

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL MEETING – 2021/02/08 – 56

Minutes of the meeting held via Zoom¹ on Monday 8th February 2021 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs W Leach (Mayor and Chairman of the meeting), J Carr, J Greenwood, A Harley, R Holmes, S Holmes, R Kemsley, P Macklin, A Preest and S Stockham

District Cllr M Topping
PS A Parry, Gloucestershire Constabulary – Report only
Twelve members of the public
Mr S Holley, Town Clerk
Miss C Wheeler, Assistant Clerk (Minute Taker)

Whilst the presentation by District Cllr Topping and report by PS Parry were given after Item 2 – Declarations of interest, the minutes reflect the order as shown on the agenda.

Presentation by District Cllr M Topping on Forest of Dean District Council Wildflower Project

The Council was informed that Forest of Dean District Council was changing the management of its grass land in order to increase biodiversity. A pilot project would be undertaken in Lydney on three specific areas: the grass areas surrounding the Centurion play area; the grass area in the overflow car park in Newerne Street and the grass strip on Centurion Way by the mini-roundabout. While Forest of Dean District Council normally cut such areas 18 times during the growing season, it was now the intention to cut only a 2m strip around the outside of these areas in line with this frequency. It was the intention to only cut the remainder of the area at the end of the growing season in order to create a better habitat for invertebrates and vertebrates, however, District Cllr Topping advised that it may be necessary to initially cut the area in March too.

Responding to a query raised by Cllr Carr, District Cllr Topping gave a commitment to ascertain the height for the March cut, which was designed to get rid of the nutrients in the grass. Cllr Leach requested that the Town Council's Grounds Team and the Environmental Working Party be kept informed of the scheme. The Clerk advised that the Council was looking to implement a similar approach on some of the grass areas it maintained. Cllr Harley advised that the Council intended to communicate its plans to residents. District Cllr Topping advised that residents of Watermead had already been advised in writing of the District Council's plans and that boards would be erected in the trial areas advising of the scheme and encouraging feedback.

PS A Parry, Gloucestershire Constabulary

PS Parry provided the Council with an overview of issues which had been experienced towards the direction of the mainline railway station and the successful operations which had been conducted to tackle the problems. PS Parry also advised that a request had been submitted to the Council to provide additional CCTV cameras for the High Street in order to expand the Town's coverage.

Cllr Carr advised that she had been informed of drug related issues in Manor Road and requested that PS Parry investigate the concerns. PS Parry advised that an operation was currently being undertaken to target drug activity in the Town which had already proved to be successful. Cllr Stockham raised the issue of 'boy racers'; PS Parry advised that whilst issues had previously been reported these had reduced but he encouraged members of the public to report any issues.

¹ The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL MEETING – 2021/02/08 – 57

Cllr Leach questioned if the Council could receive crime statistics for the Town. PS Parry agreed to provide such to the Clerk.

PS Parry advised that the Reception area for the Lydney Police Station would now be open for four hours Monday to Friday. He would provide the Clerk with the opening times.

PS Parry was thanked for his report and left the meeting at this point.

1. **APOLOGIES**

None

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

3. **OPEN FORUM**

A member of the public noted that in March 2020 the Council had voted to defer considering the appointment of a consultant to undertake a regeneration project due to Covid-19. The member of public questioned who had taken the decision to employ a former Locum Clerk in the role; when the decision had been taken and the cost involved. The Chairman advised that whilst the Council had appointed a consultant it was not the one referred to; that the Council had set aside £40k as part of its budget process, part of which would be used to cover the fees of the consultant. Responding to a further question, the Clerk advised that quotations had been received from three consultants; that the December Public Agenda referenced the regeneration project as an item of business for the Closed Session; that a decision on the matter had been deferred to an Extra Ordinary meeting on 25 January 2021 which had resulted in the contract being awarded to one of the consultants.

A member of the public highlighted that a market had operated in Lydney for over 40 years but would be required to relocate from its existing site due to the site's redevelopment to facilitate a new supermarket. Questions were asked as to why the Town Council had rejected the suggestion that a new base for the market be provided in the Newerne Street car park and what plans the Council had for a new site. The Chairman advised that the Town Council had not rejected the idea of the market; that it had been consulting with traders and it noted that they had yet to be given notice. It was highlighted that the car park was not in the ownership of the Town Council, but the District Council, which had suggested that the Town Council pay £3,000 per annum to rent the market space. Furthermore, the Council would need to obtain a Licence, issued by the District Council, to hold the market and the Mayor stressed that other locations had also been suggested for the market.

A member of the public questioned if the Hams Road car park belonged to the Town Council and if the area had been considered as a new area for the market as it was close to its existing site. The Chairman advised that the land concerned belonged to Lydney Recreation Trust. The member of public felt that the Council should have covered the £3,000 charge for the annual lease, rather than providing bonuses to its staff. The Clerk refuted the suggestion that the Council had rejected the suggestion that the market could be located in the Newerne Street and advised that the approach from the District Council had not been a formal one. Furthermore, that as part of the Regeneration and Covid-19 Recovery project consideration would be given as to where the market could relocate to. District Cllr Prest clarified that District Cllr Vaughan had submitted the offer to the Town

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL MEETING – 2021/02/08 – 58

Council in her capacity as a member of the District Council's Cabinet. The Clerk understood that District Cllr Vaughan had since written to say that the District Council had withdrawn the idea of a market in the Newerne Street car park.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 11th January 2021 were Proposed by the Chairman and unanimously APPROVED as a correct record.

Cllr R Holmes called a Point of Order at this point, noting that due to an IT problem the supporting documentation for the meeting had not been uploaded until earlier in the morning. He suggested that Item 8 – Grant Applications be deferred as the Council had not had sufficient time to review the documentation.

5. REPORTS

Cllr Carr asked if it would be possible to do something about the footpath in Forest Road between Middle Forge and Norchard as soil had fallen onto the path causing the width to narrow. County Cllr Preest requested that an urgent e-mail be sent to the Local Highway Manager at Gloucestershire County Council requesting that the work be undertaken under health and safety grounds. County Cllr Preest to be copied into e-mail.

Action by – the Clerk

Cllr Greenwood advised that he, together with Cllr Stockham and County Cllr Preest, had attended a Steering Group meeting of the Dean Forest Greenways. Furthermore, that the decision had been taken to withdraw the planning application which had been submitted due to satisfy grant qualification requirements. It was noted that the application would be resubmitted at a later date.

Cllr Leach advised that a meeting of the Multi Agency Stakeholder Flood Defence Group would take place on 25 February 2021; that he, together with Cllr Kemsley, would be participating in a walk around with an Officer from Gloucestershire County Council; that the Environment Agency would be installing a monitoring station in the vicinity of the railway station; that Severn Trent were undertaking a camera survey of the drains in Lakeside; that positive feedback had been received due to the decision to distribute sandbags in advance of the most recent risk of flooding. Cllr Leach expressed surprise that the road to the Harbour had yet to be resurfaced. County Cllr Preest advised that the work had been postponed due to a complaint which had been received regarding disturbance of overwintering birds; it was anticipated that the work would now be completed by the end of October 2021. Cllr Leach was asked to put in writing to County Cllr Preest the issues which he believed existed with land ownership.

Action by – Cllr Leach

Speaking in his capacity as a District Councillor, Cllr Preest advised that Brian Robinson had resigned as Leader of the Conservative Group at Forest of Dean District Council. Cllr Preest had now assumed that position and he advised that he would therefore stand down as Chairman of the Town Council's Planning and Highway Committee due to his increased workload. Cllr Preest would confirm his intention in writing to the Clerk.

6. FINANCIAL MATTERS/RFO REPORT

6.1 Payments

Approval of the list of payments circulated for approval at the meeting (Appendix I) was Proposed by Cllr S Holmes, Seconded by Cllr R Kemsley and unanimously AGREED.

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL MEETING – 2021/02/08 – 59

6.2 **Income and Expenditure Report/Balance Sheet/Bank Reconciliations**

Due to the delay in uploading the supporting documentation for the meeting the Council RECEIVED the above financial reports for Month 10. The Clerk requested that any questions on the documentation be directed to either himself or the Assistant RFO.

7. **CONSIDERATION OF THE COUNCIL'S CEMETERY CHARGES AND MISCELLANEOUS CHARGES (INCLUDING ALLOTMENTS)**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the Council was asked to consider freezing its charges for the 2021/22 financial year at the 2020 rate for the Cemetery, Allotments and miscellaneous items. Proposed by the Chairman and unanimously AGREED.

8. **GRANT APPLICATIONS**

8.1 The Chairman advised that grant applications had been received from SARA and The Friends of Bathurst Pool. As neither application was time sensitive it was agreed that consideration of both be DEFERRED until the next meeting.

8.2 The Council was asked to consider if it wished to adopt an alternative process for handling Grant Applications. A number of suggestions for an alternative process were received, but none were formally proposed or agreed.

During discussion the need for the Council's Grants Policy to receive greater publicity was highlighted. A member of the public suggested that the Council could advertise its Grants Policy via the Voluntary and Community Service facility. It was agreed that the grant applications from SARA and The Friends of Bathurst Pool would be considered at the March meeting and that the Clerk would ensure that an article promoting the Council's Grants Policy would be included in the next edition of the newsletter. Furthermore, the Clerk would arrange for the Council's Grants Policy to be advertised on the Voluntary and Community Service facility.

Action by – the Clerk

9. **REGENERATION AND COVID RECOVERY PROJECT**

The Chairman advised that part of the 2021/22 budget discussions considered the need to see regeneration of the Town. A tender process was operated and three quotes were considered by the Council which resulted in Place Studio being awarded the contract.

It was noted that an initial meeting had taken place in order to conduct Due Diligence. A further meeting with the whole Council had been scheduled for 16 February 2021 to discuss which items could be furthered via virtual methods and how the project would proceed. Furthermore, it was anticipated that landowners and representatives from the business community would be invited to participate in the project.

The Council was asked to consider appointing a further member to the Town Improvement Sub-Committee. Cllr Harley kindly offered to join the Sub-Committee. Acceptance of offer Proposed by Cllr S Holmes, seconded by Cllr Kemsley and unanimously AGREED.

10. **URGENT BUSINESS REERRED TO THE COUNCIL RESULTING FROM THE TEMPORARY CANCELLATION OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

10.1 **Amenities Committee** - None

10.2 **Burials Committee** - None

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL MEETING – 2021/02/08 – 60

10.3 **Finance and Scrutiny Committee** - None

10.4 **Planning and Highways Committee**

(i) Proposed 40 mph – Harbour Road, Lydney - It was Proposed by the Chairman and unanimously AGREED that the Council support a reduction in the speed limit to 20 mph, rather than the proposed 40 mph. Council felt that a 20 mph limit would also support the anticipated increase in visitors which is anticipated when the harbour improvements, together with the new development by Severn & Wye Smokery, had been completed. Furthermore, the Council has previously agreed its intention to attain a 20 mph speed limit within the parish boundaries.

Action by – the Assistant Clerk

(ii) Temporary Road Closure – Naas Lane, Lydney - 20 metres either side of the railway crossing for 50 metres. 8th February 2021 to 10th February 2021 between 22:00 hrs and 06:00 hrs

(iii) Temporary Traffic Order – various locations including junction of Bream Road, Lydney to conduct surface dressing. From 1st April 2021 to 31st August 2021.

11. **TOWN CLERK’S REPORT**

No report.

12. **CORRESPONDENCE**

12.1 Forest of Dean District Council – Lydney Town Centre Audit Report 2020 – It was NOTED that the report had been previously circulated to the Council and two questions had been forwarded to the District Council.

12.2 Forest of Dean District Council – Destination Lydney Harbour Partnership Working with Lydney Town Council – DEFERRED to the next meeting.

12.3 Royal British Legion Lydney Branch – 100th Anniversary Plaque – The Council noted the Branch’s desire to design and erect a suitable commemorative plaque in a suitable location (e.g. by the War Memorial or close to the entrance of the Town Hall). It was agreed that for consideration at the March meeting the Branch would be asked to provide details of the proposed plaque, including its construction, and the Clerk would ascertain the ownership of the wall close to the War Memorial.

Action by – the Clerk

12.4 Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils – invitation for Councillors to nominate themselves to join the Executive Committee – NOTED.

12.5 Forest of Dean District Council – Confirmation that a By-election had been called for the vacancy on Lydney North Ward - It was NOTED that a By-election had been scheduled to take place on 6th May 2021.

Cllr R Holmes recalled that the Clerk virtually attended a ‘Reopening the High Streets safely’ meeting with Officers from Forest of Dean District Council and asked if a Councillor should be appointed to attend future meetings. The Clerk welcomed the suggestion and it was AGREED that Cllr R Holmes would attend the next meeting and that, at the March meeting, the Council would discuss the possible appointment of a

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL MEETING – 2021/02/08 – 61

Councillor to attend future meetings, in addition to the Clerk.

Action by – the Clerk

13. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Council NOTED that its next meeting was scheduled to take place on Monday 8th March 2021 at 7.00 pm, via Zoom.

14. **MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

The Council RESOLVED to continue in ‘Closed Session’ under the provisions of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as the following business to be conducted was considered to be of a confidential nature.

Note: The following Minutes are made available to the Public for openness and transparency. The Council approves Confidential Minutes with substantially the same content, but with the inclusion of names of individuals or other parties when appropriate. Other Confidential business (such as legal matters and employment issues) may appear in the Public Minutes only as an Agenda /Minute heading.

15. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

It was Proposed by the Chairman and unanimously AGREED that the following Full Council confidential minutes would be approved.

- Extra ordinary meeting 24th February 2020
- 9th March 2020
- 20 April 2020
- 11 May 2020
- 8 June 2020
- 13 July 2020
- Extraordinary meeting 27th July 2020
- 14 December 2020

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm

Chairman

Date

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Appendix 1

| 04/02/2021 | | Lydney Town Council | | Page 48 | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|--------|---------------------------------|
| 13.14 | | PRELIMINARY PURCHASE DAYBOOK | | User: CEHW | | | | | | | |
| Purchase Ledger for Month No 11 | | | Order by Invoices Entered | | | | | | | | |
| Invoice Date | Invoice Number | Order No | Supplier A/c Name | Supplier A/c Code | Net Value | VAT | Invoice Total | A/C | Centre | Amount | Analysis Description |
| 20/01/2021 | 32006 | 122/126 | ARKELL HURCOMBE | ARK001 | 131.50 | 26.30 | 157.80 | 4305 | 200 | 68.00 | Bronze Plaque Welby |
| 31/01/2021 | 8994 | JY/88 70 | LIGHT FANTASTIC | LIG001 | 7.59 | 1.52 | 9.11 | 4300 | 200 | 83.50 | Bronze Plaque Welby |
| 20/01/2021 | 2021-120 | | SWINDON | SW001 | 150.00 | 0.00 | 150.00 | 505 | 0 | 7.59 | Pipe Lagging/Padlocks |
| 13/01/2021 | 13-01-21-357 | | LYDNEY ENGINEERING | LYD002 | 288.25 | 0.00 | 288.25 | 4110 | 150 | 150.00 | 3 x Better Clr Training |
| 31/01/2021 | 19302 | | TATE | TAT001 | 35.00 | 7.00 | 42.00 | 4130 | 150 | 288.25 | Electricity 2 August to 1st Nov |
| 31/01/2021 | 19306 | 92 | TATE | TAT001 | 140.00 | 28.00 | 168.00 | 4130 | 150 | 35.00 | Hire of Lap Top December |
| 31/01/2021 | 19337 | | TATE | TAT001 | 35.00 | 7.00 | 42.00 | 4130 | 150 | 140.00 | Remote log me in access Dec |
| 01/02/2021 | 19409 | 92 | TATE | TAT001 | 82.00 | 16.40 | 98.40 | 4130 | 150 | 35.00 | Jan Hire of Lap Top |
| 18/01/2021 | 0856 AHDP15 | JY/89 | TRAVIS PERKINS | TRA001 | 34.80 | 6.96 | 41.76 | 4300 | 200 | 82.00 | Mthly Mail Box Exchange |
| 04/01/2021 | 0856 AHED42 | 125 | TRAVIS PERKINS | TRA001 | 162.00 | 38.40 | 200.40 | 4410 | 500 | 34.80 | Poststrate for Bench |
| 20/01/2021 | 0856 AHE576C | | TRAVIS PERKINS | TRA001 | -97.00 | -19.40 | -116.40 | 4410 | 500 | 95.00 | Flood Defences/Sandbags |
| 01/02/2021 | GRANT | | LYDNEY HUB | LYD001 | 4,203.50 | 0.00 | 4,203.50 | 4786 | 650 | -97.00 | Credit for invoice 0856 AHED42 |
| | | | | | TOTAL INVOICES | 5,202.64 | 112.18 | 5,314.82 | | | 5,202.64 |
| | | | | | VAT ANALYSISCODE NRS @ 0.00% | 438.25 | 0.00 | 438.25 | | | |
| | | | | | VAT ANALYSISCODE OTS @ 0.00% | 4,203.50 | 0.00 | 4,203.50 | | | |
| | | | | | VAT ANALYSISCODE S @ 20.00% | 560.89 | 112.18 | 673.07 | | | |
| | | | | | TOTALS | 5,202.64 | 112.18 | 5,314.82 | | | |