

Hetton Town Council



Minutes of meeting of Hetton Town Council held remotely on Monday 16 November 2020

Note: The meeting was audio and video recorded throughout.

Present

Cllrs R Coulson, J Defty, T Dodds, R Elvin, A Farrow, D Geddis, R Heron (to Item 5), M Hopper (to Item 5), K Pearson (Town Mayor), K Rowham, S Waterston and C Willis.

In attendance

G Keedy, Town Clerk (TC)
Members of the Public (MoP) x 39
Press - Local Democracy Reporter

1) Apologies for absence

TC reported that he had received apologies for absence from Cllr J Green (work commitment), Cllr M Thornton (SCC meeting) and Cllr D Turner (SCC meeting). Town Council resolved to approve the apologies received.

No apologies for absence had been received from Cllr J Blackburn, Cllr A Liversidge, or Cllr D Liversidge.

Town Council resolved that these absences be recorded as unapproved.

2) Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3) Public participation

Town Council resolved that a period of 30 minutes be allowed for this item, subsequently extended without time constraint.

MoP: request for barriers to be installed at Peat Carr to prevent access by motorcycles and quad bikes causing nuisance and disturbance.

Extensive discussion took place relating to Sunderland City Council plans to consult on the closure of Hetton Nursery School.

Contributions were made by members of the public (including parents of pupils, who provided testimonials), Members and the Head Teacher.

Members also expressed concern that no advance notification of the proposals had been provided to the Town Council.

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3) Public participation cont ...

Town Council resolved unanimously to:

Oppose the closure of the school and requested that TC write to SCC accordingly ahead of the Cabinet meeting to be held on the morning of 17 November 20;

and,

Request that TC look at methods for starting a petition against the proposal.

MoP and Members expressed concerns at the decision of Hetton Town Trust (HTT) to close the Barnard Cafe and the adverse affect this has had on the ability of a childcare provider located within The Hetton Centre to provide hot meals to children.

Town Council resolved that the Council's trustees request a meeting of HTT to discuss this topic.

MoP and a Member reported further cases of anti-social behaviour, including damage to vehicles. Town Council resolved that TC make a further request to Northumbria Police & Crime Commissioner for her attendance at a future meeting.

4) Minutes

a) Subject to the addition of "Colliery Lane, B1285" to Item 5 on page 2, Town Council resolved to approve of the minutes of the Meeting of Hetton Town Council held on 19 October 2020.

b) Town Council resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of HTC Events & Special Activities Committee held on 2 November 2020.

In response to queries from Members, TC advised that any concerns about the alleged behaviour or conduct of Members should be addressed through processes available specifically for that purpose.

5) Reports from Members

At the suggestion of TC, due to remaining timescale and heavy agenda, Town Council resolved that Members email to TC the details of any local issues requiring attention.

6) Sunderland City Councillor(s) - Hetton and Copt Hill wards

TC reported that City Councillors representing the Hetton and Copt Hill wards had been invited to the meeting. There were no City Councillors present.

7) Dangerous and unsightly properties

Members identified properties at the following locations which were in an unsightly, dilapidated or dangerous condition:

83 High Street, Easington Lane; Bog Row School; Wesleyan Chapel and Wesleyan Chapel School House, Front Street; Richard Street; Eppleton Row and Maudlin Street.

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7) Dangerous and unsightly properties cont ...

Town Council resolved that details be forwarded to SCC with a request that enforcement action be taken against the owners of each property to ensure improvements were made.

8) Update from Town Clerk

TC reported that due to a delay on his part, he did not have any update from SCC relating to previously reported local issues.

Cllrs A Farrow and R Elvin reported that they had received direct feedback from SCC in response to issues they had raised relating to speeding and unadopted roads respectively.

During discussions, Members requested details of the eligibility criteria for the proposed traffic calming measures at North Road.

TC reported that he had established that the volunteer scheme for monitoring vehicle speed was a national initiative "Community Speedwatch". This was currently on hold in the area, but Northumbria Police had undertaken to notify TC when it is live again. In response to a request made at October meeting, Northumbria Police would provide regular crime statistics to the Town Council.

TC advised that the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government was unable to attend November or December meeting due to other diary commitments. Town Council resolved that TC make further contact to establish his future availability.

TC advised that an issue with a payment to NEST pension had been unable to be resolved by the Council's payroll provider. TC would instead need to raise the query directly with NEST.

TC reported that Facebook controls previously applied to manage comments in response to posts had not been effective. These had now been re-applied, with the intention of ensuring that the Council's FB page was focussed on information dissemination.

Town Council resolved to note the Town Clerk's update.

9) Financial report

Cllr R Elvin highlighted that many items of expenditure included VAT @20% and as this was reclaimable, queried if the VAT amount could be shown separately. TC acknowledged the position and advised that it was his aim to produce more sophisticated reports in due course.

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9) Financial report cont ...

Cllr Rowham sought details of likely election costs in view of the casual vacancies which had arisen. TC undertook to obtain an estimate from SCC.

Town Council resolved to approve the financial report and expenditure outlined below.

Income:	Nil
Staffing expenditure:	
Town Clerk net salary (November 20 - incl. additional hrs worked Oct)	£1310.61
HMRC (Combined employer/employee liabilities)	£622.05
NEST Pension (Combined employer/employee contributions)	DD £103.55
Sub-total:	£2036.21

Town Clerk expenditure:	
Zoom Video Communications (charge for Standard Pro monthly subscription)	£14.39
Tesco (A3 laminator)	£17.00
Royal British Legion (2 x wreaths @ £18.50 each for HTC)	£37.00
Sub -total:	£68.39

Other expenditure:	
My Post Shop-payee VOW Retail Ltd (500x A3 paper, A3 laminating pouches, A4 laminating pouches)	£36.55
Flagpole Express Ltd (2 x flagpoles incl. delivery)	£678.00
The Flag Shop (1 x flag – "Lest We Forget" incl. delivery)	£27.90
EE (invoice 4 Nov 20)	DD £18.00
Sub-total:	£760.45
Total:	£2865.05

Barclays Current account balance @ 12 Nov20:	£67566.66
Anticipated current account balance if all paid:	£64701.61
Barclays Reserve account balance @ 12Nov 20:	£28,401.25

Town Mayor fund:

Income:	Nil
Expenditure:	Nil
Co-op Bank balance @ 12Nov 20:	£1286.20

10) Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2019-2020

TC reported that at the time of compiling the agenda, the External Auditor had not completed their work. They had subsequently requested a range of additional information to support the Council's AGAR submission. TC advised that he would provide this to them asap.

TC alerted Members that it may be necessary to call an Extraordinary meeting of the Town Council to be held as late as 30 November to discuss.

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11) Community Aid at Christmas

TC introduced the previously circulated report.

After extensive discussion, Town Council unanimously resolved that:

A donation of £500.00 be made to each of the following groups for the purpose of targeted support to local families in need:

Easington Lane Community Access Point; Hetton New Dawn and Apostolic Church.
and

that the same amount be allocated to an appropriate community group in East Rainton, subject to confirmation to the Town Clerk of organisational details and a contact.

12) Community Grant Award Scheme

TC advised that due to coronavirus, Council had previously relaxed the pre-determined deadlines for Community Grant Award (CGA) applications, and the agreed extension period ended in October.

TC requested that Council consider a further extension.

Town Council resolved that applications be considered on a monthly basis until the end of the current financial year.

13) Christmas in Hetton and district

TC reported that he had explored with SCC the practicalities of installing a Christmas tree in Hetton Mini Park.

TC reported that he had established that monies made available by SCC to Coalfield Area Committee for enhancements to Christmas lights had been allocated to projects at Houghton and Shiney Row.

After discussion, Town Council resolved that;

Quotations be sought from Balfour Beatty and SCC for the supply, dressing and illumination of tree lights;

A progress query be made with SCC regarding the replacement of multi-coloured lights in Hetton Mini Park;

and,

Letters of thanks be sent to those businesses and individuals who assisted with the installation of flagpoles and filming.

14) Town Mayor Fund

Following a request from TC, Town Council resolved to defer this agenda item.

15) Rural Market Town Group

Cllr Elvin provided a short verbal report following his participation in an on-line meeting on 9 November. Town Council resolved to note the report.

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16) Planning matters

Town Council considered the following planning applications and resolved to take action as indicated below:

20/02086/ADV

Tavistock Day Nursery Limited Former Hetton Branch Library Front Street, Hetton le Hole, DH5 9PG

Proposal: Erection of 3no non illuminated post signs and 1no non illuminated wall mounted sign.

Applicant: Mid Counties Co-op

Concerns expressed re potential distraction for drivers and blue plaque obscured. Notify SCC.

20/02076/FUL

19 Front Street Hetton le Hole, DH5 9PD

Proposal: Change of use of offices and creation of 3no 3bed apartments with new entrance and associated bin storage.

Applicant: Mr Jatinder Singh Kang

Object on the grounds of overdevelopment.

20/01860/FUL

Hetton Lyons Cricket Club Lilywhite Terrace Easington Lane

Houghton-Le-Spring DH5 0HF

Proposal: New dark grey single ply roofing membrane with standing seam profile.

Applicant: Hetton Lyons Cricket Club

No comments or objections.

17) General correspondence

Sunderland City Council:

Query re HTC position planning application -19/01320/ FUL - Ned's Cottage

(decline SCC request and notify of ongoing concerns)

Notification of Funding

"Supporting residents through Winter and Christmas Covid-19" (circulated 11 Nov) - **Noted**

MoP: Complaint re HTC Member - signposted to SCC - **Noted**

Campaign to Protect Rural England - Autumn newsletter(circulated 2 November) - **Noted**

Co. Durham Association of Local Councils:

Various re Remembrance commemorations **(time expired - previously noted)**

"Standards Matter" public consultation(**Member discretion to respond on an individual basis**)

Larger Councils Forum-19 Nov 20 (**Draft mins circulated. Cllrs D Geddis and S Waterston to attend**)

18) Date and Time of next meeting

19.15 hrs on Monday 21 December2020 via Zoom on-line platform.

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Date: