

# LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

## AMENITIES COMMITTEE – 2021/10/18 – 04

Minutes of the Meeting held at Watney Hall Hill Street Lydney on  
Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 7.00 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors S Holmes (Chair), A Harley, R Holmes, S Stockham,  
T Saunders and C Vaughan.

Councillor L Penny (invited to speak on Agenda Items 8 and 15)  
Mr S Holley – Town Clerk (Minutes)

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1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received and noted from Councillors Taylor, who had suffered a family bereavement, and Thomas Brown.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

(i) The minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Committee held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 were confirmed as a true record, following a Proposal from the Chair. Record of Voting: For – 4, Against – 0, Abstentions – 2.

(ii) The minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021 were confirmed as a true record, following a Proposal from the Chair. Record of Voting: For – 5, Against – 0, Abstentions – 1.

4. **OPEN FORUM**

No members of the public were present.

*There were no Agenda Items 5 or 6*

7. **COUNCIL BUDGET FOR 2022/23**

(i) The Committee was requested to consider estimates for its part of the Council's Budget for 2022/23. The Town Clerk/RFO clarified aspects of the changes outlined in the circulated report, which were accepted subject to an amendment to request Officers to investigate the price of a 'green' replacement for the Stiga mower, which would result in an increase to the £12,000 in the report. The Council would be advised of the new figure.

(ii) In addition to Officers' proposals, the Committee Chair Proposed that the Council be requested to allocate a further £15,000 for Events, which should come within the Committee's remit. As well as a general increase in events, the Committee had an aspiration to start work on a Lydney Arts Festival, probably in 2023. Seconded by Councillor Saunders and APPROVED with the following Record of Voting: For – 6, Against -1, Abstentions – 0, Absent/Apologies – 2. It was felt this £15,000 should be requested as an overall sum, with the Committee to break it down across the likely activities before the start of the next Financial Year.

(iii) Subject to the comments and amendments noted above, the Committee unanimously RESOLVED to recommend the figures in the circulated report to the Council for inclusion in the Budget for 2022/23.

**Action by the Town Clerk**

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### **8. COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN**

(i) The Committee was invited to further discuss its input to the Council's emerging Strategic Plan; including suggestions for use of the Unallocated Reserves carried forward at the end of 2020/21.

(ii) Councillor Penny introduced the Environmental Working Group's recommendation to incorporate the vision of a 'Plastic Free Lydney' in the Strategic Plan, which would start with a resolution by the Town Council to lead by example and phase out single-use plastics and support all plastic free initiatives in the area. In response to members' questions, Councillor Penny explained that the vision was not about recycling plastics but reducing the use of them and that training could be made available if the Council endorsed the vision. The Mayor, Councillor Harley, Proposed that the Committee recommend the Council to incorporate the vision of a Plastic Free Lydney in the Council's Strategic Plan and that the Environment Working Group be requested to continue its work on it. Unanimously APPROVED.

(iii) The Committee noted that the Council had 17 people on its waiting list for Allotments (currently 22 plots and half-plots) as evidence of need for additional allotment land. It would not be acceptable to make such provision an objective for Section 106 'planning gain' because that would take several years to provide the new land. Councillor S Holmes Proposed that the Council be recommended to incorporate in the draft Strategic Plan the provision of a new Allotment site, supported by £25,000 from the Unallocated Reserves. Seconded by Councillor Vaughan and unanimously APPROVED. The Town Clerk requested to be advised of any information on apparently disused allotment sites around the town, for him to approach the landowners concerned. Also, Lord Bledisloe should be asked if he had any suitable land.

**Action by the Town Clerk and the Mayor**

### **9. ALLOTMENT CHARGES**

(i) Further to the initial discussion in the previous meeting, the Committee was requested to consider revised Allotment charges based on a square meterage rate. The Chair thanked Mr Pete Edwards of the Grounds Team for measuring the plots. In order to address long-standing anomalies in the allotment charges a table had been circulated showing the plot size, with existing charges and proposed new charges based on a standard 60p per square metre, while allowing a 50% discount for concessions. It was noted that the new calculations resulted in savings for some tenants, increases for others and some had no change. While some of the increases were a significant percentage increase the Committee felt the actual cost increase was appropriate given that (a) it was tenants who had requested a review of the charges and (b) charges had been frozen for 2020/21 and for 2021/22. The charge for raised beds would remain unchanged. The Chair Proposed adoption of the recommended charges, Seconded by Councillor Harris and unanimously APPROVED. Tenants would be given notice of the change in pricing.

(ii) It was noted that the largest plot was little used, with plastic sheeting over a large part of the remainder. Use of the plot was hampered by a tree in the middle. Given the waiting list, this plot could be split and provide two plots. The Committee was advised that this plot was not being properly cultivated despite warnings, so the tenant was in breach of the tenancy conditions. The tenant

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would therefore be requested to vacate the plot at the end of 2021/22.

**Action by Assistant Clerk (Finance)**

### 10. **CHRISTMAS EVENTS**

(i) The Chair and Councillor Saunders provided an update on planning for the Christmas Events. The Committee was delighted to hear Councillor Saunders' news that she had successfully applied for £10,000 from Gloucestershire County Council's 'Build Back Better' Market Towns Scheme. The grant would support the following Christmas Events planned for Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021: -

- Procession from Hams Road Car Park to the Town Hall
- Lights Switch-on Event
- Extended Christmas Lights up Highfield Road, along Andre Clement Avenue through the Park and on the Bandstand
- Santa's Grotto, to be housed in an 'igloo' (geodesic dome)
- Craft Fair
- Shop Window Competition
- Christmas Tree outside the Co-op

(ii) The Committee thanked the Chair, and especially Councillor Saunders, for their hard work and for submitting the successful grant application. The Town Clerk would complete the grant acceptance form.

**Action by the Chair, Councillor Saunders and Town Clerk**

### 11. **STREET FURNITURE**

(i) The Committee was requested to consider progress being made on the suggestions received for new litter bins, dog waste bins and grit bins. The Chair had considered the various requests reported at the last meeting and had visited the proposed sites with a map showing existing provision.

(ii) After discussing the various requests, the Committee AGREED to the following purchases: -

- Litter bin on the footpath from Forest Road to Springfield Road, next to the bench (purchase cost £40.26 + VAT, plus emptying at £4.81 per week)
- Litter bin at the entrance to the Lake, not too close to the bungalow as to be regarded a nuisance and ideally where a litter bin was previously
- Dog waste bin on the walkway to Lakeside
- Dog waste bin at the junction of School Crescent and Court Road. (Note: The Committee felt the request for a dog waste bin at the junction of Augustus Way and Juno Drive was too close to another such bin already by the play area)
- New yellow grit bin on Primrose Hill to replace one that resembled a black water butt
- Other bins should be installed on new housing estates at points furthest from Highways gritting routes

(iii) The Committee also AGREED to request the relocation of a dog waste bin currently on the rear fence of a property in Lancaster Drive because the smell was offensive to the householder, especially in Summer. The bin should be moved to the nearby grassed area.

(iv) The Committee acknowledged that it had not agreed to every request submitted, but members of the public were sometimes misled into believing dog mess was due to an absence of bins, rather than because irresponsible dog

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owners ignored any provision and would continue doing so. Greater awareness that dog waste bags could be put into ordinary litter bins might help more responsible owners, so Officers would look into acquiring 'Any Bin Will Do' stickers.

**Action by Assistant Clerk (Finance)**

12. **IMPROVEMENT PROJECT- CORNER OF TEMPLEWAY AND HIGH STREET**

It was reported that a site meeting had been set up for Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October to discuss options. However, due to the illness of a key attendee it had been agreed to re-arrange the meeting. The Committee was conscious that the Regeneration Project had also identified this corner as an important site for improvement and a dialogue should be maintained. *(Note: refer also to the proposals for the Queens Platinum Jubilee, in Minute 13 below)*

**Action by the Chair**

13. **QUEENS PLATINUM JUBILEE 2022**

Members of the Committee had been requested to suggest ways in which the Queens Jubilee could be celebrated in the town, with community involvement.

The following options would be explored: -

- Beacon-lighting on Primrose Hill on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2022, in line with a proposal from the Pageantmaster. To be discussed with Mr Derek Biddle and to be of relatively small-scale because of the absence of parking and toilets
- Tea Party in Bathurst Park
- Memorial Bench on the corner of Templeway and High Street
- Planting of two English Oak trees offered by The Honourable Company of Gloucestershire (the Head Gardener to be requested to suggest suitable locations)

**Action by the Chair and the Town Clerk**

14. **EQUIPMENT TO FACILITATE WORK ON THE LYD**

The Committee reiterated the Council's thanks for the work done clearing the Lyd by the volunteers in the Friends of the Forest Waterways group, led by Mr Adrian Lane. In order to ensure the safety of his volunteers when doing future work supported by the Council Mr Lane had requested that the group be provided six pairs of waders, six safety harnesses and six safety ropes. The Committee noted some members' concern about the absence of formal training, while others were content that Mr Lane was an experienced water keeper who conducted informal training 'to task'. The group had its own insurance with public liability cover and assurance had been given that a risk assessment had been carried out before the recent work. The Committee considered whether to require sight of risk assessments before future work, but decided against making it a condition of providing the equipment requested. Councillor Harley Proposed that the equipment requested be provided, along with six pairs of long rubber gauntlets or 'pond gloves' due to a common concern about the risk arising from Weil's Disease (Leptospirosis). The equipment would be held by the Friends while belonging to the Council in order to reclaim the VAT and to allow for use by the Grounds Team. The funds would come from the Regeneration budget. Seconded by Councillor Harris and APPROVED with the following Record of Voting: For – 6, Against – 0, Abstentions – 1, Absent/Apologies – 2

**Action by the Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk (Finance)**

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15. **ARTS WORKING GROUP**

(i) Councillor Louise Penny recommended the creation of an Arts Working Group to recognise areas of work in the town and to involve the community in art events. A draft Remit (Terms of Reference) had been circulated with the Agenda papers. Councillor Penny amplified on what the Working Group might do and explained that it might also be the lead body for a Lydney Arts Festival if such were to be approved by the Council.

(ii) The Chair noted that the circulated Remit said the Working Group would report to the Council rather than to the Amenities Committee. Subject to an amendment to correct that, the Committee unanimously AGREED to authorise the setting up of an Arts Working Group.

**Action by Councillor Penny**

16. **COUNCILLORS REPORT**

No reports.

17. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

7.00pm on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022

The meeting closed at 9.35 pm.

Chair .....

Date .....