

South Willesborough and Newtown Community Council

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Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the above Council held virtually on Monday 4th May 2020 7,00pm

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first virtual meeting of the Council and explained that although a professional video conferencing package had been bought, the Council could only access the basic package which restricts meetings to 40 minutes in total

50/20 Record attendance and approve apologies for absence

Present - Sue Mullan (SM) (Chair) Nick Cane (NC) Peter Porter (PP) Matthew Harris (MH) John Hunt (JH) Charli Wilson (CW) Nirosha Thilagarajan (NT) David Mullan (DM) Louise Wilson (LW)

Also in attendance: Clerk/RFO Rob Woods (RW) and Borough Councillor, Andy Rogers (AR)

No apologies were received

51/20 Declarations of pecuniary, other significant or voluntary interest

There were no declarations of interest made

- i. Updating of Declarations of Interest for the Code of Conduct
- ii. To note the granting of any requests for dispensations and the decision

None received

52/20 Agree Minutes of the last Council meeting and sign

The Minutes of the meeting of 2nd March 2020 were agreed as a true record of proceedings and signed. Proposed DM Seconded NC No meeting took place in April 2020 on Government advice

53/20 Meeting adjourned for members of the public to raise questions on items on the agenda

There were no members of the public present and the meeting resumed immediately

54/20 Receive reports from Borough and County Councillors

AR reported

- a) He attended the virtual Planning Committee meeting on the Newtown Railway Works planning application but not in a voting capacity and delivered his Ward member's report
- b) Outstanding issues from last Walkabout – broken fencing and signage issues have been resolved
- c) The plaque on a wall in Surtees Close requiring attention is the responsibility of the householder and not Ashford Borough Council
- d) Inadequate lighting on the footpath between Albion PH and Turner Close has been logged
- e) Request from PB to replace a litter bin in Alfred Rd/Wainwright Place has been rejected by ABC PB should justify why another is required before ABC re-considers
- f) Allotments – ABC not willing to relax restrictions on use during current Covid19 pandemic
- g) ABC is unable to help the small number of residents who have expressed the need for larger accommodation
- h) Member grants are available for the year 2020-21

AR Noted

- a) Litter bin on football field has been subject to arson attack and request from NC for a replacement
- b) PP's comments about unsightly graffiti in Aylesford Place underpass
- c) Conflicting views of PP/NC on the number of the new lights not working in the underpass and will check

55/20 To note decisions taken in extremis (Covid 19 pandemic)

A report from the Clerk was circulated prior to the meeting and considered. It was proposed by PP and seconded by NC that the Council should approve the list of decisions taken during the Covid19 lockdown period en bloc

Resolved: by unanimous agreement to ratify the following decisions

- 1) The suspension of the Meetings programme**
- 2) Amend the delegation scheme and publish on the Council's website**
- 3) Payment of Invoices – March 2020** noting that Cheque 58 was withdrawn and a further cheque (number 59) sent to the supplier
- 4) Planning consultations**
 - a) 20/285/AS – Conservatory at rear 45 Fairview Drive – **Decision: No objection**
 - b) 20/321/AS Erection single storey 2-bed dwelling 94, Canterbury Rd
Decision: recommend refusal on the grounds of design and in the interests of the neighbours in 92/92a (privacy, loss of visual amenity)
 - c) 20/352/AS – Advertisement consent McDonalds Drive Through Restaurant, Orbital Park – 4 freestanding internally illuminated signs & 1 digital booth screen
Decision: recommend further consideration of the impact that the lights would have on the overall light levels and whether they could be positioned or screened to reduce their impact. If that is not possible or evidence exists to show that exercise has been undertaken already, then the Community Council would object
 - d) 20/ 249/AS - Unit 9, Ashford Trade Centre, Hall Avenue, Orbital Park
Proposed installation of new glazed double entrance doors: fixed and removable external bollards to be installed outside new entrance and new warehouse entrance
Decision – support
- 5) Grant application from The Salvation Army**
it was resolved a) to waive the grant policy condition relating to the support of religious organisations and b) award the full grant of £2000 in support of their work which is benefitting vulnerable people in the SWAN area including a food bank operation from its Hall in Cudworth Road
- 6) Newtown Railway Works -Planning Committee submission and Press release**
- 7) Ashford Borough Council Future Vision to 2030 - submission**

56/20 To receive a verbal report from the Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee on insurance cover for 2020/21 and agree

PP reported verbally that quotations had been received from 4 insurance companies and analysed.

It was proposed by NC and seconded by NT that the Council accepts the quotation from Penn Underwriters on grounds of best value for money

Resolved: Unanimous agreement that

- a) the policy from Pen Underwriters at a cost of £470 per annum represents the best value for money for the Council and is purchased (Action RW/PP)
- b) the Council should not consider the company's 3-year contract option at the cost of £450 per annum at this stage

57/20 To receive a report from the Clerk on Year-end finance, Council reserves and Annual Governance Statements and approve

A report circulated prior to the meeting, detailing procedures and revised timescales was considered.

The Chair emphasised that the procedure should be taken in strict order with consideration of the assertions contained in the Annual Governance Statement taken first and agreed followed by consideration of the Accounting Statement and other miscellaneous matters.

Noted –

- a) as this is the Council's first year of operation it would be impossible to agree to every assertion in the Governance Statement or compare our receipts and payments with the previous financial year as the Accounting Statement returns require.
- b) That wet signatures are still required on the returns despite the lockdown rules
- c) That due to lockdown rules the Internal audit of our procedures has been postponed until 2nd June 2020

Resolved: it was agreed unanimously to ratify the following decisions

- 1) **Proposed DM Seconded PP to**
 - a) **approve the Annual Governance Statement and agree that the Chair signs the statement at this approval meeting**
 - b) **To agree with, and publish the reasons for the negative response to assertions 4 and 7 in the Governance Statement**
- 2) **Proposed NT and seconded CW**
 - a) **to approve the Accounting Statement prepared and signed by the Responsible Finance Officer and agree that the Chair counter signs the statement at this approval meeting**
 - b) **To agree with, and publish, the reasons for year on year variances**
- 3) **To note that the bank reconciliation at 31/3/20 reconciles with the accounting statement**
- 4) **To start the period of public rights on 1st September 2020 in the interests of engagement and transparency**

58/20 To agree payments**Proposed PP Seconded NC****PAYMENTS TO COUNCIL****4TH MAY 2020**

PAYEE	NET	GROSS	VAT	CHEQUE	REASON	RECORDED IN
Chairman	£119.90	£143.88	£23.98	60	Reimburse Zoom costs	IT equipment
Ashford Cattle Market	£561.43	£673.72	£112.29	61	Rent	Office rental
KALC	£1,042.46	£1,250.95	£208.49	62	Subscription	Subscriptions
Ashford Web Services	£500.00	£500.00	£0.00	63	Balance -web design	IT equipment
DMC Technologies	£39.95	£47.94	£7.99	DD	Phone/Broadband	Phone/Broadband
Royal Mail	£266.49	£319.79	£53.30	65	Postage survey returns	Projects
The Salvation Army	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£0.00	66	Grant award	Projects
Clerk	£762.73	£762.73	£0.00	68	Clerk Salary	Clerk Salary
Clerk	£87.58	£105.10	£17.52	67	Phone - home working	Telecoms/Broadband
HMRC Cumbernauld	£221.24	£221.24	£0.00	69	Salary oncosts	Clerk Salary

* Cheque 64 written out in error & not dispatched

59/20 Receive feedback on the findings of the Parking and Traffic survey and agree future actions

A report was circulated to Councillors in March 2020

Councillors had no comments on the findings, the implications of the findings the recommended way forward or the detail of the survey

Resolved – to agree the recommendations of the survey report with the addition proposed by CW that parking is included as a discrete item on future Planning and Highways Committee meeting agendae

The 40-minute window ended at 7.31pm. Members agreed with a proposal, moved by DM, that all members and guests should be re-invited to the meeting by the Chair in a second 40-minute window to complete the business. The meeting reconvened at 7.39pm and all attendees and guests recorded in Item 50/20 re-joined it

60/20 Receive feedback on the new website and e-mail facility

CW reported that the website was not displaying correctly on her device and that the mapping and search engine optimization features are not as specified

Agreed

- a) CW to liaise with the web designer and RW
- b) To release cheque for the balance of the web designers costs as agreed in Item 58/20 subject to consent (Action RW)
- c) To consider moving to a more secure e-mail system in the future (Action CW/RW)

61/20 To receive correspondence/E-mail correspondence

- a) From ABC – a reminder that Councillors should check their Declarations of Interest details and report any changes to RW
- b) A petition received from 10 local residents requesting the Council to provide additional allotments in the SWAN area –

It was Agreed after a short discussion that Item b) above should go to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for further consideration (Action RW)

62/20 Agree date of next Council meeting as 1st June 2020 and items to be included on the agenda

Date: 1st June 2020 agreed

Items to be on the agenda

“SWANcasts” (Action - JH NC and RW to liaise prior to the meeting)

63/20 Forum for exchange of information between Councillors

No further information was exchanged

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 8.04pm

Signed _____
(Chairman)

Dated ____/____/____