

STOCKSBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Stocksbridge Town Council, held remotely via Zoom,  
on Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> April 2021

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PRESENT: Cllr. R J Crowther (Chair); Cllrs. M Milton, J A Grocutt, S Abrahams and  
J Staniforth from Item 409

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405. To Receive Chairman's Remarks and Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Cllrs. C Ward, M Whittaker and A S Law.  
Cllr. J Staniforth would be arriving late.

Cllr. R J Crowther chaired the meeting in the absence of Cllr. C Ward

406. Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no items for exclusion of the Press and Public.

407. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. J Grocutt declared an interest in the following issues: Planning, Highways, Transport,  
Licensing, Housing and Parking Services.

408. Public Questions and Petitions

The Clerk reported that she had received a survey from a local resident in respect to the proposed  
funicular as part of the Towns Fund bid with the majority being against the proposal and  
requesting further information, particularly in relation to the cost of such a venture.

Cllr. SA noted that not a lot of people had looked at the consultation on line and had only seen the  
article regarding the funicular in the Look Local.

Cllr. RJC requested Cllr. JAG take the question to the next Towns Fund Board meeting in respect  
of the cost of the funicular.

Cllr. JAG undertook to do so but added that she felt people should take the time to look at the  
Welcome to Stocksbridge website and make a decision on the proposed scheme overall as there  
was a lot to look at. Various ideas had been tried in the past to get some interaction between  
Manchester Road and Fox Valley, including the Chamber of Trade scheme, to no avail.

*Cllr. J Staniforth joined the meeting at this point.*

409. To Receive Remarks from the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021

With reference to item 366 - 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021 Town Council - Shared Cycle and Pedestrian  
Route between Neepsend and Owlerton. The Clerk reported that the Town Council had given full  
support to this application as it would compliment work carried out along the Upper Don Trail,  
providing a vital link to enable active commuting and leisure trips to Stocksbridge. The  
application had been granted by Sheffield City Council. Copies of this correspondence had been  
previously circulated to members'.

With reference to item 388 - Liberty Steel. The Clerk reported that correspondence had been received from Miriam Cates MP noting the concerns of the Town Council in respect of Liberty Steel and noting that she was very closely engaged with having meetings with management, Unions and the Government to discuss what is happening and had expressed to the Secretary of State for Business the unique value of the Stocksbridge plant and its part in the future of the UK steel industry. Copies of this correspondence had been previously circulated to members'.

With reference to item 393 – Deepcar Recycling Centre. The Clerk reported that a response had been received from the Waste Management Officer, SCC via Cllr. JAG, following concerns raised regarding access and queuing outside Deepcar Recycling Centre. Actions to attempt to resolve these issues were in the process of being put in place. Copies of this correspondence had been previously circulated to members'.

Cllr. SA reported that she was receiving positive feedback following the increase in opening hours and the remedial steps taken to improve access to the site.

Cllr. RJC noted that he had visited the site on two occasions over the last weekend and had experienced no major problems.

410. To Approve as a True and Correct Record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting were taken as read.

Proposed by Cllr. J A Grocutt, seconded by Cllr. M Milton and

RESOLVED:- That the minutes be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

411. Finances - To Receive and Approve Monthly Financial Statements

The Clerk reported that the details of the Monthly Financial Statements had been previously circulated.

Proposed by Cllr. S Abrahams, seconded by Cllr. J Staniforth and

RESOLVED:- That the Town Council accept details of the Monthly Financial Statements for March 2021 as supplied by the Clerk.

412. Grant Applications

No grant applications had been received to date.

413. SLLP Grant Applications

No grant applications had been received to date.

414. Clerks Reports

The Clerk reported on litter picking activities being undertaken by members of the public in and around the area and requests made to SCC for provision of litter picking equipment, noting that the SCC site did not have the facility to submit a date when the equipment was required. The Clerk had made a request for equipment as had Cllr. JAG and the recently set up Stocksbridge and Deepcar Litter Pickers Group.

Cllr. JAG reported that she had been in contact with T Newman, SVP as they had also expressed an interest in taking part in any litter picking activities and noted that she had managed to secure

some litter pickers from them to use on a litter pick taking place on 2<sup>nd</sup> April along Manchester Road, meeting outside the Town Hall at 10am.

Cllr. JAG reported that about 25 people had turned out for the litter pick which had been amazing. Unfortunately, the litter pickers requested from SCC had not arrived. There were now several litter picking groups set up around the Valley and they were all doing a fantastic job. Yorkshire Water also have a Ranger in the Peak Park who does litter picks with local volunteers and they were to get involved.

Cllr. RJC felt it was good if the community got involved as it gave them a sense of ownership and pride in their area.

Cllr. SA informed that herself and Cllr. MW had suggested that the group meet once per month on a Saturday, enabling children to become involved, followed by refreshments in the Council Chamber. All members felt this was a good idea but needed to be deferred until Covid restrictions had been lifted after 21<sup>st</sup> June.

The Clerk reported that she had received correspondence from T Newman, informing that he had submitted a funding bid to the National Lottery Awards for All fund for just under £10,000 to run a series of community clean up events across Stocksbridge, which will pay for SVP staff time and equipment to help the community look after the places that matter to them and requesting £1,000 of funding from the Town Council to kick start this bid. Copies of this correspondence had been previously circulated to members'.

The Clerk noted that in view of the fact that several Litter Picking groups already appeared to be well organised within the Valley it may be better for the Town Council to purchase litter picking equipment, if nothing was forthcoming from SCC, to handout to the community.

Cllr. JAG also noted the forthcoming LAC meetings which would have funding available and suggested that T Newman wait and see what they could offer. Cllr. JAG also noted that L Hible was collating a list of groups and the days they met which would be useful when planning which Saturday of the month for litter picking groups to meet.

The Clerk advised that she had a meeting with Dawn Shaw from the LAC the following morning. Proposed by Cllr. S Abrahams, seconded by Cllr. J A Grocutt and

**RESOLVED:-** That the Town Council:-

- a) would look to purchase litter picking equipment if none was forthcoming from SCC
- b) inform T Newman, SVP to await the forthcoming LAC meetings to apply for funding

The Clerk updated members on information received from YLCA stating that legislation regarding the holding of remote meetings will not apply to meetings held on or after 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021. This would mean that both the May and June Town Council meetings would be missed. As an alternative the Clerk requested that Councillors consider holding an EGM following on from the Annual Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> May, instead of the May Town Council meeting and having a further EGM on 24<sup>th</sup> June to replace the June Town Council meeting, which could be held in the Council Chamber following the lifting of all restrictions on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021.

All members were in agreement with this suggestion.

Cllr. RJC felt it was extremely remiss of the Government not to extend the legislation to enable meetings to be held remotely and he felt very disappointed with the decision. Clinically vulnerable people also needed to be taken into account.

Cllr. JS was in agreement, stating that local democracy was being curtailed. The Government have expectations but the Town Council needed to get back to normal and perhaps an outdoor meeting could be considered for June.

Cllr. JAG suggested that perhaps the Oxley Park cafe area could be used.

415. To Receive Verbal Reports from Members'

a) Cllr. SA reported that she was attending regular STEP meetings the main issue being The Venue which was hoping to commence a gradual opening in May and was hopeful of being fully open by September. They were wishing to engage with the community and were willing to talk to any groups to accommodate their needs, however, there were no grants available for The Venue and it wasn't financially feasible to open the whole of the building for one group as this entailed heating/lighting/staffing for the whole building. The sale of the Welfare Hall was proceeding slowly.

Cllr. SA had attended the Health and Wellbeing meetings, Bolsterstone Archaeological Group, the litter pick along Manchester Road and a Zoom meeting on the Green Deal regarding buses/railways and advice on how to live more green.

Cllr. SA informed that she was being asked if green space was to be incorporated into the Town Fund project and noted that younger members of the community were keen to see the improvements to the Library but not so much the older generation.

b) Cllr. JAG reported that she had attended the People Keeping Well meeting and the litter pick and had dealt with flooding issues on Bracken Moor fields, litter at Underbank Reservoir and damage to the grass verges at the entrance to the car park with ownership being an issue.

Cllr. JAG had attended a meeting on the re-opening of the City with businesses being given information on how to re-open etc., which she had requested included all district centres as well.

c) Cllr. JS reported that he had spoken to a student from Sheffield Hallam on the closure of Liberty Steels.

d) Cllr. MM informed that he had also spoken to the student who was doing his Masters and wanted information on the role of Liberty Steels within the Valley.

e) Cllr. RJC reported that he had attended the Garden Village Community Association meeting and two meetings of Friends of Hollin Busk which was proceeding towards the Enquiry.

Cllr. RJC had also spoken to the Sheffield Hallam student and had undertaken to pass his contact details onto Liberty Steels for them to contact him if they so wished.

416. To Receive a Verbal Report from the Mayor

In the absence of the Chairman the Clerk reported that Cllr. CW had reported that she had a meeting with Gary Beatson, SCC regarding Stocksbridge Youth Centre on 12<sup>th</sup> April at 4pm.

417. Valley In Bloom

The Clerk tabled a request from Stocksbridge Valley in Bloom for £1600 funding assistance towards planting within the area for the financial year 2021/2022. The Clerk noted that this expenditure had been approved as part of the budget for 2021/2022.

Proposed by Cllr. J A Grocutt, seconded by Cllr. J Staniforth and

**RESOLVED:-** That the Town Council approve the funding of £1600 to Stocksbridge Valley in Bloom for the financial year 2021/2022.

Cllr. JAG wished to record the thanks of the Town Council to the Valley in Bloom team for their continued fantastic efforts and hard work throughout the year, in all weathers, which was very much appreciated by all, particularly so during the past year when the sight of the planters along the Valley had cheered many people up.

418. Schools Award

Following recent news reports regarding how teachers are struggling through the pandemic with stress levels etc. also there is an increase in children's mental health issues the Town Council considered something as a thank you to all the children, teachers and staff in the schools in our area. As restrictions are still in place, £100 Book Tokens for each school with a certificate and presentation by the Mayor was suggested. There are 6 schools so therefore the £600 could come out of the grants surplus for this financial year.

Proposed by Cllr. J Staniforth, seconded by Cllr. M Milton and

RESOLVED:- That the Town Council approve the award of £100 Book Tokens each of the 6 schools in the area and a thank you to all the children, teachers and staff for their continued hard work and efforts during the Coronavirus Pandemic.

419. Town Hall Frontage

As discussed at a previous meeting, the Clerk tabled a quotation from Grace's Ornamental Ironworks Ltd to supply and fit a galvanised, powder coated plated rail to the front of the flower beds outside the Town Hall in order to prevent soil spilling onto the pavement. The Clerk noted that she had endeavoured to obtain further quotes to no avail.

Cllr. JAG noted the work undertaken by Grace's to improve the area outside the Pot House shops and felt that the railing should be installed as soon as possible.

Cllr. JS asked if it would be possible to see a copy of the design prior to installation.

Proposed by Cllr. S Abrahams, seconded by Cllr. M Milton and

RESOLVED:- That the Town Council approve the quotation from Grace's Ornamental Ironworks Ltd of £1550 + VAT to supply and fit a galvanised, powder coated plated rail to the front of the flower beds outside the Town Hall.

420. Code of Conduct

The Clerk tabled an amended Code of Conduct from Sheffield City Council, previously circulated to members, for consideration and adoption by the Town Council. The Code had been agreed at the Audit & Standards Committee prior to approval by Full Council before being formally adopted and is based on the NALC model code but has kept the gifts and hospitality limit to £10 and retained the wider definition of bullying from the ACAS guidance.

Proposed by Cllr. S Abrahams, seconded by Cllr. J A Grocutt and

RESOLVED:- That the Town Council adopt the amended Code of Conduct from Sheffield City Council as tabled by the Clerk with immediate effect.

The Clerk noted that this was the Code which the Councillors would be signing up to at the Annual Meeting.

421. Internal Audit Services

The Clerk reported that unfortunately, the Council's Internal Auditor has had to retire due to ill health. The Clerk had obtained a list of internal audit services from YLCA and contacted 4 who are in the South Yorkshire area requesting a quote. Only 2 companies had responded. The Clerk had forwarded both quotes received to Cllrs. CW, RJC and JAG and received delegated authority to appoint Town Parish Audit at a cost of £340.

Proposed by Cllr. J Staniforth, seconded by Cllr. M Milton and

RESOLVED:- That the Town Council appoint Town Parish Audit as the Town Council's Internal Auditor for the financial year 2020/2021 at a cost of £340.

422. Public Bridleway from Station Road to Wharncliffe Woods

The Clerk reported that correspondence had been forwarded from Cllr. JAG received from PROW regarding a consultation with respect to an application to record a public bridleway from the end of Station Road to Wharncliffe Woods, requesting any further evidence which could be of use to be included in an Investigation Report which would be presented to SCC.

Cllr. JAG stated that evidence was required that the pathway was well used noting that this was a vital part of the Upper Don Trail.

Members noted that the route was well used by walkers and cyclists and promoted a healthy lifestyle and reduced the carbon footprint.

Cllr. RJC suggested an enthusiastic response in support of the application consistent with others already submitted by the Town Council for similar projects. The Walkers are Welcome group were in the process of collating a response to the consultation.

Cllr. MW would be requested to forward any comments he may wish to make via email to be included in the response from the Town Council.

423. Towns Deal Bid

Cllr. JAG provided members with an update noting that there had only been one further meeting but things were going through the processes in order to get things moving. Further information had been put on the Welcome to Stocksbridge website. The Board had been split into 3 different groups – Manchester Road, dealing with transport/walkers/cyclists etc; Education and Skills and Healthy Stocksbridge incorporating the Leisure Centre etc. SCC were providing an Officer for each area to ensure things progressed on track.

Cllr. SA enquired if mental health had been covered and Cllr. JAG confirmed that it had.

The Clerk enquired if there was a date for works to commence noting that the Town Council were due to go out to tender for the Christmas Illuminations contract for 2021 and queried what impact this may have in view of the impending works to Manchester Road. The Clerk suggested that it may be prudent to renew the contract with City Illuminations Ltd for a further 12 month period pending any potential amendments that maybe required as they would work with the Town Council to accommodate any last minute alterations.

Proposed by Cllr. J A Grocutt, seconded by Cllr. S Abrahams and

RESOLVED:- That the Town Council instruct the Clerk to obtain a quotation from City Illuminations Ltd for this year's Christmas Illuminations contract, in view of impending works due to commence on Manchester Road, for consideration and recommendation at a future meeting.

424. Accounts for Authorisation

The Clerk informed that approval was required for cheques signed in between meetings during the Coronavirus lockdown, authority having been given by the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Cllr. JAG, a list of which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting.

Proposed by Cllr. J Staniforth, seconded by Cllr. J A Grocutt and

(i) That approval be given for cheques signed in between meetings during the Coronavirus Lockdown, in settlement of the undermentioned accounts.

				<u>Made Under Power</u>
Facility Maintenance Solutions	Monthly water monitoring	£	10.00	LGA72(Sch14P9)
Facility Maintenance Solutions	Repairs to burst water pipe	£	40.00	“
Smithymoor Community Assn	Grant Aid	£1000.00		LGA76(S19)

Stocksbridge Nursery Infant Sch	Grant Aid	£ 500.00	“
4SLC Trust	Quarterly grant aid	£5000.00	“
Yorkshire Local Councils Assn	Annual Subscription 21/22	£1498.00	LGA72(S111)
T H Bisatt	Zoom subscription	£ 11.99	“

(ii) That approval be given for cheques signed in between meetings during the Coronavirus Lockdown, in settlement of the undermentioned accounts in respect of The ARC:-

			<u>Made Under Power</u>
Copymark (Service) Ltd	Photocopying usage	£ 4.18	LGA72(S111)
NRC Services Ltd	Cleaning and materials	£ 602.95	“
Facility Maintenance Solutions	Monthly water monitoring	£ 20.00	LGA72(Sch14P9)
Firths Window Cleaning Services	Windows cleaned	£ 55.00	LGA72(S111)
AquaPoint Ltd	Water cooler charges	£ 50.51	“
Pollards Wholesale Ltd	Refreshment supplies	£ 168.45	“
Micro Alarms Ltd	Alarm repairs	£ 77.40	“
Viking	Microwave	£ 59.39	“
Facility Maintenance Solutions	Blocked toilet repair/lights	£ 40.00	LGA72(Sch14P9)
Firths Window Cleaning Services	Windows cleaned	£ 55.00	LGA72(S111)
Copymark (Service) Ltd	Photocopying usage	£ 6.74	LGA72(S111)

(iii) That authority be given for Direct Debits paid during the Coronavirus lockdown during March 2021:-

			<u>Made Under Power</u>
SSE	Electricity charges – ARC	£1606.99	LGA72(S111)
Veolia	Waste removal	£ 144.06	“
Moorepay	Payroll monthly charge	£ 67.75	“
British Telecommunications plc	Phone charges	£ 43.16	“
Intuit Ltd – Quickbooks	VAT software subscription	£ 14.40	“

(iv) That authority be given for salaries paid during the coronavirus lockdown:-

			<u>Made Under Power</u>
Salaries/Tax/NI/Pensions	April 2021	£3341.99	LGA72(S111)

Chairman