



Petworth Town Council

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A MEETING OF PETWORTH TOWN COUNCIL TOOK PLACE ON THURSDAY 21ST OCTOBER 2021 AT PETWORTH TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD BAKERY, GOLDEN SQUARE, PETWORTH, COMMENCING AT 7PM

MINUTES

PRESENT

Cllr E Singleton (Chairman)	Cllr A Copus (Vice Chairman)
Cllr H Desai	Cllr N Fox
Cllr P Hewlett	Cllr J Fynes
Cllr S Frossard	Cllr M Peet
Cllr J Thorpe	

Also present was Cllr J Duncton (West Sussex County Councillor) for agenda item 7 & Laura Smith (Town Clerk).

145/21 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman requested mobile phones were turned off. She reported that the Council had been awarded a grant of £1,992 from Chichester District Council's New Homes Bonus scheme and advised of the terms of the agreement. Under the proposal of Cllr Copus, seconded by Cllr Desai, the Council unanimously resolved to accept the grant of £1,992. The Chairman reported that some Councillors had expressed concern regarding meeting in person at the Council Office given the situation regarding COVID-19. She advised that Councillors were able to join meetings via Microsoft TEAMS however if they did so, they would not be able to vote. Following discussion, the Chairman asked the Clerk to book the Leconfield Hall for the Full Council meetings over the winter period.

146/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr J Law, Cllr D Burden, Cllr C Kemp, Cllr C Sproson, Cllr S Atkins, Cllr J Scallon & Cllr E Lintill (Chichester District Council Leader).

147/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

148/21 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Upon the proposal of Cllr Copus, seconded by Cllr Desai, the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 16th September 2021 were approved as an accurate record and signed as such by the Chairman.

149/21 MATTERS ARISING

Cllr Frossard asked the Clerk if she had looked into submitting a community right to bid on the library. The Clerk advised that she was aware of how to apply and would do so should the Council resolve to make the application.

150/21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

There was no adjournment of the meeting for public questions.

151/21 REPORT FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Cllr J Dunton reported that she had submitted a written report which had been circulated to Councillors. She advised that the closure of the A285 at Dunton was likely to remain for a few months and suggested the highway across Bury Hill could be used as a diversion. Cllr Dunton reported that the Chairman of Petworth Business Association had suggested more signage to highlight the route across Bury Hill and informed the Council that she would look into this.

A discussion took place regarding the road closure at Dunton. Cllr Fox reported that the road had been moving for months and suggested that WSCC should have identified the issues there before the recent slippage of earth. Cllr Fox advised that he felt there was no excuse for not having surveyed the highway before the damage had occurred. He reported that it was unacceptable to allow scaffolding to be installed which had obstructed the highway on part of the official diversion for the closure of the A285, without temporary traffic lights being in situ. Cllr Fox suggested that there was no joined up thinking within West Sussex County Closure to allow this obstruction to the road, without temporary traffic lights being enforced, whilst it was being used as an official diversion route and he asked the Clerk to write to the Highways department to express the Council's concern.

In the absence of Cllr Atkins, the Chairman read a written report Cllr Atkins had submitted regarding the Rotherlea planning application which had been considered at the South Downs National Park Planning Committee on 14th October 2021:

“Firstly, please accept my apologies in advance of this month's full council meeting on Thursday. I won't be able to attend due to work commitments. I would be grateful if you are able to raise and record my observations of the recent SDNP planning committee meeting on 15th October with our local members under item 7 of the agenda.

I was unable to attend the meeting in person, and would like to thank Cllr Kemp for representing PTC. I did watch the recording of the meeting and was left astounded and disappointed at the discussion and resulting decision particularly given our efforts to include Members in our conversations with local residents.

In PTC's view there are numerous failings in the original application, of particular concern was the density and massing, resulting in the overspill of parking provision on to the local streets. This will have effect both to the access to the Square Field development and the existing residents. The applicants have proposed selected amendments to the scheme in application and could have made a positive decision to rectify these fundamental issues. But they did not and they are aware of our concerns.

The decision makers (SDNP planning, highways and the planning committee members) could have chosen to negotiate amendments to address these issues in advance of the determination of the application. I believe they did not as they would have then been seen to acknowledge the failings of the approval which was granted to the applicant, WSCC.

Parking was mentioned by members in the meeting however the discussion was then re focussed on rightly dealing with the information only as submitted.

Ironically the committee discussion then proceeded to push for Electric Vehicle changing points to be included, which were not required for the original application. Demonstrating that the committee can, and have chosen to attempt to, influence the development outside of the submitted detail. Making a decision to influence one less harmful aspect outside of the submitted application and not another significant issue demonstrates how little regard the SDNP planning committee give to the safety of the community and road users in the community.

PTC have highlighted the community's views on these safety issues on numerous occasions, raising a 'big red flag' which is about the limit of the Town Councils remit. The consequences of this decision will now surely sit solely on the decision makers and members of the SDNP planning committee.”

Cllr Dunton responded that the only difference on the most recent application was that some of the buildings had been re-angled, that there was no reduction in parking and that the development would now only be social and affordable housing. She suggested that it was a “win win” application.

Various Councillors responded to Cllr Duncton's remarks advising that there wasn't enough parking in the area currently hence the new development would create further issues given the proposed number and location of parking spaces, suggesting that the parking regulations and the reality of what is required on a new development are different and that the current problems at the Dawtrey Road / Station Road junction would be exacerbated by the new development.

Cllr Duncton left the meeting.

152/21 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 14th September 2021 were approved.

Cllr Copus reported that at the 6 month point of the year the run rate on the council's expenditure, after adjustments had been made for the transfer of reserves and the payments made for the cricket nets, was 51%. He advised that the most recent full year forecast showed that the council would have a surplus of £1,111 at the end of the 2021/22 financial year. Cllr Copus reported that the committee is looking at investing some of the council's reserves in a one-year bond, to increase the level of interest received. He advised that a proposal would be put to council in due course. Under the proposal of Cllr Copus, seconded by Cllr Hewlett, it was unanimously resolved to award a grant of £300 to Films at the Leconfield Hall to subsidise the live streaming of the Royal Opera House's Nutcracker on 12th December 2021. Under the proposal of Cllr Copus, seconded by Cllr Peet, it was unanimously resolved to purchase of Christmas Tree decorations at a cost of £400.64, Christmas Event programmes at a cost of £1,000, to instruct Pro-Tec Security Management to provide 4 stewards for the Christmas Event at a cost of £345.50 and to source 4 lighting towers from Brandon Hire Station for the Christmas Event at a cost of £901.76. Under the proposal of Cllr Copus, seconded by Cllr Desai, it was unanimously resolved to purchase 12 no bonfire signs at a cost of £72 and to instruct Sussex Water Mains Ltd to install the water fountain / bottle filler in Rosemary Gardens at a cost of £1,232.89. Cllr Copus advised that the committee had considered a proposal received from the Editor of Petworth Pages for the four 2022 editions of the magazine. Under the proposal of Cllr Copus, seconded by Cllr Fox it was unanimously resolved to support the proposal and adopt the revised pricing structure. Under the proposal of Cllr Copus, seconded by Cllr Fox, it was unanimously resolved to appoint Mr W Burkinshaw of Greenscape Services as the Council's play area inspector at a cost of £50 per fortnight.

153/21 HIGHWAYS, TRAFFIC AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Upon the proposal of Cllr Singleton, seconded by Cllr Hewlett, the minutes of the Highways, Traffic & Planning Committee meeting held on 8th September 2021 were approved.

The Chairman asked Councillors for their thoughts regarding Cllr Atkins' report received during agenda item 7 and following discussion, the Chairman asked the Clerk to produce an article regarding the Rotherlea development. She asked the Clerk to include the article in the winter 2021 edition of Petworth Pages, to send it to the Midhurst & Petworth Observer, West Sussex County Council's Highways department and to the South Down's National Park Authority's Planning department, and to publish the article on the Town Council's website & social media channels. She also asked the Clerk to write to the local Conservative Party to advise of the council's dissatisfaction with Petworth's County Councillor's lack of representation of the community's views regarding the most recent Rotherlea planning application.

154/21 OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Upon the proposal of Cllr Peet, seconded by Cllr Desai, the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 1st September 2021 were approved.

Cllr Peet reported that a working party had been arranged to install the new sign, leaflet holders and shelf in the phone box at the Old Bakery. He advised that the committee had requested quotes for works on the towers at the play area on Hampers Common. Cllr Peet reported that the Silent Soldiers would be put out in the coming days and the football goal put back in situ on Hampers Common. Cllr Fox advised that he was pleased to see the skatepark project is being prioritised by the committee.

155/21 TO RECEIVE THE REPORT FROM THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR

Cllr Copus presented the report from the External Auditor which was noted by the Council.

156/21 FARMERS MARKET

Under the proposal of Cllr Copus, seconded by Cllr Desai, the Council unanimously resolved to adopt the proposed contract with Food Rocks Ltd.

157/21 TO RECEIVE UPDATES FROM WORKING PARTIES AND OUTSIDE GROUPS

- a) **Petworth Business Association (PBA)** – Cllr Desai reported that the PBA’s AGM had been held and she advised that Mr John Bird had joined the committee. She presented the proposed artwork to be displayed at the entrance to the Old Bakery and invited Councillors’ feedback. Cllr Desai advised that she would share the feedback received with the PBA and Chichester District Council.
- b) **Infrastructure Business Plan** – There was no update.
- c) **Petworth Visitors** – There was no update.
- d) **New Premises** – The Clerk advised that a meeting would be held with Mr Gareth Edwards, Library Manager for Petworth, and other representatives from WSCC on 19th November 2021.
- e) **Community Hub** – Cllr Frossard reported that the working group had considered an invitation to join the “Four Towns Partnership”. She advised that the proposed partnership, which would include Selsey, East Wittering & Bracklesham, Petworth & Midhurst, had been developed by Dr Mike Nicholls of the Selsey Community Forum. Cllr Frossard reported that the proposed partnership would enable the provision of various social care services to residents through local hubs, with up to £25,000 available to each area every year for 5 years. She advised that having considered the proposal and the geography of the towns involved within it, the community hub working group recommended the council decline the opportunity to join the four towns partnership and focus on re-opening the council’s helpdesk over the winter months. It was agreed that Cllr Frossard would produce an article regarding the re-opening of the helpdesk for inclusion in the winter 2021 edition of Petworth Pages and that she would write to those who had previously used the helpdesk services to let them know it was available should they need assistance. The Clerk agreed to track the number and types of calls received in order for the council to make a decision on whether a 2nd phone line was needed to service the helpdesk in the future.
- f) **Planting & Horticulture** – Cllr Hewlett reported that the autumn tidy up day would take place on 29th October 2021. She advised that the hanging baskets would be taken down on 31st October 2021 and they would be planted up by Tawny Nurseries in the spring. Cllr Hewlett advised that the steel troughs which would replace those that had been damaged were due to be delivered during the week commencing 25th October 2021. She reported that the 5 faux lead planters that had been ordered were faulty hence they could not be delivered. Cllr Hewlett advised that Fred’s Bank had been cut back and works were ongoing in Rosemary Gardens. She advised that the Planting & Horticulture working group would meet on 25th October 2021 at 3pm. Cllr Hewlett reported that the working group would review the council’s contract with HJS Landservices to identify whether the council’s volunteers could carry out any of the tasks detailed on the contract specification during 2022. She advised that there was an overhanging ivy at the back of Rosemary Gardens which she was identifying ownership of. Cllr Hewlett reported that she had not received any further contact from representatives of the Leconfield Estate following the recent meeting at the Shimmings Path. Cllr Copus reported that Cllr Atkins was identifying ownership of the triangle at the end of Bartons Lane, upon which it was hoped a memorial tree removed from the Shimmings Path could be planted. Cllr Hewlett reported that the planters around the town would be emptied soon with new planting taking place.
- g) **Leconfield Hall** – Cllr Peet reported that the Leconfield Hall had 20 events on sale including Sunday matinee showings and films taking place every day during the October half term.

- h) **Petworth Heritage Partnership** – Cllr Fox reported that the Heritage Day had taken place on 11th September 2021. Cllr Fynes advised that the bus tour was a particular success of the day.
- i) **Christmas Event** – Cllr Desai reported that event parking would be available at Petworth House car park with stewards on site there to assist the public and count cars in. She advised that Cllr Thorpe and Lucy Mills were organising the entertainment for the event and that the PBA were co-ordinating live window displays within the town centre shops using the themes of peach, hope and joy. Cllr Desai reported that there would be an informal light switch on involving Lord Egremont and pupils from Petworth Primary School when the tree is erected on Saturday 20th November 2021. The Clerk requested Councillors’ assistance with the delivering of a letter to residents before the event. Cllr Desai reported that approximately 70 parking spaces had been sourced at various locations across the town to enable local businesses to park during the event, freeing up spaces in the main car park for visitors. The Clerk updated the committee on attendance at the first aid at work course on Monday 15th November 2021, from 9am – 3.30pm and it was agreed that Cllr Thorpe and Cllr Hewlett would attend should spaces not be filled nearer the time. Cllr Copus reported that the Christmas lights would be put up around the town from Sunday 31st October 2021.
- j) **Petworth Park Sports** – Cllr Peet reported that the Sports & Physical Activity working group would meet at 7pm on Monday 25th November 2021. He advised that Petworth Park Sports had identified a potential food and beverage contractor who, if appointed, could make the facility more accessible to the public.
- k) **The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee 2022** – Cllr Fynes reported that the working group plan to purchase an inscribed memorial bench to be sited on the cobbles at the bottom of Lombard Street. She advised that the land there belonged to WSCC who had given approval subject to a 28-day period of notice. Cllr Fynes asked the Clerk to liaise with the Leconfield Estate to ask if they would install the bench. She advised that the working group is developing plans to participate in the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Beacons on 2nd June 2022, potentially including a bonfire and fireworks display at Hampers Common, to live stream the “Platinum Party at the Palace” taking place at Buckingham Palace on Saturday 4th June 2022 on a big screen in the Market Square and to organise some family activities on Sunday 5th June 2022.

158/21 NEXT FULL COUNCIL MEETING (Information Only)

The Chairman advised that the next Full Council meeting would be held on Thursday 18th November 2021.

Meeting closed 8.52pm.

Signed (Chairman) Date.....