



Petworth Town Council

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A MEETING OF PETWORTH TOWN COUNCIL TOOK PLACE ON THURSDAY 21ST NOVEMBER 2019 AT 7.30PM IN THE PETWORTH TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE, THE OLD BAKERY, GOLDEN SQUARE, PETWORTH

MINUTES

PRESENT

Cllr D. Burden	Cllr C. Smith
Cllr R. Booth	Cllr A. Copus
Cllr P Hewlett	Cllr M Peet
Cllr J. Fynes	Cllr N. Fox
Cllr J. Thorpe	Cllr H. Desai
Cllr E. Singleton	Cllr S. Atkins
Cllr J. Scallon	

Also present was Laura Smith, Town Clerk.

There were no members of the public present.

161/19 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Singleton advised that as Cllr Kemp is away, she will be Chairing the meeting. The Chairman requested that mobile phones should be turned off and advised that the meeting would be recorded for the purposes of the minutes. She pointed out the fire escape route.

162/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Chichester District Councillor Eileen Lintill, West Sussex County Councillor Janet Duncton, Cllr C. Kemp and Cllr C. Sproson.

163/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors declared no disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item of business on the agenda.

164/19 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Upon the proposal of Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Hewlett, the minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 17th October 2019 were approved as an accurate record and signed as such by the Chairman.

165/19 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the minutes of 17th October that were not covered elsewhere in the agenda.

166/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

There was no adjournment of the meeting for public questions.

167/19 REPORT FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

West Sussex County Councillor Janet Duncton submitted the following written report for the meeting to consider:

“Just in case I don’t make it to-night this is the booklet that was available at the CLC. Chris may have picked one up but if others want it you can pass it on.

South Downs National Park have been doing a lot of work on climate change and CO2 etc and had some good speakers on climate change. Like everyone else they are of course concerned about this subject and will produce a plan in the near future of what they can do to try and work and generally do things in an eco-friendly way. Of course, they don’t own a lot of buildings etc and Midhurst having been done in recent years is probably pretty good insulation wise.

As you already know the County Council over the last few years has developed its Solar Farms. These have not been put onto grade one agricultural land but on land that was once waste tip land.

They have also for some time had a big compost unit in Oving and when our vehicles are up for replacement they always see if they can purchase electric Cars or Vans in replacement. Ford is also a very good Material recycling facility which as you will be aware takes mixed items and separates them. Food waste is still a problem but some tests on collecting food waste are being done in the Horsham District.

To-day I held a coffee morning at Billingshurst to say thank you to our Foster Parents. As I know I have said many times before we are always keen to hear from anyone who would like to look at becoming Foster Parents.

One of our problems with the recent Ofsted report was that we had a lot of turn around with Social Workers. We are working hard on this and so far we have recruited over 20 Social Workers that work with our Children looked after and of course they work with Foster Parents as well who do like to see the same one all the time. As mentioned to you before this will not be a quick fix. I could well take 2 years to get this Service to the level it should be but we are moving in the right direction.

I hope the Clerk received the Parish newsletter that I sent to all my Parish’s because some said they had never seen it. The Office tell me it goes to all 158 Parish’s in West Sussex but I thought I would make sure by sending it to my Parish’s.

Please let me know if there is anything you want me to look into for you.

So glad the Fair was such a success. Nice to have new people making a good job of it.”

Cllr Singleton asked the Clerk to circulate Cllr Duncton’s report with the booklet referred to in her email, to all Town Councillors.

At the request of Cllr Fox, the Clerk agreed to report the dangerous, large pot holes on the junction of Wyndham Road and Dawtrey Road with West Sussex County Council.

168/19 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Upon the proposal of Cllr Copus, seconded by Cllr Peet, the minutes of the F&GP Committee meeting held on 15th October 2019 were accepted.

Cllr Copus reported that the Council had received an interim internal audit on the 13th November and that pleasingly, no major issues were identified. He advised that this feedback will be shared under the specific agenda item later in the meeting.

Cllr Copus advised that the costs of the improvement works in Rosemary Gardens reached the accounts in October hence we are now operating at just above the annual run rate. He reported that a forecast for the year was presented to the Finance & General Purposes committee on the 19th November which identified a surplus of £12,000 at the end of the current financial year.

Cllr Copus reported that a first draft of the 2020/21 budget was presented to the Finance & General Purposes committee on the 19th November with a number of amendments made as a result of the discussions. He advised that the current draft budget shows a 5% increase however this may change

when the taxbase is confirmed by Chichester District Council after their Cabinet meeting on the 2nd December 2019. Cllr Copus reported that the deadline to confirm our precept is the end of January 2020.

Cllr Copus advised that following recent feedback from the Auditor with regards to the awarding of grants, the Clerk has sought guidance from the Auditor regarding recent applications received from 4Sight Vision and the West Sussex Mediation Service. Cllr Copus recommended further information is sought from the Auditor prior to deciding whether to recommend the grants to Council for approval. This was unanimously approved and Cllr Copus asked the Clerk to seek clarification from the Auditor for the Finance & General Purposes committee to review at the December meeting.

Cllr Copus recommended that the payment of 2 invoices; one at a cost of £442 to St John Ambulance for first aid cover at the Christmas Event and the second at a cost of £444 to cover the cost of 3 defibrillator batteries. Under the proposal of Cllr Copus, seconded by Cllr Hewlett, the payment of the 2 invoices was unanimously approved.

169/19 HIGHWAYS, TRAFFIC AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Upon the proposal of Cllr Burden, seconded by Cllr Smith, the minutes of the meeting of the Highways, Traffic and Planning Committee held on 9th October 2019 were accepted.

Cllr Atkins reported that at the November meeting of the committee, a planning application for the change of use of the barn at Keyfox Farm and considerable landscaping of neighbouring fields was considered. He advised that the scheme appears to have an educational element which the committee welcomed and reported that the committee's support has been given subject to the condition that the land remains agricultural in nature.

Cllr Atkins advised that the developers of the Square Fields site recently met with Cllr Kemp and they appear to want to ensure early consultation with the Town Council takes place with regards to the development of the site. He reported that the developers are likely to present to Full Council in the near future.

Cllr Atkins also reported that he and Cllr Singleton are meeting the Chairman of the Royal Town Planning Institute on Friday 22nd November, to discuss our experience in developing a Neighbourhood Plan.

170/19 OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Upon the proposal of Cllr Peet, seconded by Cllr Scallon, the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 2nd October 2019 were accepted.

As the draft minutes of the November Open Spaces committee meeting hadn't yet been circulated, Cllr Peet asked the Clerk to share the key points from the meeting with Full Council. The Clerk reported that the quote to paint the fencing around the play area in Rosemary Gardens was accepted by the committee and that we are hoping this will be funded through the Section 106 Community Facilities fund. The Clerk advised that the committee is also exploring the potential to install a composting toilet and some 9v9 football goals at Hampers Common. She reported that Cllr Kemp has recently met with colleagues from Hyde Housing to explore the potential of removing scrub at Hampers Common in an area commonly used as a toilet. The Clerk also reported that anti climb paint will be added to the equipment at Hampers Common twice a year to minimise the opportunity for people to climb on top of the equipment. She advised that the committee is developing recommendations for the type and location of litter bins across the Town, that the tenders for our grounds maintenance contract will be reviewed at the December committee meeting, that the allotments are being inspected in November and that Cllr Scallon is producing a presentation to aid our consultation with young people regarding the proposed shelter at Hampers Common.

171/19 TO RECEIVE UPDATES FROM WORKING PARTIES AND OUTSIDE GROUPS

a) **Petworth Business Association (PBA)** – Cllr Desai advised that the new committee is meeting

regularly and will soon be surveying their membership to identify how they can best support them moving forwards. She also reported that the PBA has produced seasonal flyers which can be found around the Town. Cllr Desai advised that local businesses are very concerned by the proposed closure of Park Road in the week commencing 2nd December and reported that many have been lobbying West Sussex County Council to ensure the closure takes place in the New Year rather than over the festive season.

- b) **Traffic Calming working group** – Cllr Scallon advised that the white lines have been painted in North Street and that these have been well received by local residents. He reported that we have approval to use 5 lamp posts in order to erect the slow down indicator signs and that due to the weight of the signs, they can be in one place for no longer than 2 weeks at a time. Cllr Scallon advised that the new 30 mph sign in Angel Street will be installed within the next few weeks and that the new signalised crossing by the Sylvia Beaufooy Centre has been included in West Sussex County Council’s 2020/21 delivery programme. He reported that this could well be fully funded, at no cost to the Town Council (dependent on the final cost of the scheme).
- c) **Petworth Sports** – Cllr Peet advised that the extension of the lease of the Sports Ground is a priority in order to secure significant funding however the National Trust is not willing to finalise the terms of a long-term lease at the present time. He reported that the Sports Ground management group are meeting on the 28th November to agree the most appropriate response to the National Trust.
- d) **Petworth Visitors** – Cllr Singleton advised that Terms of Reference have been drafted and will be presented to the next Finance & General Purposes committee meeting. She reported that the working group will meet in the next week and that she is keen to encourage more members of the group, including representatives from the National Trust, in order to give a more varied perspective.
- e) **New Premises** – Cllr Peet reported that he and Cllr Kemp are meeting with colleagues from the Leconfield Hall on the 4th December to explore the potential to relocate the Town Council to the Hall. He advised that this may involve being able to provide a community hub facility within the Town, in the longer term. Cllr Peet asked the Clerk to send Cllr Thorpe details of this meeting.
- f) **Community Hub** – Cllr Thorpe advised that the group has not met in recent weeks as it is very difficult to plan when the location of the hub is not yet known. She reported that the group plan to send a survey out to local service providers to identify whether they would like to be involved in the potential community hub, in the future.
- g) **Christmas Event** – Cllr Scallon reported that the plans for the Christmas Event are going well. He advised that we needed 50 stewards this year, up from the 30 required for the 2018 event. Cllr Scallon also advised that the Event Safety Management Plan is very thorough this year and that 4 stewards are required should we need to implement the emergency evacuation plan. Cllrs Fox, Copus and Smith offered to assist with these stewarding positions if required. The Clerk advised that all stalls are now taken and that confirmation letters with further details about arrival times etc. will be sent to stallholders in the coming days. Cllr Scallon advised that his understanding is that the conditions the National Trust have put on the offer to use the Park for car parking has made it prohibitive. He reported that Rowena will tidy and clean the Leconfield Hall at the end of the event but that support with the breakdown of the stalls would be appreciated. Cllr Copus advised that 4 sail flags have been purchased to promote the stalls inside the Leconfield Hall and the United Reformed Church. The Clerk advised that we have hired a stage this year.

172/19 THE OLD BAKERY LEASE

Cllr Copus advised that the Town Council has received an offer of a 6-month extension to the lease at the Old Bakery which comes to an end on 4th May 2020. Cllr Copus recommended the new premises working group meet to discuss the content of the extension. Cllr Fox asked the Clerk to circulate the terms of the new lease to the working group for consideration prior to their meeting.

173/19 INTERNAL INTERIM AUDIT REPORT

Cllr Copus reported that the Council had received an interim internal audit on the 13th November and that pleasingly, no major issues were identified. He advised that the auditor has made a number of recommendations including the Council having two credit cards; one held by the Clerk and one by the Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, to reduce the need for Councillors and the Clerk to use their personal cards in order to purchase goods and claim reimbursement of the cost. Cllr Copus also reported that the auditor recommended that a number of financial reports are produced at the end of each month to improve the Council’s corporate governance, that proper descriptions of goods & services procured must be entered on the accounts package to ensure that the payment document is properly recorded, that a financial procedures document should be drafted to ensure the high standard of data processing is maintained by the Council in the event of illness or staff changes, that all grants awarded by the Council must be in accordance with the Council’s powers to lawfully award grant aid that a playground management policy should be developed by the Council identifying the legal requirements associated with running a playground, that signage on playgrounds and recreation areas should be updated, that personnel conducting playground inspections must attend a RoSPA playground inspector certificated course and thereafter attend update/CPD courses every 2 years, that the Council should consider using Risk Wizard to manage its risk management requirements, that it is a mandatory requirement for all personnel to have a pay slip each month, that Council is also required to have an investments strategy to support with future planning and finally, that Members should consider outsourcing the Council’s payroll.

174/19 PETWORTH TOWN COUNCIL CREDIT CARDS

Under the proposal of Cllr Fox, seconded by Cllr Smith, it was unanimously agreed that the Town Council secures 2 credit cards with a maximum limit of £500 on each card, to be retained by the Clerk and the Chair of the Finance & General Purposes committee. Cllr Copus asked the Clerk to speak to Nat West Bank to establish what they could offer the Town Council.

175/19 SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK INITIATIVES

The Clerk advised Councillors of the outcomes from a recent meeting with Charles Winchester, South Downs National Park Authority Ranger, whereby the Town Council may be able to engage with a number of projects to benefit local residents and businesses. The Clerk advised that she will keep the Council abreast of any developments with these projects.

176/19 NEXT FULL COUNCIL MEETING (Information Only)

The next meeting of the Town Council is scheduled to be held on Thursday 16th January 2019.

Meeting closed 9.02pm.

Signed
Chairman

Date.....