

Hetton Town Council



Minutes of meeting of Hetton Town Council held remotely on Monday 18 May 2020

Note: The meeting was audio and video recorded in part.

Present

Cllrs J Blackburn, R Coulson, J Cunningham, J Defty, T Dodds, R Elvin, A Farrow, D Geddis, J Green, R Heron, M Hopper, K Pearson (Town Mayor), K Rowham, D Turner (to Item 12), S Waterston and C Willis.

In attendance

G Keedy, Town Clerk (TC)
Members of the Public (MoP) x 2
Press - Local Democracy Reporter

1) Continuation of appointments to 2021 Annual meeting of HTC

Town Council resolved to apply Regulation 4 of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 which permits the continuation of appointments.

2) Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr A Liversidge (caring responsibility) and Cllr D Liversidge (caring responsibility).

Town Council resolved to approve the apologies received.

No apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. C Sinnott or Cllr M Thornton. Town Council resolved to record their absences as unapproved.

3) Declarations of Interest

Councillor J Cunningham declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 11 (relative working at establishment), Cllr J Blackburn declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 11 (trustee of Hetton Home Care) and Cllr D Turner declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 12 (Member of SCC Planning Committee).

4) Public participation

Town Council resolved that a period of up to ten minutes be allocated for public participation.

MoP expressed their deep disappointment with some comments made at May 2020 meeting.

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Signed:

Date:

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5) Revision to Standing Orders

TC referred to the previously circulated document.

Town Council resolved to approve the amendments to Standing Orders to reflect current Government regulations relating to Coronavirus.

6) Minutes

Town Council resolved to approve the Minutes of the meeting of Hetton Town Council held remotely on 27 April 2020.

7) Reports from Members

The following issues were raised:

Cllr K Rowham:

Expressed concerns about parking congestion at Hetton Lyons Country Park due to car park access gates being closed.

Expressed concerns about ongoing parking congestion / parking on pavement at Hetton Lyons Industrial Estate, Unit 6 near Dove Building Materials premises - obstructing pedestrian access.

Cllr S Waterston:

Expressed concerns on behalf of residents relating to speeding in Richard Street and Caroline Street, Hetton le Hole. The 20 mph speed limit signs are regarded as ineffective, and Councillor requests speed humps are introduced at both locations.

Commented that Northumbria Police Operation Avalanche had waned. Cllr is very concerned at the drugs problem in the area which is blighting the lives of residents. Requests an update from Inspector N Gjørven.

Cllr M Hopper:

Concurred with the views of Cllr Waterston re drug problem and added that there was an associated increase in violence. Lockdown was exacerbating the problems and requested a remote meeting with Inspector Gjørven at an early date.

Cllr D Geddis:

Reported a recent knife crime incident and separate robbery; and issues with quad bikes and off-road bikes leading to police chases in Easington Lane. He too requests an update from Northumbria Police on actions to tackle crime and ASB in the area.

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7) Reports from Members cont ...

Cllr R Elvin:

Seeks progress from SCC on the removal of parking restrictions outside Tesco, Hetton to help facilitate local shopping.
Requests that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Northumbria be invited to attend a future meeting of HTC.

Cllr R Coulson:

Expressed his view and support for the escalation of Members' concerns re crime and ASB to higher authority.

Cllr K Rowham:

Also requests that Northumbria PCC be invited to attend a future meeting of HTC.

8) Town Clerk update

TC reported that he had been notified by SCC that an investigation into fly-tipping at Grange View, East Rainton had been concluded, but it had not been possible to trace the perpetrator.

TC advised that he had introduced automated settings to email messages requesting read receipts. However, the response rate had been minimal.
TC requested that Members check the settings on their devices to ensure this facility had not been disabled.

TC had become aware that the voicemail facility on the Town Council mobile phone was not working. He undertook to investigate with EE.

Town Council resolved to note the update received from the Town Clerk.

9) Casual vacancy

TC reported that he had formally notified Sunderland City Council of the vacancy created by the death of Cllr S Quigley. SCC would prepare a "Notice of Casual Vacancy" for publication.

He added that where ten valid requests for a by election are received by the Proper Officer then under the provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 a by election will not currently take place, and the vacancy will be held open until the by election takes place. The 2020 regulations provide for the by election to take place on the date for the Ordinary Election of Councillors due to be held on Thursday 6 May 2021.
In response to a Member query, TC confirmed that if no by-election is called then the vacancy could be filled by co-option.

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10) Financial report

Town Council resolved to:

Note the content of the report and approve all expenditure;
and

Authorise TC to obtain signatories to change account mandate to enable on-line account enquiries.

Income:

HMRC (VAT refund 2018-2019) £2760.33

Staffing expenditure:

Town Clerk net salary (May 20) £1028.23

HMRC (Combined employer/employee liabilities) £442.43

NEST Pension (Combined employer/employee contributions) DD£63.73

Sub-total: £1534.39

Other expenditure:

Hetton Home Care Services Ltd (emergency donation - approved 27 Apr 20 meeting) £1000.00

T & A Dixon Accountancy Services (Provision of payroll services for Oct 19 - Apr 20) £60.00

Co Durham Association of Local Councils (subscription for 2020-2021) £2026.48

EE (invoice 4 May 20) DD£15.11

Sub Total: £3101.59

Total:£4635.98

Barclays Current account balance @ 18 May 20: **£48,702.90**

Anticipated current account balance if all paid: **£44,066.92**

Barclays Reserve account balance @ 18 May 20: **£28,389.70**

Town Mayor fund:

Income: Nil

Expenditure: Nil

Co-op Bank balance @ 14 May 20: £1286.20

11) Hetton Home Care

Following their earlier declarations of interest, Cllr J Blackburn and Cllr J Cunningham took no part in the discussion of this item or subsequent vote.

TC referred to the previously circulated report and appendix which included a submission from Hetton Home Care Services Limited (HHCSL) outlining the position for the requirement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for staff during the Coronavirus crisis.

Members had also been provided by TC with a copy of a written submission from a Member which provided a perspective on HHCSL funding.

After full discussion, Town Council resolved not to provide further financial assistance to HHCSL.

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Signed:

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12) Planning matters

Cllr D Turner had declared an interest as a Member of SCC Planning Committee and left the meeting at this juncture.

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

19/01532/REM

The Cottage, Park View. Hetton le Hole, DH5 9JH

Proposal: Reserved matters application for Partial demolition of the existing cottage and construction of 3no new dwellings and associated means of access.

Cllr S Waterston expressed concern about this historic building being adversely affected, increased traffic, and wider views about the need to prevent urban sprawl and protect the historic character of the town.

It was noted that the application was "Reserved" and Town Council resolved to take no further action.

13) General correspondence

Town Council resolve to take action as indicated below.

Co. Durham Association of Local Councils:

Multiple emails re Coronavirus (**noted**)

Notification of Larger Councils Forum - 21 May 20 (remote meeting) - **Cllrs Geddis and Waterston to attend.**

Robert Jenrick MP, Local Government Secretary:

Open letter to Town and Parish Councils re Government funding (**noted - TC in dialogue with SCC**)

MoP: re Hetton Home Care (**noted**)

MoP: re Elemore Golf Course (**Members unaware of any plans for the site**)

MoP: re historic photo (**refer to local history group**)

Local business: re request for financial assistance

(Council unable to provide direct financial assistance. TC to liaise with proprietor to explore options)

14) Meetings calendar

TC referred to the previously circulated calendar outlining proposed meeting dates for 2020-2021.

Town Council resolved to approve the calendar of meetings as tabled.

15) Date and Time of next meeting

Town Council resolved that the next meeting would be held at 19.15 hrs on Monday 15 June 2020.