



Petworth Town Council

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A MEETING OF PETWORTH TOWN COUNCIL TOOK PLACE ON THURSDAY 21ST JANUARY 2021 AT 7PM VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING

MINUTES

PRESENT

Cllr E. Singleton (Chairman)	Cllr P. Hewlett
Cllr A. Copus (Vice Chairman)	Cllr H. Desai
Cllr J. Thorpe	Cllr C. Sproson
Cllr J. Scallon	Cllr M. Peet
Cllr S. Atkins	Cllr C. Kemp
Cllr N. Fox	Cllr J. Fynes
Cllr D. Burden	

Also present was Laura Smith (Town Clerk), Cllr E. Lintill (Chichester District Council Leader) and Cllr A. Sutton (Chichester District Councillor) for agenda item 7, Cllr J. Dunton (West Sussex County Council Chairman) from 7.17pm to 7.19pm and one additional member of the public.

01/21 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed those present to the first meeting of 2021. She requested mobile phones are turned off, she asked those present to ensure their microphones are muted when they are not speaking, and she requested they use the hands up feature should they wish to speak.

02/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

03/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

04/21 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Upon the proposal of Cllr Kemp, seconded by Cllr Hewlett, the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 19th November 2020 were approved as an accurate record and signed as such by the Chairman.

05/21 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the minutes of 19th November 2020 that were not covered elsewhere in the agenda.

06/21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Cllr A. Sutton advised that he was leading on the communications regarding the roll out of the COVID-19 vaccine on behalf of Chichester District Council and offered to take questions should Councillors wish to contact him. He reported that Chichester District Council has pledged to support people with hidden disabilities by recognising the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme and he advised that further information regarding this scheme will be sent to the Town Council imminently.

07/21 REPORT FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

In the absence of Cllr J Dunton, the Chairman advised that the Clerk has circulated Cllr Dunton's written report to all Councillors, via email.

Cllr E Lintill reported that the District Council does not have any role in determining the location of COVID-19 vaccination sites, the schedule of the roll out of the vaccine etc. however they are receiving many questions from the public which is taking up a lot of Officer time. She advised that the regular information coming through from the West Sussex NHS system is, as a result of intervention from Chichester District Council whereby the District have encouraged the NHS to increase their communication regarding the roll out of the vaccine with stakeholders. Cllr Lintill reported that the District Council is currently setting its budget for 2021/2022 and that the hope challenges would ease in January 2021 were scuppered when the latest lockdown was announced. She asked Councillors to encourage any businesses who need financial support to contact the District Council's Economic Development Team. Cllr Lintill advised that elections are still scheduled to take place on the 6th May 2021 and that the District Council is working hard to support staff who are finding the current times challenging, particularly those who are working full time while home schooling their children.

08/21 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Upon the proposal of Cllr Copus, seconded by Cllr Kemp, the minutes of the F&GP Committee meetings held on 17th November 2020 & 15th December 2020 were accepted.

Cllr Copus reported that the main item for discussion at the recent Finance & General Purposes committee meetings was the budget for 2021/2022, which will be presented to the Council later in the meeting. He advised that excluding the Coronavirus income and expenditure, the run rate was 68% which is less than the flat run rate of 75%. Cllr Copus reported that the Council is likely to have a surplus of around £5,000 at the end of the financial year. He advised that Petworth Park Cricket Club have secured landlord's approval to install the cricket nets at the Sports Ground, subject to 2 conditions. He recommended that having received confirmation from the Cricket Club they will meet the 2 conditions and that they have the funds in place to carry out the works, the Council instruct Total Play by returning their booking form. Cllr Copus asked the Clerk to place the order with Total Play. Cllr Copus reported that at the December 2020 Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting, the committee considered a grant application received from Petworth Park Sports Association to cover the costs of the inclusion of a sports & physical activity questionnaire in the Winter 2020 edition of Petworth Pages. Under the proposal of Cllr Kemp, seconded by Cllr Copus, it was unanimously resolved to grant £900 to Petworth Park Sports Association.

09/21 HIGHWAYS, TRAFFIC AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Upon the proposal of Cllr Atkins, seconded by Cllr Copus, the minutes of the Highways, Traffic & Planning Committee meeting held on 11th November 2020 & 9th December 2020 were accepted. Cllr Atkins presented a document which highlighted that there were less planning applications in 2020 than in 2019 with the most received in any one month being 7 applications. He advised that the Square Fields and land behind Rothermead developments are running and that no further communication has been received from the Leconfield Estate regarding the land to the South of Petworth since Cllr Atkins meeting with representatives of the Estate at least 12 months ago. Cllr Atkins reported that he has been in discussion with Nexus with regards to whether a review of the Neighbourhood Plan is required in 2021/2022 and advised that this is unlikely and will be confirmed in due course.

10/21 OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Upon the proposal of Cllr Peet, seconded by Cllr Scallon, the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 4th November 2020 & 2nd December 2020 were accepted.

The Clerk reported that at the Open Spaces Committee meeting on 6th January 2021, the Committee resolved to retain the fencing around the towers at Hampers Common play area, ensuring it is closed to the public. She advised that concrete steps had recently been installed at Station Road allotments and repairs to the main vehicle gate at the site had also been made. She reported that Cllr Sproson has been exploring the feasibility and cost of installing a water supply and water fountain at Rosemary

Gardens and that Cllr Hewlett continues to develop plans for planting in the Town during the summer of 2021.

11/21 2021/2022 BUDGET

Cllr Copus presented the budget for the 2021/2022 financial year. He reported that the Finance & General Purposes committee have considered the budget in great detail and following 3 drafts, a final budget detailing a band D increase of 5.16% is recommended to Full Council for approval. Cllr Copus advised that the tax base is up by 1% but the addition for second homes is down by 35% and the reduction for Council Tax support is up by 11% resulting in an overall net reduction of 1.4% in the tax base. Under the proposal of Cllr Copus, seconded by Cllr Kemp and unanimously approved, Full Council adopted the 2021/2022 budget which includes a precept of £135,263.

12/21 EXTERNAL AUDIT

The Council noted the content of the External Auditor Report and Certificate 2019/2020.

13/21 INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT

The Council noted the content of the Interim Internal Audit including the 4 recommendations.

14/21 INFRASTRUCTURE BUSINESS PLAN

Cllr Atkins presented the Infrastructure Business Plan and reported that it had been an enjoyable project which involved representatives from across the Petworth community. He advised that the Infrastructure Business Plan will go out to public consultation on the 22nd January and will be submitted to the South Downs National Park Authority before the end of January 2021. He reported that the Infrastructure Business Plan will be submitted annually, reviewed bi-annually and will include a list of priority projects for capital investment across the Town. Cllr Atkins reported that the projects will be funded through Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 funding. Cllr Singleton thanked Cllr Atkins for his efforts producing the Plan.

15/21 APPOINTMENT TO PLANNING COMMITTEE

Cllr Atkins advised that it would be beneficial to have another Councillor on the planning committee to avoid potential delays in the consultation process. Cllr Fynes offered to step down from the Open Spaces committee and to join the Planning Committee, which was unanimously approved by the Council.

16/21 SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Cllr Peet reported that following a recent meeting of the Councillors representing Petworth Town Council on the Sports & Physical Activity Working Group, it is recommended Council resolve to request a quote from David Morley Architects in order to have one final attempt at securing a long-term lease of the Sports Ground. Under the proposal of Cllr Kemp, seconded by Cllr Fox, it was resolved to produce a brief and seek a quote from David Morley Architects. Cllr Peet also advised that Cllrs on the working group recommend the Council instruct Muckle LLP to develop the required suite of governance documents in order to put Petworth Park Sports and Petworth Town Council on a solid footing at the Sports Ground for many years to come. Under the proposal of Cllr Kemp, seconded by Cllr Fox, it was unanimously resolved to instruct Muckle LLP to produce the suite of governance documents at a maximum cost of £5,000 + VAT.

17/21 TO RECEIVE UPDATES FROM WORKING PARTIES AND OUTSIDE GROUPS

- a) **Petworth Business Association (PBA)** – Cllr Desai reported that the new committee met following the recent AGM and that Sally Matson is now Chairman of the PBA. She advised that many businesses in the Town are closed due to the latest lockdown and that the majority of these businesses are waiting to hear the outcomes of applications for Government grants.
- b) **Traffic Calming working group** – Cllr Scallon reported that despite encouraging feedback from West Sussex County Council Highways Department during 2020, he is now unsure whether they are supportive of the Town Council's recent application for a Traffic Regulation Order. He advised that having recently met Sergeant Daniel West, the Council is now in receipt of formal support from the Police for the Traffic Regulation Order. Cllr Scallon reported that he hopes to speak with Mr

Chris Stark to establish the County’s view on the TRO in the coming week. Cllr Scallon reported that the works to install the pelican crossing by the Sylvia Beaufoy Centre are due to commence on the 23rd March 2021.

- c) **Petworth Visitors** – Cllr Singleton reported that the National Trust have considered closing the Park in recent weeks due to the vast numbers of people using the Park who, it is felt, do not live locally. She advised that a meeting would take place with representatives from the National Trust when their new staff structure is in place.
- d) **New Premises** – Cllr Singleton advised that the Police are regularly using the office in the Library hence it is unlikely the space is available for the Council to use.
- e) **Community Hub** – Cllr Desai reported that the Helpdesk has had a busy time since the latest Government lockdown came into effect. She advised that the Helpdesk Co-ordinators continue to do a fantastic job in organising the collection and delivery of prescriptions to those who are shielding, self-isolating or in quarantine. Cllr Singleton reported that the Surgery and the Chemist are under great pressure at present, particularly due to being inundated with questions regarding the roll out of the COVID-19 vaccine. Cllr Fynes suggested a letter is put through the doors of all those living in the Parish to request they do not call the Surgery or the Chemist to ask when they will be vaccinated, advising that they will be contacted with an appointment in due course. Cllr Hewlett offered to put posters up to this effect, around the Town. Cllr Singleton advised that she would liaise with the Surgery and the Chemist and would ask the Sorting Office to support with the postal drop.
- f) **Planting & Horticulture** – Cllr Hewlett reported that the summer plants have been ordered and will arrive at the end of May or early June 2021. She advised that following the discussion with Mr D Sneller at the December 2020 Open Spaces committee, a meeting has taken place involving representatives from Petworth Primary School and the Leconfield Estate to discuss tree planting in Petworth. She reported that the young people from the Sylvia Beaufoy Centre will support with the Estate’s existing tree planting schedule however the Coronavirus has limited the potential to involve them in other projects at this time. Cllr Hewlett advised that Mr J Riddell has delivered mulch to Sheepdown and may deliver some to Tillington, that the silver birches at the bottom of Sheepdown have been trimmed and that vandalism in Rosemary Gardens is worse than ever, with one individual walking across the flower beds. Cllr Hewlett presented her ideas for the War Memorial and Cllr Singleton asked her to get a price for the works, for consideration by the Open Spaces committee. It was unanimously resolved that the Town Council should enter the In Bloom competition 2021. Cllr Hewlett advised that she is including an article in the Spring edition of Petworth Pages requesting volunteers’ support. Cllr Singleton reported that the planter outside Austens has been damaged by a driver and advised that she would pass the driver’s details to Cllr Hewlett to follow up.
- g) **Infrastructure Business Plan** – Nothing to report as covered earlier in the meeting.
- h) **Farmers Market** – Cllr Scallon reported that Hayley Marriott will be managing the Market from January 2021 onwards. He advised that she has 4 new volunteers attending the Market to support the event. Cllr Scallon reported that he would organise a card to give to Ms L Barrett and that he would put up the car park banners for the January Market.

18/21 NEXT FULL COUNCIL MEETING (Information Only)

The next Full Council meeting will be held on Thursday 18th February 2021.

Meeting closed 8.48pm.

Signed (Chairman) Date.....