

Droitwich Spa Town Council

MINUTES of the meeting of Droitwich Spa Town Council held by Online Zoom Facility on **Monday 25 January 2021** at 6.00pm.

PRESENT: Councillor WT Moy (Mayor)
Councillor Mrs C Bowden
Councillor E Bowden
Councillor GR Brookes
Councillor Mrs JM Chaudry
Councillor G Duffy
Councillor J Grady
Councillor NR Griffiths
Councillor RP Hopkins
Councillor A Humphries
Councillor DJ Morris
Councillor RJ Morris
Councillor CM Murray
Councillor AM Sinton

APOLOGIES for absence: Councillor DM Craigie & Councillor Mrs K Fellows.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS SESSION

There were no questions received.

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211. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor RJ Morris declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 10 for Wychavon District Council – Community Legacy Funding, in the context that he is a Member of the Wychavon Executive Board.

Councillor DJ Morris declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 10 for Wychavon District Council – Community Legacy Funding, in the context that he is a Member of the Wychavon District Council – Communities & Funding Advisory Panel that considers the applications.

Councillor AM Sinton declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 10 for Wychavon District Council – Community Legacy Funding, in the context that he is a substitute Member on occasion of the Wychavon District Council – Communities & Funding Advisory Panel that considers the applications.

Councillors A Humphries, CM Murray and RP Hopkins declared non-pecuniary interests in Agenda Item 11 – Neighbourhood Plan Options in so much that they are members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group.

212. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2020

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 14 December 2020 by Zoom Facility, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

213. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor WT Moy read out the attached report. The information was noted.

RESOLVED That the information and report were noted.

214. POLICING IN DROITWICH SPA

The Town Clerk read from the following report which had been provided by Sergeant Sarah Kent in advance of the meeting. There were no questions or points arising at the meeting. The Town Clerk reaffirmed that any questions can be put directly by contacting Sergeant Kent or through the Town Council Officers as required.

Police Report

This is the report for the Council Meeting.

Since my last report to the Town Council we've moved onto another National Lockdown and our work to some extent is re-focussed to reflect this. In the same pattern as other lockdowns some criminal offences have reduced in number leaving us more time to deal with reported breaches of Covid Legislation. As before, the majority of the community continue to follow the rules but a minority are breaching them.

One issue in the town that's been mentioned previously is the 'road racing' that occasionally takes place on the A442 between the Big Bear and the old Homebase island. I was disappointed to see that cars attended the location on the evening of Sunday 10th January with the intention of racing on the road. Officers attended promptly and fourteen people were reported for breaching Covid Regulations, some having travelled significant distances in order to attend. Other traffic matters were also dealt with. This anti-social and sometime dangerous behaviour is a priority for my Droitwich team and we're using a multi-agency problem solving approach to dealing with it in both the short and longer term.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I'm contactable on sarah.kent@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

Sgt Sarah Kent
Safer Neighbourhood Team Sgt
Droitwich and Tenbury Wells
West Mercia Police

RESOLVED That the information was noted

215. HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE

To note that the High School operation is currently reduced due to the third lock down. A further update will be provided from a summary report produced by the Head Boy & Head Girl in due course when restrictions are lifted.

RESOLVED That the information was noted

216. YOUTH COUNCIL UPDATE

To note that the High School operation & Youth Council is currently reduced due to the third lock down. A further update will be provided from the Youth Council when their activities can fully resume and restrictions are lifted

RESOLVED That the information was noted

217. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE UNDER MENTIONED MEETINGS

1. Planning Committee – 11 January 2021 by Zoom facility. *[circulated previously]*
2. Resources Committee – 11 January 2021 by Zoom facility *[circulated previously]*
3. Community & Amenities Committee- 11 January 2021 by Zoom facility *[circulated previously]*

Through the Chairman the Town Clerk updated with reference to the Planning Committee minutes of 11 January, under minute number 190 –Declarations of Interest.

“Through contacting the Leader on Saturday 23 January 2021, Councillor A Humphries requested the following addition. That Councillor RP Hopkins & Councillor CM Murray had exited and later re- joined the meeting due to technical problems.”

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meetings as listed including the addition made for Planning Committee (minute reference 190) be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

218. COUNCIL ESTIMATES AND PRECEPT 2021/2022.

Full Report previously attached with Agendas for Community & Amenities Committee and Resources Committee on 11 January 2021. *[for information]*

To receive and consider:

- a) The recommendations of the Community and Amenities Committee upon the estimates pertinent to budgets within the control of that Committee *[see Minute No 202 of Community and Amenities Committee 11 January 2021]*
- b) The recommendations of the Resources Committee for the setting of estimates for the financial year 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 and to set the precept request *[see Minute No's 207 & 208 of Resources Committee 11 January 2021]*

RESOLVED There were no further questions arising. The vote was unanimous in support. That the information was noted as follows.

That the Town Council request a requirement of £436,259 being £400,140 in precept and a precept support grant element of £36,119. This represents an increase of 3.9% for

a precept of £400,140, with a Band D property increase from an annual council tax of £45.32 to £47.06, an increased amount of £1.74 per annum.

2. That no changes be made to Fees & Charges for 2021/2022.

3. That the Grants Budget (S137 Grants and Sponsorship) be set at £5,000.00 as detailed in the estimates to enable financial assistance for Festivals and Events in the Town. To be referred to the Grants Appraisal Panel for scrutiny and consideration with onward recommendation to the Community & Amenities Committee. An additional consideration for a further £2,500.00 to be made available from the general contingency should the demand for C & A grants exceed the allocated £5000.00.

4. That £15,000.00 towards the planning and arrangements for the deferred Mayflower 400 Event (originally 4 July 2020) be allocated from the Reserves/Events Budget (with a confirmed commitment of 50% match funded from Wychavon District Council).

5. That there be no maximum threshold of grant allocation applicable to the Grants Appraisal Panel recommendations.

6. That the attached estimates, budgets and precept report considered by the Community & Amenities Committee and the Resources Committee at their meetings on 11 January 2021 be approved as final consideration on 25 January 2021. That the appropriate budget and precept request as outlined in point 1, be submitted to Wychavon District Council for the Municipal Year 2021/2022.

219. WYCHAVON DISTRICT COUNCIL - COMMUNITY LEGACY FUNDING.

To confirm the following project and application updates from the Town Clerk. *[for information]*

- (a) Edition Two – Droitwich Spa High School, Community Cabin. Sign off of the construction and grant payment draw down phases with Wychavon District Council & High School representatives was completed on 8 December 2020. Arrangements for the formal opening and Management Committee aspect thereafter will follow in due course and when lock down restrictions permit. Councillor GR Brookes and the Heritage Team had provided the High School with various historic and iconic photograph images depicting the Town and history. These are being considered for enlargement and laminating to provide internal wall decoration for some of the space in the new cabin facility.
- (b) Edition Three – Stage One Application (Expression of interest & proposal) for the Droitwich Spa Augmented Reality Heritage Trail App, has been submitted on 2 December 2020. Agreement to proceed to Full Application received 4 December 2020. Public Consultation work and preparation of the full application (stage two) is in course towards the submission deadline of 5th March 2021. A BBC Breakfast Time Radio feature had been recorded on 25 January for later broadcast and featured an interview with Sarah Davies – Heritage Manager explaining about the project. A digital workshop had been organised by WDC on 13 January to support the application process. Town Council Officers and stake holders had represented both projects for the workshop. A key driver featured the necessity to demonstrate engagement with the community for consultation which should also make provision for non- digital enabled contact. The radio broadcast feature had therefore been taken forward as such a means for contact wider strategy-together with other initiatives. It is planned to also engage with the radio broadcast idea for the Football Club Pavilion application process in due course.
- (c) Edition Three – Stage One Application (Expression of interest & proposal) for the Droitwich Spa Community Football Club Pavilion as part of the King George Playing Fields, Ground Fund Project has been submitted on 3 December 2020. Agreement to proceed to Full Application received 4 December 2020. Public Consultation work and

preparation of the full application (stage two) is in course towards the submission deadline of 5th March 2021.

- (d) For the above points (b) and (c) Elected Members are encouraged to consider production of individual statements of support for both applications. This is pursuant to minute reference 144 of Full Council on 26 October 2020 resolving to proceed with the two Community Legacy applications for Edition 3. Members support was considered an important factor as part of the Consultation Workshop provided by WDC on 13 January 2021 at which the Town Clerk, Heritage Managers and a representative of the Droitwich Spa Community Football Club attended. Statements of support should be submitted by email to the Town Clerk for incorporation with the aforementioned full applications.

RESOLVED That the information was noted.

220. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING OPTIONS

- (a) Pursuant to Minute reference 186 of Full Council held on 14 December 2020 to note the following as updated by the Town Clerk.

- Wychavon District Council have kindly extended an invitation to Elected Members of Town & Parish Councils to receive training on planning matters. The first session is arranged for 26 April 2021.
- Wychavon District Council have kindly offered to support further consideration of options and progress towards a Neighbourhood Plan project. A second collaborative Zoom forum has been suggested for dates in April 2021 to be facilitated in the same format as the first meeting that took place on 13 October 2020. Further details to be provided in due course. Tentative dates have been suggested for Members consideration as follows- Tuesday 13 April 6pm & Wednesday 14 April 6pm.
- Thereafter consideration by Council to accord with the resolution of 14 December 2020 (Full Council Minute reference 186) for the formation of a working group of Councillors and related arrangements. This should include relevant terms of reference, Membership, a schedule for meetings, communications protocol and any political balance requirements where appropriate.

- (b) Any available updates from Councillor A Humphries in his capacity as the Town Council nominated representative for the Neighbourhood Plan Group and his responsibility for communications. The relevant updates may include any brief reports, business case details for delivery of a project and associated costing information.

Councillor A Humphries updated that the Group were scheduled to meet next week. There was nothing further to report at this stage from the Group.

RESOLVED That the information was noted.

221. COUNTY COUNCIL

- (a) Councillor GR Brookes updated the following report.

WCC Report 25-01-2021I propose to refer to a few highlights of County Council activity since our last Town Council meeting.

I am very pleased to report that Worcestershire is the 3rd highest in England for Covid19 Vaccine roll out. This is due to the dedication of all involved and excellent planning and teamwork. Matters have been organised so that there is a reserve list to ensure no time or vaccine is wasted in the event of a cancellation by a member of the public. My wife has already had the first dose having been offered a cancellation, and I am booked for next Monday.

WCC has already spent some £83million to support the response to the pandemic. Despite this, and also having to deal with the flooding issues, WCC is on course to have only a very small overspend at year end. I congratulate all concerned in managing resources carefully and prudently whilst still delivering enhanced services for our residents.

The government is providing more cash for social services and schools and WCC currently manages a total spend of some £1.1billion. Children's services will also see more support.

Further works have been done to improve roads and pavements with safe working arrangements despite the pandemic.

There is more investment in street lighting, and some 46% of our street lights have already been upgraded to LED, saving operating costs and also addressing the green agenda with energy savings.

More work is presently being done to speed up the Section 278 work – This is the improvements to infrastructure funded by developers, where their tardiness has caused problems for residents.

Of course the gritter teams have been busy too!

We have managed this investment into our services and infrastructure and yet still have one of the lowest council tax rates in England [*for information*]

(b) The Town Clerk updated the following two connected matters with regard to Divisional Funding opportunities provided by Councillor GR Brookes.

- To note that the proposed tree planting initiative for Town Council land holdings originally updated as part of Full Council 14 December 2020- (Minute Reference 185). Funding to be covered through a Divisional Fund Award being considered by Councillor GR Brookes. Options had progressed with professional advice and recommendations from the Municipal Planting Contractor. The suggestions are in scope for the available funding. The project will be further updated as an Agenda Item through the Community & Amenities Committee on 1st March 2021.
- To receive an update on lighting improvements for the Community Hall. Funding to be covered through a Divisional Fund Award being considered by Councillor GR Brookes. The Town Clerk explained that the Main Hall had benefited from LED Lighting installation as part of the refurbishment programme a few years previously. This has meant that the John Corbett Room lighting is currently of an inferior standard by comparison. The work had been professionally estimated and was in scope for the available funding. Measures will now be taken forward to undertake the works safely within the period of lock down whilst the Centre remains closed to the public.

(c) Councillor RJ Morris reported on the following matters.

For the impact of Covid 19 and general hardship affecting the Community the County Council lead initiative and first contact point is “ here 2 help” . This can be accessed through the County Council contact options as follows,

Here2Help is a community action response to Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Further Divisional Funding support had been allocated to the DCVS, Droitwich Spa Rugby Club and Droitwich Spa Food Bank joint initiative to support the community with food and welfare packs for vulnerable people.

Councillors RJ Morris and Mrs JM Chaudry updated about a serious fire that had taken place at St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School in the town during the early hours of the day. It was reported that damage was substantial and up to three class rooms had been destroyed by fire. The further impact on the school during the challenges of the third lock down and Covid 19 was acknowledged. Appreciation was expressed towards the rapid response and endeavours of the local emergency services in dealing with the incident.

RESOLVED That the information was noted.

222. DISTRICT COUNCIL MATTERS

Councillor AM Sinton updated the following

Just to let everyone know about the following meeting about the Raven in accordance with our motion in November. Apologies for releasing it before we had chance to discuss it at Council but I felt time was short.

Residents of Droitwich Spa who wish to learn more about the proposed Raven Hotel Site development are invited to take part in a virtual public meeting via the Zoom facility to take place on Monday, February 1, 2021 at 6 pm. This will consist of a presentation by RCA Regeneration, the agents for the proposed development. Participants will be able to submit questions in advance and there will also be the opportunity to ask questions after the presentation.

The meeting will last about 90 minutes and will be chaired by Cllr Bradley Thomas, the Leader of Wychavon District Council.

Log-in details for the meeting can be obtained by emailing the Town Clerk of Droitwich Spa or his Deputy:

mark.keld@droitwichspa.gov.uk

sharon.abbott@droitwichspa.gov.uk

or phoning [01905 774258](tel:01905774258)

Following my report earlier about the Town Prospectus the meeting of the Town Centre Advisory Panel is on Monday 1st February at 10.30 am. It can be viewed on the Wychavon YouTube channel following this link:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzB_cpC7_OjcoROh4mUJhfQ

The log-in details for the Raven meeting should be available tomorrow.

Councillor RJ Morris reminded Members that business grant support was available through Wychavon District Council towards the impact of Covid 19. Take up had been positive from the local business community and Members were asked to encourage businesses to follow up on the opportunity of support. Those affected business which had applied to WDC for the second national lock down period in the autumn were automatically eligible for the current and ongoing third lock down period. Payments are managed on a six weekly timescale.

Councillor RP Hopkins raised concern that a local business had reported to him that they could not contact Wychavon by telephone in order to take forward an application for support. Councillor RJ Morris explained that the initiative was very busy due to demand in the District and the restrictions of Covid 19 meant that Officers were often working remotely. Telephone contact did divert to Officers home locations but the recommendation to apply on line should also be considered. All relevant information can be accessed at www.wychavon.gov.uk

RESOLVED That the information was noted.

223.ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Creditor Payments were presented to the Council totalling £ 3,372.62. There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED That the statement of accounts for payment be received and the expenditure totalling £ 3,372.62 as now appended be approved and duly passed for payment.

The meeting ended at 6.45 pm.

Chairman of Council -----
19 April 2021