

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 2021/04/12 – 69

Minutes of the meeting held via Zoom¹ on Monday 12th April 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

Ms J Fox, Chair of Governors and Mr R Brand, Head Teacher – The Dean Academy (presentation only)

Eight members of the public

Miss C Wheeler, Assistant Clerk

Mrs C Whittington, Assistant RFO/Finance Assistant (Minute Taker)

A minute's silence was observed due to the passing of HRH Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh. A further minute's silence was observed due to the passing of Mrs V Hobman, a former Mayor of Lydney. The Chairman spoke on the life of dutiful service which both had led and extended the Council's condolences to the Royal Family and the family of Mrs Hobman.

The Chairman welcomed Ms Fox and Mr Brand from Dean Academy to the meeting. Mr Brand, the Head Teacher, and Ms Fox, the Chair of Governors, gave a brief update on the current situation at Dean Academy. The Council noted that Mr Brand had been appointed Head Teacher at the Dean Academy last May. Mr Brand gave an overview of the challenges the school had faced due to Covid, with pupils and teachers alike adjusting to the new situations they found themselves in. The implementation of lateral flow testing had brought reassurance to staff and pupils alike. Mr Brand praised the students for the resilience they had shown.

The Council was pleased to note that more students had expressed a preference to attend Dean Academy in September.

Cllr Leach thanked Mr Brand for his update and suggested that he, his staff and students might wish to attend Council meetings on a quarterly basis. Cllr Macklin was introduced as the representative for Youth who would liaise with the school in the future.

Mr Brand and Ms Fox excused themselves from the meeting at this point.

1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

3. **OPEN FORUM**

A member of the public advised they had previously requested additional Dog Bins at Naas Lane and Rodley Road and enquired when a decision would be made. Furthermore, they questioned if the Council would be commemorating the late HRH Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh and Mrs Hobman and suggested the provision of memorial benches. The Chair advised that the issues raised would be considered shortly.

Action by – the Assistant Clerk

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A member of the public attempted to put a question to the Council but was unable due to IT connectivity issues. The Assistant Clerk was asked to contact the member of public and request that they submit their question in writing for a response to be provided.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 8th March 2021 were Proposed by the Chairman and APPROVED as a correct record with one abstention.

5. REPORTS

Cllr Preest, in his position of District Councillor, advised that he had held meetings with his fellow Lydney District Councillors regarding the Levelling Up Fund that had been announced by the Government. As a result, Cllr Preest advised that he would be putting forward the Bream Road Junction and Newerne Link schemes as they had been fully costed by Gloucestershire County Council and a consultation exercise already undertaken.

Discussion took place on the Levelling Up Fund and Cllr Harley advised that she had previously attended a meeting which outlined the protocols which underpinned any funding bid and established that a total of three schemes would be put forward on behalf of the District by Forest of Dean District Council.

Cllr R Holmes expressed a desire that a scheme for Lydney Harbour be submitted to enable it to be brought back into maritime use. The Chairman felt it was likely that many interested parties would submit schemes. Cllr Harley felt that it may be possible to combine two projects in one scheme and suggested that Gloucestershire County Council would submit a separate transport bid.

After a short further discussion it was suggested that the Town Improvement Sub-Committee would consider the matter further and that Cllrs Preest and R Holmes would be involved in such discussions.

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 Greenwood, Seconded by Cllr S Holmes and AGREED with one abstention.

Cllr R Holmes expressed concern that large areas of Lydney were still not receiving the Newsletters. During discussion it was stated that the following areas had not received a copy of the newsletter, despite the Council increasing the number of printed copies:

- Queen Street
- Kimberley Drive
- Forest Road
- Primrose Hill
- Manor Road

Cllr R Holmes Proposed that the Clerk be requested to review the delivery arrangements and investigate the possibility of a refund. Seconded by Cllr Leach and unanimously AGREED.

Action by – the Town Clerk

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6.2 **Bank Statements**

The Council NOTED the Bank Statements for month 12.

6.3 **Operation London Bridge – Book of Condolence**

It was noted that the passing of HRH Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh the previous week had necessitated that the work be undertaken prior to the meeting.

It was Proposed by the Chairman that the cost of creating an on-line Book of Condolence (£750) for use in the event of the death of a senior national figure be ratified.

Unanimously AGREED.

Consideration was then given as to whether the Council wished to provide a donation in memory of the Duke of Edinburgh. It was suggested that a donation be made to the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme in his memory and that a memorial bench be provided in memory of Mrs Hobman. Proposed by the Chairman and unanimously AGREED.

The Chairman voiced an intention to provide a donation a donation to Brehal as the planned twinning exchange would no longer take place this year.

It was noted that all the above would be funded from the Civic budget.

Action by – Town Clerk

7. **LAMP POST SURVEY**

The Council considered a report detailing the need to re-survey the lamp posts at a maximum cost of £2,190 plus VAT in order for them to be utilised for Christmas Light features/lamp post banners.

After a short discussion it was Proposed by the Chairman and unanimously AGREED that the cost be approved. Furthermore, that the Assistant Clerk would contact District Cllr Vaughan to ascertain if Forest of Dean District Council would be able to provide a contribution from the Reopening the High Streets Safely fund.

Action by – the Assistant Clerk

8. **REGENERATION AND COVID RECOVERY PROJECT**

The Chairman provided an overview of the action which had been taken to date:

- A consultant had been appointed.
- Walking Workshops were currently being organised for the end of the month and that Councillors would receive training to enable these to be conducted.
- A separate website would be created (www.lydneyforward.com) to communicate information on the project and receive comments from members of the public which would be live from 19 May 2021.

Attention then focused on the site currently occupied by the Co-operative Store as it was felt it may close when the new store opened. This would have an impact on both the pharmacy and Post Office services and on the appearance of the Town. Cllr Harley felt that the site offered great potential and could offer a variety of community uses.

Furthermore, Cllr Harley suggested that it may be possible to form a Community Interest Company to take over the site together with the potential to submit a bid to the Levelling

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Up Fund. It was Proposed by the Chairman that the site of the Co-operative Store be registered as a Community Asset. Unanimously AGREED.

Action by – the Town Clerk

Cllr Harley also advised that the Town Improvement Sub-Committee and Place Studios had been approached by Accessible Gloucestershire with an offer to conduct an Accessibility Audit for the Town. It was noted that details of the cost of the audit had yet to be received but would be considered under the remit of the Sub-Committee.

The Assistant Clerk advised the Council that the first invoice from Place Studios had yet to be received

9. RETURN TO FACE TO FACE MEETINGS

The Council considered a report from the Clerk outlining a number of considerations relating to the Annual Council Meeting and the Annual Town Meeting, summarised below.

Annual Council Meeting

The proposed date of 17th May 2021 was accepted by Council as this would comply with the next stage of relaxation of the Coronavirus restrictions. It was accepted that as all Councils were required to resume face-to-face meetings from 7th May 2021 it would be necessary to hire a larger venue in order to comply with social distancing obligations. Accordingly, Council noted that Lydney Community Centre had been hired for the meeting. Concern was expressed by a number of Councillors over the requirement to meet in person, however, the Assistant Clerk advised that the regulations required Councillors to attend in person if they wished to participate in debate and vote. The Chairman explained that members of the public would be encouraged to attend by remote means.

Annual Town Meeting

The report called for the Council to consider the following options:

1. Hold the meeting by remote means prior to 7th May 2021.
2. Secure another venue to enable the meeting to take place in person prior to 1st June 2021.
3. As the Annual Town Meeting was not a meeting of the Council, to resolve on the grounds of public safety, not to host any face-to-face Town meeting before 1st June 2021, with the Town Meeting to be hosted sometime later in the year when times were safer and the public could be more confident about attending meetings in person.

The Assistant Clerk read out the legal advice which had been obtained from the Council's Legal Representative that legislation required the meeting to be held prior to 1st June, and whilst there were no specific sanctions if it was not held by that date, their advice was that it should be held within the statutory time limits if at all possible.

During discussion it was not felt viable to hold the meeting by remote means and it was Proposed by the Chairman that whilst the legal advice was noted, Council had decided that the Annual Town Meeting should not take place, on the grounds of public safety, until later in the year and in compliance with Covid regulations. Unanimously AGREED.

Action by – the Town Clerk

10. MOTIONS FOR GAPTC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

No proposals were received.

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11. **DESTINATION LYDNEY HARBOUR PROJECT**

The Council received a written report which provided an update since the last meeting.

A member expressed unhappiness with the pointing on the renovated toilet block. The Chairman gave a commitment to feed these comments back to Forest of Dean District Council.

Action by – Cllr Leach

12. **DEAN FOREST GREENWAY**

Cllr Greenwood provided the Council with an overview of the Steering Group meeting he had attended and advised the Council of the necessity to obtain an extension of the 20 mph zone in Forest Road. This would allow a crossing point to be created at the start/end of the proposed route. Cllr Greenwood advised that West Dean Parish Council had requested that a traffic survey be undertaken in the area and he called for the Council to facilitate this. As West Dean Parish Council had not given any indication of cost, the Assistant Clerk advised that a speed survey in Primrose Hill had cost £150. The Council felt that it was not clear from West Dean Parish Council's communication whether it was asking for support or for Lydney Town Council to cover the cost of the survey. It was Proposed by Cllr Greenwood, Seconded by Cllr Leach, that the Council support the survey and cover its cost, if required. Unanimously AGREED.

Action by – the Town Clerk

13. **COMMUNITY EVENT**

Prior to the meeting the Council was provided with a report which detailed three different suggestions for a community event that could be organised later in the year, if required.

The Assistant Clerk requested that the Council decide if such an event would fall under its remit or that of Bathurst Park and Recreation Trust due to the requirement to ascertain insurance provision, budget, etc. Furthermore, the Assistant Clerk requested the Council provide clarification on the type of event required in order that more detailed research/costings could be undertaken by Officers.

During the discussion preferences for Options B (Community Get Together and Thank You) and C (Community Day) were expressed and the Assistant Clerk was requested that the Council be provided with revised information on those options.

Action by – the Assistant Clerk

It was Proposed by Cllr Carr, Seconded by Cllr Leach and unanimously AGREED that the event would be a Council organised event.

The Assistant Clerk reminded the Council that the Amenities Committee held the remit for organising the Council's events and suggested that the Council may wish to appoint the Amenities Chairman as Lead Councillor for the Event. However, the Chairman requested that this appointment be deferred until the Annual Council Meeting.

Action by – the Town Clerk

The Assistant Clerk advised Council that the event was unbudgeted and, therefore, any expenditure would need to be covered by Free General Reserves. NOTED. Cllr Kemsley enquired if it would be possible to utilise the funding which had been given to the Bathurst Park and Recreation Trust by Robert Hitchins Limited for Party in the Park. The Assistant

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Clerk advised that the Trust would first need to agree to approach Hitchins to ascertain its views and reminded all present that approval had already been granted to carry the funding over to 2022/23 to help facilitate Party in the Park for 2022.

14. Consultations

- 14.1 Forest of Dean District Council – Electronic Vehicle Charging Points Phase 1. It was noted that the date for comments had expired by the time of the meeting.
- 14.2 Wester Power and Distribution – Green Recovery Call for Evidence. NOTED.

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

- 15.1 Amenities Committee – Nothing to advise.
- 15.2 Burials Committee – Nothing to advise.
- 15.3 Finance and Scrutiny Committee – Nothing to advise.
- 15.4 Planning and Highways Committee – Cllr Stockham Proposed that Mrs Hobman’s name be added to list of street name suggestions operated by the Committee. Seconded Cllr S Holmes and unanimously AGREED.

Action by – the Assistant Clerk

16. TOWN CLERK’S REPORT

No report.

17. CORRESPONDENCE

Cllr Leach read out an apology from Gordon Blake Funeral Directors regarding the failure of Mrs Hobman’s funeral corgage to drive pass the Council Office.

- 17.1 Friends of Bathurst Pool - Thank you letter in respect to a recent donation
- 17.2 Forest of Dean District Council - Press release regarding postal voting
- 17.3 Severn Area Rescue Association - Thank you letter in respect to a recent donation
- 17.4 The Rifles – Letter from General Sir Patrick Sanders KCB CBE DSO ADC Gen. Colonel Commandant outlining the effect of the Government’s Integrated Review on the Regiment
- 17.5 Mark Harper MP – E-mail outlining the resumption of some services by CrossCountry Trains

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Council NOTED that its next meeting was scheduled to take place on Monday 17th May 2021 at the Lydney Community Centre.

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.

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20. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

It was Proposed by the Chairman and AGREED with one abstention that the Confidential Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 8th March 2021 be approved.

The meeting closed at 20.53 pm

Chairman

Date

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APPENDIX 1

Agenda item 6.1

07/04/2021		Lydney Town Council								Page 57	
12:13		PRELIMINARY PURCHASE DAYBOOK								User: CEHW	
Purchase Ledger for Month No 12				Order by Invoices Entered							
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
31/03/2021	32107	139	ARKELL HURCOMBE	ARK001	80.50	16.10	96.60	4305	200	80.50	Plaque - Price
30/03/2021	1800604787	106	GCC	GLO001	150.00	30.00	180.00	4805	700	150.00	Speed Survey P/Hill
31/03/2021	19799	92	TATE	TAT001	140.00	28.00	168.00	4130	150	140.00	Mthly Remote Access
31/03/2021	19795		TATE	TAT001	35.00	7.00	42.00	4130	150	35.00	Mthly Hire of Lap Top
TOTAL INVOICES					405.50	81.10	486.60			405.50	
VAT ANALYSISCODE S @ 20.00%					405.50	81.10	486.60				
TOTALS					405.50	81.10	486.60				

Invoices for Approval at Full Council 12 April 2021

Supplier	Invoice Number	Invoice Total
Ellis Whittam	SINV025010	£ 2,786.40
Ellis Whittam	SINV025011	£ 307.90
Network Connections T/A Redhand	763	£ 1,500.00
Tate Computer Technology Ltd	19858	£ 93.00
WPS Hallam Insurance Brokers	506095320	£ 675.60
Aitkens Sportsturf Ltd	6671	£ 3,456.00
Total		£ 8,818.90