

Droitwich Spa Town Council

MINUTES of the meeting of the COMMUNITY AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE held at the Community Hall on Monday 8th November 2021 at 18.25 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs C Bowden (Chairman)
Councillor RJ Morris
Councillor WT Moy (Ex- officio)
Councillor EJ Bowden
Councillor DM Craigie
Councillor Mrs K Fellows
Councillor AH Laird

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors, GR Brookes, Mrs J Chaudry, GA Duffy, J Grady, RP Hopkins, A Humphries & A Sinton

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors RG Beale, NR Griffiths & C Murray

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were none received

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165. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor RJ Morris declared interests in:

- Agenda item 4, Grant application as Chairman of the Scouts Group
- Agenda item 5, Community Pantry as he has always openly supported the pantry
- Agenda item 12, Wychavon Diamond Jubilee Community Recognition Awards as a member of the panel at Wychavon where the awards scheme was changed.

Councillor A Humphries declared an interest in Agenda item 6 – Remembrance 2021 as Chairman of The Royal British Legion (Droitwich Spa Branch)

Councillors EJ Bowden & Mrs C Bowden declared an interest in Agenda item 4, Grant application as their Grandson attends St Peters Scouts Group

Councillor A Sinton declared an interest in Agenda item 12, Wychavon Diamond Jubilee Community Recognition Awards as a member of the panel at Wychavon where the awards scheme was changed.

Councillor GA Duffy declared an interest in Agenda item 5, Community Pantry as a member of the committee at Chawson Barns where the pantry is currently run from.

166. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY & AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 13TH SEPTEMBER 2021

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Community & Amenities Committee held on 13 September 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.

167. GRANT APPLICATION

Due to no further meetings of the Grant Appraisal Panel during this financial year the Committee considered the application made from St Peters Scout Group for assistance with funding to repair their roof at Cockshute Scout Hut

RESOLVED That the Section 137 Grant of £1000.00 be awarded to St Peters Scout Group for funding repairs to the roof at Cockshute Scout Hut.

168. THE COMMUNITY PANTRY

The Committee reviewed the options and feasibility report supplied by the Town Clerk to enable the Town Council to make further informed consideration towards the two proposals put forward by Mr Richard Whittall at Full Council on 27th September 2021 in support of the Pantry Group using parts of the Community Hall land/premises and involvement with their project.

Councillor RJ Morris spoke in favour of supporting Droitwich Pantry:

“Droitwich Pantry started as Worcestershire Homeless appeal 7 years ago supporting homeless people in Worcester and surrounding areas as well as signposting other support and working with other agencies. 3 and a half years ago they set up the Droitwich Pantry and fridge to take ‘end of life’ food from food outlets. Many people struggle with food poverty and the organisation supports them, whether homeless or struggling financially. The Homeless appeal operates a kitchen to support those who are homeless and the pantry collects end of life food from many outlets: Morrison’s, Asda, Waitrose, Tesco, Lidl, Aldi and more... They usually prepare 148 food parcels and serve nearly 600 people a week. If end of life food was not collected by volunteers, it could go to landfill and add to waste. The food also supports those struggling who may feel judged using a foodbank, whilst the pantry charges a small fee and is used by people across all demographics.

During the pandemic the volunteers continued providing the service putting their own health and safety on hold to help the communities. Across the three groups up to date they have provided the food for 362,176 meals, 81,984 of these meals have been for children. On top of this during the 2020 October half term they supported the Marcus Rashford campaign and provided 1080 packed lunches over the 7 days, this support was carried on through the 2021 summer holidays by providing children’s recipe bags for the 6 weeks a total of 1296 bags.

63 volunteers support all activities from collecting food, sorting, food, making up parcels, distributing food and in the homeless kitchen’s making up food. The Group are now looking to provide more essential items, including, clothing & baby items.”

Councillor Mrs C Bowden proposed the following:

“The Town Council recognises the laudable sentiments behind the approach made by Community Pantry group regarding the possible provision of premises in Droitwich Spa. The Town Clerk has produced a comprehensive review of the options which makes it clear that the Council have not got the resources to provide the facilities being requested. In view of this very reluctantly the Council cannot accede to the group’s request at this time. However, the Council will support the continuation of discussions with the relevant partners to find a way forward.”

The Committee voted in favour of this proposal though pledged their full support to helping the Pantry find premises that would be suitable for their needs.

RESOLVED That the proposal was carried that unfortunately the Town Council did not have the capacity within their premises to meet the needs of the Community Pantry though would continue to support them to find alternative premises.
That the Town Clerk would engage with Wychavon District Council to inform them that the Town Council wishes to continue working towards helping the Group establish an operating base elsewhere together with ongoing support for their operation

169. REMEMBERANCE 2021

The Committee were updated by the Town Clerk about how following cancellation in 2020, caused by the Covid 19 Pandemic, the normal arrangements would now resume. This Year represents the 100th anniversary of the Royal British Legion. Full invitation letters have been issued by the Town Council during early October to all Local Dignitaries, Elected Members, Past Mayors, Civic connections, Local Groups & Organisations and stakeholders. Elected Members were reminded to be present at St Richards House by 10.20am at the latest in order to process and be in place for the Mayor to take the Salute from the Main Parade prior to formal proceedings.

Due to the National Pandemic situation there is emerging public health guidance being issued to various participating organisations. This recommends social distancing of 1 metre apart for outdoors & inside and consideration for face coverings. Some of the guidelines do also recommend that post ceremony indoor gatherings should not be attended. This would extend to the Church Service in St Andrews Church and the RBL Reception at the Working Men's Club premises, immediately following the Parade and Ceremony on Victoria Square. **There are no legal restrictions in place and the guidance is recommended and a personal choice at this time. The onus rests with individuals to maintain personal responsibility for their own and other people's health and safety. If in doubt the recommendation is not to attend any public gatherings and to seek medical advice for any specific health concerns.**

RESOLVED That the information was noted.

170. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH ON DATE AND EVENT 2021

The Event arrangements for the day which takes place on Saturday 27th November were updated to the Committee. This year the usual format is to be resurrected which comprises, the fairground, Farmers Market and seasonal stalls in Victoria Square from 10.00am. There will be family activities at the Heritage Centre including the Grotto operated by Droitwich Spa Lions. The Countdown and Switch On for the lights will take place at approximately 4.45pm on the stage adjacent Lloyds Bank. The Mayor will be accompanied by Rebecca Redfern, local Summer Paralympian swimming Medallist, for the switch on. This will be preceded from approximately 4pm by the Salvation Army Band and Mrs Helen Jones with the "ISing Choir". The Old Cock Inn have also notified that they are holding a Festive Celebration Day simultaneously which will feature stalls and live music into the evening. The Town Council are coordinating activity, resources support and publicity to help align both events on the day.

RESOLVED That the information was noted.

171. QUEENS PLATINUM JUBILEE EVENT – SATURDAY 4TH 2022

Further arrangements will be reported at the next scheduled Committee Meeting on 10 January 2022, following a zoom meeting which is planned with various stakeholders on Tuesday 9th January. The next stage is to engage with OPUS Events to help facilitate a Community Reach - Out Session to encourage interest and participation from local performing arts groups. This is in addition to artists already commissioned by OPUS for the event next year. Community participation is a key caveat stipulated within the terms and conditions of the Arts Council supplementary funding that has been secured. Press and forward publicity should also commence during January 2022

RESOLVED That the information was noted.

172. QUEENS PLATINUM JUBILEE – THE QUEEN’S GREEN CANOPY

The Committee were asked to consider suitable local options to support the National tree planting initiative as part of the arrangements for the Platinum Jubilee in 2022. The desired objective is to create a lasting nationwide legacy of new growth trees in the local Communities. They were asked to carefully consider the species and locations of trees for planting due to the ongoing maintenance regime and legacy created for the connected liability aspects. All Councillors agreed they wanted to be involved with this National initiative and would consider locations.

RESOLVED That the information was noted.

173. QUEENS PLATINUM JUBILEE – LIGHT A BEACON CAMPAIGN

The Committee reviewed the options presented for the National network of illuminated beacons as a component of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations next year. The beacons are scheduled to be in place and illuminated on the Special Bank Holiday – Thursday 2 June 2022 from 9.15pm. The suggested elevated location is Dodderhill Church yard which provides a vista point overlooking the Town Centre. This location was used to position a searchlight as part of the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Celebrations in 2012. The option to purchase liquid petroleum gas fuelled beacon for the aforementioned location and arrange for a suitably qualified professional contractor to carry out the illumination process and requisite safety measures was agreed by the Committee. It was suggested by the Town Clerk that an approach would be made to Dodderhill Parish Council in order to ask for respectful permission to use the site and to offer a collaborative approach for the initiative.

RESOLVED That the Committee would like to participate in the National initiative to Light a Beacon at the commencement of the Platinum Jubilee weekend of celebrations and authorised the purchase of liquid petroleum gas filled Beacon by the Town Clerk and for suitable contractor to be arranged to install and light the Beacon.
That the Town Council Officers would approach Dodderhill Parish Council with regards to the proposed location.

174. ARBOREAL SURVEY AND TREE WORKS – TOWN COUNCIL
LANDHOLDINGS

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The Committee were updated regarding several requests that had been received from residents in the locality of Spring Meadow/Door Step Green and Copcut Park recently for the Town Council to consider reduction of sizeable mature trees. Each enquiry had been followed up by inspections including the professional opinion of the enlisted Arboreal Specialist. This has derived a programme of recommended remedial works to cut back and reduce overhang from trees rooted on Town Council land from adjacent property boundaries and gardens. In some cases, trees have outgrown their habitat with canopy and crown reduction now recommended to mitigate against any safety and insurance liability concerns that could arise. The investigations had also identified some further ash trees afflicted by the ash die back disease. This is an irreversible condition and felling to ground is the recommended course. This accords with a similar approach taken for 17 diseased ash trees at Spring Meadow during 2019. The costs are within scope for the land maintenance and grounds care budget allocation.

The Arboreal Survey for all trees on Town Council land holdings is next due in the autumn of 2022 in keeping with the recommended 4/5 year rolling plan and last report undertaken in late 2018. Due to the number of tree enquiries being currently received the Arboreal Specialist has been asked to bring the next survey forward to May 2022. This supports due diligence and proactive management for insurance liability purposes. Furthermore, it would enable a coordinated approach for remedial work and maintenance priorities to continue through summer 2022.

RESOLVED That the information was noted

175. WYCHAVON DIAMOND JUBILEE COMMUNITY RECOGNITION AWARDS

It was updated to the members how the named awards were to be discontinued by Wychavon District Council and were to be replaced with Community Recognition Awards which would incorporate and combine multiple similar schemes run by the Council. The remaining fund from the original awards comprised of £1800, £150 of which was invested by Droitwich Spa Town Council. Wychavon District Council had requested a decision as to whether the Town Council would like this fund returned or donated to the upcoming Community Recognition Awards Scheme.

RESOLVED That the Committee would like the current investment to be donated to the upcoming Community Recognition Awards Scheme.

The meeting concluded at 19.00 pm

Chairman of Committee
10 January 2022

Chairman of Council
13 December 2021

