

# LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

## MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 2021/12/13 – 43

Minutes of the meeting held at Watney Hall, 3 Hill Street, Lydney  
on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at 7.00pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors A Harley (Mayor and Chair of the meeting), C Harris, J Greenwood, R Holmes, S Holmes, W Leach, P Macklin, L Penny, T Saunders, E Taylor and C Vaughan.

Mr S Holley, Town Clerk

Mrs T Clarke, Events and Administration Officer (Minutes)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors S Cave, R Kemsley, S Stockham and S Thomas-Brown.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made at this point in the meeting. However, once discussion of Minute 8 – ‘Lydney Forward – Regeneration and Covid Recovery Project’ commenced Councillor Saunders declared an ‘other’ interest in that some members of her family (not of her household) were employed in the store. Councillor Vaughan declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the same item in that that she was employed within the store and left the meeting for part of the discussion (Note: the Agenda item concerned did not give rise to an actual interest for either member).

3. **OPEN FORUM**

No Members of public were in attendance.

4. **MINUTES**

The Mayor Proposed from the Chair that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 be approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendment:

Minute 7 - Lydney Forward – Regeneration and Covid Recovery Project – Amend the section ‘River Walk and River Lyd Enhancement’ to show that Councillor L Penny had been elected as Chair and that C Harris had been appointed as Vice Chair.

APPROVED with the following Record of Voting: For – 8, Against – 0, Abstentions – 3, Absent/Apologies – 4.

5. **REPORTS**

(i) County Councillor

The Council had received a report from County Councillor A. Preest covering: (a) Improvements to the Lydney Harbour Road, which had been delayed because agreement had not yet been reached with one of the two land owners affected, and (b) Councillor Preest’s support for three of Lydney’s schools by approving ‘Build Back Better’ applications for: Aylburton School’s project about safe use of the internet and prevention of cyber-bullying; Lydney CofE School’s project about mental health; and Severnbanks School’s project about mental health.

(ii) District Councillors

Councillor Vaughan (speaking in her capacity as a District Councillor) reminded

# LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

## MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 2021/12/13 - 44

the Council of its concern that Severnbanks School had lost its crossing patrol and drew attention to the construction traffic (HGVs) from the development of the Fairtide Centre. On one occasion Councillor Vaughan had seen four HGVs on the road during times when children were crossing the road to or from school. She had contacted the Planning Office the previous week and learned that construction traffic from the Fairtide site was not supposed to travel during school drop off and collection times. Councillor Vaughan reported that the District Council's Enforcement Team was putting a case together. Members recalled that the Council had written to support the re-instatement of the School Crossing Patrol for Severnbanks School and asked whether there was any news. Councillor Vaughan asked that she be advised of any more concerns to her collate and relay to the Enforcement team.

### 6. **FINANCIAL MATTERS / RFO REPORT**

#### 6.1 **Payments**

The lists of payments at **Appendix A** were unanimously APPROVED.

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

The Council NOTED the above financial reports for Month 8 (November).

#### 6.3 **Councillor Audit checks**

The Council NOTED that Councillors Greenwood, Harris and S Holmes had undertaken the Quarter 2 audit check with no issues raised.

### 7. **DRAFT BUDGET FOR 2022/23**

(i) The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer presented a Draft Budget compiled from the estimates provided by the Council's Committees and by the two Trusts of which the Council was Sole Trustee. He explained that the Budget required some work by the Council before an Approval Draft could be presented at the meeting to be held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

(ii) The Council RESOLVED not to add to the £9,000 already held for Table Tombs in view of the Churchwarden's advice that some individual tombs could be repaired for as little as £300.

(iii) In addition to the above figures the Council was requested to consider some new proposals from members. After discussing the various estimates, proposals and options the Council RESOLVED:

1. to accept the estimates provided by its Committees;
2. to accept the Grant Requests from BPRT and LRT;
3. to create a new Budget item for Youth Work (£5,000 – for direct activities of the Council, as distinct from Youth Grants);
4. to create a new Budget item for Arts Activities (£500 – to be applied for by the Lead Councillor for the Arts / the Arts Working Group) via the Amenities Committee);
5. to create a new Budget item for Youth Grants (£1,000 – to be applied for by the Lead Councillor for Youth / the Youth Working Group) via the Council;
6. to allow an inflationary increase at Council Tax Band D, measured as the mid-way point of the RPI and CPI figures expected to be announced later in the week.
7. to meet any difference from the Unallocated Reserves **IF** the Budget requirement was to lead to an increase at Band D in excess of inflation.

# LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

## MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 2021/12/13 - 45

The Town Clerk explained that the Draft Budget would be amended to incorporate the above changes into a Final Draft for approval at the next meeting.

### 8. **'LYDNEY FORWARD' – REGENERATION AND COVID RECOVERY PROJECT**

(i) Subsequent to the last meeting, Councillor Taylor had declined to accept the Chair of the Working Group charged with 'Influencing the Development of the Co-op site' (suggested in her absence) so the Mayor Proposed from the Chair that Councillor R Holmes take up the post. The Council unanimously AGREED. It was noted that the post of Vice-Chair (if required) remained vacant.

(ii) Soon after the commencement of the following discussion, Councillor Saunders declared an 'Other' interest in that some members of her family worked in the Co-op store. Councillor Vaughan left the meeting for the remainder of this item building having declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in that she worked in the building. The Council was aware that the Co-op Head Office had publicly announced in January 2020 that a number of its stores "do not fit with the long-term strategy of the Society. This includes the Lydney store." The Council was aware that this uncertainty made the topic a sensitive subject for employees of the store, but the Council had a proper role in identifying future opportunities for the town. The Mayor reminded the Council that later in 2020 it had considered registering the Co-op building as a possible Asset of Community Interest. The Town Clerk suggested that Officers draft a report for the next meeting on the process of doing so, the purpose of the legislation and the possible benefits.

(iii) The Mayor advised that Groundworks were due to provide an update report on the proposed Business Hub in January.

### 9. **STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Mayor stated that a large part of the Strategic Plan was encompassed by the Regeneration Project and this had been the focus of attention recently. There was nothing more to report at this stage.

### 10. **MOTION FOR THE COUNCIL TO REDUCE SINGLE USE PLASTICS**

Councillor L Penny (for the 'Plastic Free Lydney' project) Proposed a Motion that "Lydney Town Council will lead by example, committing to reduce our consumption of single use plastics, and to cease their use where possible in recognition of the contamination and damage caused to the environment. The environmental working group of the council are heading all aspects of the Plastic Free Lydney campaign (with Cllr Louise Penny and Cllr Steve Stockham being on the steering group), as well as supporting all plastic free initiatives in the area." Councillor Stockham (Chair of the Environment Working Group) Seconded the Motion.

The circulated report explained that the Environment Working Group would, "...conduct an audit of all avoidable single use plastics (SUPs) at the Council offices, in our parks, green spaces and at our events, will replace our avoidable SUPs with sustainable or reusable alternatives, while also ensuring we maximise our opportunities to recycle what we cannot eliminate and utilise any opportunities to recycle new materials wherever possible.

We will be encouraging businesses, community organisations and schools etc to get involved and will promote the Plastic Free Lydney campaign through our social media platforms, encouraging the whole community to be involved in reducing single use plastic in our town.

We plan to create a Plastic free Lydney leaflet and distribute in the community, to

# LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

## MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 2021/12/13 - 46

inform them of our changes and how they can also contribute.”

Councillor Penny explained that, so far, the Plastic Free Project had signed up 8 businesses against a target of 15 and the Council’s direct involvement would encourage others to do likewise.

The Council unanimously RESOLVED to adopt the Motion. The Town Clerk invited Councillor Penny to visit the Council offices and Grounds Team Workshop to see what could be achieved.

### 11. **APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND EXTERNAL BODIES**

Subject to adding the appointment made earlier in the meeting (Minute 8(i) - Lydney Forward – Regeneration and Covid Recovery Project) the list was up-to-date.

### 12. **LYDNEY HARBOUR**

(i) The Town Clerk reported having been advised by the District Council’s Regeneration Officer that he had no update since the full report provided at the November meeting, because any new discussion points were due to be raised the following day at a meeting of Lydney Coastal Community Team.

(ii) The Council was reminded of County Councillor Preest’s report on delays to the improvement of Harbour Road, recorded earlier in the meeting (Minute 5(i)).

### 13. **CHRISTMAS LIGHTS PARADE AND SWITCH ON EVENT**

(i) Councillor Saunders expressed her thanks to all involved in preparations and helping on the day. A lot of lessons had been learnt but there had been great attendance and, overall, the event had generally been considered a success.

(ii) It was noted that road marshalling was not so easy due to the darkness and because the roads had been closed at peak times. In future, the Council would have the experience to be more prepared, possibly with additional volunteers from local clubs. The road closures would be better advertised and appear in the local paper. Large banners notifying of the closure date and times would be put on the major routes coming into Lydney – particularly at either end of the Bypass.

(iii) It was suggested that there be more lights, and/or better lights, in 2022. In reply, Councillor Saunders explained that there had been issues with the lighting of the lampposts. The Town Clerk stated that he would like the Council Offices to be lit from 2022; he would speak with the owners of neighbouring Claremont House and Deansgate motel on whether they would like to participate.

(iv) A member suggested that the organisers look into having groups on vehicle floats next year.

(v) A number of members wished the Council to record its appreciation and vote of thanks to Councillors Saunders and S Holmes for their efforts as Event Lead Councillors for the parade.

### 14. **REPORTS FROM THE CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES, SUB COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES AND FROM LEAD COUNCILLORS**

(i) Councillor Saunders requested a list of emergency contact details for over the Christmas and New Year holidays. Such details should also appear on the Council’s newsletter, which should include contact details for the Lydney District and County Councillors. It was reported that a local resident was willing to hold a key to the Car Park gates for Bathurst Park in order to help drivers who found their vehicles locked in after hours. The Flood Wardens tree would be updated by Councillor Leach and the Town Clerk.

# LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

## MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 2021/12/13 - 47

(ii) Councillor Greenwood advised that the planning application for the Dean Forest Greenway had been submitted.

(iii) Councillor R Holmes reported that the Finance and Scrutiny Committee had had useful discussions on changes to the Grants process and other matters at its last meeting.

(iv) Councillor Penny reported that members of the Health and Social Care Working Group had been very concerned by reports of huge problems with waiting times at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital and Proposed that a letter be sent to the NHS Trust and the County Council. This was AGREED and a letter would be drafted by Councillor Penny with the Mayor and the Town Clerk.

(v) Councillor Leach reported that the next meeting of the Multi-Stakeholder Flood Defence Group was due to be held in January. Its first priority was working with the County Council and Atkins on a survey identifying where problems lay in greater detail than had been done before. The Environment Agency was putting in a number of new monitoring points and the group was working well with Aylburton Parish Council and Alvington Parish Council. Most problems came from communicating with Sever Trent Water. However, Severn Trent had raised the electrics in East Marsh above likely flood water levels, which should help in future. Efforts were being made to look into a suggestion that £102,000 was available for a new culvert in a Section 106 Planning Agreement.

(vi) Councillor Harris advised the Council of work done mapping out obstructions to water flows, identifying infrastructure and maintenance failings. The Town Clerk would speak to the person concerned.

(vii) Councillor Harris advised that she had acted as Chair of the Planning and Highways Committee immediately before the present meeting and that the Committee had requested that Councillors and/or members of public be trained to complete a course on how to use a speed gun, as had been done recently in Cinderford. The Town Clerk had made contact with the Police.

### 15. **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

Covered elsewhere in the meeting.

### 16. **CORRESPONDENCE**

(i) A letter of thanks had been received from Pearl Biddle for a grant which had allowed for a Christmas Day 'takeaway' meal to be delivered to a number of residents in need. Councillor S Holmes advised that the cut-off date for any new names would be 20<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

(ii) The County Council had written to ask for feedback on 20mph speed limits by way of an online survey.

### 19. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022

## **CLOSED SESSION**

### 20. **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.

# LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

## MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 2021/12/13 - 48

*Notes:*

*(i) Before the commencement of the next item the Council resolved to suspend Standing Order 3x in order continue the meeting beyond three hours.*

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

21. **STAFF MATTERS – STAFF REVIEW AND VACANCIES**

The Council noted the Personnel Committee’s discussion on the impact of two-long-standing vacancies and efforts to recruit to fill them. *(Summary only – further detail is available in the Confidential Minutes)*

The meeting closed at 9.25pm

Chair .....

Date .....

**LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 2021/12/13 – 49**

**APPENDIX 1**