The Council's objectives in providing these services are: -

- * To ensure effective management and implementation of the Council's policies and priorities, and
- * To be aware of, and comply with, all duties and obligations as laid down by Acts of Parliament, statutory instruments and specific guidelines.

Note: The target established for 2008/2009 was to produce the Annual Statement of Accounts without external audit qualification. The accounts for 2008/2009 (Appendix H) were approved at F&GP Committee on 25 June 2009 and are awaiting external audit by Mazars. The 2007/2008 accounts unaudited at the time of last years Plan were subsequently approved without qualification.

Lead Officer: Town Clerk

Service Description and Objectives: -

The Council supports by annual grant aid a range of local organisations providing statutory and voluntary support in specific spheres of activity to the overall benefit of town residents. In addition a budget is available annually for application by local groups and organisations in accordance with criteria that are regularly reviewed by the Council. In 2008 20 grants were awarded through this process, together with a further six grants to sports clubs developing their youth sectors. The service objectives are to show commitment and support to the local voluntary sector in the community work they undertake and to provide modest support for activities and community based initiatives that, without Town Council support, might not otherwise be possible.

The Town Council actively supports international twinning. Formal links have been established with Bourg-de-Peage (France), Mindelheim (Germany), Verbania (Italy), Sant Feliu de Guixols (Spain) and Schwaz (Italy). The day-to-day administration of this twinning activity is devolved to East Grinstead Town Twinning Association. A friendship link has been formed with Dundee in the province of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. The emphasis here is on educational links and this is co-ordinated locally by Sackville School.

Many other successful partnerships are supported, working in collaboration with the County and District Councils and voluntary sector as appropriate. These partnerships embrace various youth initiatives, major town events, and subsidy of concessionary rail passes. The East Grinstead Community Partnership, East Grinstead Credit Union, and East Grinstead Youth council are examples of new groups, formed for a specific purpose, actively facilitated by the Town Council. A freelance youth professional is engaged to facilitate the Council's work with the Youth Council, which meets regularly and has a core membership of about 12, and its support for youth work generally.

The Council runs a number of grant aid programmes, including funding major community based charities, supporting registered community groups and supporting youth sport development. In 2008 grants were made available to Local Action Teams for the first time to facilitate their ward-based work, undertaken in partnership with the Town Council, Sussex Police and local community volunteers. Enhanced support has been given to the Town Museum, a registered charity, whose work is largely facilitated by community volunteers, recognising in particular the value of their research facilities, and education/schools outreach programme. An elected councillor on the Museum Trust represents the Council.

Altogether the Town Council is represented on over 20 local groups and organisations. Representation agreed for 2008/2009 was approved as follows at the 2009 Annual Town Council meeting in May.

- (1) East Grinstead Town Twinning Association, Executive Committee - Councillors Gillbard, Johnson and Joyce-Nelson
- (2) Mid Sussex District Association of Parish Councils - Councillors Barnett and Johnson
- (3) Age Concern, East Grinstead - Councillor Mrs Waddingham
- (4) East Grinstead Music & Arts Festival - Councillor Mrs Mainstone
- (5) Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign - Councillor Mrs Brunsdon

- (6) Citizens' Advice Bureau Management Committee - Councillor Johnson
- (7) East Grinstead Town Museum - Councillor Mainstone who, in accordance with the Declaration of Trust, will remain a Trustee until such time as he ceases to be a Member of the East Grinstead Town Council
- (8) East Grinstead Christmas Lights Committee - Mr David Heasman
- (9) East Grinstead Museum Society - Councillor Musk
- (10) East Grinstead in Bloom - Councillors Banks
- (11) East Grinstead Business Assoc. Executive Committee - Councillor Johnson
- (12) Wallis Centre Management Committee - Councillor Mrs Collins
- (13) East Grinstead Council for Voluntary Services - Councillor Mrs Collins
- (14) East Grinstead Christmas Promotions Committee - Councillors Starmer and Mrs Mainstone
- (15) East Grinstead and District Credit Union - Councillor Baldwin
- (16) East Grinstead Fair Trade Town Steering Group - Councillor Marmara
- (17) East Grinstead War Memorial Limited - Councillor Gillbard
- (18) Mid Sussex Association of Town Councils - Town Mayor, Majority and Minority Group Leaders and Councillor Mrs Brunson
- (19) Greenstede Talking News for the Blind - Councillor Mrs Mainstone
- (20) Queen Victoria NHS Foundation Trust Governors - Mr C J Rolley, Town Clerk

6.4 SERVICE: CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Lead Officer: Head of Finance & Support Services

Service Description and Objectives: -

These services are those central services, which are separately costed and then allocated back to all other cost centres in accordance with criteria set out in the CIPFA Accountancy Code of Practice. The Councils objectives in providing the service are: -

- * To provide an efficient and effective administration support service;
- * To deal with all electronic and written correspondence, telephone and personal callers in a prompt, courteous and efficient manner and
 - To publicise the Council's services through the most appropriate medium.

Committee Chairman 2008/2009 and 2009/2010: Councillor Johnson

Lead Officer: Town Clerk

Chairman's Committee Commentary for 2008/2009

"Few could have predicted, when I reported to you at the Annual Town Meeting last year, that circumstances would have so radically changed in so short a time. There is no doubt at all that the current recession is having a devastating affect upon the housing market, and we all know of the collapse in house prices, the rapid fall in demand as people, particularly first time buyers, find it increasingly hard to get the necessary finance to pay the mortgage, and others are losing their home because of loss of employment.

I have to mention this, because there is a natural 'knock on effect' for my Committee. As we look about and observe the number of developments that have ground to a halt, or have been put 'on the back burner', and a change of emphasis in demand from the 4 plus, bedroom detached to the 'affordable' one and two bedroom apartments or houses, we are bound to look on the Government's demand for the level of housing in Mid Sussex, and particularly in East Grinstead, with scepticism. As developer's margins fall, so we observe moves to cut down on their Section 106 liabilities, and provide less community benefit. Some may say that we are now paying the price for previous Governments policies allowing local authorities to sell off their housing stock.

The direct result of all this is that we, along with all other authorities, are seeing far less planning applications, for, unless the applicant is lucky enough to have sufficient ground to extend his home to accommodate the next generation, most will not contemplate home purchase at this time until the market, and their own financial situation improves. Therefore, we are moving to holding our meetings at 3 weeks interval instead of every fortnight.

That does not mean that our work will diminish. The new Permitted Rights legislation places extra burden upon us as members to check that standards are being maintained, and conditions fully complied with. My Committee take our responsibilities very seriously in this respect, and we are of the opinion that these are matters, which cannot be left wholly in the hands of District Council officers. While the level of concurrence with decisions at District Council (delegated) and North Area Plans Committee, remain high, there are distinct instances of disparity. Whilst in this year, District lost the appeal on the Rentokil site development, and did not want to face the risk of a finding against them, with substantial costs to pay, in regard to the Dunnings Mill Squash Club site, we do have an enviable measure of success on those cases which go to appeal in North Area, and my members would want to see decisions still made on firm planning grounds, and not tainted unduly by fears of heavy penalty if the case is lost.

And this year marks an appeal decision, which even went against West Sussex Highways opinion. As I keep saying, we are the ones at the coalface, and we have to carry the brickbats."

Service Description and Objectives: -

This service, which is the only one undertaken by the Planning Committee, embraces the Town Council's representational planning role.

The Town Council has its own Planning Committee that met fortnightly during 2008/2009 but whose timetable changed to three-weekly meetings from May 2009 recognising the reduced

activity and numbers of planning applications being received. The Committee considers nearly 400 planning applications annually, contributes to the South East Plan, Local Development Framework and Structure Plan discussions/consultations, responds to planning appeals, deals with street naming and generally champions planning infrastructure issues as they impact upon the civil parish.

The Town Council is also actively committed to seeing the Thornfield proposals, as set out in the East Grinstead Town Centre Masterplan, implemented at the earliest possible date. This programme for aiding economic regeneration of the town centre is something that East Grinstead desperately needs, and the Council will be vigilant in pressuring both Thornfield plc and Mid Sussex District Council to move this forward at the earliest possible opportunity.

Core Strategy – Three Tiers Group

During 2008/2009 Mid Sussex District Council abandoned the former East Grinstead Area Action Plan proposals as it decided to progress their proposals for the Town through the emerging Core Strategy. At broadly the same time, partly as a consequence of the economic recession, which had a particular impact on the house building industry, the proposed East Grinstead relief road was found to be unaffordable, non-deliverable and environmentally unacceptable. The Three Tiers group, set up by the Town Council, with the support of the planning authority, has made considerable progress in delivering an alternative vision for East Grinstead and is due to complete its work, and submit its submission document early autumn 2009. In this there has been much focus on ensuring the robustness of the evidence base, supported by the work of MTRU, a leading transport planning consultancy, and in making the case for guaranteed infrastructure improvements, which are essential for the future wellbeing of East Grinstead.

Committee Chairman 2008/2009 and 2009/2010: Councillor Musk

Chairman's Committee Commentary for 2008/2009

"The focus of the Committee's work during the year has covered six key areas - East Grinstead in Bloom, Business Support, Community Housekeeping, Estates, Cemeteries and Burial Services, and Tourism Support and Information. Throughout the year there has been emphasis on maintenance of our assets and driving up income. We have been well served by Mr Astley, Amenities Manager, and his team.

In respect of the South and South East in Bloom competition the Town performed well in securing a silver award. Tribute should be paid to Councillor Banks and his hardworking Committee. Further initiatives are planned for 2009.

Councillor Mainstone and the Business Support Group should also be commended. A focus has been given to supporting the retailers and assisting the re-launch of the East Grinstead Business Association, embracing East Grinstead Chamber of Commerce and a dedicated Traders/Retailers section. The focus for the coming year will be on preparing for the completion of the Bluebell Railway northern extension into East Grinstead with the opportunities that will bring East Grinstead. The importance of this to the Town's tourism product should not be under-estimated. The development of a wider portfolio of services under Mr Kerr, including for Business Support, is welcomed and thanks are due to him and Mrs Spalding for their hard work.

In relation to the Council's estates, particularly at East Court, mention should be made of the forward programme of maintenance identified for the buildings, the change in marketing direction to achieve enhanced income for the Meridian Hall and East Court Mansion, and the improvements initiated by the Foreman, Mr Townsend, in respect of cleaning and caretaking services.

Reference should also be made to the Council's Housekeeping team under the Foreman, Mr Ansley, their focus on graffiti removal, delivering agency services for the principal authorities and willingness to undertake small tasks the responsibility of others but which are so important in maintaining an attractive street scene.

In respect of our burial services under the Foreman, Mr Hearn, the new Memorial Wall at Mount Noddy was completed early 2009 and officially dedicated at a special service conducted by Canon Clive Everett-Allen on 30 April 2009. Improvements have also been made to fencing and signing at the Cemetery, to Queens Road closed churchyard generally to enhancing the quality of services provided."

Services

There are four services, which fall within the purview of Amenities and Tourism Committee – East Court Estate, Tourism and Economic Development, Cemetery and Burial Services, and Civic Pride. Further information on these is set out below.

Lead Officer: Amenities Manager

Service Description and Objectives: -

East Court Mansion is a Grade II Listed property, built in 1769. It serves as the Town Hall providing offices for the Council's administration (five full-time and two part-time staff are based here) and a dedicated Council Chamber and Mayor's Parlour. There are a number of rooms for hire by local community groups and organisations and the building is also let for private parties with the Main Hall and Cranston Suite being licensed for civil weddings. The building also houses Meridian FM radio station, East Grinstead Model Railway Club, and offices for the Family Welfare Association, Jigsaw4U, CAMHS and an office for West Sussex County Council Children and Young Peoples Service. The Town Council seeks to optimise use of the property for appropriate civic and community use, to maintain the property to a high standard and to generate income to offset some of the operational costs of running the property. Overall utilisation rates of hiring accommodation in the Mansion during 2008/2009 were 73%.

The Meridian Hall was opened in 1986 immediately adjacent to East Court Mansion. The building comprises a 2000 sq ft Main Hall, entrance foyer with disabled toilet facilities and cloakroom, a large commercial kitchen and, on the first floor, men's and ladies toilets. Outside there is an attractive enclosed piazza area. This new build facility incorporating a former garage and flat serves as a high quality hall for local groups and organisations, private hirers and as a licensed venue for civil weddings. The objectives in providing the service are to give a local venue to meet the realistic community needs of East Grinstead, to increase utilisation in order to reduce public subsidy and to maintain the facility to a high standard. Overall utilisation rates of hiring accommodation in the Meridian Hall during 2008/2009 were 54%.

The Town Council acquired the Old Court House from West Sussex County Council on a five-year peppercorn lease in 1994 and the freehold was subsequently purchased in 1999. The premises serve as a valuable community resource centre for East Grinstead and all rooms are currently fully let to local groups and organisations on leasehold terms. Groups occupying the premises include Grenestede Talking News for the Blind, East Grinstead Council for Voluntary Service, All Kids Ltd, Paddington Playgroup and ConChord Music Society. The objectives of providing this service are to give a high quality affordable venue for essential local groups/organisations at no cost to the taxpayers of East Grinstead. The building had a 100% occupation rate during 2008/2009.

Most of the grounds at East Court are in the ownership of East Grinstead War Memorial Co. Ltd. and leased to Mid Sussex District Council. The Town Council has over three acres of grounds in its ownership including the terraces/gardens immediately around the Mansion, a children's playground, which was extensively refurbished during 2006 and 2007, and the War Memorial Garden. Two all-weather tennis courts are leased to Estcots Lawn Tennis Club. The Council employs a gardener to maintain its landholdings on the estate, with some casual/seasonal support.

During 2008/2009 the focus was on completing the capital enhancements to the heating system in the Meridian Hall on time and within budget, and commissioning outstanding buildings maintenance survey reports for the Mansion and Old Court House as a basis for prioritising future estates maintenance during the lifetime of this administration. There was also a continuing focus on generating income and ensuring that as a percentage of gross operational expenditure this performance indicator improved.

Lead Officer: Business and Tourism Support Officer

Service Description and Objectives: -

A dedicated Tourist Information Service is provided from East Grinstead Library. The Tourism & Information Officer and his part-time Assistant, who are employed by the Town Council, provide tourist information regarding accommodation, attractions and public transport. This is a partnership initiative between the Town, District and County Councils. The service objectives are to market the town and surrounding area to residents and visitors alike, to develop the tourism economy of the area, to provide tourist information, to facilitate tourism publications and to work in positive partnership with the local tourism industry.

The Town Council allocates a small budget annually to facilitate Economic Development initiatives. This recognises the importance of the commercial, retail, service and industrial sectors to the well being of East Grinstead and those who live or work in the community. The Council is represented on East Grinstead Chamber of Commerce and their sub-committees, works closely with local traders/retailers and helped to establish the East Grinstead Business Association, which is now working well as an independent organisation with its own Board and Chief Executive. A small Working Group contributes to the Council's work in this area..

The small budget allocated for this service is also used to pump prime initiatives such as the weekly Farmers Market (Thursdays 9am-2pm), successfully located in the High Street.

As a commitment to the local economy, the Council's procurement strategy recommends goods and services are purchased from local firms where they offer best value.

During 2008/2009 the tourism staff produced a new visitors guide, developed a number of marketing initiatives, including related to the Farmers' Market, the Museum and seeking generally to maximise opportunities to better promote the town to tourists and visitors alike. In line with Member's policy wishes there was an enhanced focus on developing the role of the former Tourism Officer more broadly across the business spectrum.

Customer Satisfaction

During the year the Tourism Initiative staff conducted a customer satisfaction survey of known accommodation providers and local attractions. 20 written responses were received, all of which were satisfactory or better in all categories resulting in a 100% result. Questions covered included promotion of businesses, availability of information, courtesy of staff, hours of opening, response times and quality, and location and facilities of Tourist desk.

Lead Officer: Amenities Manager

Service Description and Objectives: -

The Town Council is the burial authority and is responsible for the following facilities: -

Mount Noddy Cemetery

This nine-acre cemetery off Blackwell Road, opened in 1909, is the only open cemetery provided in East Grinstead. Separate sections are laid out for the different denominations and for interment of bodies and ashes. Council employees maintain the cemetery and administration is undertaken at East Court. The Cemetery Foreman tenants the Lodge

house under an occupational licence. The cemetery is located in an established residential area and emphasis is placed upon providing high standards of grounds maintenance.

Queens Road Cemetery

This now closed cemetery has its main access in West Hill. There is no continuing burial activity on the site. The former chapels were sold for residential development in the early 1980's and the residents are responsible for keeping the grass cut.

St Swithun's Churchyard

The Town Council maintains this closed churchyard in accordance with the provisions of Section 215 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Service Standards Questionnaire

During the year we conducted two questionnaire surveys, one of funeral directors and monumental masons, and the other of clergy and church leaders. Notwithstanding the inevitable small base of the survey groups we realised over 50% returns in both categories with seven and five responses respectively. The responses were extremely favourable with 100% positive comments in relation to the helpfulness of staff. Some comments in relation to difficulties of parking large numbers of vehicles at interment services are valid. Current arrangements will be reviewed though there is no inevitable easy solution to what is essentially a lack of land availability.

8.4 SERVICE: CIVIC PRIDE

Lead Officer: Amenities Manager

Service Description and Objectives: -

This is a relatively new cost centre service introduced in 1 April 2006 and incorporating all of the Grounds and Open Spaces, and Local Environment services previously run as two distinct cost centres. It embraces all of the landholdings outside of East Court and the Cemetery service for which the Town Council has responsibility. The objective is to maintain Town Council owned land, and other areas that are owned by other local authorities under agency arrangements, to a high standard.

Mid Sussex District Council owns the vast majority of parks and recreation grounds in East Grinstead. The Town Council grounds at East Court are maintained by the Town Council and the costs of that are recorded against the East Court cost centre (5.4).

The Outdoor Services cost centre covers all other grounds maintenance, including Turners Hill Road Recreation Ground, all seasonal planting/hanging baskets, other sites in Town Council ownership, and agency work for West Sussex County Council on roundabouts.

Two allotment sites are owned at Mount Noddy and Imberhorne comprising some 250 plots. The two sites are let on 21-year leases to independent Allotment Associations who are responsible for all maintenance and administration. The Town Council receives peppercorn rents for the sites. Since the revised management arrangements came into force in the 1990's standards of maintenance on both sites have increased, vacant plots have been eliminated and the costs to the Town Council in administering this aspect of the service have been eradicated.

The Town Council is also responsible for a number of highly visible non-statutory services, details as follows: -

Approx 250

unadopted footway lights;

1	town clock in London Road;
1	town clock in the High Street
2	War Memorials
7	non-advertising bus shelters
3	notice boards
approx 60	litterbins
approx 20	salt/grit bins
approx 30	public seats
approx 250	hanging baskets maintained and watered plus other tubs and displays

The Council also provides a dedicated community housekeeping service, which has been significantly enhanced since 2005 and which, in addition to work on the Council's own landholdings also provides a range of contracted agency services to both Mid Sussex District Council and West Sussex County Council, including in relation to graffiti removal, highways weed spraying and removal of fly posting. Some of this contracted work is in neighbouring parishes within Mid Sussex.

Objectives of providing the services are: -

To provide and maintain all items of street furniture to an acceptable standard;

To provide litter/salt/grit bins to meet identified needs;

To promote Council/Committee meetings on public notice boards prominently sited;

To honour the Town's dead from the two World Wars and other subsequent conflicts;

To provide a clock focus at the northern entry to the town centre and in the conservation area;

To provide bus shelters on public amenity grounds at bus stops either through the advertising contract with Adshel or by direct Council provision where the advertising contractor considers it is not appropriate to provide an advertising shelter.

East Grinstead in Bloom

The Town Council in active partnership with East Grinstead in Bloom (Chairman – Councillor David Banks) has participated in the South and South East in Bloom competition since 2007. In 2008 for the second successive year the Town's entry in the Large Town category achieved a silver award. It is intended to re-enter in 2009 with an objective of strengthening the entry by means of an enhanced focus on the town centre with a view to striving for a silver gilt award. It is clear from the Council's and councillor's postbags that the local endeavours on bringing floral colour to the Town Centre are appreciated, and in this regard the number of civic hanging baskets/planters and those provided for the business/retail community are planned for increase.

9. PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Committee Chairman 2008/2009 and 2009/2010: Councillor Mainstone

Lead Officer: Town Clerk

Chairman's Committee Commentary for 2008/2009

"The purpose of the Public Services Committee is to consider services provided by other authorities and agencies and how they affect the town community.

A feature of our meetings this year has been to invite speakers to explain to the committee how their services relate to East Grinstead. We have gained a lot of information, asked many questions and built good working relationships with several different services providers.

- Sue Chapman, Head of Maternity Services, East Surrey Hospital
- Tim Yair, West Sussex Cycling Officer
- Mary Goode, Head of Corporate Affairs, and Heather Bunce, Programme Director, QVH Redevelopment Plans
- Anthony Brittain, Chairman of East Grinstead Community Transport
- Cllr Garry Wall (MSDC), Sue Rees (MSDC Parking Services Manager) and Mark Fisher (MSDC Head of Leisure)
- Brian Hughes, Director of West Sussex Primary Care Trust

I would like to highlight the following agenda items that our committee have responded to on behalf of the Town Council:

- The introduction by MSDC of new car park ticket machines
- Increases in parking charges introduced by MSDC
- The MSDC Parking Review for 2010 - 2020
- Our response to the North East Review of the West Sussex Primary Care Trust
- Our opinions concerning the redevelopment of the Queen Victoria Hospital
- Our interest in Policing issues and particularly the development of the neighbourhood panels
- Our interest in cycling provision for the town through the West Sussex Cycle Strategy.
- Public transport issues including the redevelopment of the town's railway station
- Our response to the West Sussex Sustainable Community Strategy
- The BT programme of proposed removal of payphones
- The London Road footway enhancement scheme
- The use of the paved area at the eastern end of the High Street
- West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Integrated Risk Management."

Services:-

Public Services Committee is solely a representational committee ensuring close liaison and engagement with other statutory bodies, local authorities and groups and organisations in the Town that work to the benefit of the Town. The committee has no financial budget as it incurs no costs, over and above staffing and establishment costs, which are allocated to the corporate management cost centre.

Service Commentary

The Town Council is custodian Trustee for the Parish Halls Trust charity registration 206371. This building, located in De La Warr Road, comprises a large hall with stage, small hall, upstairs meeting hall and small committee room. The building is in need of significant investment in order to fully meet requirements of disability access legislation though it does have disabled toilet facilities to the large hall. The Council is currently looking at options for the building. To facilitate future possible development, spending decisions on which are currently on hold for reasons set out in the Leader of the Council's introduction, a scrutiny group is currently looking at future options. The utilisation rate for the Large Hall in 2008/2009 was 60%, whilst for the Small Hall it was 60%. The Trust's total assets at 31 March 2009 were £22,327. This compares favourably with the previous year when the figure was £17,640. The Council is currently setting aside a grant of £30,000 annually towards a future building enhancement scheme though no final decisions on what that project will be have yet been made.

The Council owns Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre, also in De La Warr Road. This building is currently let on a 28-year lease to Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre Trust, which is run by the Council in accordance with requirements of the Charities Commission charity registration 1108890). The Centre comprises a 340-seat theatre, usual backstage facilities, three large meeting rooms, a small performance space, gallery, and cafeteria/bar area. Concessionaires, engaged by a separate trading company, provide catering. Staff, under the day-to-day management of the Chief Executive Officer, are employed by the Trust, not the Council. The Council grant aids the Trust an annual non-inflation linked sum of £80,400.

Committee Chairman 2008/2009 and 2009/2010: Councillor Joyce- Nelson

Lead Officer: Town Clerk as Clerk to the Trustees.

Chairman's Committee Commentary for 2008/2009:

"The Charities Committee is independent of the Town Council and services the work of the Parish Halls Trust and Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre Trust. Every elected Member of the Town Council serves on this Committee.

During the past year there have been five meetings and attendances have been good. In addition a Scrutiny Group was established to explore opportunities for redevelopment of the Parish Halls. To date they have had three meetings and further meetings will be necessary in future.

Turning to the Parish Halls first the view of the Charities Committee, reinforced by the Town Council, is that there is still need to look at the long-term future of this building. Notwithstanding that the building continues to be well used and operated within budget during the past year. In fact income exceeded the projected target. The credit crunch has of course meant that we can no longer proceed with the proposed partnership scheme with Age Concern East Grinstead and so we are now looking at stand-alone options. In the short term it is intended to continue to run the Parish Halls as at present and keep a watching brief on the outstanding, and potentially costly, maintenance issues.

Chequer Mead has had another successful year and we remain indebted to our staff, the Planning and Review Group, the volunteers, friends and our many customers. The Trust works in accordance with the Business Plan, which has as its focus a requirement for all theatre bookings to be based upon lettings. This has continued to ensure financial viability.

At each meeting of the Charities Committee, Trustees have received a comprehensive report from the Chief Executive Officer, providing information on all aspects of the programme and operation at the Centre. There is also a financial report prepared monthly including a profit and loss account, purchase and sales ledger and bank reconciliation statement. Current assets remain healthy at over £200,000 and it needs to be remembered that this does reflect the need at some future date for replacement of boilers and other expensive maintenance and this underpins the current funding strategy. The Centre has made a small operating profit in 2008/2009. Artistically as Trustees we are proud of the quality of the programme and the continuing high standards that are achieved throughout the Centre's business operations."

11. REVIEWS AND SCRUTINY

Best value legislation initially required the Town Council to review all of its functions every five years. Although this requirement was subsequently removed and the statutory requirement of best value no longer exists, Town Councillors in considering their current review programme have still sought to achieve the following objectives: -

- * To give relative priority to those service areas which represent the largest area of net expenditure or where a review is considered to be potentially beneficial in enhancing performance;
- * To review related services as a group in order to give possible advantages of economy of scale, and
- * To use reviews to achieve significant improvement in service provision and performance standards, and to explore alternative options for service delivery.

Nominated elected Councillors with appropriate skills and expertise undertake the review function for each service or group of services, where available. They form the Review/Scrutiny groups. They are supported in their work by the Town Clerk and/or nominated Head of Service. In accordance with the Council's approved toolkit the review specifically looks at the 4 C's, details as follows:

- * **Challenge** why, how and by whom a service is being provided;
- * **Compare** its performance with the performance of other Local Councils providing a similar service;
- * **Consult** local people and key partners, including local businesses, and voluntary organisations in the setting of priorities and performance targets;
- * Use fair and open **competition** wherever practicable as a means of securing efficient and effective services.

Wherever possible the Review Groups seek to achieve efficiency improvements overall consistent with the 2% target that was originally set for local authority expenditure as a whole. Although this is no longer a statutory requirement of Government it remains, for the time being, an objective of the Town Council

Service Review Timetable and Summary of Outstanding Action Plan Implementation

The currently approved review programme, including historic review details, is as follows:

Year 1 - 2000/2001 (Completed)

Civic and Mayoral Services

Economic Development comprising Town Management, Tourism and CCTV

Civic News

During the first year of best value three separate reviews of the above services were extensively conducted. There are no outstanding issues still arising from those reviews.

Year 2 - 2001/2002 (Completed)

East Court Estate comprising: East Court Mansion, Meridian Hall, The Old Court House and those East Court Grounds in the ownership of the Town Council.

During the second year of best value a comprehensive review of the East Court estate was undertaken. This focussed on a wide range of issues including Fees and Charges, Disabled access and Buildings Improvements, Grounds Maintenance, Customer Services, Charitable status, Signage, Catering, Conditions of Hire and a proposed Lottery bid for the estate.

As a consequence of the review some changes were implemented immediately such as outsourcing grass and hedge cutting whilst other expensive requirements including significant works to the Mansion in order to conform to the Disability Discrimination Act were completed over a two-year time frame.

Two items were not concluded. Despite successful completion of a master plan for the whole estate, including landholdings belonging to East Grinstead War Memorial Ltd and Mid Sussex District Council, no Lottery bid has yet been submitted. As explained in previous plans, the Town Council would not be lead agency for such bid as the bulk of the areas of the estate needing investment are in the ownership of others. Secondly Members are not pursuing, in the short/medium term, any further work on Trust status for the Town Council's landholdings at East Court although this can be revisited at any future date should Members so instruct.

Year 3 - 2002/2003 (Completed)

Street Furniture and Floral/Grounds Maintenance Services in the Town Centre.

During the third year of best value (2002/2003) Councillors conducted a crosscutting review of Town Centre street furniture and planting. All ten agreed actions were implemented over the following 18 months and were duly reported in the 2004/2005 plan.

Year 4 - 2003/2004 (Completed)

A staffing and organisational review.

External consultants were asked to undertake a detailed review of the Council's organisation and staffing structure during the summer/autumn 2003. These areas had not been comprehensively looked at in over a decade, during which period the Council increased its services and responsibilities considerably. Accordingly, and because of the workload associated with the successful application for Quality Local Council status, no formal best value review was undertaken during that year. The detailed Organisation and Structure review report was formally approved at Finance & General Purposes Committee on 25 March 2004. The recommendations, including a new staffing structure, were successfully implemented over a fifteen-month period concluding 30 June 2005. This was the subject of regular reporting to Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Year 5 - 2004/2005 (Completed)

Community Grants and Partnership Initiatives

This is a service with a high level of net expenditure, and an area of increasing pressure, specifically due to principal authority cutbacks in real terms, which are currently impacting on many of the groups that the Town Council has historically sought to support in a relatively modest way through this budget. The review provided an opportunity for Members to assess whether their funding makes a positive difference to the various bodies supported, whether it provides value for money and whether it is most appropriately being targeted in the best way.

The review was conducted during October and November 2004. The review group, including four elected members and two external critical friends, met on three occasions and their work was supported and reinforced by extensive consultation and research. The action plan that was recommended by the review team was subsequently approved at Finance and General Purposes Committee on 25 November 2004 and confirmed at Council on 6 December 2004. Details, with agreed timetable and executive accountability for implementation, were reported in the 2005/2006 Plan and all aspects have been implemented.

Year 6 – 2005/2006 (Completed)
Cemetery and Burial Services.

This was identified as a priority area for review following the benchmarking exercise undertaken in conjunction with other statutory best value town councils in 2004. The outcome of this exercise showed that the average cost of burials in Mount Noddy Cemetery, East Grinstead was above the benchmarked average for responding councils and significantly greater than the top quartile. Whilst it was considered issues pertaining to the size of cemetery set against the number of interments may be a factor in this situation, as may be the case that other councils maintain lawned cemeteries whilst Mount Noddy is essentially operated on traditional lines, Members considered it right that there should be a detailed service review to investigate this matter further. This review confirmed the original observation.

The review was conducted between October 2005 and January 2006. The review team comprising four elected members and two external critical friends met on three occasions. All findings and recommendations were reported in the 2006/2007 Plan and all items have now been actioned and implemented with the exception of the erection of the Memorial Wall at Mount Noddy and here a contract has now been let and works will be completed late summer/early autumn 2008.

Year 7 – 2006/2007 (Completed)
Grant Aid to Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre

The Town Council owns Chequer Mead and has leased the Centre to Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre Trust, a sole custodian Charity. Councillors are Trustees of the Charity and the Charity, together with the Parish Halls Trust, is run at arms length from the Council through a Charities Committee. In 2008/2009 the Council's grant aid to the Trust is £80,400. The Council is the only main funder for the Trust, which is otherwise self-funding with sound assets. Members wished to put in place a long-term funding strategy for the Centre and considered this would be best achieved through a fundamental best value review. This was undertaken during the autumn and winter 2006/2007 and the review team included elected councillors and two external critical friends.

The findings of the review team were that Chequer Mead was performing strongly in its charitable trust format, that a healthy equity was being necessarily built up to meet long term building maintenance requirements, and that compared with similar facilities elsewhere the public subsidy on the Centre was the lowest identified. Having confirmed the Town Council's grant for 2007/2008 at £80,400 the review team went on to recommend as follows:

- (1) that no further indexation of grant would be agreed beyond 2007/2008 although the matter could be reviewed again at any

time upon a formal request being made by the Charity at the time the budget is being reviewed;

- (2) that Grant Aid at the level of £80,400 should continue until the financial year following that in which total equity, comprising general revenue balances and rolling renewal fund, but not fixed assets, should reach £250,000 at which time a further review of future grant funding should be undertaken for consideration by the Town Council's Finance and General Purpose Committee, and
- (3) that the Town Council acknowledges and welcomes the policy decision of Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre Trust to set aside £20,000 from its funds annually into a rolling renewals fund and recognises also the Trusts commitment to significant annual expenditure on buildings maintenance from within its general revenue budget in order to reflect their obligations for maintenance under the terms of their lease.

:

When the Review Group recommendations were considered at Finance & General Purposes Committee on 25 January 2007 they were formally resolved and, subsequently, approved as Council policy at Council on 5 February 2007.

Year 8 – 2007/2008 (Completed)

Review of Committee Services

The review group, comprising six elected members, met three times between September and December 2007. The recommendations arising from their work were considered at Finance & General Purposes Committee on 24 January 2008 and were duly approved. These were designed to ensure that the Council's committee arrangements, including work (but not policy) deputed to Working Groups and Scrutiny Committees was fit for purpose and appropriate to meet the new administrations support requirements through to, and beyond, the next council elections in 2011. The following arrangements were agreed and are all being implemented.

- (i) Working Groups should submit proposed Terms of Reference to their parent Committee for approval. These should encompass both the Working Groups general objectives and specific, measurable objectives;
- (ii) The parent committee should be responsible for giving direction to the Working Groups (e.g. by approving Terms of Reference and objectives), receiving their reports and debating recommendations submitted by the Working Groups;
- (iii) Working Groups should submit their reports to their parent committees for each cycle, with the Working Group Chairman and/or Vice Chairman in attendance to speak to them;
- (iv) Only parent committees can agree policy. Commitments or initiatives that require urgent decisions by the Council should be first discussed with the Chairman of the parent committee;

- (v) Membership of Working Groups should be open to all Councillors but a core group of Members will be invited to serve as such by the Working Group Chairman, in conjunction with the Leader of the Council. Appropriately qualified members of the public may be invited to serve on a permanent or occasional basis by the Working Group Chairman, and
- (vi) Working Groups will continue until such time as their parent committee by recommendation to Council consider that they have served their useful purpose.
- (vii) The Town Council will, with effect from 1st April 2008, replace the current arrangement of Best Value Reviews with new scrutiny arrangements that will themselves form part of the new Town Council Performance Management Plan;
- (viii) There will be no more than two scrutiny groups established at any time and that in the first year, 2008/2009, they will be established for the purposes of scrutinising the Parish Halls Remodelling and reviewing the Town Council's Performance Management systems and use of performance indicators;
- (ix) Each scrutiny group will comprise a maximum of five Members and the Town Council's officers will service the groups. In certain cases members of the public may be invited to participate in a scrutiny group subject to approval by full Council;
- (x) Detailed terms of reference and objectives will be set at the outset for each scrutiny group established.
- (xi) That the Terms of Reference of the committees should give a clear introductory explanation of their work and that specifically Standing Order (k) for Leisure & Tourism Committee subject to a name change recommended in (xii) below, be amended to read "the facilitation of tourism, and related business, initiatives and the provision of tourist information facilities for the town in liaison, as appropriate with other local authorities and agencies";
- (xii) With effect from the Annual Town Council meeting in May 2008 the name of the Leisure & Tourism Committee be changed to an alternative name to be resolved at full Council on 4th February 2008, (Note: The name determined was Amenities and Tourism Committee) and
- (xiii) The Town Clerk be authorised to make all appropriate changes to the standing orders and Terms of Reference of the Council for ratification at Finance & General Purposes Committee on 27 March 2008.

The Council appreciates that all efficiency reviews, in each year, need to be concluded by mid-January so that the efficiency improvements identified can be fully reflected in the following financial year's budget which, in accordance with the Council's business planning timetable, is now agreed during the January/February cycle of meetings. These are now to be conducted by Scrutiny Groups with specific remits, no more than two of such groups being established in any financial year though the work of particular groups may continue beyond a particular financial year.

Years 9 and 10 – 2008/2009 and 2009/2010

Parish Halls Redevelopment
Performance Management

In 2008/2009 groups were established with remits for review of the Council's performance management systems, and for the redevelopment of the Parish Halls complex. As at September 2009 the Groups are continuing their work having held seven and three meetings to date respectively. The outcomes of those reviews will be reported through Finance & General Purposes Committee in due course and incorporated in the 2010/2011 Performance Plan.

The Town Council recognises that reviews properly and comprehensively undertaken may require difficult decisions on the best value option for future service delivery. It will be necessary to set demanding targets for service improvement and action plans to deliver these to a realistic timetable. The reviews present an opportunity for the Council to set its own priorities and demonstrate its ownership of the best value process.

12. ABOUT OUR PERFORMANCE PLAN

East Grinstead Town Council accepts full responsibility for the preparation of this Plan and for the information contained within it. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is correct.

Copies of this Plan are available for public reference in East Grinstead Town Library, at the Help Point in West Street and at the offices of East Grinstead Town Council, East Court, College Lane, East Grinstead. Copies have also been sent to West Sussex County Council, Mid Sussex District Council, Sussex Police and key representative organisations within the town and a full copy of this can be viewed on the Town Council's dedicated website (www.eastgrinstead.gov.uk). Any individual wishing to purchase a printed copy can do so for £5 (including post & packing) from the Town Council offices - cheques made payable to East Grinstead Town Council.

Views on the Performance Plan

The Town Council would welcome public views and comment on the Performance Plan and these can be made in writing to any Town Councillor at their home addresses as listed in Appendix A, or to the Town Clerk, Mr C. J. Rolley, at East Court in writing or by any of the following means: -

Tel: (01342) 323636
Fax: (01342) 327823
Email towncouncil@eastgrinstead.gov.uk

APPENDIX A

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

STAFF ESTABLISHMENT 2009/2010

Town Clerk	Chris Rolley
Town Clerk's P. A.*	Mrs Sarah Bunting
Business and Tourism Support Officer	Simon Kerr
Business and Tourism Support Assistant*	Mrs Dawn Spalding
Community Support & Development Officer*	Vacant (currently frozen)

Finance & Support Services

Head of Finance & Support Services	Barry Male
Finance Assistant	Peter Carr
Secretarial & Office Assistant*	Mrs Sheila Martin
Receptionist/Administrative Assistant*	Mrs Alison Merricks

Amenities Services

Amenities Manager	Keith Astley
Assistant Amenities Manager	Nigel Foster
Bookings Assistant*	Mrs Linda Wilson
Administrative Assistant	Mrs Katrina Hamill
Cemetery Services Foreman	Garry Hearn
Outdoor Services Foreman	Jonathan Ansley
Outdoor Services Assistant	Graham Woodward
Outdoor Services Assistant	Mark Hayward
Outdoor Services Assistant*	Norman Woodward
Outdoor Services Assistant	Simon Wheaton
Outdoor Seasonal Assistant (summer only)	Edward Astley
Gardener	Martin Gaved
Handyman*	Roger Gwatkin
Apprentice Carpenter	Jack Clayden
Senior Caretaker	Stuart Townsend
Caretaker	Ken Gupwell
Cleaner*	Mrs Rose Humphrey
Cleaner*	Mrs Carol Madgwick
Caretaker*	Mrs Sue Batt

* Part-time positions.

Note: Although the Town Council are sole custodian trustees for Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre the staff are employed by the charity and not by the council. The staffing establishment currently five full-time and five part-time was comprehensively reviewed during 2007. The Chief Executive Officer, John Durrant, reports direct to the Charities Committee, which was first established in 2004/2005 and is accountable to the Town Clerk who also fulfils the position of Clerk to the Managing Trustees.

APPENDIX B

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

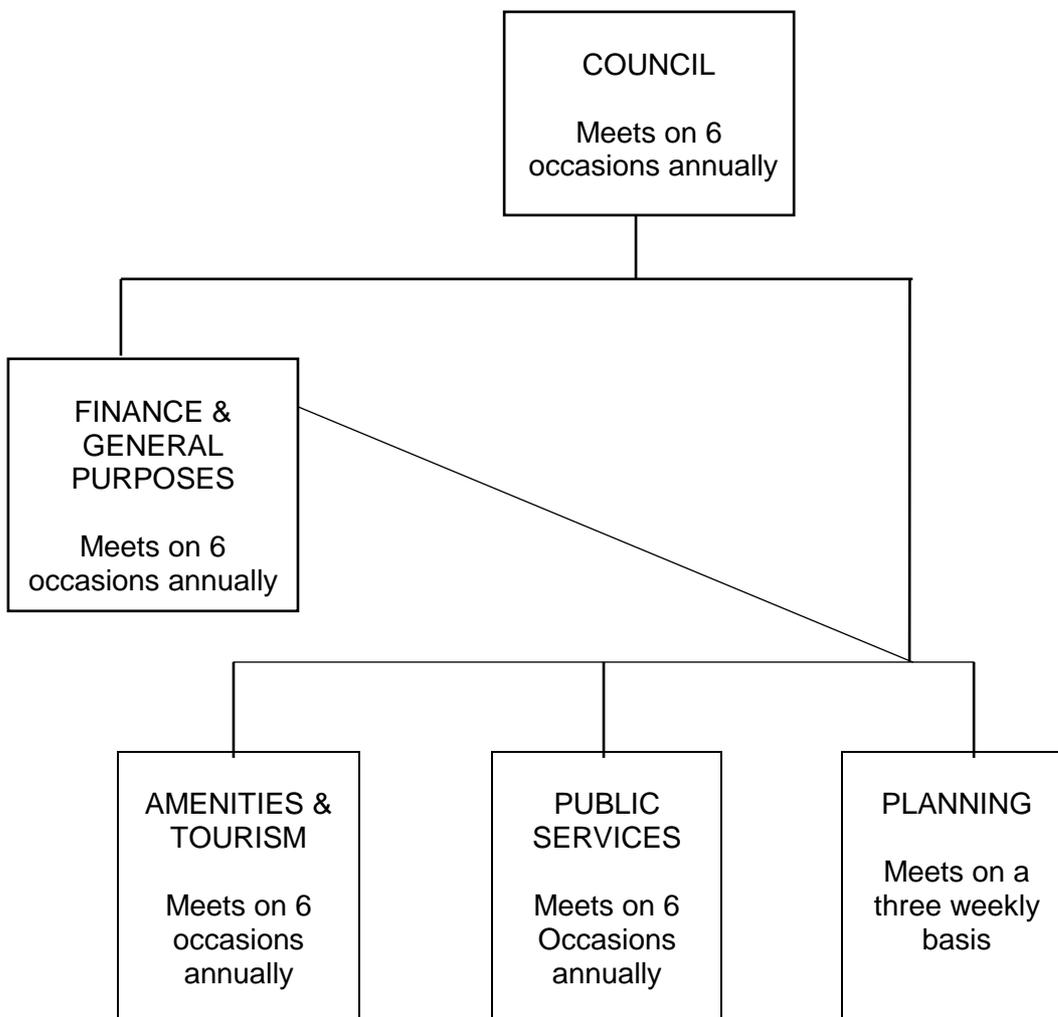
COUNCILLORS 2009/2010

Tel: - Private

J W BALDWIN (LD)	Scarletts, Sandy Lane East Grinstead, RH19 3LP	Town	01342 321347
D J BANKS (LD)	29 St Johns Road East Grinstead, RH19 3LG	Imberhorne	01342 312258
S J BARNETT (LD)	10 Woods Hill Close Ashurst Wood, RH19 3RJ	Herontye	01342 326001
MRS L BENNETT (C)	39 Copse Close East Grinstead, RH19 3EF	Ashplats	01342 301007
MRS H A BRUNSDON (LD)	83 Blount Avenue East Grinstead, RH19 1JN	Imberhorne	01342 327200
MRS M E COLLINS (LD)	Bodinnick, Lewes Road East Grinstead, RH19 3UD	Worsted	01342 324296
I C H DIXON (LD)	Chevalhurst, Dunnings Road East Grinstead, RH19 4AD	Herontye	01342 317213
B A GILLBARD (LD)	7 Meadowcroft Close East Grinstead, RH19 1NA	Baldwins	01342 325184
P J JOHNSON (LD)	Kingsmere Cottage, Stoneleigh Close, E.G. RH19 3DY	Ashplats	01342 311359
J W JOYCE-NELSON (LD)	1 Dexter Drive East Grinstead, RH19 4SU	Town	01342 314727
B MAINSTONE (LD)	Mallaig, Windmill Lane East Grinstead, RH19 2DY	Imberhorne	01342 326454
MRS C A MAINSTONE (LD)	Mallaig, Windmill Lane East Grinstead, RH19 2DY	Baldwins	01342 326454
L A MARMARA (LD)	Mill House, The Feld, London Rd East Grinstead, RH19 2QL	Baldwins	01342 301265
R MUSK (LD)	Scandia, Hurst Farm Road East Grinstead, RH19 4BL	Herontye	01342 313310
L QUINN (C)	6 Dallaway Gardens East Grinstead, RH19 1AZ	Ashplats	01342 317817
P REED (C)	38 Fulmar Drive East Grinstead, RH19 3NN	Ashplats	01342 311926
B T STARMER (LD)	Kimberley, Pine Grove East Grinstead, RH19 3BB	Imberhorne	01342 300534
Mrs V WADDINGHAM (LD)	11 Beckett Way East Grinstead, RH19 4SF	Town	01342 326627

(LD) = Liberal Democrat (C) = Conservative

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEE STRUCTURE



Notes: Finance & General Purposes Committee - 10 members
Planning Committee - 9 members
Leisure & Tourism - 9 members
Public Services - 9 members
In addition the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor are ex-officio on all Committees.

The Council also has a Charities Committee with its own constitution. All Councillors are members of this. The Town Clerk serves as Clerk to the Trustees. The Charities Committee meets quarterly.

The Council's Standing Orders also provide for the establishment of Working Groups and Scrutiny Committees, reportable to specific programme committees. Two Working Groups focussing upon Business Support and, Environment and Sustainability were set up from 2007/2008 civic year. Two scrutiny groups with remits for review of the Council's performance management systems, and for the redevelopment of the Parish Halls complex were established from June 2008. These will be disbanded once they have achieved their remits.

APPENDIX D

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL - DIARY OF MEETINGS
2009/2010

2009

11th May	(M)	Annual Town Council
12th May	(T)	Planning
1st June	(M)	Planning
11th June	(Th)	Public Services
18th June	(Th)	Amenities & Tourism
18th June	(Th)	Charities
22nd June	(M)	Planning
25th June	(Th)	Finance & General Purposes
6th July	(M)	Council
13th July	(M)	Planning
3rd August	(M)	Planning
24th August	(M)	Planning
10th September	(Th)	Public Services
14th September	(M)	Planning
17th September	(Th)	Amenities & Tourism
17th September	Th)	Charities
24th September	(Th)	Finance & General Purposes
5th October	(M)	Council
6th October	(T)	Planning
26th October	(M)	Planning
12th November	(Th)	Public Services
16th November	(M)	Planning
19th November	(Th)	Amenities & Tourism
26th November	(Th)	Finance & General Purposes
7th December	(M)	Council
8th December	(T)	Planning
10th December	(Th)	Charities

2010

4th January	(M)	Planning
7th January	(Th)	Public Services Committee
14th January	(Th)	Amenities & Tourism
21st January	(Th)	Finance & General Purposes
25th January	(M)	Planning
1st February	(M)	Council (Precept)
15th February	(M)	Planning
8th March	(M)	Planning
11th March	(Th)	Public Services
18th March	(Th)	Amenities & Tourism
18th March	(Th)	Charities
25th March	(Th)	Finance & General Purposes
29th March	(M)	Planning
6th April	(T)	Council
7th April	(W)	Annual Town Meeting
19th April	(M)	Planning

NOTES:

- 1 All full Committee and Council meetings are open to the public and commence at 7.45 pm with the exception of the June, September and March Charities Committee meetings which will commence immediately following the Amenities & Tourism Committee meetings on those evenings, or at 8.30 pm, whichever is the later.
- 2 All Council meetings provide a maximum period of 30 minutes for public questions commencing at 7.45 pm.
- 3 All Committee meetings provide a maximum period of 15 minutes for public questions commencing at 7.45 p.m.
- 4 All Council and Committee meetings are held in the Council Chamber at East Court Mansion. The annual Town Meeting is held in the Main Hall.

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT 2008/2009 CIVIC YEAR

I am pleased to present this report at the end of my mayoral year, the second of this administration. The Council, which was elected in May 2007, has continued to focus on service delivery, maintaining quality in our financial and support administration, which is critical in the deteriorating economic climate, and trying to ensure at all times that we listen to and serve our community as meaningfully as possible.

Can I begin by thanking the public, who have attended our meetings and shown support in other ways. Attendances have been particularly good when we have had controversial planning applications, or discussions on items that have a wide community interest. This thanks applies equally to the local press. This is a difficult time for local newspapers and locally the merger of the Courier and Observer into a single new title will hopefully provide the economy of scale to ensure the continuance of a local East Grinstead newspaper, based upon East Grinstead values, which I and my colleagues consider is an important contributor to news dissemination, robust but fair comment and healthy democracy.

The Planning Committee considered over 300 planning applications during the civic year, well down on recent years. The Committee continues to make recommendations on all applications submitted within the civil parish and comments also on planning appeals and other consultations. Members visited many of the application sites in their Wards and studied the plans in advance of the meetings. The District Council reported on 313 of their planning decisions. It was noted that some 86% of the Committee's recommendations were upheld at the District Council, broadly similar to last year.

During the year we were informed that the Area Action Plan was now unviable. This was welcome, but unsurprising, news as it was clearly apparent that the scheme for 2,500 homes at Imberhorne with a full outer relief road was seriously flawed and was no longer affordable, deliverable or environmentally acceptable. The continued opposition from Surrey and East Sussex County Councils, which was consistent throughout, merely applied the last nails to the coffin. Nonetheless there has been a continuing strong focus on the Core Strategy, a document planning the future of Mid Sussex to 2026. Locally the Town Council has grasped the nettle by forming a Three Tiers Group comprising representatives of all three tiers of council locally, an initiative that has the support of Mid Sussex District Council. Work is well advanced on the Infrastructure deficit and needs report and an independent transport report has been commissioned. It is hoped to complete submissions from the Three Tiers Group by early June but this will be subject to receiving outstanding data from West Sussex County Council, which is essential to support the evidence case. Once the Three Tiers Group and the Town Council have completed their work any submission on acceptable future housing in East Grinstead will be the subject of a Town Meeting.

Last year my predecessor Councillor Dixon wrote "It will be interesting to see the effect that the credit crunch has on planning issues locally. There is already evidence that developers are struggling to sell some of the many flats erected in recent years. If this brings a change to the pattern of development locally with a greater emphasis on small family housing, the Planning Committee would welcome this." Well the credit crunch developed into the biggest recession in all our lifetimes, house sales have reduced spectacularly for all types of housing and house building has virtually ground to a halt. Furthermore we now have a number of abandoned eyesore sights scattered throughout the Town with little likelihood of

early completion. The Planning Committee will nonetheless do what it can to urge landowners to tidy their sites where appropriate, working alongside Mid Sussex District Council in this objective

The Public Services Committee has been active in a number of public consultations ensuring effective and considered representations are made in the interests of the local community. In addition to this the Committee has been active in building relationships with a number of external agencies and bodies and to this end we have welcomed presentations at our meetings from a number of such organisations.

The Committee were pleased to welcome speakers at each meeting during the civic year. In June Brian Hughes, Director of West Sussex Primary Care Trust spoke about the North East Review. In September Mary Goode and Heather Bunce of the Queen Victoria Hospital spoke about the hospitals redevelopment plans and regarding development issues generally. In November Anthony Brittain, Vice Chairman of EG Fleet, informed us about community transport issues locally. At the same meeting we received a presentation from Mid Sussex District Council Cabinet Member Garry Wall, and two senior officers Mark Fisher and Sue Rees regarding the new parking machines, parking charges and the parking review. Consequential upon this we have been asked to lead upon a local community consultation response to the comprehensive review which will commence later this year to take effect from April 2010. In January we had a useful presentation from Tim Yair, West Sussex County Council Cycling Officer and in March we were pleased to welcome Sue Chapman Head of Midwifery at Surrey and Sussex Health Care NHS Trust and her colleague Charlotte O'Brien General Manager for Women and Child Health regarding the new midwife led unit at East Surrey Hospital Maternity Services.

A wide range of issues were considered by the Committee during the year. In addition to those already mentioned this has included a regular item on policing issues locally, we contributed to the West Sussex Housing Market Assessment, made a response to the BT programme of proposed public payphone removals, and considered a wide range of issues in relation to Gatwick Airport and particularly items in relation to the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign. Committee also dealt with London Road footway improvements, job centre issues, the use of the paved area in front of Broadleys, responded to the West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service integrated management plan, and gave consideration to a number of public bridleways and footways issues including Rice's Hill. Here the Town Council co-ordinated a formal request under the Wildlife and Countryside Act to have Rice's Hill added to the Definitive Map. Other issues included concessionary fares, public transport matters, and consideration of reports from Council representatives on outside bodies.

In the coming year we are hopefully looking forward to seeing the East Grinstead Railway Station replaced with a more appropriate building, seeing completion of the National Cycle Route between the Worth and Forest Ways by a clearly defined routes through the town centre, seeing progress on a number of health care issues locally including outcome of the North East Review and further progress with regards to improvements on the Queen Victoria Hospital site, and completion of the parking review following full and effective consultation.

The Amenities and Tourism Committee is responsible for all buildings in the ownership of the Town Council. Income remained above budget for our three buildings – Meridian Hall, East Court Mansion and the Old Court House – but towards the end of the year we began to see a reduction in some usage with a marginal adverse impact on income. These trends are being watched carefully. As a consequence we are focussing our efforts on specific targeted hire markets, have reviewed fees and charges and continue with our forward maintenance programme, allied with a particular focus on driving up customer care and standards generally.

The work of the Housekeeping Team has continued with a continuing focus on graffiti removal, agency work for the two principal authorities and supporting planting and clean up initiatives locally. We were pleased that East Grinstead received a Silver Award in the 2008 South and South East in Bloom competition and we applaud the work of the East Grinstead in Bloom Committee under the chairmanship of Councillor Banks, in partnership with the Housekeeping Team and other agencies. We are looking to build on this success in 2009.

The Council is committed to maintaining high standards of maintenance in its land holdings. In respect of Mount Noddy Cemetery the new Memorial Wall opened at the end of April and is a valued additional facility enabling the public to remember their loved ones. Earlier in the civic year a new memorial stone was unveiled at the Cemetery commemorating those who lost their lives in the Whitehall bombing 65 years previously.

Our two allotment sites, at Mount Noddy and Imberhorne, continue to be fully subscribed and we are indebted to the dedicated local Allotment Associations that manage and maintain these within the long-term leases that the Town Council has with them. Long-term we recognise the need for more allotments in East Grinstead to meet demand. We intend this issue to be addressed through the Infrastructure audit.

Gratitude is also expressed to the East Grinstead Tourism initiative and the work of the staff in this area. Their work in conjunction with that of the Business Support Group under the chairmanship of Councillor Mainstone, is of critical importance in these difficult times. Recent progress in relation to the northern extension of the Bluebell Railway and the planning that is going into ensuring the town is well equipped to gain maximum benefit from the Bluebell's arrival bodes well for the future. Similarly the creation of a new enhanced East Grinstead Business Association, incorporating East Grinstead Chamber of Commerce, is very much to be welcomed as has been the success of Spring Sunday, organised by High Street retailers, and other town events.

The Charities Committee, which looks after Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre and the Parish Halls Trusts, is independent of the Town Council but is managed by the Town Council as sole custodian Trustee. All Councillors are currently Trustees of these Charities and the Town Clerk serves as Clerk to the Trustees. Chequer Mead has continued to perform well with a continuing attractive programme of events and activities in the Theatre, in the Gallery and steady usage of the meeting rooms. Our caterer has maintained high standards.

Pleasingly total equity in the Trust again increased during the year, though by less than in previous years. It is imperative that the Town Council, the only core funder and the owner of the building, ensures a sound financial base that recognises future capital spending commitments, not least on the building and its fabric, and a potential decline in consumer spending. The policy to restrict the grant to £80,000 per annum, which in real terms has represented a marginal reduction year on year, is reviewed annually. When the asset base is considered to be sufficient to enable the subsidy to be reviewed downwards such decision will be made, but not before.

As always we are most grateful to the excellent Chief Executive, John Durrant, his hard working and diligent staff, and the many valued volunteers for their commitment and achievements.

The Parish Halls has continued to operate throughout the year notwithstanding the Council and Trustee's best efforts to seek refurbishment, possibly with other parties. Proposals to embrace Age Concern within the building have now been abandoned primarily due to the credit crunch and because costs of development were in excess of those that were affordable and justifiable. The work of the Parish Halls Scrutiny Group under the

chairmanship of Councillor Gillbard has been particularly valuable, especially in aspects of due diligence. We are now looking at other options for the site recognising that it is the services provided under the charitable trust deed that are most important.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee has overall responsibility for the Council's resources, its finances and staffing. The Committee has paid particular focus to establishment matters, staff and member training, internal and external audit, risk management and management of performance. A scrutiny group, under the chairmanship of Councillor Baldwin, has been established to comprehensively review all performance indicators and the way that performance is managed.

The Town Council's financial position remains robust. The Council has no debts, its revenue balances of nearly £400,000 decreased marginally during the year but by less than initially budgeted, and we were able to fund a modest but viable capital programme. In the coming year a Band D council taxpayer will pay £63.89 for their portion of the Town Council's services, an increase of 2.9% on 2008/2009 financial year. The Council has reaffirmed its commitment that future increases for the life of this administration will be less than 5% annually.

The Finance & General Purposes Committee is responsible for community support and for our various partnerships. The Council recognises that it is best able to fulfil its obligations where it works constructively in partnership with others. This creates an enhanced degree of community ownership and real benefits, not least financial. Here I would like to particularly commend the East Grinstead Town Twinning Association, the Christmas Lights Committee, the East Grinstead Christmas Promotions Committee and other similar groups locally, all of who do such sterling work locally. I particularly wish to pay tribute to East Grinstead Community Partnership, which has now closed down. The Partnership undertook much valued work in driving forward the Town Health check and Action plan over a five-year period. Thanks are particularly due to Don Cooper the first Chairman and his successor Bobby Hamilton and to Andrew Bass and later Christine Hardisty who clerked the Partnership during this period. The Town Council will resume delivery ownership of the few outstanding Action items.

There are also many other voluntary groups and organisations working within the town who do excellent work. It has been my pleasure to see them at work this year, and I am delighted that the Town Council is able to support their work with grant aid and/ or assistance in kind. We do thank them all. Equally I do thank our service clubs – Rotary, Lions and the like who perform much valued and selfless public service.

The F&GP Committee has lead responsibility for the Environment and Sustainability Working Group, under the chairmanship of Councillor Mrs Brunsdon. The prime area of focus this year has been in respect of the Greening Campaign. Imberhorne Ward is already progressing with this initiative, which is designed to reduce carbon footprint, and Herontye Ward is about to embark similarly. The 'jute bag' initiative proved particularly popular as besides meeting all necessary green credentials it also promoted the local economy.

In September I was pleased to hold a Civic Service at St Swithun's Church, and I sincerely thank the Rev Canon Clive Everett Allen for agreeing to this.

During the year I was pleased to raise in total £7,500 for my charity, Age Concern East Grinstead. A number of fundraising events were held including a Race Night, a Quiz Night and a Murder Mystery evening coupled with a Dinner Dance, all in the Meridian Hall. I would like to thank everyone who supported these and other events. As a consequence I was able to present a cheque for £2,000 to Age Concern East Grinstead earlier this year, a second cheque for £500 was donated by 'One Night Stand' the performers at my Charity Dinner Dance. I am now able to present a further cheque in an amount of £5,000, which includes a

sum of over £1,000 generously donated from drink sales on the night courtesy of Melvin Phillips and Light Bar Services and PLB wines. This is to be ring fenced by Age Concern, East Grinstead, for their future building development or relocation. At this juncture can I also mention the tremendous support I have received from the ATC and NTC this year, assisting me at a number of my Mayoral events. The young people in these organisations are tremendous ambassadors for young people in our town. I will be sending a cheque to the NTC but am delighted to hand over a cheque for £200 to the ATC tonight.

In my year as Town Mayor I have attended 217 events, excluding council and committee meetings. A list of these is attached to this report as Appendix A. I am most grateful to my husband, Neal, who has served as my consort and my rock. I have been enormously grateful for the support and friendship everywhere I have been. Everyone has been tremendously welcoming and this has made my year all the more enjoyable.

In July we were pleased to welcome Councillor Quinn to our ranks, elected to Ashplats Ward, following the sad death of Councillor Lord, this time last year. I should like to thank all Town Councillors for their faith and trust in me this year and for their own diligence and hard work. There have been, during the year, six Council meetings, 42 Committee meetings, five Scrutiny Group meetings, one Annual Town Meeting and four meetings of the Charities Committee. Councillors' attendances at all of these have been good, 78% for Committees and 83% for Council meetings, and Members have fulfilled their responsibilities with distinction. I have been particularly grateful to my Deputy Town Mayor, Councillor Marmara, who has supported me at many functions and represented me at others when I was not available, the Leader of the Council and the Committee Chairs.

I also wish to thank the Town Council staff for their support for the Council and its work during the year also. It has been much appreciated. This year we were particularly pleased to welcome as new employees Nigel Foster, Assistant Amenities Manager and Sue Batt as Caretaker/Cleaner. We also congratulate Keith Astley on his promotion to Amenities Manager. We wish them all well.

Finally I wish to thank the public of East Grinstead for the welcome they have given Neal and myself throughout the year. It has been a huge privilege to serve the Town as first citizen. East Grinstead is a lovely place, with lovely people and the memories we take from the year will stay with us forever.

Councillor Ginnie Waddingham,
Town Mayor
2008/2009 civic year.

APPENDIX E1

2008

May

- 13 Annual Tourism Forum at Town Museum
- 14 Young Enterprise at Chequer Mead
- 16 Commemoration Service for Revd John Mason Neale at Sackville College
- 17 East Grinstead Big Day Out at Station*
Art Exhibition at Greenstede Gallery, Chequer Mead*
Football Festival at East Grinstead Rugby Club*
- 21 Reception for French students and Fonthill Lodge pupils at East Court
It's a Knockout at the Kings Centre
Guinness Book of Records event at Wetherspoons*
- 23 Cricket Week event at Tunbridge Wells accompanied by the Town Clerk
- 24 Street Collection for Town Museum
Queen Victoria Hospital Concert at Chequer Mead*
- 28 Sports Taster Session for Outset Youth at East Grinstead Cricket & Hockey Club
High Sheriff of West Sussex Garden Party at Heaslands, Haywards Heath*

June

- 1 Hanging Baskets in High Street
Treasure Hunt prize draw at Town Museum
- 3 MS Society Information Day in Meridian Hall
Bluebell Railway Exhibition at Town Museum
- 4 Reception for visitors from Schwaz at East Court
- 11 Environmental Trail Day at St Peter's School with Councillor Mrs Brunsdon
- 18 Furnihelp Mid Sussex AGM at Horsted Keynes
- 19 Fonthill Lodge School production of "Yanomamo" with Mr Iain Waddingham
- 20 Concert in aid of St Catherine's Hospice at Chequer Mead
- 21 Opening of Founder's Fete Day at Sackville College
Credit Union AGM at St Swithun's Parish Hall
East Grinstead Choral Society Concert at Chequer Mead*
- 24 North Area Music Centre Concert at Chequer Mead
- 25 Tourism Forum at Town Museum
- 28 On air with BBC Southern Counties Radio
- 29 Scout Awards at Imberhorne School
- 30 Olympics Event at Imberhorne School

Jul

- 3-7 Town Twinning visit to Bourg-de-Peage*
- 9 Memorial Stone Service at Mount Noddy for Whitehall Bombing victims, with Deputy Town Mayor*
- 12 Lunch at Sackville College
Graduations at School of Oriental Medicine, Green Hedges Avenue*
East Grinstead Soroptimists Garden Party
- 15 EG4Kidz Event at East Grinstead Library, West Street
Visit to Trefoil Montisorri School at Peredur Centre
- 17 Photocall for East Grinstead Farmers Market
- 18 Communion at Sackville College
- 19 Veterans Day at East Court with Deputy Town Mayor*
Mid Summer Market Walkabout with Deputy Town Mayor and Consort
Age Concern Quiz Night with Deputy Town Mayor*

- 22 Waterloo Band Concert at Chequer Mead in aid of Army Benevolent Fund
- 25 Choirpower Concert at Chequer Mead*
- 28 London and Kent Mayor's/Chairmen's event at Eltham Palace*
- 30 Reception for Canadian Girl Guides at East Court and Meridian Line
Strawberry Tea at St Luke's Church
- Aug
- 6 Scout Camp at Ardingly Showground
- 7 Spray Can Art for Motiv& at Wallis Centre
- 9 First Match of the season for East Grinstead Town Football Club*
- 17 Civic Reception at Arundel given by Chairman of Arun District Council in aid of his charity fund*
- 18 Meeting with Chairman of Queen Victoria Hospital
- 22 Motiv8 barbeque at Wallis Centre
Garden Party for residents of Lingfield Lodge
- 27 Grenestede Talking News AGM at East Court
- 28 Big Speed Read at Imberhorne Upper School with East Grinstead Library
Town Council staff barbeque at East Court
- Sept
- 1 East Grinstead Rotary Club open evening at Chequer Mead
- 3 Launch at East Grinstead Town Museum of print from original dated 1833 by W G Moss
- 4 East Grinstead Meridian Rotary Club charity cheque presentations at Lingfield Golf Course
- 5 Age Concern Annual General Meeting and Tea Dance in Meridian Hall
- 6 Cheese & Wine Charity fundraising for Dartford Town Mayor at Dartford*
- 8 Sunnyside Community Pre-School Open Day at Peredur Centre
- 10 Halsford Park School Anniversary Tree Planting
- 13 Departure from High Street of charity walkers in aid of Aqueduct
Coffee morning at St Luke's Church in aid of Age Concern East Grinstead
Garden Party for Town Museum at Chequer Mead
- 14 Ribbon cutting for refurbished United Reform Church, Moat Road
Town Mayor's "At Home" day at East Court*
- 16 Reception for Imberhorne School students and their visiting students from Germany
- 19 Music & Arts Festival AGM at East Court*
1343 East Grinstead Squadron's Dining In Dinner at Roebuck Hotel, with Deputy Town Mayor*
- 20 Special transport day at Martells, Queens Walk
- 21 Crawley Mayor's Civic Service at St John the Baptist Crawley followed by lunch at Mayor's home*
Presentation of prizes to Ploughing Match champions at Imberhorne Farm*
- 23 EG4Kidz competition presentations at Town Library
- 24 Business Support Group meeting at East Court
- 25 Opening of East Grinstead Children & Family Centre at Blackwell Farm Road
- 26 Guinea Pig buffet lunch at Felbridge Hotel
Reception for young people with disabilities from Twin Towns at East Court
East Grinstead in Bloom Awards presentation at Meridian Hall with Deputy Town Mayor*
- 27 Opening of New Life Church with Leader of Council
Dinner for young people with disabilities from Twin Towns at Hindleap Warren*
- 28 Solemn Vespers for Michaelmas at Worth Abbey*
- Oct
- 2 Gateway Club Party at Wallis Centre*
- 3 AGM for Friends of East Grinstead Museum
- 4 Reception for Town Twinning Mindelheim Choir at East Court

- East Grinstead Lions Charter Dinner at Ramada Hotel, Gatwick*
- 7 Day out at Bluewater with Mayor of Dartford accompanied by Cllr Mrs Mainstone
- 8 Outset Youth AGM at Pulborough accompanied by Cllr Baldwin
- 11 Carib Aid Creative Talent Show at Chequer Mead
- 12 Launch of Costume Hire facility at Chequer Mead*
- 17 Brambletye School fund raising exhibition at Greenstede Gallery, Chequer Mead
- Concert in aid of Age Concern at Chequer Mead
- 19 Concert at Sackville College
- 20 Access AGM and Burrin Award presentation at East Court
- 21 Funeral Service for ex Councillor John Thompson
- 22 Coffee morning at Swan Mead
- Meridian Rotary Speaker's Night at The Chequers, Forest Row*
- 26 Mayor's Civic Service at St Swithun's Church*
- Lunch at St Lukes Church in memory of Alan Lord an in aid of Age Concern*
- 27 Shortmat Bowls Presentations in Meridian Hall
- 29 Launch of new store design for Boots the Chemist in London Road
- 31 Company of Friends production of My Fair Lady at Chequer Mead*
- Nov
- 1 Fireworks at East Grinstead Football Club*
- 4 Reception at East Court for Trefoil school children
- Bag of Hats fundraising for Chequer Mead Friends at Chequer Mead with Deputy Town Mayor and Cllr James Baldwin*
- 7 Fonthill Lodge School Bicentenary Exhibition at Town Museum
- 9 Remembrance Sunday wreath laying at East Court and High Street
- 14 Race Night in aid of Age Concern in Meridian Hall*
- 17 Meeting with new Town traders at East Court
- 18 Queen Victoria Hospital staff awards at Chequer Mead
- 19 Soroptimists' Caribbean Evening at East Court
- 21 Cowan Architects Anniversary Lunch at Ashdown Park Hotel
- Town Twinning AGM at East Court with Deputy Town Mayor
- 22 Wine Tasting with Meridian Rotary Club in Meridian Hall with Deputy Town Mayor and Mayoress*
- 25 Cutting of turf at Imberhorne for Bluebell Railway
- 26 Rotary Club evening at The Chequers Hotel, Forest Row
- 27 Accreditation celebration at East Grinstead Town Museum
- Gateway Club Christmas Party at the Wallis Centre accompanied by Deputy Town Mayor
- 30 Beaver Scouts Christingle at Imberhorne Lower School
- Dec
- 3 Guinea Pig Club Dinner at Windlesham Golf Course
- 4 East Grinstead Christmas Shopping Evening*
- SAAFA Concert at Chequer Mead*
- 6 Rotary Club Tree of Goodwill lighting in High Street accompanied by Deputy Town Mayor*
- 7 East Grinstead Christmas Shopping Day*
- St Catherine's Hospice Tree of Light Service at St Swithun's Church*
- 9 Concert in aid of Lifeboat Institute at Chequer Mead
- 10 Presentation of NVQ certificate at Blonde McIndoe Centre, Queen Victoria Hospital
- Recording of Christmas message with Greenstede Talking News
- 12 Red Cross raffle at Pavilion Playgroup at Olympus
- Age Concern Christmas Party in Meridian Hall accompanied by Councillor Baldwin
- Presentation to Access All Sports at CJs in High Street

- Open Evening at Waitrose Supermarket
- 15 Tour of Wards at Queen Victoria Hospital
- 17 Pensioners' Party at St Mary's, Windmill Lane
Imberhorne School Year 13 Presentations at Imberhorne Lane
- 18 Meads Primary School talk to years 5 and 6
Kumon maths presentations at Pavilion Room, Olympus
1343 ATC Squadron event at Morton Road Drill Hall*
- 20 Age Concern Saturday Club at Swan Mead
Joined Rotary Club collection round in Garden Wood area*
- 21 Mayor's Carols and Reception at East Court*
- 23 Joined Town Council staff for Christmas Lunch at East Court
- Jan 2009**
- 11 Volunteers' Party at Chequer Mead
- 16 Photocall for parcels to troops abroad
- 17 Opening of Hallmark Travel Exhibition in Meridian Hall*
Formal handing over of 4VEP for Bluebell Railway at East Grinstead Station*
- 20 Monica Cantwell Trust pantomime at Lingfield Community Centre*
- 21 Rotary Club "Youth Speaks" at Chequer Mead*
- 24 Crawley Borough Council Civic Ball at The Hawth*
- 29 Retailers Meeting at East Court for Business Group
- 30 East Grinstead Operatic Society's production of "Stepping Out" at Chequer Mead*
- Feb**
- 4 Exhibition of paintings by John Joseph at Town Museum
- 6 Reception for NYCPE visitors to East Court
Celebration for East Grinstead Hockey Club on becoming Premier League winners (indoor champions)*
- 9 East Grinstead Business Association Dinner at Dunnings Mill
- 10 Meeting at East Court with Dr Adrian Bull, Chief Executive, Queen Victoria Hospital
- 13 Fundraising event at British Heart Foundation Shop in London Road
"Talk Lunch" at Halsford Park School with Year 1 students
- 14 Lions party for Senior Citizens at Sackville School*
- 20 "On with the Show" Exhibition at Town Museum
- 21 Wellbeing Seminar with Council for Voluntary Service at Glen Vue*
Performance by Act One Beginners at Chequer Mead*
- 23 Meeting with Justice & Peace Group at New Evergreen Restaurant*
- 24 Meeting with East Grinstead Business Association (EGBA)
- 25 Meeting with local retailers at CJs Coffee Bar
- 26 Performance of "Neville's Island" with Mayor of Tunbridge Wells at Trinity Theatre*
- 27 Fairtrade event at Sackville School to meet a Palestinian olive producer
- Mar**
- 4 Interview for Grenestede Talking News
Presentation by Rotary Club to St Piers at Lingfield
Welcomed Youth Council to East Court
- 6 Greenstedde Gallery Lighting Opening Night at Chequer Mead*
- 7 Lions Sponsored Swim at Olympus*
- 8 Artemis School of Speech & Drama*
- 15 Wedding Fair at East Court*
- 17 Reception for Meads School pupils at East Court
Meeting with retailers regarding Spring Sunday event
- 18 Performance of "The Likes of Us" at Brambletye School*
- 20 Performance of "Old Tyme Music Hall" at Chequer Mead*
- 21 Soroptimists President's Dinner at Roebuck Hotel*
- 23 Multiple Sclerosis AGM at Crawley College

- 24 Reception for Imberhorne School and Tanzanian students at East Court
 25 Reception for Omlets at East Court
 26 Mental Health AGM at Glen Vue
 Reception for Fonthill Lodge and French students at East Court
 28 Cheese & Wine Party for East Grinstead Museum in Mayor's Parlour*
 29 Presentation at East Grinstead Rugby Club*
 31 Reception for Tuesday Scout Group at East Court
- Apr
- 3 U3A Spring Choir Concert at Parish Halls in aid of Age Concern
 4 Model Railway Exhibition at Sackville School
 Judging for "Search for a Star" at Chequer Mead*
 5 Spring Shopping Day*
- 8 Annual Town Meeting
 14 Rotary Club lunch at The Star, Lingfield
 16 Grant presentation at Bluebell Railway accompanied by Deputy Town Mayor
 17 Mid Sussex District Council's Chairman's Charity Dinner Dance at Claire Hall*
 18 Balloon Launch for Leukaemia at Wallis Centre
 19 Target Shooting Club prize giving
 21 Tea with St Dunstan's Church raffle winner in Mayor's Parlour, East Court
 Civic Reception for East Grinstead Hockey Team*
 24 Bluebell Railway Pullman Lunch at Horsted Keynes*
 Opening of Stag Theatre, Sevenoaks*
 25 Mayor's Charity Dinner Dance and Murder Mystery in Meridian Hall*
 26 Sunshine Sevens Tournament*
 Vintage Bus Day*
 Scouts St George's Day Parade at St Swithun's Church
- 28 Duke of Edinburgh Award Event at Meridian Hall*
 29 Young Enterprise Area Board Award Presentations at Chequer Mead
 30 Mount Noddy Memorial Wall dedication ceremony
- May
- 2 East Grinstead Arts Festival at Chequer Mead
 Street Collection for East Grinstead Town Museum
 4 May Fair in High Street with Deputy Mayor and Mayoress*
 5 Imberhorne School Graduation event at Effingham Park Hotel
 6 Young Enterprise event at Chequer Mead
 8 Charity Evening at St Catherine's Hospice for Crawley Town Mayor's Charity*
 9 Oxfam Shop, London Road 25th Birthday celebration
 East Grinstead Hockey Club Annual Awards*

* *accompanied by Consort*

Deputy Town Mayor

- April
- 29 Young Enterprise Area Board Award Presentations at Chequer Mead,
 following on from Mayor's earlier attendance in afternoon.

- May
- 9 Councillor Barnett and Mrs Pauline Barnett represented Mayor at Tunbridge
 Wells Charity Dinner/Dance

ACTION PLAN 2007/2011

As the final exercise the two new groups looked at identifying a small number of short term (2007/2009), medium term (2009/2011) and long-term projects. These are as follows and brief details of progress to date is recorded in bold alongside.:-

Short term

1. Comprehensively review the Council's Committee and working structure (democratic services) and recommend any changes necessary in order to deliver the Council's business agenda. **ACHIEVED 2007/2008**
2. Engage with Mid Sussex District Council (alongside other local councils) in order to ensure parish and town councils receive an element of Section 106 funding. **ACHIEVED THROUGH MSDC/MSATC/MSALC WORKING PARTY 2008/2009**
3. Develop an holistic, strategic plan, working with Mid Sussex District Council, for the Town as a whole. **WORK TO BE COMPLETED SEPTEMBER 2009 THROUGH THREE TIERS GROUP**
4. Remodel the Parish Halls and complete an audit for all Town Council premises. **ONGOING THROUGH SCRUTINY GROUP.**
5. Improve partnership working at all levels and seek devolution of appropriate services. **ONGOING**

Medium term

1. Engage with outside agencies, Government and others, using benchmarking and lessons from other councils to identify other grants, commercial revenue streams and other finance opportunities. **ONGOING**
2. Develop and deliver a marketing plan for the Town to maximise tourism opportunities levered by the Bluebell Railway extension and other initiatives. **NOT YET STARTED**
3. Subject to review, seek Town Centre premises for Town Council and related agency services. **NOT A PRIORITY IN NEW FINANCIAL/ECONOMIC CLIMATE.**
4. Subject to what happens at Mid Sussex District Council consider subsidised bulky refuse collections locally. **UNNECESSARY GIVEN CONCESSION IMPROVEMENTS INTRODUCED BY MSDC.**
5. Seek devolution and enhancement of public toilets, working in conjunction with Mid Sussex District Council. **OFFER TO MSDC TO TAKE OVER NORTON HOUSE TOILETS WAS REJECTED..**

Long term

1. To have a long term economic plan for maximising East Grinstead's prosperity. **NO PROGRESS TO DATE.**

2. To seek to make East Grinstead Town Council a carbon neutral authority. **WORK HAS COMMENCED THROUGH ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP.**
3. To review the possibility of providing enhanced leisure services at East Court. **MERIDIAN FM OCCUPYING ROOMS FOR PERMANENT COMMUNITY RADIO STATION FROM LATE 2009. OTHER POTENTIAL NEW USES UNDER CONSIDERATION.**
4. The provision of a sustainable transport link between East Grinstead and Crawley/Three Bridges. **THIS WILL BE LOOKED AT BY MSDC AS PART OF CORE STRATEGY.**

APPENDIX G

**EAST GRINSTEAD
TOWN COUNCIL**

***Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended
31st March 2009***

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East Grinstead Town Council

Statement of Accounting Policies

31st March 2009

General

The accounts have been drawn up in accordance with proper accounting practices for smaller relevant bodies as laid down in "Governance and Accountability in Local Councils - a Practitioner's Guide 2008 which meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003, incorporating Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006.

Capital expenditure

In accordance with the recommendations of the CIPFA guidelines this council has set a *de minimus* level of £5,000 below which expenditure is not capitalised.

All expenditure above the *de minimus* level on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of fixed assets is capitalised on an accruals basis in the accounts. Expenditure on fixed assets is capitalised, provided that the fixed asset yields benefits to the authority and the services it provides, for a period of more than one year. Fixed assets are valued on the basis recommended by CIPFA and in accordance with the statements on asset valuations principles and guidance notes issued by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. The closing balances are stated on the following basis:

- Non operational properties have been valued to Open Market Value whilst Operational properties have been valued to Open Market Value for Existing Use or, where this could not be assessed because there was no market for the subject asset, the properties were valued at Depreciated Replacement Cost, subject to the prospect and viability of the occupation and use.
- Other operational assets are included in the balance sheet at historic cost net of depreciation.

Differences arising on the valuation of fixed assets are charged to the fixed asset restatement reserve. Revaluation of fixed assets is planned at five yearly intervals, although material changes to asset valuations will be adjusted in the interim period, should they occur.

The Council's policy is to carry out a maintenance programme so that, as far as possible, its fixed assets' useful lives remain the same. As a result it is considered that any depreciation charge on the buildings would be immaterial. Therefore, in 2008/2009 depreciation was only chargeable on vehicles, plant, furniture and equipment above the *de minimus* level and on no other assets of the authority. The depreciation charge was credited against the fixed assets.

Depreciation on Vehicles and Plant is calculated using the straight-line method at a rate of 20%.

Amounts set aside from revenue to finance capital expenditure or as transfers to other earmarked reserves are disclosed separately as appropriations on the face of the Income and Expenditure Account and in Note 16.

Debtors and Creditors

The revenue accounts of the council are maintained on an accruals basis in accordance with the code. That is sums due to or from the council during the year are included whether or not the cash has actually been received or paid in the year.

Cost of Support Services

The cost of management and administration which is controlled by the Finance and General Purposes Committee is allocated to all services on an agreed basis.

Reserves

The council maintains certain reserves to meet specific future expenditure. The purpose of the council's reserves is explained in note 16.

The system of capital accounting requires the establishment of two reserve accounts in the balance sheet (neither of which represent reserves which the council can use to support future expenditure):

- the fixed asset restatement account, which represents principally the balance of the surpluses or deficits arising on the periodic revaluation of fixed assets, and
- the capital financing account, which represents revenue or capital resources applied to finance expenditure of a capital nature or for the repayment of external loans and the charge of depreciation to ensure it does not impact on the amount to be met from precept.

Risk Management and Anti fraud & corruption policies

The council is examining the major risks it faces and confirms that systems are under constant review so as to mitigate those risks.

Post Balance Sheet Events

Events between the balance sheet date and the date that the Financial Statements are approved are considered by the council in accordance with SSAP17.

East Grinstead Town Council
Income and Expenditure Account
For the Year Ended 31st March 2009

Year Ended 31st March 2008				Year Ended 31st March 2009	
Net				Net	
<u>Expenditure</u>	Note	Services	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>
£			£	£	£
82,829		Democratic Representation & Management	93,046		93,046
46,427	[7]	Corporate Management	85,223		85,223
130,214		East Court Estate	252,614	136,620	115,994
133,238		Community Grants and Partnership	118,244		118,244
21,110		Planning & Economic Development	22,740		22,740
30,631		Tourist Information Services	42,185	12,639	29,546
51,094		Cemetery Services	87,712	31,888	55,824
110,846		Public Open Spaces	167,309	44,150	123,159
<u>29,147</u>	[16]	Capital expenditure	<u>37,781</u>	-	<u>37,781</u>
635,536		NET COST OF SERVICES	906,854	225,297	681,557
(34,826)	[2]	Interest and Investment Income			(27,206)
(17,517)		Transfer from General Fund			(26,746)
<u>17,807</u>	[16]	Transfer to Earmarked Reserves			<u>33,285</u>
<u>601,000</u>		NET CHARGE TO PRECEPT			<u>660,890</u>

Statement of Movement on the General Fund Balance
For the Year Ended 31st March 2009

<u>Year ended</u>		<u>Year ended</u>
<u>31st March 2008</u>		<u>31st March 2009</u>
(17,517)	Transfer to/(from) the Income and Expenditure Account	(26,746)
<u>425,430</u>	General Fund Balance brought forward	<u>407,913</u>
<u>407,913</u>	[16] GENERAL FUND BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD	<u>381,167</u>

East Grinstead Town Council
Balance Sheet
as at 31st March 2009

	31 st March 2008				31 st March 2009
£	£	Note		£	£
			Tangible Fixed Assets		
			Operational Assets		
5,471,383		[9]	Land & Buildings	3,985,300	
<u>17,850</u>		[9]	Vehicles & Plant	<u>14,230</u>	
	5,489,233		Total Fixed Assets		3,999,530
	80,000	[18]	Pension Asset/(Liability)		(216,000)
	<u>5,569,233</u>		Total Long-Term Assets		<u>3,783,530</u>
			Current Assets		
47,777		[14]	Debtors	26,199	
<u>503,682</u>			Cash & Bank Funds	<u>523,346</u>	
	<u>551,459</u>		Total Assets		<u>549,545</u>
	6,120,692				4,333,075
			Current Liabilities		
(77,681)		[15]	Creditors	(69,286)	
<u>(12,379)</u>			Receipts in Advance	<u>(12,319)</u>	
	(90,060)				(81,605)
	<u>6,030,632</u>		Total Assets less Current Liabilities		<u>4,251,470</u>
			Total Assets less Liabilities		<u>4,251,470</u>
	<u>6,030,632</u>				
 Represented By					
	(4,853,510)	[16]	Fixed Asset Restatement Account		(3,367,427)
	(635,773)	[16]	Capital Financing Account		(632,153)
	(53,436)	[16]	Earmarked Reserve		(86,723)
	(407,913)	[16]	General Fund Balance		(381,167)
	(80,000)	[18]	Pension Reserve		216,000
	<u>(6,030,632)</u>				<u>(4,251,470)</u>

Signed..... Signed..... Signed.....
Chairman Finance & General Purposes Responsible Finance Officer Town Clerk

Date..... Date..... Date.....

East Grinstead Town Council
Cash Flow Statement
For the Year ended 31st March 2009

		Year ended 31st March	
		2008	2009
Surplus for the year	[4]	(17,517)	(26,746)
 Non-cash Transactions			
Contribution to Earmarked Reserves	[4]	17,805	33,285
		288	6,539
 Increase/decrease in :-			
Debtors	[14]	(18,505)	21,578
Creditors	[15]	27,904	(8,393)
Receipts in Advance		1,101	(60)
		10,500	13,125
 Total increase in cash and cash equivalents		10,788	19,664
 2. Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents		£	£
Opening Balance		492,894	503,682
Closing Balance		503,682	523,346
 Movement in Year		10,788	19,664

East Grinstead Town Council
Notes to the Accounts
31st March 2009

1. Section 137 Expenditure

Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) enables the council to spend up to the product of £5.86 per head on the electoral roll in any one year for the benefit of the people in its area on activities or projects not specifically authorised by other powers. The total amount available for this purpose in 2008/2009 was £111,949.

Expenditure was incurred for the following purposes:

	2007/2008	2008/2009
	£	£
Revenue Community Grants	4,448	5,440
Tourist information	2,079	2,972
Civic Newsletter	4,442	3,401
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	10,969	11,813
	<hr/>	<hr/>

2. Interest on Bank Deposits

The interest figure arises from the investment of revenue balances including reserves and provisions as follows:

	Revenue	Capital & Revenue Projects	Total
	£	£	£
Bank Interest	24,639	2,567	27,206

3. Publicity

Section 5 of the Local Government Act 1986 requires the Council to disclose expenditure on publicity. The broad details of this expenditure is:-

	2007/08	2008/09
	£	£
Civic Newsletter	4,442	3,401
Hall Facilities	345	1,219
Public Notices	121	156
Press & Public Relations	1,350	1,700
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	6,258	6,476
	<hr/>	<hr/>

4. Budget

The following shows a comparison of the budget and out-turn figures (before Depreciation adjustments) in 2008/09 analysed by the approved cost centres that conform with the Best Value Accounting Code of Practice.

<u>Revised Estimated - net Expenditure</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>
	£	£	£
Democratic Representation	87,680	93,046	(5,366)
Corporate Management	80,700	85,223	(4,523)
East Court Estate	127,140	115,994	11,146
Community Grants & Partnerships	131,490	118,244	13,246
Economic Development	24,810	22,740	2,070
Tourist Information Services	30,960	29,546	1,414
Cemetery Services	61,560	55,824	5,736
Public Open Spaces	121,650	123,159	(1,509)
Capital & Revenue Projects	68,500	37,781	30,719
Interest & Investment Income	(30,000)	(27,206)	(2,794)
(Total Variance for Year)			50,139
Transfer from General Reserves	(43,600)	(26,746)	(16,854)
Transfer to Earmarked Capital Reserves		33,285	(33,285)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Charge to Precept	660,890	660,890	-
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

5. Staffing

During 2008/09 the council employed an average of 24 permanent staff, some full-time and some part-time. All administrative, professional, technical and clerical staff (APT & C) and outdoor staff are paid on nationally agreed pay scales.

The Town Clerk is paid on Town Clerk's salary scale SCP65 above threshold, within a national salary scale that is agreed annually by the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks.

1 officer received a salary in the band of £60,000 to £70,000 in the year.

6. Audit Fees

During the year the council paid fees to Mazars LLP the council's auditors as follows:

	2007/2008	2008/2009
Fees payable in respect of external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor	<u>£2,500</u>	<u>£2,500</u>

7. Related Parties/ Agency Income

The council had the following material transactions with related parties:

1. As part of its continuing support, the council paid a grant of £80,400 (2007/2008 £80,400) to Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre Registered Charity Number: 108890 which was formed on the 6th April 2005.
2. Transactions with the West Sussex County Council Pension Fund are detailed in Note 18 to the Accounts.

3. The council received a Best Value Grant of £Nil (2007/08 £30,000) from “Communities and Local Government”.
4. The council received £52,320 (2007/08 £50,847) from partnership initiatives with Mid-Sussex District Council and West Sussex County Council.

8. Operating Leases

Vehicles & Plant

Undischarged obligations in respect of operating leases which expire within 1 year £2,545

9. Fixed Assets

	Land and Buildings £	Vehicles and Plant £	TOTAL £
Cost or Valuation			
At 1 April 2008	5,471,383	75,336	5,546,719
Fixed Asset Restatement	(1,486,083)		(1,486,083)
Additions		5,000	5,000
Disposals		-	-
At 31 March 2009	<u>3,985,300</u>	<u>80,336</u>	<u>4,065,636</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2008	-	57,486	57,486
Charge for year	-	8,620	8,620
Disposals		-	-
At 31 March 2009	<u>-</u>	<u>66,106</u>	<u>66,106</u>
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2009	<u>3,985,300</u>	<u>14,230</u>	<u>3,999,530</u>
At 31 March 2008	<u>5,471,383</u>	<u>17,850</u>	<u>5,489,233</u>

The item of capital expenditure during the year was:-

	£
Steam Cleaner	<u>5000.00</u>

10. Capital Commitments

At the 31st March 2009 there were no significant orders for future capital.

11. Financing of Capital Expenditure

The addition to fixed assets in the year was financed as follows:-

	£
Earmarked Reserves	<u>5,000.00</u>

12. Information on Assets Held

Fixed assets owned by the council include:-

Operational Land and Buildings

East Court	-valued on existing use
Meridian Hall	-valued on depreciated replacement cost
Chequer Mead Arts Centre	-valued on depreciated replacement cost
Cemetery Buildings (including workshops)	-valued on existing use
Cemetery	
Old Court House	-valued on market value

Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment

Building contents
Vans - 3
Tractor - 1
Trailer - 1
Digger - 1
Dumper - 1
Ride-on Mower - 1
Quad Bike sprayer - 1

Infrastructure Assets

Bus Shelters - 10
Street Lights

Community Assets

East Court Playground
East Court Garden of Remembrance
War Memorials - 2
Recreation Grounds - 1
Allotment Sites - 2
Civic Regalia

13. Fixed Asset Valuation

The freehold properties which comprise the authority's property portfolio (including building contents) were valued as at 1st January 2009 by DVS (Valuation Office Agency) on the under mentioned bases in accordance with the Appraisal and Valuation Standards 6th Edition of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. The Property Asset Restatement in 2008/09 amounted to £1,486,083 which is largely due to a reduction in the value of Chequer Mead Arts Centre amounting to £1,030,000. This substantial reduction is occasioned by the status of the tenancy. In 2004/05 the occupational lease was disregarded as the standing tenant was a trust in liquidation. In 2008/09 a long lease to a new trust with 22 years remaining life has been taken into account.

Plant and machinery that forms part of the building is included in the valuation.

Properties regarded by the council as operational were valued on the basis of open market value for existing use or where this could not be assessed because there was no open market for the subject asset, at the depreciated replacement cost.

Vehicles, plant and equipment above the *de minimus* value of £5,000 have been listed at historic cost, less depreciation to date.

14. Debtors

	31 st March 2008	31 st March 2009
	£	£
Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre	760	358
Parish Halls	14,314	2,487
Henry Smith's Charity	0	2,508
Sundry Debtors	32,703	20,846
	<hr/>	<hr/>
47,777		26,199
	<hr/>	<hr/>

15. Creditors

	31 st March 2008	31 st March 2009
	£	£
Other Local Authorities	17,465	20,702
Sundry Creditors – Revenue	60,216	48,584
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>77,681</u>	<u>69,286</u>

16. Reserves

The council keeps a number of reserves in the Balance Sheet. Some are required to be held for statutory reasons, some are needed to comply with proper accounting practice, and others have been set up voluntarily to earmark resources for future spending plans.

Reserve	Balance 1 April 2008 £	Net Movement in Year £	Balance 31 March 2009 £	Purpose	Notes
Fixed Asset Restatement Account	(4,853,510)	1,486,083	(3,367,427)	Store of gains on revaluation of fixed assets	[1]
Capital Financing Account	(635,773)	3,620	(632,153)	Store of capital resources set aside to meet past Expenditure	[2]
Earmarked Reserve	(53,436)	(33,287)	(86,723)	Resources available to finance future specific projects	[3]
General Fund	(407,913)	26,746	(381,167)	Resources available to meet future running costs	[4]
Pension Reserve	(80,000)	296,000	216,000	Balancing account to allow inclusion of Pensions Liability in the Balance Sheet.	[5]
TOTAL	(6,030,632)	1,779,162	(4,251,470)		

Notes

- [1]. The system of accounting for local councils requires the establishment of a fixed asset restatement account. The balance on this represents the value of assets included in the balance sheet. This balance is increased or reduced when assets are revalued or disposed of.
- [2]. The capital financing account represents revenue and capital resources applied to finance capital expenditure on fixed assets or for the repayment of external loans. It also includes the reversal of depreciation to ensure it does not impact on the amount to be met from precept. It does not represent a reserve which the council can use to support future expenditure.

The movements on the reserve during 2008/09 were :-	£
Funding from Earmarked Reserves	(5000)
Less Depreciation	8,620
	<hr/>
	(3,620)
	<hr/>

[3]. Earmarked Reserves

	31 st March 2008	Contribution to Reserves	Capital Receipts	Other Contributions	Reserves Expended	Transfer on Reserves	Balance at 31st March 2009
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Earmarked Capital Reserves							
Investment Interest	-			2,567	(125)	(2,442)	-
Jetwasher		5,000			(5,000)		
East Court Enhancements		3,000	-			1,884	4,884
Meridian enhancements	6,315	30,500			(14,373)	558	23,000
Youth facilities	15,000						15,000
Memorial Wall	13,255				(12,733)		522
Parish Halls Development		30,000			(5,550)		24,450
	<u>34,570</u>	<u>68,500</u>		<u>2,567</u>	<u>(37,781)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>67,856</u>
Earmarked Revenue Reserves							
Pensions Reserve	18,867						18,867
	<u>18,867</u>			<u>-</u>			<u>18,867</u>
	<u>53,437</u>	<u>68,500</u>		<u>2,567</u>	<u>(37,781)</u>		<u>86,723</u>

The earmarked reserves are used to finance or part-finance specific projects which are part of the council's capital and revenue projects programme. To comply with FRS12 reserves for non past obligating events are included in earmarked revenue reserves set aside for future expenditure.

- [4]. Statement of Movement on the General Fund Balance on P.3
- [5]. Pension Scheme - note 18 to the Accounts.

17. Trust Funds

The council administers a number of Charities, namely the Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre, the Parish Halls - East Grinstead, the Sidney Betchley Charity and the Henry Smith's Charity. In accordance with previous auditors instructions the accounts of these charities are kept entirely separate from the accounts of the council and are not incorporated within the Balance Sheet.

	Net assets as at 31/03/2009
Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre Trust	£184,207
The Parish Halls - East Grinstead	£22,352
The Sidney Betchley Charity	£1
The Henry Smith's Charity	£8,574

18. Pension Schemes

East Grinstead Town Council participates in the West Sussex County Council Local Government Pension Scheme who acts as an Administrating Authority. The Local Government Pension Scheme is a defined benefit scheme based on final pensionable salary.

In 2008/09 the council, in accordance with the percentages advised by the actuary and shown below, paid an employer's contribution of £54790 to the West Sussex County Council Superannuation Fund. Under pension regulations, contribution rates are set to meet 100% of the overall liabilities of the fund. Changes in contribution rates as a result of that valuation took effect from 1st April 2008. East Grinstead Town Council's contribution rate over the accounting period was 16.1%. The contribution rates certified for the East Grinstead Town Council at the 31 March 2009 valuation are as follows:

2009/2010	16.1% of pensionable salary
-----------	-----------------------------

In accordance with Financial Reporting Standard No. 17 – Retirement Benefits (FRS 17) East Grinstead Town Council is required to disclose certain information concerning assets, liabilities, income and expenditure related to pension schemes for its employees.

The latest formal valuation was carried out as at 31st March 2004, and has been updated by independent actuaries to the West Sussex County Council Pension Fund to take account of the requirements of FRS 17 in order to assess the liabilities of the Fund as at 31st March 2009. Liabilities are valued on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method, which assesses the future liabilities discounted to their present value.

The main assumptions used for the purposes of FRS 17 are as follows:

	31st March 2008	31st March 2009
Price increases	3.6%	3.1%
Salary increases	5.1%	4.6%
Pension increases	3.6%	3.1%
Discount	6.9%	6.9%
Rate of return on Equities	7.7%	7.0%
Rate of return on Bonds	5.7%	5.4%
Rate of return on Property	5.7%	4.9%
Rate of return on Cash	4.8%	4.0%

The Value of the West Sussex County Council Superannuation Fund Assets of which the East Grinstead Town Council Fund is a part are valued at fair value, principally market value for investments, and comprise:

	31st March 2008 £(000)	31st March 2009 £(000)
Equities	969	779
Bonds	230	211
Property	107	89
Cash	<u>50</u>	<u>33</u>
Total	<u>£1,356</u>	<u>£1,112</u>

The proportions of total assets held in each asset type, shown above, reflect the proportions held by the Fund as a whole at 31st March 2009.

The following amounts in respect of East Grinstead Town Council were measured in accordance with the requirements of FRS 17:

	31st March 2008 £(000)	31 st March 2009 £(000)
Estimated assets in West Sussex County Council Pension Fund (A)	1,356	1,112
Estimated Liabilities in West Sussex County Council Pension Fund ¹	<u>1,276</u>	<u>1,328</u>
Present Value of Unfunded Liabilities ²	-	-
Total Value of Liabilities (B)	<u>1,276</u>	<u>1,328</u>
Net Pension Asset (Liability) (A) –(B)	80	(216)

¹The Actuaries estimate for the purposes of FRS 17 that this liability comprises approximately

	31st March 2008	31st March 2009
Employee member	£ 878,000	£949,000
Deferred Pensions	£145,000	£ 140,000
Pensions	<u>£253,000</u>	<u>£239,000</u>
	<u>£1,276,000</u>	<u>£1,328,000</u>

²It is assumed that all unfunded pensions are payable for the remainder of the member's life. On death of the member, any spouse will receive a pension equal to 50% of the member's pension at the time of death of the member.

The movement on the Net Pension Asset (Deficiency) during 2008-2009 can be broken down as follows:

	Year to 31st March 2008	Year to 31st March 2009
Opening Pension Asset (Deficit)	£120,132	£79,025
Employers Contribution	£47,893	£54,790
Current Service Cost	(£66,000)	(£58,000)
Expected Return on Assets	£101,000	(£98,000)
Interest on Pension Scheme Liabilities	(£70,000)	(£90,000)
Actuarial Gain/(Loss)	£(54,000)	(£107,000)
Further adjustment to actuarial valuation		£3,185
Closing Pension Asset (Deficit)	<u>£79,025</u>	<u>(£216,000)</u>

19. Further Information

Further information about the accounts is available from the Council Offices, East Court, College Lane, East Grinstead. This is part of the council's policy of providing full information about its affairs. Interested members of the public have a statutory right to inspect the accounts before the audit is completed. The availability of the accounts for inspection is advertised in the local press.

APPENDIX I

Town Councillor Allowances 2008/2009

The only allowances payable to Councillors (other than the Town Mayor) are those that are formally approved by Mid Sussex District Council's Independent Panel on Members' Allowances. These cover all travel within the civil parish of East Grinstead, costs of postage, costs of telephone calls and computer costs (hardware and software). In 2008/2009 financial year the allowance was £1,084 per Councillor.

In 2008/2009 13 of the 18 Councillors claimed an allowance with the other five members making no claim. Details are as follows:

Councillor Baldwin - £1,084
Councillor Banks - £1,084
Councillor Barnett – No claim
Councillor Mrs Bennett - £1,084
Councillor Mrs Brunsdon - £1,084
Councillor Mrs Collins - £1,084
Councillor Dixon - £1,084
Councillor Gillbard – No claim
Councillor Johnson - £1,084
Councillor Joyce – Nelson - £1,084
Councillor Mainstone - £1,084
Councillor Mrs Mainstone - £1,084
Councillor Marmara- No claim
Councillor Musk – No claim
Councillor Quinn - £808.55 (July – March)
Councillor Reed - £1,084
Councillor Starmer - £1,084
Councillor Mrs Waddingham - No claim

The Town Mayor in 2008/2009 civic year was Councillor Mrs Waddingham. She represented the Town Council in her official capacity at over 200 official engagements. The allowance for the post, which provides for all mileage costs and purchase of tickets for events, was approved by the Town Council at £1,230 for the year.

C J Rolley
Town Clerk

APPENDIX J

Ward Member Budgets 2008/2009

Ward Member budgets of £750 per elected Member were introduced in 2008/2009 financial year. This equated to a total provision of £13,500. In the event an amount of £5,935 was spent during the year and the remainder committed in reserves. Some of those reserves were for schemes/initiatives that could not be undertaken or completed in the year but which will be progressed in 2009/2010 financial year. Details of these will be reported in next year's plan. A schedule of how the £5,935 was spent is detailed below:

Councillor Baldwin - £100 Christmas posters; £20 EG4Kidz; £250 East Grinstead in Bloom; £150 Spring Sunday.

Councillor Banks – £750 East Grinstead in Bloom.

Councillor Mrs Bennett - £100 East Grinstead in Bloom; £650 Defibrillator campaign.

Councillor Mrs Collins - £250 East Grinstead in Bloom.

Councillor Dixon - £500 East Grinstead Promotions Committee.

Councillor Johnson - £500 Blackwell School; £250 Estcots School.

Councillor Joyce-Nelson- £100 East Grinstead in Bloom; £20 EG4Kidz; £100 Spring Sunday.

Councillor Mainstone - £150 Town Museum Iggy Club.

Councillor Quinn - £600 Defibrillator campaign.

Councillor Reed - £100 East Grinstead in Bloom; £650 Defibrillator campaign.

Councillor Starmer - £375 East Grinstead in Bloom.

Councillor Mrs Waddingham - £100 EG Christmas Lights; £100 East Grinstead in Bloom; £20 EG4Kidz; £100 Spring Sunday.