

PETWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 17TH JANUARY 2013 IN THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE AT 7.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr K Lintill (Chairman), Cllr G Allan, Cllr D Burden,
Cllr C Goldthorp, Cllr C Duncton, Cllr N Fox,
Cllr J Fynes, Cllr C Kemp, Cllr R Pawsey,
Cllr A Simmons, Cllr A Sneller
and Cllr B Walsh.

Cllr E Lintill (District Councillor)

CLERK: Mrs J Huggett.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Simpson to the meeting.

1. Apologies were received from Cllr L Pearce, Cllr R Chandler and Cllr J Duncton (District Councillor).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Salt Bags: In his absence he wished to thank Cllr Chandler for distributing all the salt bags.

Town Team Initiative: A workshop is being held at the Soper Hall, Harestone Valley Road, Caterham, Surrey on Thursday 7th February, as to how the recommendations of the 'Mary Portas review of the High Street' can be implemented. The cost is £45 including lunch.

Rural Sussex: They are offering help towards Neighbourhood Planning.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 15th November 2012, having been circulated, it was proposed by Cllr Kemp, seconded by Cllr Sneller, that they be passed and signed.

5. POLICE/PCSO REPORTS

PCSO Ian Luxford reported on the following.

Christmas and New Year: This had been good with no real problems.

Stolen Dogs: Gun dogs have been stolen from kennels at Lynchmere and thefts have also been reported in Surrey and Hampshire. If you see anything suspicious report it.

Break-Ins: There has been a huge increase in reported break-ins. Twenty in East Street was broken into at 1.00 am this morning and £45,000 of clothes stolen. One man has been arrested, he has been released on bail.

Parking: The Chairman said there are vehicles parking in some very strange places. PCSO Luxford said if the vehicles are parked in a dangerous place, if it is reported to them, then they can deal with them.

6. MATTERS ARISING

- (a) Jubilee Board in Market Square: Cllr Fynes said the board has been ordered and is due for delivery in March. She is going to ask Mr Wootton if the Estate can fix it. Cllr Allan asked if payment will be due in this financial year. Cllr Fynes said it will.

7. COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

(a) **District Council**

Cllr E Lintill reported on the following.

Police: Rachel Bacon has moved on and Martin Walker will be taking over as District Commander. Under Inspector Rolls, from Monday there will be additional visual bodies ensuring a greater police presence north of Singleton.

Government Funding: The government settlement has been reduced by £600,000 This had been planned for and they will be able to balance the books this year.

Skateboard Park: Having spoken to children at the Youth Centre it appears that they would like the skateboard park to be on Hampers Common. Although the Town Council is in favour, as it leases the land from the Leconfield Estate they must agree to it. Indicative drawings were not good enough, they wanted to see a plan which will blend in with the area. The company designing the skateboard park has now met with representatives from the Estate and, if all goes to plan, it will go before the Cabinet at its February meeting and, subject to agreement with the Estate, could go ahead soon. Cllr Sneller informed Cllr E Lintill that the Community Association holds about £1,900 which was raised when

it was suggested a play area be built on the estate off Station Road south of the town. This money could go towards it.

(b) **County Council**

Cllr C Duncton reported on the following.

Flood Damage: £8 million has been taken out of reserves for flood damage, clearing culverts, etc. This is on top of the normal annual sum. If the Town Council knows of any problems, please let him know.

CLC: The next meeting will be on Tuesday 22nd January at Fernhurst.

Dudmans: The company has gone into administration.

Government Funding: As for the District Council the County's government settlement has been reduced by £10 million.

Gritting: The gritting lorries have been out in force this week keeping the main roads open and clear of snow. Cllr Pieter Monteyn has been on South To-day speaking from the Chichester depot. He appreciated that there have been problems with some of the local side roads, such as Grove Street, but the bags of grit delivered by Cllr Chandler have been well used.

Middle Street: Cllr Kemp said although he has mentioned it before nothing has been done to fill the holes in Middle Street which are becoming deeper. Cllr C Duncton to follow this up with Highways.

The Chairman invited Mr Simpson to speak.

8. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Demolition of the Court House and Courtlea: Mr Simpson said that large lorries are coming down Grove Lane every half hour, to get past parked vehicles they are going on to grass verges from Grove Inn to the houses and by the allotments. They are churning up the ground, and near the allotments there is a trench 1ft deep. Grove Lane is not built for these large vehicles as is stated on the sign at its junction with Haslingbourne. Once the demolition is finished then the building work will start, and he asked if the company can be asked to pay to put the damage right. Cllr Fox said that damage to a highway must be repaired by Highways. The Enforcement Team are currently looking at the work being carried out as it shouldn't have been started until proper method statements had been put in place. There will probably be a separate demolition contract. When the main building work commences this should be carried out under the Considerate Contractors' Scheme. The Chairman told Mr Simpson that the Council will monitor the situation.

9. FARMERS' MARKET

The Chairman said Cllr Sneller had asked that this item be put on the agenda. Cllr Sneller said he is finding it increasingly difficult to get back to Petworth by 5.00 pm on the Friday night in time to put the cones out and he suggested this should sit with the Open Spaces committee. The next Farmers' Market is on 23rd February. He will still put out the notices on the lamp posts. The markets are going well, but a parking cone went missing after the December market. Cllr Allan said on occasions the number of stalls has been small, is it not a requirement that they have to attend at Petworth and Midhurst to take part at Chichester? Cllr Sneller said either Petworth or Midhurst.

10. REPRESENTATIVE TO SIT ON THE PD&CA

The Chairman said Cllr Sneller had also asked that this item be put on the agenda. Cllr Sneller said the Community Association was formed in 1996, Mrs Howard was then a Councillor and she sat on the committee as the Council's representative. As she is no longer on the council and has resigned from the Community Association committee, he would like a councillor to come forward. Depending on when and how often it meets Cllr Goldthorp said she would be interested. Cllr Sneller said every 6 to 8 weeks, the next meeting is on 11th February, he will send her details.

11. REPORTS

(a) **Finance and General Purposes**

Cllr Allan said a meeting had been held on Tuesday 8th January, the minutes have been circulated, and he updated Councillors.

Current Financial Situation: Several unbudgeted items, as listed, had eaten into the reserves and the Jubilee Plaque still has to be paid for. As it gives an inflated impression he has removed the \$106 money from the main accounts. The £5,000 for CCTV has yet to be paid. He is a pessimist and anticipates that the balance at the end of the financial year will be about £14,000, but the Clerk, who is an optimist, thinks nearer £19,000. Cllr Kemp asked if the money for the Lorry Route can be carried forward, Cllr Allan said it cannot.

Cllr J Fynes proposed and Cllr D Burden seconded that the minutes be passed. This was carried unanimously.

Budget 2013/2014: Cllr Allan referred to the draft budget.

Income

Precept: For the next financial year the District Council has agreed to make up the shortfall on the precept. The committee has recommended that the precept be set at £51,513 and the District Council will make a grant of £5,357 to cover that shortfall. Increased by £1,000, under 2%.

Expenditure

Christmas Decorations: The heading has been changed to 'Christmas Event' to show it covers the whole day, not just the decorations, and the figure has been reduced to £2,500.

Hanging Baskets: Reduced to £2,000.

Audit Fee: Reduced to £600, new external Auditor appointed at a lower fee.

The following have been removed - Chapel Contingency, Lorry Route Signs, Lombard Street Lighting and Winter Salt.

New categories have been added, Web Site and Town Council by-election and a figure of £5,000 has been put in for Contingencies.

He then asked for any questions or comments.

Chapel Contingency: Cllr Sneller said the chapel has to be made safe and there should be money set aside for this in the budget. Cllr Allan replied that the agreement between the Council, the District Council and the Leconfield Estates is no longer in force and if money is needed it will have to be taken from reserves. Cllr Sneller said a decision must be made soon on the future of the chapel, it was under the umbrella of the Petworth Enterprise Partnership but this has now folded.

Neighbourhood Plan: Cllr Fox requested that money be made available for the Neighbourhood Plan, he asked that £1,000 be set aside and suggested that the Contingency budget be reduced to £4,000.

Youth Club: Cllr Burden asked why no money had been put in for the Youth Club. The Clerk said their funding had been secured for this year, the PBA has chosen them to be their charity this year, they will be receiving the money from the raffle held at the monthly networking meetings.

After further discussion, Cllr Allan proposed that the budget as set by the F&GP committee be adopted with two changes, that 'Contingency' be reduced to £4,000 and the addition of £1,000 for the 'Neighbourhood Plan'. This was seconded by Cllr C Duncton and, on a vote, unanimously agreed.

Market Stalls: Cllr Allan said he had been approached by the PBA who are intending to purchase 20 stalls at a cost of £2,400. If the Town Council would make a contribution it can use them free of charge. Cllr Kemp said this would be good for the town, it would save the council £300 a year for hire costs, he was all in favour of this. However he would like to see written confirmation that they would be hired at no cost to the council before any money was paid.

After further discussion it was proposed by Cllr Allan, seconded by Cllr Burden the £800 should be given to the PBA. On a vote this was carried unanimously.

(b) **Open Spaces**

Cllr Simmons said a meeting had been held on Thursday 10th January, the minutes have been circulated, and she updated Councillors.

Replacement for Mr McColl: The Clerk has received one application, it is a pity Cllr Robbins is not here, he has a further contact but there has been no update from him. The closing date is 31st January.

Hanging Baskets: Cllr Kemp said he had suggested that Ms Brickell and the Community Garden team be asked to provide the hanging baskets this year. Cllr Simmons said that Cllr Robbins, who helps at the Community Garden, is looking into this, but before the committee makes any decision he is going to ascertain if they have the necessary knowledge, or the facilities, to produce and bring on the number of plants required.

Lombard Street Lighting: The Chairman said one of the residents in Lombard Street is complaining about the light sited outside her property. He has been in correspondence with her, and had suggested that she came to to-night's meeting, but she had declined. He asked that the Open Spaces committee take this on. Cllr Simmons took note.

Cllr Sneller proposed and Cllr Allan seconded that the minutes be passed. This was carried unanimously.

(c) **Traffic and Planning**

Cllr Fox said a meeting had been held on Wednesday 9th January, the minutes have been circulated, and he updated Councillors.

Planning Application: Two residents had come along to give a presentation on The Old Tanneries. Following this there had been an in depth discussion after which it was agreed an objection be lodged. On the following morning he had made a site visit which confirmed the committee's views.

Signs at the Welldiggers: The Clerk has not received an invoice for the work.

Angel Street and North Street: The Clerk is looking into funding.

Pedestrian Crossing in Church Street: Mrs Baker had e-mailed the Clerk to say that WSCC had been successful in a bid through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and £5,000 has been awarded solely for the purpose of putting in a pedestrian crossing. It had been ascertained that this will cover the full cost, warning signs will be placed before the bend in the road and there will be no loss of parking spaces outside the church.

No TRO is needed and the money has to be spent by the end of March. He asked if Councillors are in favour of this, if so, they would need to agree a colour, either buff, grey or red. Lord Egremont, St Mary's church, the National Trust and Leconfield Estate are all in favour of red, but the decision rests with this council. After a short discussion it was unanimously agreed that Highways be asked to go ahead with the pedestrian crossing and the colour should be red. The Clerk to inform Mrs Baker.

Cllr Kemp proposed and Cllr Walsh seconded that the minutes be passed. This was carried unanimously.

(d) **Petworth Pages**

Cllr Fynes said the latest edition is now being delivered.

(e) **Petworth Business Association**

Cllr Kemp had nothing to report.

(f) **Christmas Decorations**

Cllr Kemp said he would like to thank all who had helped to make the day such a success. He had agreed with Cllr Allan that he would come in under budget, this he had done, but not as much as Cllr Allan had hoped as £2,000 had been spent on new lights. They were going to have to look at changing to LED bulbs as the power required for the current ones overloads some of the circuits and not all lights were working. Advertising costs take up a large amount of the budget and these need to be looked at. Cllr C Dunton said the current lighting is admired by many and he likes the lights as they are. Cllr Kemp replied that the LED lights draw less power, there is no difference in the colour. Cllr Sneller pointed out that the cost will be higher. Cllr Kemp concluded by saying that more help is still needed in putting up and taking down the lights, and on the day.

(g) **Neighbourhood Planning**

Cllr Fox said two meetings have been held since the last council meeting, the second one on Tuesday. They are making progress, albeit slowly, as a great deal of research is required. They are looking at plans from other towns and villages, reading and trying to put a brief together. Once this has been done they will open up and invite other groups. The next meeting will be in March. However the first thing to be done is to identify and publish the boundary of the plan, there are five parishes abutting the boundary and they had agreed to restrict it to the parish boundary. There are issues if they go beyond this as it will involve the relevant Parish Councils. The boundary needs ratification from this council, he produced a map showing it and asked for a proposer and seconder. Cllr Kemp proposed, and Cllr Sneller seconded this. On a vote it was unanimously agreed.

(h) **Clerk**

Pound Street Road Closure: The Clerk said she had previously circulated details and a plan of the road closure in February. She had nothing further to report.

12. TO CONSIDER OTHER ITEMS AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

Street Vendors: Cllr Goldthorp asked about the food being sold from vans parked at Hampers Common. The Chairman said this has been brought to the attention of the Town Council as it rents the land on which the burger van is parked. The kebab van parks on the other side of the road, the burger van's generator is very noisy, there have been complaints from residents, and the Estate wants it moved to the other side of the road. The Chairman said he will follow this up. Cllr C Duncton said there are no parking restrictions in the road.

Civic Awards: Cllr Fynes said other parishes give out Civic Awards to residents who contribute something to the community, she thought this would be good for the town and suggested that this council consider it and invite recipients to the Annual meeting in May. Cllr Sneller said it would be necessary to set up a process before going ahead. The Chairman thanked Cllr Fynes for her suggestion, it was a very good idea but Councillors will need to think about it.

Waste Treatment Plant at Warnham: Cllr C Duncton said visits can be made to the new waste treatment plant at Warnham or, should the council be interested, a speaker can come out and tell them about it. It is extremely interesting to find out how the disposal of waste is carried out. He suggested that perhaps Councillors would be interested in someone coming along to the Annual Meeting talk to them. This was agreed. Cllr C Duncton to organize it.

Code of Conduct: The Chairman said all Councillors will have received a copy of the Code of Conduct, he hoped they had read it and will be willing to adopt it. Cllr Sneller said he had several issues with it, the main one being the word 'your' before 'authority', it should be 'the'. After a short discussion the Chairman called for a proposer and seconder. Cllr Allan proposed that the Code of Conduct as written be adopted. His proposal was seconded by Cllr Kemp and, on a vote, carried by a majority.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

