

Hetton Town Council



Minutes of meeting of Hetton Town Council held remotely on Monday 19 October 2020

Note: The meeting was audio and video recorded throughout.

Present

Cllrs R Coulson, J Defty, T Dodds, R Elvin, A Farrow, D Geddis, J Green (to Item 16), R Heron, M Hopper, K Pearson (Town Mayor), K Rowham, D Turner, and S Waterston.

In attendance

G Keedy, Town Clerk (TC)
Members of the Public (MoP) x 8
Press - Local Democracy Reporter

1) Apologies for absence

An apology for absence had been received from Cllr C Willis (holiday). 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

Following a query from MoP, Town Council resolved that TC request of Northumbria Police that they routinely supply to HTC a copy of the crime statistics which are presented to the SCC Coalfield Area Committee; and that the information be published by HTC.

MoP raised concerns about crime in Cragdale Gardens area and an anticipated increase should a proposed residential development go-ahead.

MoP queried the protocols for contacting Town and City Councillors and raising dissatisfaction with their responses. MoP was advised accordingly.

MoP expressed an interest in CCTV and was advised that this would be discussed at Item 15.

MoP re speeding in Moorsley Road. A Member referenced a voluntary scheme he was aware of to monitor speeding. TC to seek further information.

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4) Minutes

- a) Town Council resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting of Hetton Town Council held on 21 September 2020.
- b) Town Council resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of HTC Events & Special Activities Committee held on 12 October 2020.
- c) Town Council resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of HTC Management & Policy Committee held on 13 October 2020.

5) Reports from Members

Cllr D Geddis:

Request for a Royal Mail post box. Site to be identified.

Request for dog waste bins in Taylor Wimpey development, Easington Lane. Developer have indicated that they will fund these, but SCC have advised they will not empty as the estate is unadopted. How can impasse be resolved?

Cllr S Waterston:

Received complaints from residents re poor condition of former Elmore Golf Club site.(churned up by quad bikes) What action can SCC take?

Cllr M Hopper:

Re access to Elmore Golf Club site - has been in dialogue with SCC and there is lack of clarity about ownership of barriers and availability of funding. Seeks a definitive position from SCC.

Cllr S Waterston:

Seeks an explanation from SCC for the delay in acting on longstanding reports made by herself and MoP's of horses being kept illegally at HLCP allotment site, and details of action to be taken against the offender.

Cllr D Geddis:

Supported concerns of Cllr Waterston and added that Cllr C Willis had made similar reports. He was aware that MoP's had been threatened by the allotment holder.

Cllr R Elvin:

Requests the relocation of the speed camera at Elmore Lane to Colliery Lane B1285.

Cllr A Farrow:

Concerns about vehicle speeds on Robin Lane. The speed limit is reduced to 40mph on the approach to East Rainton when coming from Durham, but requests a review.

It is difficult to turn out from Robin Court, Fieldside and Hedgelea onto Robin Lane as the brow of the hill means that drivers and cyclists don't have a clear view and traffic is often coming too fast along that stretch of the road.

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Item 5 cont ...

Member suggests any combination of three options to make the junction safer.

1. Extend the present 40mph speed limit back to the county border.
2. Reduce the present 40 limit to 30 between East Rainton and Hetton.
3. Request a vehicle activated speed display sign.

Cllr Farrow read a statement outlining her concerns that comments she and Cllr Heron had made in a verbal exchange during the 21 September meeting were misrepresented.

Cllr Farrow advised that she would furnish TC with a written copy to be made available to other Members upon request.

Cllr K Pearson:

Reports a blocked drain at rear of Go Discount store, Front Street, Hetton le Hole.

Cllr D Geddis:

Highlighted the success of "Wild at Heart" in North East Business Awards and asked that TC write to congratulate the business on behalf of HTC.

Reports dumped rubbish at rear of Go Discount store, Front Street, Hetton le Hole.

Cllr M Hopper:

Requests clearance of an overgrown area at rear of Hertford Crescent, Hetton le Hole.

Reports that blocked drains at Moorsley Road are now clear and running after having tarmac removed.

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

TC reported that City Councillors C Rowntree and K Johnson had advised that they were unable to attend.

7) Casual vacancies

TC reported that two casual vacancies existed in the Hetton Down ward following the resignations of Cllrs J Cunningham and C Sinnott.

SCC had issued the formal vacancy notices with deadlines of 22 and 27 October respectively for receipt of requests for a by-election.

8) Update from Town Clerk

TC reported that he had followed up a query raised at September meeting about the possible role of the Ombudsman in assisting the Town Council with progressing some issues.

He had established that the Local Government & Health Service Ombudsman was unable to act on behalf of town and parish councils.

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TC advised that he had heard back from SCC about the request for an anti-litter signage and been asked for more details about HTC requirements. TC would contact Members of Management & Policy Committee accordingly.

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9) Financial report - October 20

TC highlighted an additional payment made to NEST Pension and advised that this was out of synchronisation with monthly salary payments. This had been referred to the Council's payroll provider for investigation TC would report back.

Cllr R Elvin queried if SCC had made a payment to HTC from the Government's Covid assistance fund. TC confirmed that £1000.00 had been received and previously reported.

Cllr R Heron queried if TC had been paid for any recent additional hours worked. TC advised that the Finance report referenced this aspect.

Cllr A Farrow welcomed receipt of monies from Hargreaves Community Fund and requested that a future meeting consider how it could be best used.

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

Income:

Sunderland City Council:	
Precept 20-21 (2nd instalment)	£27965.50
Local Council Tax Support Grant (2nd instalment)	£5922.50
	Sub -total: £33888.00
Durham County Council (distribution of residual monies - Hargreaves Community Fund)	£1490.00
	Total: £35378.00

Staffing expenditure:

NEST Pension (Combined employer/employee contributions - 29/09)	DD£162.68
Town Clerk net salary (October 20 - incl. additional hrs worked Sept)	£1288.93
HMRC (Combined employer/employee liabilities)	£621.85
NEST Pension (Combined employer/employee contributions)	DD
£103.55	

Sub-total: £2177.01

Town Clerk expenditure:

Zoom Video Communications (charge for Standard Pro monthly subscription)	£14.39
Tesco:	
500 x A4 paper	£1.70
USB cable (for iPhone SE)	£11.00
Sub -total:	£27.09

Other expenditure:

Rialtas Business Solutions (annual support and maintenance for Alpha Software)	£148.80
EE (invoice 4 Oct 20)	DD £18.00
T&A Dixon Accountancy Services (payroll service Apr - Oct 20)	£60.00

Sub Total: £226.80

Total: £2430.90

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Item 9 cont ...

Barclays Current account balance @ 15 Oct 20:	£69823.12
Anticipated current account balance if all paid:	£67392.22
Barclays Reserve account balance @ 15 Oct 20:	£28,401.25
Town Mayor fund:	
Income:	Nil
Expenditure:	Nil
Co-op Bank balance @ 15 Oct 20:	£1286.20

10) Christmas trees and Illuminations

TC introduced the previously circulated report and reminded Members that HTC had agreed to utilise SCC and Balfour Beatty respectively for the supply and illumination of Christmas trees.

Following a query from Cllr R Heron, TC advised that work was being undertaken by SCC to renew the tree housings at each of the three installation sites.

TC added that he had been in touch with SCC to ask that advance notification of any works be provided in order that Hetton Nursery could be advised as a matter of courtesy.

Town Council resolved to note the report.

11) Flagpoles - Hetton Mini Park

TC introduced an updated report following a cost revision to delivery price submitted by supplier "C".

After discussion, Town Council resolved that an order be placed with supplier "B" unless Supplier "A" could match the security specification, their quotation representing a cost saving.

Following a query from Cllr R Heron, Town Council resolved that arrangements for raising and lowering flags would be remitted to Events & Special Activities Committee for consideration.

TC advised Council that installation was dependent upon receipt of permission from SCC and he was actively pursuing this aspect.

12) Repair to Mayoral pendant

TC introduced this item and Cllr K Pearson (Town Mayor) provided an update.

Quotations for repair had been received from the original specialist supplier, a national chain of jewellers and a local independent jeweller.

Cllr Pearson reported that she had proceeded with the independent jeweller at a cost of £18.00 which she had personally met.

Town Council resolved to note the action taken and thank Cllr Pearson.

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13) Co Durham Association of Local Councils - financial training sessions

TC introduced the previously circulated report.

After discussion, Town Council resolved that Cllr K Pearson and Cllr D Geddis attend the sessions "Budgeting" and "Finance for Councillors" at a total cost of £120.00.

14) Member email addresses

TC reminded Members that this topic had been discussed at September 20 meeting, but was deferred pending receipt of further information about any additional security offered by the use gov.uk addresses.

TC reported that he had queried this aspect with the Council's IT supplier. He had been advised that gov.uk addresses provide no more security than any other domain.

After discussion, Town Council resolved not to adopt gov.uk addresses.

15) CCTV in Hetton and district

TC introduced the report.

Town Council resolved to note the report and proceed with the recommendations.

16) Remembrance Day

TC provided an update following receipt of latest guidance received from Co. Durham Association of Local Councils and SCC.

TC read out the guidance from SCC which stated that there were no restrictions to individuals laying a wreath or attending any cenotaph or war memorial to pay their respects.

The item also included discussion relating to the War Memorial in Hetton Mini Park.

Town Council resolved that a quotation received from a local monumental mason for works to clean, repair and restore the War Memorial be passed to SCC with an urgent request for action ahead of Remembrance Day on 11 Nov; and that if SCC were unable to authorise and expedite in time, an offer be made for HTC to initiate and finance the work.

17) Coalfield Area Committee - 29 September 20

Cllr K Rowham provided a verbal update and focussed on funding awards made by CAC to ELCAP and Springboard, contrasting the scale of their financial positions and operations.

Town Council resolved to note the update.

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18) Planning matters

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

20/01708/FUL

At Hetton Lyons Workshop Colliery Lane Hetton le Hole, DH5 0BG

Proposal: Installation of four light towers.

Applicant: J Murphy and Sons Ltd

Object on the grounds that the proposal will exacerbate current light pollution issues affecting nearby residents.

20/01854/FUL

At BARCLAYS The Auld Bank 3 Front Street Hetton le Hole, DH5 9NU

Proposal: Retrospective application for replacement windows, reinstatement of existing 2.4m blocked opening to form new entrance door on front elevation, reinstatement of existing 1.3m blocked opening to form window on side elevation and internal alterations.

Applicant: Lyons Financial Management

No objections or comments

20/01629/FUL

At 19 Century Way Houghton le Spring DH5 9RY

Proposal: Conversion of existing garage to Lounge with Bay Window

Applicant: Mr Peter Raine

No objections or comments

19) General correspondence

Town Council resolved to take action as indicated below:

MoP: installation of fibre broadband **(raise with SCC)**

Sunderland City Council:

Notification of Code of Conduct complaints x 2 **(Noted)**

City Councillor attendance at HTC meetings / Town Charter **(Noted)**

Hargreaves Surface Mining: Distribution of monies from Community Fund **(Noted)**

Co Durham Association of Local Councils:

Planning for the Future - Government White Paper consultation **(TC to liaise with Cllr Rowham)**

Remembrance Day - various - all circulated **(Noted)**

Rural Market Town Group:

Welcome, survey and request for representative **(TC to complete survey)**

Invitation to meeting 9 November 20 **(Cllr R Elvin to be HTC rep)**

Following a suggestion by Cllr R Elvin, Town Council resolved that feedback from SCC to issues raised by Members be published on the Council's website and FB page.

20) Date and Time of next meeting

19.15 hrs on Monday 16 November 2020 at The Hetton Centre or virtual - in line with Government advice.

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Date: