

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 2021/03/08 – 62

Minutes of the meeting held via Zoom¹ on Monday 8th March 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 and S Stockham

District Cllr J Bevan
Six members of the public
Mr S Holley, Town Clerk
Miss C Wheeler, Assistant Clerk (Minute Taker)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received and noted from Cllr Preest.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

3. **OPEN FORUM**

(i) A resident asked if the Council could enlighten him as to the delivery lorries which now parked outside Martins and The Original Factory Shop on Newerne Street to unload (thereby obstructing the cycle lane) rather than unload at the rear of the premises. The Mayor was able to say that the Planning and Highways Committee had resolved that such complaints should be raised with the County Council's Highways Department with a view to getting improved signage and had followed this up through our County Councillor. There were also problems with cars parked on the zebra crossing and in the cycle lane. It was AGREED to request the Clerk to write to the Police requesting enforcement of the existing regulations and to Highways to follow up the request for improved signage.

(ii) District Councillor James Bevan referred to recent correspondence in the local paper about chicanes being removed from Church Road, about the speed pads 'lifting' and about a proper light-controlled crossing for children attending the Academy. Cllr Bevan observed that vehicles stopping and starting at the chicanes caused more pollution and that plenty of HGVs used the road including refuse trucks. The Mayor thanked Cllr Bevan for his comments and advised him that the Council had already resolved (through the Planning and Highways Committee) to request that the entire town be a 20mph zone.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 8th February 2021 were Proposed by the Chairman and unanimously APPROVED as a correct record.

5. **REPORTS**

- 5.1 Further to Cllr Alan Preest's comments about his workload at the last meeting (Minute 5 – Reports) it was noted that Cllr Preest had been able to make arrangements that would allow him to remain Chair of the Planning and Highways Committee.
- 5.2 District Councillor Bevan reported on his excitement at the news that the Government Lockdown hoped to bring the country out of the last Covid restrictions on 21st June, so he had asked the District Council's Regeneration team for progress opening the new Visitor

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

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Centre and toilets at the Harbour, which Cllr Bevan anticipated would become quite popular. The Mayor was able to advise Cllr Bevan that the Council had budgeted £18,000 towards the Harbour project, including £3,000 for cleaning and unlocking the Visitor Centre and Toilets. The Council would be asked to approve a detailed breakdown of the various elements of the £18,000 later in the same meeting (refer to Minute 7 – Destination Lydney Harbour, below).

- 5.3 Cllr Anne Harley advised that the Council's Events and Funding Assistant had done an amazing job collating the content for the April edition of the Council's newsletter. The final draft would be circulated to members. There were some requests for earlier drafts to be circulated more widely for comment when future editions were produced. The Mayor reiterated his wish to see improved circulation of the newsletter. The Clerk reminded the Council that in January it had reviewed the Christmas edition (including complaints of poor circulation) and had resolved to increase the production run in order to reach every household. The distributor had been asked for improved reporting on delivery of the April edition, which was scheduled to commence at the end of March.
- 5.4 The Mayor reported:
- his curiosity where residents got their information from. Although the Council published information on its website, on Facebook, issued Press Releases to the local media and had revived the newsletter, he and other Councillors sometimes met residents quite unaware of important decisions, or who had been misinformed. The Town Clerk advised that the media seemed not to respond to Press Releases and invitations.
 - that the Lydney Twinning Association had cancelled the planned visit in May from Brehal, our twin town in France, due to the Covid pandemic.
 - that he had attended a short socially-distanced service organised by the Royal British Legion to mark Commonwealth Day
- 5.5 Cllr James Greenwood advised that the Dean Forest Greenway group continued its good work and he hoped to have a report for the Council at its next meeting.
- 5.6 Cllr Richard Kemsley advised the Council that he and the Mayor had walked alongside the River Lyd with the County Council's Strategic Flood Risk Manager, Joe Baker, who had prepared a very thorough report.

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.

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

The Council NOTED the Financial Reports for Month 11.

6.3 **Interim Internal Audit Report**

The Council NOTED the Interim Internal Audit Report, prepared by Wildin & Co. The report had been delayed by Covid and had been circulated to members of the Finance and Scrutiny Committee prior to the meeting. The Council was pleased to note that there were no matters of concern. A suggestion that every Councillor present signed a representation document to indicate who had authorised payments would be followed up.

6.4 **Virement**

The Council unanimously AGREED to vire the sum of £7,245 from the Corporate budget ('Salaries' in Box 4 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return [AGAR]) to a new nominal code for Locum Staff ('Other Payments' in Box 6 of the AGAR) in respect

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of the cost of employing a Locum Clerk and a Locum Responsible Financial Officer during April to May 2020.

6.5 Arrangements for 2020/21 Audit

(i) The Council NOTED (i) that Wildin & Co would complete a year end Internal Audit inspection in the week beginning 12th April; that Rialtas would send a technician to close down the RBS accounting software on 14th May; and that consequently the June meeting of the Council would be the earliest at which it could consider approving the accounts for 2020/21, the Governing Statement and the AGAR; and that the Council would receive only lists of Payments for approval and copy Bank Statements at its meetings in April and May.

(ii) The Chair of the Finance and Scrutiny Committee reminded the Council of previous discussion on procuring a new Internal Audit provider. This had been deferred for 2020/21 but would be taken up for 2021/22.

6.6 Funding for additional CCTV Cameras

The Council was requested to agree to carry forward into 2021/22 any unspent funding for CCTV in the Planning and Highways Committee budget at 31st March 2021 to allow for additional CCTV cameras which had been requested by the Police. The Clerk advised that £5,000 was currently held in Earmarked Reserves for CCTV and the aforementioned request would enable a further £1,500 to be carried forward from the 2020/21 budget. It was noted that further discussion on a detailed proposal for the additional cameras would take place during 2021/22 financial year. Proposed by Cllr Stockham, seconded by Cllr Carr and unanimously AGREED.

Action by – the Clerk

7. DESTINATION LYDNEY HARBOUR

7.1 Update Report

The Council considered a written update report from the Regeneration Officer at Forest of Dean District Council, together with an e-mail detailing projects on which the £18,000 support from the Town Council could be expended.

Whilst no objection was voiced to the suggested projects, a number of comments were made in relation to the two public art projects which were being managed by the District Council as a result of the overall Coastal Communities funding awarded by the Government. Cllr Leach agreed to feed back the comments to the Regeneration Officer at the next Coastal Communities and Harbour regeneration meeting.

Action by – Cllr Leach

7.2 Financial Contribution to the Harbour Project

It was proposed by the Chairman and unanimously AGREED that the Town Council's £18,000 funding would be used to cover the following projects: -

<u>Item</u>	<u>2021/22</u>	<u>2022/23</u>	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2024/25</u>	<u>Total</u>
Visitor Information Hub Interpretation panels and audio equipment	1500				1500
Visitor Information Hub audio recording	900				900
Cleaning of interpretation panels (2 days per year)		600	600	600	1800

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Cleaning of artwork (2 days per year)		600	600	600	1800
Shrubbery clearance (artwork and walking trail, 4 days per year)	900	900	900	900	3600
Replacement of panel (in case of vandalism)		200	200	200	600
Watering/maintenance of Landscape Planting		800	800	800	2400
Archaeological Trial Trench (artwork)	2400				2400
Temporary Custodianship of new toilets	3000				3000
Total	£8,700	£3,100	£3,100	£3,100	£18,000

The Chairman Proposed that the Town Council would pay £18,000 as a lump sum to the District Council immediately in respect of the above projects, with the Council to monitor implementation of the above elements over the course of the project. Unanimously AGREED.

Action by – the Clerk

7.3 Temporary Custodianship of the Toilets

The Town Clerk reported that he had passed on to the Regeneration Officer contact details for a contractor interested in being a keyholder for the Visitor Centre and Toilets, and undertaking the cleaning. Although the Regeneration Officer had asked the Council to act as host the project had moved on and the Officer was now willing to manage this activity under the overall project.

It was reported that some concern had been expressed about the minimal parking at the Harbour. In response, it was said that parking at the Harbour itself was to be strictly limited to disabled parking, with more able visitors expected to park on the approach road.

7.4 Harbour Festival

It was also noted that contact details for the organiser of previous Harbour Festivals had been passed to the Regeneration Officer. It was understood that there would not be a Harbour Festival in 2021, because of the Covid pandemic.

7.5 Lydney Coastal Community Team

The Council noted that the next meeting was scheduled to be held on Wednesday 10th March 2021.

8. GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Council was requested to consider two grant applications:

Friends of Bathurst Pool

It was Proposed by Cllr Stockham, Seconded by Cllr Harley, that a grant for £500 be awarded. Unanimously AGREED.

Action by – the Clerk

Severn Area Rescue Association

It was Proposed by the Chairman that a grant for £400 be awarded. Vote CARRIED, with one Absention.

Action by – the Clerk

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9. **REGENERATION AND COVID RECOVERY PROJECT**

Attention was drawn to the circulated report. It was asked whether the planned engagement exercise would be affected by the ‘Purdah’ period for the forthcoming elections. The Clerk advised that the issue had been raised with Forest of Dean District Council and he awaited their response.

(Cllr Carr excused herself from the meeting at this point.)

Attention was drawn to the options in the report which included £5,000 on a dedicated website for the project for six months (ongoing financial commitment thereafter); a revised Option 2 Process Plan to allow for face-to-face engagement; a mapping software agreement, etc. It was noted that further information had been requested from Place Studios regarding an ongoing financial commitment for the website and the necessity for a mapping option when the Council possessed its own mapping agreements.

Cllr S Holmes Proposed that Delegated Powers would be bestowed on the Town Improvements Sub-Committee to manage the project within the approved Regeneration budget and to make any necessary decisions, subject to all Councillors being updated on the Sub-Committee’s work. Seconded by Cllr Stockham and unanimously AGREED.

10. **RE-OPENING HIGH STREETS SAFELY**

Cllr R Holmes’s offer to attend the next meeting with the Clerk was unanimously ACCEPTED.

11. **TOWN CENTRE FAMILY TRAIL**

The Council considered a proposal from Forest of Dean District Council to offer a new family town centre trail to run over the Spring/Summer months, subject to Covid-19 roadmap guidelines.

Samples of trail booklets which had been used by other authorities had been provided by the District Council and it was noted that all four Forest towns had been invited to consider the proposal.

During discussion it was felt that the proposal seemed to cut across the Regeneration project; appeared very generic with little to connect it to Lydney; had little for children and families to do; offered little benefit to local traders; and would require the purchase of a book/engage with an interactive map to participate. Also, the Town Council already possessed a trail leaflet. It was unanimously AGREED to request the Clerk to inform Forest of Dean District Council of the views expressed.

Action by – the Clerk

12. **DRAFT STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY - CONSULTATION**

The Council was asked to consider the draft statement which had been received from Forest of Dean District Council and agree a response. It was unanimously AGREED that no comment would be submitted.

13. **REPORT FROM LYDNEY YOUTH HUB**

The contents of the report were duly noted and Cllr Macklin advised that he had forwarded to the Clerk some correspondence which had been received earlier in the day.

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14. **ROYAL BRITISH LEGION – REQUEST FOR PLAQUE**

The Mayor advised that the preferred location for the plaque was on a wall which formed part of a private dwelling. The British Legion was seeking permission from the owner. The Council was shown the proposed wooden plaque, the design of which was duly noted.

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

15.1 **Amenities Committee** - None

15.2 **Burials Committee** – Cllr Stockham advised that a footpath in the Churchyard had become muddy and that Groundstaff were assessing if any work could be undertaken to improve the surface. Furthermore, as it appeared that it would be some time before the Council received a report on the condition of the table top tombs it had been agreed that a notice would be erected advising members of the public that the tombs may be unstable and to avoid them.

15.3 **Finance and Scrutiny Committee** - None

15.4 **Planning and Highways Committee** - None

16. **TOWN CLERK’S REPORT**

The Clerk advised that, since the last meeting, the Government had now set out its roadmap regarding the phased relaxation of Lockdown. The Town Council’s staff had been invited to comment on any concerns they may have regarding a return to office working and the Clerk expressed a desire to adhere to the roadmap.

Cllr R Holmes reminded the Council that it was going to research the costs involved with streaming physical Council meetings. The Clerk would report back on the equipment required.

The Clerk informed the Council that the latest Covid advice issued by the National Association of Local Council made clear that the current legislation enabling the ability to hold meetings remotely would expire on 6th May. Discussion was taking place between the principal Councils regarding the implication of the expiry of legislation and the Lockdown restrictions. It was still not certain whether the Annual Town Meeting could be held safely before the end of May 2021.

It was felt that the Council Chamber would be unsuitable for physical meetings as attendees were not able to observe social distancing and the need to find an alternative venue was mooted.

17. **CORRESPONDENCE**

17.1 **NALC – Preparing to return to face-to-face meetings from 7th May 2021**

17.2 **NALC – Standards and Civility in Public Life**

17.3 **Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership – Travel survey 2021** – Councillors to respond on an individual basis.

17.4 **Lydney Area in Partnership – Election of Members to Committee of Management**

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- 17.5 Forest of Dean District Council – Key dates for residents regarding election voting
- 17.6 Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils – Election to Executive Committee – Councillors advised that they could nominate themselves on an individual basis, if they so wished.

18. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Council NOTED that its next meeting was scheduled to take place on Monday 12th April 2021 at 7.00 pm, via Zoom.

19. **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.

20. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

It was Proposed by the Chairman and unanimously AGREED that the Confidential Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 25th January 2021 would be approved.

21. **CONTRACT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVICE**

The Council was requested to consider options for contracting out employment law and health and safety advice (including acting as the Designated Health and Safety Advisor).

The Council was provided with three quotations for providing health and safety advice and one quotation which combined both employment law and health and safety advice.

After a short discussion the Chairman proposed acceptance of the quotation from Ellis Whittam for a five-year combined contract to provide both employment law advice and health and safety advice at a cost of £2,322 plus VAT for the first year, commencing 1st April 2021. Vote CARRIED.

The meeting closed at 8.51 pm

Chairman

Date

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Appendix 1

Purchase Ledger for Month No 12

Order by Supplier A/c

Nominal Ledger Analysis

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
01/03/2021	02199		ALPHA WEBSITE	ALP001	45.00	0.00	45.00	4170	150	45.00	Uploading PDF reports
05/03/2021	M/2282/W	112	PHILIP BLATCHLY	BLA001	375.00	75.00	450.00	4305	200	375.00	Memorial Tablet - Probert
05/03/2021	M/2283/W	109	PHILIP BLATCHLY	BLA001	414.50	82.90	497.40	4305	200	414.50	Memorial Tablet - Loew
26/02/2021	INV0076387	131	COLUMBARIA COMPANY	COL001	71.00	14.20	85.20	4305	200	71.00	Cemetery Plaque - Pensoth
04/03/2021	LETTER MARCH	CONTRACT	FODDC	FODDC	210.00	0.00	210.00	4300	200	210.00	5 Green Licences
01/03/2021	EMAIL 1.03.20	47 CONTRACT	GAPTC	GAP001	2,348.41	0.00	2,348.41	4160	150	2,348.41	Annual Membership
10/02/2021	84146	CONTRACT	GREENWORKS SOLUTIONS	GRE001	70.00	14.00	84.00	4110	150	70.00	Ladycare Annual Maintenance
28/02/2021	9140	JY/76 & 85	LIGHT FANTASTIC	LIG001	19.34	3.67	23.21	4610	400	19.34	Duct Tape/Warning Tape
29/02/2021	3703	41	MAKINSON	MAK001	57.00	11.40	68.40	4055	100	57.00	February Payroll
24/02/2021	1624655951		NALC	NAL001	129.76	25.96	155.72	4640	400	129.76	Training
03/03/2021	EMAIL 03.03	37 CONTRACT	PWLB	PWL001	7,643.43	0.00	7,643.43	4230	150	7,643.43	6 Mthly Loan Repayment
02/03/2021	18544	JY/95	REVILL	REV001	53.50	10.70	64.20	4515	400	53.50	Strimmer Kit
05/02/2021	28492	24	RIALTAS	RIA001	200.00	40.00	240.00	4060	100	200.00	CW Training
31/01/2021	CN30921	24	RIALTAS	RIA001	-59.00	-11.80	-70.80	4130	150	-59.00	Refund for Duplicate Inv
28/02/2021	19559	62	TATE	TAT001	140.00	28.00	168.00	4130	150	140.00	Mthly Remote Access
28/02/2021	19566		TATE	TAT001	35.00	7.00	42.00	4130	150	35.00	Lap Top Hire - Feb
01/03/2021	19846	71	TATE	TAT001	77.50	15.50	93.00	4130	150	77.50	Mthly Mailbox Exchange
18/02/2021	0858 AHF494	JY/87	TRAVIS PERKINS	TRA001	40.58	8.12	48.70	4610	400	40.58	Building Sand
24/02/2021	170098289	CONTRACT	WILDIN AND CO	WIL001	787.50	157.50	945.00	4220	150	787.50	6 Monthly Audit Charges

TOTAL INVOICES 12,659.52 482.35 13,141.87 12,659.52

VAT ANALYSISCODE NRS @ 0.00% 45.00 0.00 45.00
VAT ANALYSISCODE OTS @ 0.00% 10,202.84 0.00 10,202.84
VAT ANALYSISCODE S @ 20.00% 2,411.68 482.35 2,894.03

TOTALS 12,659.52 482.35 13,141.87