

PETWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER 2013 IN THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE AT 7.30 PM

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

Cllr J Duncton (County and District Councillor)
Cllr E Lintill (District Councillor).

CLERK: Mrs J Huggett.

1. Apologies were received from Cllr R Chandler, Cllr C Goldthorp and Cllr E Hodgkins

2. CO-OPTION OF A COUNCILLORS

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Shepherd to the meeting and proposed that she be co-opted as a Councillor. This was seconded by Cllr Kemp and, on a vote, unanimously agreed. Cllr Shepherd will join the Open Spaces committee.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Feature in the Observer: Aime Gordon will be running a series on towns and villages in the area and the first one will be on Petworth. The Clerk had details of where to send any information Councillors thought would be of interest.

Visit Chichester: Councillors have received a copy of a letter from Mr Paul Over written in his capacity as a Director of Visit Chichester. In it he asks if the Council will support the request for a grant of £2,500 from Chichester District Council. A short discussion followed, after which the Chairman called for a vote. All were in agreement with the exception of Cllr Sneller who abstained. The Chairman commented he didn't consider the letter should have been written on District Council headed paper. The Clerk to write accordingly.

Annual Meetings. Hampers Green Centre is booked for Thursday 15th May. In view of the change to the Standing Orders he asked that all Councillors note the date now to ensure they attend.

Feature in the Observer: (cont) As Aime Gordon had now arrived the Chairman asked her if she would like to elaborate on the proposed articles. Aime Gordon thanked him and said similar articles had been run several years ago. It will be a double page spread, Petworth will be the first place to be featured on 3rd October. She said she would like any information Councillors could give her by next week, the feel of the town churches, its history, school, etc., what they like about Petworth, or any item they think would be of interest to readers.

Rosemary Lane Development: A request has been received from Seaward Properties, who will shortly be commencing work on the new development in Rosemary Lane, for a postal address. The Clerk had asked Councillors for suggestions and the following had been put forward - Courthouse Close, Courthouse Walk, Courthouse Way, Courthouse Lane and Court Close. Furthermore Cllr Sneller had suggested Jailhouse Row, but on a serious note 'Mance Close' - yes, Mance with a 'c'. He had explained that John Mance was the Governor at Petworth House of Correction, later prison, from 1824 to 1857. His time at Petworth brought about penal change, not just at Petworth, as he influenced penal policy nationally. During the discussion that followed some Councillors thought that the name would be too close to 'Mant Road'. Cllr Kemp suggested that 'Mance Court' be more appropriate. This was agreed.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 18th July, having been circulated, it was proposed by Cllr Robbins, seconded by Cllr Walsh, that they be passed and signed, subject to the following amendment.

1. Apologies. Delete 'Cllr J Robbins did not attend' and insert 'Cllr J Robbins' under 'Present'.

6. POLICE/PCSO REPORTS

PCSO Luxford said he had very little to report.

Sylvia Beaufoy Car Park: There have been complaints from residents about anti-social behaviour in the car park at night with youngsters playing loud music from their cars and making a noise. There are no bins there and workers from the Youth Centre are having to clear up the rubbish. He said the Council should consider asking for bins to be put there.

(Clerk's Note: I've asked the District Council to look into this.)

Traffic to the Coast: Cllr Robbins said he is concerned at the number of tractors and farm vehicles holding up traffic on the way to the coast. PCSO Luxford said they have every right to be on the road, the owners have been advised to tell their drivers to let cars pass when possible, but the drivers change so often it is impossible to know if this is happening. The Chairman said he finds that Langmeads' drivers are very good and pull over at the first available opportunity. Cllr Fynes concurred.

7. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Website: Cllr Pawsey said she did not have a great deal to say, she now has details on her lap top of what the website will look like, if Councillors would like to see it she will show them after the meeting. She now needs committee meetings, minutes, policy documents, planning application consultations, Neighbourhood Planning, Councillors' details, etc. Cllr Walsh said the Assistant Clerk's Job Description includes keeping the website up-to-date. He has been looking at a free website for Town and Parish Councils, Spanglefish.co.uk and asked Cllr Pawsey if she had looked into this as a possibility. Cllr Pawsey said she hadn't. Cllr Sneller asked if any payment had been made, Cllr Pawsey replied this is not due until it is up and running. The Chairman said he considered that the Spanglefish website should to be investigated, but Cllrs Fynes, Burden and Robbins said that Cllr Pawsey had put in a great deal of time looking into this and she should go ahead. On a vote this was agreed. Cllr Pawsey said her husband has taken a photo of the town from the church tower. He has the copyright and she's received advice from the website designers that there would be no legal potential issues if taken from a public place and there are no people in it. The Chairman said the church tower is not a public place, one can only go up there if given permission by the church. Cllr Pawsey said her husband had received this. A discussion then followed on the photo and any legal issues. These would need to be looked into. Cllr Sneller reported that the Community Association will be re-vamping its site.

(b) Assistant to the Clerk: The Chairman said so far there have been 18 applications but not all have returned their forms. Closing date is on Tuesday 24th.

8. COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

(a) **District Council**

Cllr E Lintill reported on the following.

Local Plan: The Council's Local Plan is now out for consultation.

Planning: The new format is now in place. She and Cllr Dunton both supported the Town Council and objected to the proposed new signage outside the Sue Ryder shop, but all other Councillors voted in favour.

Farmer's Market: There are possible changes with the venue of the Farmers' Market. Discussions are taking place on the continuation of the bi-monthly market in Midhurst, if this should cease there is the possibility of a monthly one in Petworth.

(b) **County Council**

Cllr Dunton reported on the following.

Oil Exploration: There are public meetings in both Kirdford and Wisborough Green highlighting, amongst other concerns, the transporting of large equipment through small villages with narrow roads. But until she knows both sides of the

story, she will not be coming down on one side or the other. There are already three working oil wells in the county, which many people don't know exist.

Primary Schools: She has visited three of the schools in her area, Fittleworth, Northchapel and Petworth all of which are excellent. She can't speak too highly of Petworth, it is a super school, she didn't see any obese children there and they all seem very happy. Cllr E Lintill said there will be Open Days in October and she urged Councillors to go and see the school for themselves. Cllr Fynes said she is disappointed that she never receives anything from the school for Petworth Pages. Rother College send in regular contributions. Cllr E Lintill suggested she talk to Mrs Standing, the Head Teacher.

9. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no members of the public present.

10. REPORTS

(a) **Finance and General Purposes**

Cllr Walsh said a meeting had been held on Tuesday 3rd September, the minutes had been circulated, and he updated Councillors.

War Memorial: Cllr Kemp will look at the wall behind the War Memorial.

Rosemary Gardens: The Probation Service are doing a good job on the play area. Three quotations had been received for the wet pour resurfacing but as all worked from different specification Cllr Kemp is going to produce one.

HSBC: As everyone knows the Petworth Branch is closing on 4th October and the Clerk cannot be expected to drive to Chichester every time she has money to deposit. With the Clerk he is looking at transferring the accounts to NAT West and he asked for Council's approval. This was unanimously given.

Internal Auditor: As Councillors will recall with the sad death of Mrs Penfold earlier this year Mr Richard Smith kindly completed the audit. He has now agreed to take this role on a permanent basis and he asked Councillors for their approval. This was unanimously given.

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

(b) **Open Spaces**

In Cllr Chandler's absence Cllr Simmons said a meeting had been held on Thursday 29th August and the minutes had been circulated. She said she had nothing to say but asked that Cllr Sneller speak on 'Horsham Road Chapel' and Cllr Robbins on 'Trees in Rosemary Gardens'.

Trees in Rosemary Gardens: Cllr Robbins referred to his report which had been circulated to Councillors. He said he considered that the work should be carried out between now and next spring and it will be necessary to go out to tender.

Cllr Fox said Cllr Robbins should, as the trees are within a conservation area, firstly find out from the District Council whether planning permission is needed, or indeed if there is a TPO on the trees in question. Cllr Robbins said he will be speaking to Mr Whitby, the Tree Officer. Cllr Fox said if planning permission is not needed he should receive written confirmation of this.

Horsham Road Chapel: The Chairman referred to the paper by Cllr Sneller on a meeting held on 4th September that had been circulated prior to the meeting. He said the decision of the Open Spaces committee to mention the possibility of demolition in the Observer had certainly brought people 'out of the woodwork'. A long discussion followed during which many views were put forward. Cllr Robbins said it has been known that the chapel has been derelict for years, no one has come forward claiming ownership, there is no parking nearby, and unless a use is found for it he cannot see how there can be any funding available to restore it. It is a redundant church. Cllr Sneller disagreed, he said it is not a redundant church, the group who met last week are very enthusiastic, they will be looking at all possibilities, including setting up a Trust. A meeting is to be held on 13th November, the venue yet to be agreed, when the public will be able to express their views and ideas.

Finally, the Chairman brought the discussion to a close by asking if Councillors would support the proposed actions as listed in Cllr Sneller's paper, but there will be no offer of finance. This was agreed. Cllr Sneller asked for a response in writing.

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

(c) Traffic and Planning Committee

Cllr Fox said a meeting had been held on 30th July, the minutes had been circulated, and he updated Councillors.

Swan House: A number of members of the public had turned up to protest at the possible use of Swan House as a food outlet. The planning application under discussion had nothing to do with this, but they had been allowed to have their say at the end of the meeting.

Highways: The Clerk is arranging a further meeting with Highways to discuss the crossing in Church Street and the traffic problems in Angel Street and North Street, plus any other Highways problems. It was mentioned that tree roots are raising up the surface along the footpath to Wyndham Road.

Cllr Simmons proposed and Cllr Robbins seconded that the minutes be passed. This was carried unanimously.

A further meeting had been held on Tuesday. The minutes are not yet available but two objections have been lodged on the change of the ground floor of Virginia Cottage in Lombard Street from a shop to a residence, and a large extension to the Old Tanneries in Byworth.

(d) **Petworth Pages**

Cllr Fynes said she is in the process of finalising the copy, she has been inundated with advertisers and this edition will definitely realise a profit. As the Chairman had been away she had asked Cllr Kemp to write the Town Council's article. Cllr Shepherd said although living within the parish she is in an RH post code area so she and her neighbours don't receive a copy. She asked Cllr Fynes if she could let her have some. Cllr Fynes said spares are available in the library. The Chairman thanked Cllr Fynes for all the work she and her family put in to produce such an excellent magazine.

(e) **Petworth Business Association**

Cllr Kemp said a meeting had been held yesterday. Discussion had taken place on the Food and Wine Festival, but the meeting had mainly been taken up with the forthcoming AGM, the fact the committee were all standing down, the possibility of reducing its numbers and drawing up a new constitution.

(f) **Neighbourhood Planning**

Cllr Fox said a meeting had been held on 5th August, they are making slow but steady progress and are now seeking a consultant. Two members are actively seeking funding. They will be meeting again next Tuesday.

(g) **North East Parishes Forum**

The Clerk reported on the meeting held at Duncton on 12th September.

Transport: Cllr Nick Thomas, District Councillor, spoke on transport and the problems in various villages. This was raised at the previous meeting and Cllr Sneller, who had attended, reported to this Council at its June meeting that all parishes had been asked to make the Forum a Council agenda item, the idea being to draw parishes together on subjects such as current transport problems. However as transport hadn't been raised under this item at the July meeting there was nothing she could say.

Police: Sgt Jonathan Chapman spoke on crime in the area which is down from last year.

Flood Areas: Mrs Fiona Baker from WSCC spoke on a new scheme whereby Town and Parish Councils obtain estimates for work they would like carried out on flood areas. This is paid for by WSCC.

Other speakers were Mr Tom Bell, Neighbourhood Planning Officer, CDC, and Cllr Andrew Shaxson, District Councillor and Chairman of Planning, SDNP. A very interesting meeting.

(h) **Christmas Events**

Cllr Kemp said lights are going up on 3rd, 10th and 17th November in time for the Fair on the 20th. They are low on stalls and table bookings, but there is still some time to go. Everything else is well on track, there will be additional choirs singing during the day and the sound system has been upgraded. As in the past volunteers are needed to steward on the day.

(i) **Clerk**

The Clerk said she had nothing to report.

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

Petworth Youth Centre: Cllr Sneller said there is an open evening on Tuesday 1st October from 6.30 - 8.00 pm to which everyone is invited.

Farmers' Market: Cllr Fynes referred to the article in the Observer on the possibility of Midhurst losing its bi-monthly Farmers' Market. Should this happen she would like Petworth to have one monthly. Cllr Kemp said the PBA should be consulted, but other Councillors didn't agree with him.

Petworth Vision: Cllr Fynes said that also in the Observer mention had been made of Petworth Vision. Midhurst Town Council had complained that Petworth is receiving free help from Melanie Burgoyne whereas they are paying for this. Cllr E Lintill said that in the same article Cllr Gordon McAra had corrected this saying that Midhurst also received free help when Melanie Burgoyne was part of its working group.

'A' Boards: Cllr Simmons said there are a number of 'A' boards blocking the corner of the path at the entrance to the car park. She had been there when a lady who had stepped off the path to pass them had nearly been hit by a car. A short discussion followed on 'A' boards in general after which the Chairman asked Cllr Kemp to raise this with the PBA.

Closure of the HSBC Bank: Cllr Kemp questioned what would happen to the garden outside the HSBC when the bank closed. Cllr Fynes said she also had thoughts about the seat as this is on land owned by the bank. During the discussion that followed Cllr Robbins was asked, as he maintains the garden, if he could look into its future.

Footpath: The footpath from Sheepdown Drive to Orchard House is overhung with brambles. The Clerk to contact Highways.

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

