

Hetton Town Council



Minutes of Management and Policy Committee held remotely on Monday 14 September 2020

Present

Councillors T Dodds, R Elvin (Chairman), D Geddis, M Hopper and S Waterston.

In attendance

G Keedy, Town Clerk (TC)
Cllr R Heron
Cllr K Pearson
MoP x 1

1) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr J Cunningham(ill) and Cllr J Green (work commitment).

Committee resolved to approve the apologies received.

No apology for absence had been received from Cllr C Sinnott and her absence was recorded as unapproved.

2) Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3) Public participation

Committee resolved that a period of up to 15 minutes be allocated.

Cllr R Heron sought clarification of the term "unelected voting Member" included in the draft Standing Orders. TC answered this could refer to a co-opted Member.

4) Engagement with Sunderland City Council

TC introduced the previously circulated report.

Following a proposal by Cllr R Elvin, seconded by Cllr D Geddis, Committee resolved unanimously to recommend to Town Council that:

An approach be made to SCC (including option for Town Clerk and Committee Chairman to meet with appropriate senior officer) to explore opportunities to review and strengthen the role of the Council's representative on the Coalfield Area Committee.

Following a proposal by Cllr R Elvin, seconded by Cllr D Geddis, Committee resolved unanimously to recommend to Town Council that:

Town Clerk routinely invites Members of SCC representing the Hetton and Copt Hill electoral Wards to meetings of Full Council to deliver updates and hear local concerns.

1 of 3

Signed:

Date:

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Item 4 cont ...

Following a proposal by Cllr R Elvin, seconded by Cllr S Waterston, Committee resolved unanimously to recommend to Town Council that:

A review of the Charter be undertaken with SCC to ensure alignment with emerging Government plans for an increased role in communities for town and parish councils.

5) Review of Standing Orders

Cllr Elvin introduced this item and explained that it was not the intention for Committee to go through the document line by line as both he and TC had examined the model in detail.

Cllr T Dodds raised several detailed queries.

TC explained that SO's denoted in bold type were legal requirements and could not be amended. He added that the model had been drafted by specialist legal advisers and were generally regarded as suitable for all local councils, although these could be amended to reflect local nuances.

TC undertook to seek clarity on D5 on page 7 ahead of Full Council on 21st and examine formatting issues in due course.

Cllr T Dodds commented that references throughout the document were not gender neutral.

Following a proposal by Cllr R Elvin, seconded by Cllr D Geddis, Committee resolved unanimously that TC add a suitable narrative at the beginning of the document to address this aspect.

Following a proposal by Cllr R Elvin, seconded by Cllr Waterston, Committee resolved unanimously to recommend to Council the adoption of the revised Standing Orders.

6) Grievance Policy and Procedure

Cllr R Elvin introduced this item. TC explained that although not mandatory, it was good practice for the Town Council to have such a procedure.

Following a proposal by Cllr R Elvin, seconded by Cllr D Geddis, Committee resolved unanimously to recommend to Town Council that the Policy and Procedure be approved and adopted.

7) Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

TC introduced this item and explained that although not mandatory, it was good practice for the Town Council to have such a procedure.

TC undertook to look at. in due course, formatting and version control aspects raised by Cllr T Dodds.

Following a proposal by Cllr R Elvin, seconded by Cllr T Dodds, Committee resolved unanimously to recommend to Town Council that the Policy and Procedure be approved and adopted.

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8) Website Accessibility Regulations

Members discussed the requirements and highlighted the onerous nature of the regulations.

After discussion, Committee resolved to recommend that TC provide a position statement to Full Council and work to achieve the required outcomes on an incremental basis.

9) Hetton Mini Park

TC reminded Members that this topic had been discussed previously and there was a need to progress. He added that following queries to SCC, he had been advised that any assistance required in developing such a project could only be provided on a fee paying basis.

Cllrs D Geddis and M Hopper both suggested that external sponsorship could be explored for funding assistance.

Cllr Dodds suggested that the mini park be renamed as a memorial park and could include an area dedicated to those lost to Covid 19.

Committee resolved unanimously that individual Members of the Committee should visit the site and share their viewpoints at a Committee meeting specifically to consider the topic.

10) Recording of Council meetings

TC explained that he had included this agenda item to address an issue which had arisen as result of Zoom meeting recordings.

He had automatically recorded Zoom meetings of Committees but had realised that when Council or Committees met physically at The Hetton Centre, only Full Council meetings were recorded (using CCTV).

Following discussion, Committee resolved to recommend to Council that where practicable, all Council meetings would in future be recorded.

11) Litter awareness in Hetton and District

Cllr R Elvin introduced this item.

Following a proposal from Cllr R Elvin, seconded by Cllr D Geddis, Committee unanimously resolved to recommend to Town Council that an approach be made to SCC to discuss the provision of anti-litter signage throughout the district, with an initial focus on retail areas and HTC boundary entry points.

12) Hetton Lyons Boys Club site

Cllr R Elvin introduced this item and provided background.

Following a proposal by Cllr R Elvin, seconded by Cllr M Hopper, Committee resolved unanimously to recommend to Town Council that TC write to "Ambition" (the land owner) to seek a progress update and explore opportunities for the Town Council to offer assistance.