

Hetton Town Council



Minutes of meeting of Hetton Town Council held remotely on Monday 15 February 2021

Note: The meeting was audio and video recorded throughout.

Present

Cllrs R Coulson, J Defty, T Dodds, R Elvin, D Geddis, J Green, R Heron (to Item 6), M Hopper, K Pearson (Town Mayor), K Rowham, S Waterston and C Willis.

In attendance

G Keedy, Town Clerk (TC)
Members of the Public (MoP) x 17
Local Democracy Reporter

1) Apologies for absence

An apology was reported on behalf on Cllr D Turner (unwell). Town Council resolved to approve the apology received.

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

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 to allocate a period of up to 30 minutes and suspend Standing Orders for Item 5 to facilitate further public involvement.

MoP:

Seeks an update on Fox & Hounds site which is an "eyesore".

Requests action to clean and tidy the site at top of Moorsley Bank known as Old Methodist Chapel / Hetton Boatyard.

Cllr R Heron: Seeks update on former Bog Row School site.

4) Minutes

a) Town Council resolved to approve the minutes of the Meeting of Hetton Town Council held on 18 January 2021.

b) Town Council resolved to approve the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of Hetton Town Council held on 25 January 2021.

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5) Proposed closure of Hetton Nursery School

Extensive discussions took place, with contributions from Members and members of the public.

Key points included:

School financial standing and external factors impacting negatively on the position; questioning of the need for nursery places at the Hetton Primary rebuild; the extent of potential job losses; the holding by SCC of a Cabinet meeting prior to the closure date of the consultation; views that the consultation process was not inclusive and that consultees were not being listened to.

Town Council resolved:

To note the intention of Members to meet independently with the "Friends of Hetton Nursery" campaign group;

That TC write to Chief Executive, Sunderland City Council requesting his view on the legality of a Cabinet meeting held to discuss the topic which took place prior to conclusion of the consultation;

That TC seek advice on powers to provide financial assistance for legal support to the campaign;

and,

That TC write to B Phillipson MP to seek details of her availability to attend an Extraordinary meeting of Hetton Town Council to discuss the proposed closure.

6) Reports from Members

Cllr R Coulson:

Stone wall in disrepair at Boatyard site.(Hetton Boat Company)

Cllr Waterston:

Feedback provided by SCC on 15 Feb re CCTV camera refers to an incorrect location (site reported is Burn Lane, not Logan Terrace).

Cllr D Geddis:

Requests removal of "Harris" fencing at footpath at Easington Lane.
Fly-tipping at Hetton Lyons Country Park.

Cllr M Hopper:

Disputes SCC on assertion (15 Feb) that a gate has previously been installed at Moorsley. Requests a plan and /or list detailing the location of grit bins in Hetton and district. Expresses further concerns at lack of action against perpetrators of burglary at Moorsley Stables in Jan 19. Wishes to make formal complaint to Northumbria Police about an organisational failure.

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6) Reports from Members cont ...

Cllr S Waterston:

Queries use by Durham Police of DNA recognition system. More information required.

Reported that SCC were to charge £25.00 each for delivery of three x replacement bins to a resident even though all were to be delivered simultaneously.

Cllr R Elvin:

Commented that recently introduced interactive speed cameras were working well.

Cllr D Geddis:

Request for dog waste bins at Kingfisher Drive and Goldfinch Drive, Easington Lane.

Town Council resolved that TC refer the issues raised to relevant agencies.

7) 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.

8) Update from Town Clerk including local issues

TC advised that the Police & Crime Commissioner for Northumbria was unable to attend the February or March meetings of Council. However, TC was liaising with her officers re alternative dates and he was considering the possibility of an Extraordinary meeting to accommodate her availability.

TC had not heard back from the office of Robert Jenrick MP and suggested that he instead approach the Minister of State (Housing, Communities and Local Government) to attend a future meeting.

TC reported that he was in dialogue with the insurers of Tuffnells re damage to the bench seat. Cost details were being sought for installation of a replacement. TC added that during his enquiries, it transpired that permission had not previously been granted by SCC for the installation of the original seat. TC would seek a licence from SCC.

TC advised that he had been in contact with Balfour Beatty (BB) following Council's request for an downward adjustment to the bill for Hetton tree lights in view of quality concerns.

TC had been advised by BB that the tree lights at Hetton, East Rainton and Moorsley had previously been purchased directly by Hetton Town Council (HTC) and, as such any responsibility for repair or replacement lay with HTC. TC had subsequently located documentary evidence which confirmed the purchase of the East Rainton and Moorsley tree lights. Enquiries were ongoing re Hetton tree lights.

TC advised that the asset register would need to be updated accordingly and that he would bring a report to Council or Management & Policy Committee once he had a full understanding of the position re ownership. TC added that he had also been advised that the "living" tree located outside of Hetton Swimming Pool continued to still carry a set(s) of lights.

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9) Financial report

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

Income:

HMRC (VAT refund 19-20) £3591.53

Staffing expenditure:

Town Clerk net salary (February 21 - incl. additional hrs worked Jan and 19/20 arrears) £1886.58

HMRC (Combined employer/employee liabilities) £1034.16

NEST Pension (Combined employer/employee contributions) DD £156.18

Sub-total: £3076.92

Town Clerk expenditure:

Zoom Video Communications (charge for Standard Pro monthly subscription) £14.39

Sub-total: £14.39

Other expenditure:

Sunderland City Council (supply and installation of 3 x Xmas trees) £3900.00

Mazars LLP (Limited assurance review for 19-20) £408.00

Balfour Beatty (Hetton festive lighting) £1180.03

Balfour Beatty (Moorsley festive lighting) £1180.03

Balfour Beatty (East Rainton festive lighting) £1180.03

EE (invoice 4 Feb 21) DD £18.00

DC Services Ltd (Annual website and email hosting plus domain registration) £238.56

Sub-total: £8104.65

Total: £11195.96

Barclays Current account balance @ 10 Feb 21: **66,829.62**

Anticipated current account balance if all paid: **£55,633.66**

Barclays Reserve account balance @ 10 Feb 21: **£28,401.96**

Note:

Community Grant Award - Hetton Colliery Railway 200 (approved at 21 Dec 20 meeting) £500.00

Town Mayor fund:

Income: Nil

Expenditure:

Great North Air Ambulance Service £643.10

Children's Air Ambulance £643.10

Co-op Bank balance @ 10 Feb 21: Nil

10) Town Mayor Fund

TC introduced the previously circulated report.

Town Council resolved that any residual amount, up to the full allocation of Town Mayor Fund is shared equally between Royal British Legion (ring-fenced for the provision of welfare services locally) and 1st Eppleton Scouts.

11) Hetton Mini Park - lighting adjustment to illuminate War Memorial

TC introduced the previously circulated report.

Town Council resolved to accept the quotation received from Balfour Beatty and proceed with a request for the appropriate works.

12) Replacement computer hardware and software

TC introduced the previously circulated report.

Town Council resolved to note the contents of the report, initiate the purchase of a lap-top using Dell or an authorised supplier, seek quotations from broadband suppliers and purchase appropriate, up to date software and a hard-drive.

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13) Former Hetton Lyons Boys Club site

TC read a brief update received from UK Youth and advised that he would seek a more detailed update.

Town Council resolved to note the position.

14) Sunderland City Council Digital Strategy

TC introduced the previously circulated report.

Town Council resolved to note the report and request that an SCC officer attend a future meeting to discuss in more detail.

15) Draft response to SCC consultation "Allocations and Designations Plan"

TC introduced the previously circulated report compiled by Cllr K Rowham.

He explained that the draft submission had already been provided to SCC to meet their deadline of 12 February. However SCC had agreed to accept any additional comments arising from the evening's meeting.

Town Council resolved to commend Cllr Rowham for her research and work in compiling the response and that TC should confirm to SCC that this represented the Town Council's approved submission to the consultation.

16) Planning matters

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

21/00115/FUL

Gateway North East Elemore Lane Easington Lane Houghton-le-Spring

Proposal: Erection of new boundary fencing

Applicant: Gateway North East

No comments or objections.

20/01621/FUL

71 Kingfisher Drive Houghton-le-Spring DH5 0GE

Proposal: Retrospective application for single storey extension to the front.

Applicant: Mr Ryan Dunwoodie

Clarification to be sought from SCC re provision of parking spaces.

21/00115/FUL

At Gateway North East Elemore Lane Easington Lane Houghton le Spring

Proposal: Erection of new boundary fencing and installation of 2no. storage containers and 1no. bin store. (Amended proposal 09.02.21)

Applicant: Gateway North East

No comments or objections.

TC advised that he had omitted to include:

21/00177/LP3

Demolition of existing caretakers house/ primary school and erection of new school with multi games area including improved site access, associated car parking and landscaping.

TC to seek an extension to the consultation deadline date.

HTC minutes 15 February 2021 cont ...

17) General correspondence

Town Council resolved to take action as indicated below:

Office of Bridget Phillipson MP x 2 (TC responded) **Noted**
MoP - re rats and waste (referred to SCC) **Noted**
Sunderland City Council: North Road Traffic calming (circulated 15 Feb) **Noted**
MoP - Freedom of Information Request **Noted**
Durham County Model Car Club - land request **Noted**
Co. Durham Association of Local Councils:
Various: incl. NHS and Frontline Workers Day **TC to seek more information**
Social Media Training - 2 March 21 @£10.00 **TC to attend**
Canvassing for Elections (circulated 11 Feb) **Noted**
Friends Against Scams - E-learning **Circulate to Members**
Larger Councils Forum Thurs 18 Feb 10.30am **Cllrs Geddis and Waterston to attend**
Possible continuation of Remote meetings after 7 May **Circulate to Members**

18) Date and Time of next meeting

Town Council resolved that the next meeting would be at 19.15 hrs on Monday 15 March 2021 virtually or at The Hetton Centre - in line with prevailing Government guidance.

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Date: