

Hetton Town Council



Minutes of the meeting of Hetton Town Council held on Monday 17 February 2020 at The Hetton Centre

Note: The meeting was audio and video recorded throughout.

Present

Cllrs R Coulson, J Cunningham, J Defty, T Dodds, D Geddis, J Green, R Heron, M Hopper, K Pearson (Town Mayor), S Quigley, M Thornton, D Turner, S Waterston and C Willis.

In attendance

G Keedy, Town Clerk (TC)
Members of the Public (MoP) x 4

1) Apologies for absence

Cllrs J Blackburn (personal commitment), Cllr R Elvin (family commitment), Cllr A Farrow (away), Cllr A Liversidge (other meeting commitment), Cllr D Liversidge (other meeting commitment), Cllr K Rowham (family commitment) and Cllr C Sinnott (attendance at other event).

Town Council resolved to approve the apologies received.

2) Declarations of Interest

Cllrs M Thornton and D Turner declared an interest in Item 11 - Planning matters.

3) Public participation

MoP raised concerns in his capacity as an official of Eppleton Cricket Club (ECC) about comments made at the January 20 meeting of HTC relating to funding and grants.

TC advised Council that a formal letter received from ECC about this matter had been circulated to all Members and would be considered at Item 14.

Following a query from Cllr Thornton, TC confirmed that the CCTV recording of Jan 20 meeting was unlikely to be recoverable.

4) Minutes:

a) Town Council resolved to approve the minutes of the Meeting of Hetton Town Council held on 20 January 2020.

b) Town Council resolved to approve the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Hetton Town Council held on 27 January 2020.

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Signed:

Date:

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Item 4 Minutes cont ...

c) Town Council resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Events & Special Activities Committee held on 3 February 2020.

Following a proposal by Cllr R Heron, Town Council resolved that the recommendation to consider sites for Christmas trees at Hetton Downs be left in abeyance pending completion of long term building works in the area.

d) Town Council resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Management & Policy Committee held on Tuesday 11 February 2020.

5) Neighbourhood Investment Plans

TC introduced SCC officers Pauline Hopper (Area Community Development Lead, Coalfield) and Helen Peverley (Area Co-ordinator and Neighbourhood Investment Plan Project Manager).

The officers delivered a presentation which outlined the "Let's Talk" initiative, resident engagement and key themes identified.

An opportunity was then provided for comments and questions from Members.

Upon conclusion, Cllr K Pearson (Town Mayor) on behalf of the Town Council, thanked the officers for their attendance and informative presentation.

6) Reports from Members

Cllr J Defty requested that reports be provided by SCC Councillors who were also Members of HTC. Cllr D Turner responded that SCC Members were not at HTC meetings to report on City Council matters.

Cllr J Defty requested that consideration be given by SCC to restrict out of town outlet retail facilities to protect the City Centre.

Cllr M Thornton encouraged the prosecution of those responsible for fly-tipping.

Cllr Geddis suggested that revenue generated from parking fines be utilised to support the provision of free parking facilities.

Cllr M Hopper referred to further incidents of fly-tipping at Moorsley and suggested the installation of gates or cameras.

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7) Town Clerk update

TC reported that preliminary work had been completed for provision of a Facebook page for the Town Council, but technical advice was being sought prior to launch re the introduction of appropriate controls.

TC referred to the public meeting on 24 January which had been organised by the Town Council in response to local concerns about heightened anti social behaviour. He reported that attendance had been between 80-90 residents and that representatives from Northumbria Police, Tyne and Wear Fire & Rescue Service and Sunderland City Council had attended. Northumbria Police had undertaken to provide feedback arising from their initiative to combat ASB.

TC advised Town Council that he was experiencing inconsistency in obtaining responses to some queries referred to SCC.

TC informed Members that the office was currently without email and that the website had been suspended. These issues were under investigation by the IT supplier.

8) Christmas Tree 2019 costs

TC introduced the previously circulated report.

Cllr D Geddis expressed his concerns at the short timescale given by SCC which he considered pressurised the Town Council for a decision on 2020 procurement arrangements.

Cllr S Waterston voiced strong concerns at what she considered as the appalling quality and high costs of the Christmas trees provided in 2019.

Cllr R Heron concurred with comments made.

Following full discussion, Town Council resolved that:

SCC be notified of the Town Council's decision to be included in the procurement process for 2020;

The invoice for £6568.80 for the supply and installation of trees in 2019 now be authorised;

and

TC write to SCC outlining the Town Council's decisions along with strong disappointment re quality and cost of trees in 2019.

9) Staff, Employment & Training Committee

TC reported that Cllr C Sinnott had resigned her membership of the Committee and details of a replacement nomination was awaited from the Labour Group.

Town Council resolved to note the position.

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10) Financial report

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

Income:

Postage by Phone DD refund £26.77

Staffing expenditure:

Town Clerk net salary including back payment (Feb 20) £4967.24

HMRC (Combined employer/employee liabilities) £2693.34

NEST Pension (Combined employer/employee contributions) DD £291.69

Sub-total: £7952.27

Town Clerk expenditure:

Wilko (1 x box file) £3.00

Post Office (24x 1st Class Stamps) £16.80

Wilko (2 x packs 500 A4 paper @ £3.00 each) £6.00

Sub-total: £25.80

Other expenditure:

Sunderland City Council (Supply and fitting of 3 x Christmas Trees) £6568.80

Balfour Beatty (Xmas Illuminations - East Rainton) £1180.03

Balfour Beatty (Xmas Illuminations - Moorsley) £1180.03

Balfour Beatty (Xmas Illuminations - Hetton le Hole) £1180.03

EE (invoice 4 Feb 20) DD £29.72

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Konica Minolta (print and copy costs 11/19- 2/20) £18.10

Sub-total: £10,156.71

Total: £18,134.78

Barclays Current account balance @ 13 Feb 20 £36108.37

Anticipated current account balance if all paid: £17,973.59

Barclays Reserve account balance: £28,379.75

Town Mayor fund:

Income: Nil

Expenditure:

Seaham Town Council
(Advance purchase 2 x tickets @ £30.00 each for Mayor's Charity evening 24 April 20) £60.00

Co-op Bank balance @ 14 Feb 20: £1346.20

Anticipated current account balance if all paid: £1286.20

11) Planning matters:

Cllrs M Thornton and D Turner declared an interest and left the meeting for the duration of the discussion.

Town Council considered the following planning application received from SCC.

20/00134/LP3/Planning Consultation - Evolve Business Centre, Rainton Bridge

Installation of solar panels and associated battery storage

Town Council resolved no comments or objections.

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12) Application for Community Grant Award

TC introduced the item and confirmed that the application met the policy requirements in terms of provision of a signature, bank statement and constitution.

Town Council resolved to approve the application received from East Rainton Cricket Club for £200.00 for the purchase of a new cooker.

13) Town Mayor issues

Cllr Pearson reported that there had been no Civic or community events during January. Town Council resolved to note the report.

14) General correspondence:

Town Council resolved to receive correspondence and take action as detailed below:

Email from HTC Member: Request for a review of membership of Events & Special Activities Committee **(include as agenda item at March HTC meeting)**

Eppleton Cricket Club: Re funding arrangements

During the debate, Cllr Thornton accused Cllr Rowham (who was not present) of being a liar. Cllr Defty requested Cllr Thornton twice to withdraw the accusation and apologise. Cllr Thornton refused to withdraw the remark and refused to apologise. TC was asked to respond formally to ECC by letter.

Co. Durham Association of Local Councils:

Royal Garden Party 2020 **(Noted)**

External Audit Training course - FoC **(TC to attend)**

Larger Councils Forum 20 February 20 **(Cllrs Geddis and Waterston to attend)**

15) Date and Time of next meeting

Town Council resolved that the date and time of the next meeting would be 19.15 hrs on Monday 16 March 2020.

Exclusion of Press and Public

TC advised that acting upon advice received from Sunderland City Council this agenda item should be regarded as confidential.

Town Council resolved that Members of the public and press be excluded under the provisions of the Admissions to Public Meetings Act 1960.

16) Operation Bridges

TC reported that he had followed up actions agreed at the January 20 meeting.

Town Council resolved to note the current position, consider supervision arrangements at the appropriate time and notify SCC of identified location.