

STOCKSBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Stocksbridge Town Council, held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Stocksbridge, on Thursday, 24th June 2021

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

1 member of the public

37. To Receive Chairman's Remarks and Apologies for Absence
Apologies for Absence were received from Cllrs. A S Law and C Ward.
The new Chairman Cllr. Richard Crowther welcomed everyone back to the Council Chamber for the first face to face meeting in the past 15 months due to the covid pandemic.
In the absence of the former Chairman, Cllr. Julie Grocutt, Deputy Leader of SCC undertook the honour of presenting Cllr. Richard Crowther with the Mayoral Chain. In his turn Cllr. Richard Crowther presented the new Deputy Mayor, Cllr. Joseph Staniforth with the Deputy Mayor's ribbon.
The Chairman reported on the announcement of the death of former Town and City Councillor Philip Wood who had been heavily involved in local groups over a number of years and requested a one minute silence to mark the loss.
38. Exclusion of the Press and Public
There were no items for Exclusion of the Press and Public.
39. Declarations of Interest
Cllr. J Grocutt declared an interest in any Planning issues.
40. Public Questions and Petitions
The member of the public present wished to note that P Wood had been Chairman of the Transport Group in 2014 and wished to pass on thanks for his past work.
The member of the public also wished to report the 3 hour wait for an ambulance for an elderly resident of Newton Grange who had fallen in the grounds breaking a leg on what was a particularly hot day. The lady in question has since undergone surgery and is recovering well.
The Chairman requested that the Clerk write to the Ambulance Trust noting the Town Council's concerns and requesting an assessment of how response times are matching up in this area.
41. April Town Council Minutes
With reference to the April Town Council Minutes – Item 415a) Members Reports, paragraph 3, Valley React. Correspondence had been received from K Travis stating that Valley React have not received any funding from the Co-op for computers and also that Balfour House had never been closed due to Covid nor had any cases of Covid been reported and was open for lettings of empty properties.
The Chairman noted that Cllr. SA had written a personal apology to the Group.
Proposed by Cllr. J A Grocutt, seconded by Cllr. J Staniforth and

RESOLVED:- That the Town Council minutes of 8th April 2021 be amended accordingly.

42. To Approve as a True and Correct Record the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on 4th May 2021
Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on 4th May 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.
43. To Receive Remarks from the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on 4th May 2021
There were no Remarks from the Minutes.
44. To Approve as a True and Correct Record the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on 4th May 2021
Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on 4th May 2021, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting were taken as read.
Proposed by Cllr. J Staniforth, seconded by Cllr. M Milton and
RESOLVED:- That the minutes be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.
45. 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. M Whittaker, seconded by Cllr. S Abrahams and
RESOLVED:- That the Town Council accept details of the Monthly Financial Statements for May 2021 as supplied by the Clerk.
46. Grant Applications
a) Strideout Stocksbridge Running Club
The Clerk tabled a grant application from Strideout Stocksbridge Running Club requesting funding assistance towards the provision of training courses and equipment for the Club to enable more ladies to gain the benefits of running within a group.
Following discussion it was resolved that the Clerk contact Stocksbridge Community Leisure Centre to ascertain if they offered any similar running course with a view to perhaps the groups joining. The Clerk was also to contact the Club to request the percentage of members from this area participating.
This further information would be considered at the next Town Council meeting on 8th July.
47. SLLP Grant Applications
No grant applications had been received to date.
48. Clerks Reports
The Clerk reported that she had been informed by M Kaye, Valley in Bloom that the group were struggling with planting and watering due to there being only 7 members, mainly elderly, with only 2 men. MK had taken the decision to remove the planters from the balcony of the Town Hall and had noted two incidents on the precinct when planters had required re-planting following vandalism by youths. MK had noted that all the planters on the precinct required replacement compost as it was currently becoming waterlogged. The Clerk noted that the group were trying to carry on with the planting until the Towns Fund works commenced on the

precinct and surrounding areas when, hopefully, planting and upkeep would be incorporated as part of the scheme.

The Clerk noted that the Town Hall balcony did look bare and suggested perhaps some miniature trees/shrubs to replace the planters.

Members suggested Valley in Boom contact various other groups within the area to ascertain if they could assist the volunteers. It was noted that most of these groups had been contacted before as well as advertisements in the Look Local for more volunteers. The Clerk undertook to forward the suggestions to the group.

Members noted the state of the grass on the beds in front of the Library. The Clerk noted that the gardeners from Bradfield Parish Council had taken on the grass cutting but last time they arrived to do the work, just prior to the pandemic, someone else was already there cutting the grass. The Clerk undertook to reinstate the grass cutting regime. It was also noted that the triangle of land at the entrance to the Leisure Centre was in need of cutting. The Clerk undertook to find out who owned the land and if it was already part of a cutting scheme, if not it could be incorporated with the grass cutting on the precinct.

49. To Receive Verbal Reports from Members'

a) Cllr. JS reported that he had attended both the May and June Litter Picks organised by Helen Frith.

Cllr. JS had attended the press release photo in support of the Friends of Hollin Busk.

Cllr. JS advised that he had attended Stocksbridge Junior School in his new role as Deputy Mayor, together with the Mayor, to present the book tokens awarded by the Town Council.

Cllr. JS reported that he had attended the Fox Valley Food Festival which had been a great event.

Cllr. JS noted that he had been approached by local residents regarding Rundle Road playground querying why this was still closed after the covid restrictions had been removed. Cllr. JAG undertook to look into the matter.

b) Cllr. SA reported that following issues raised at a Town Council meeting regarding grave concerns with respect to Jessops Hospital, a letter had been written to the local MP following which an investigation had taken place highlighting that Jessops was failing in its role and must put its house in order.

Cllr. SA stated that the sale of the Welfare Hall was still ongoing. The Venue was to open in September and they were keen to reach out to the Arts and Education Groups and were looking to do this in late July in the Council Chamber to discuss how they could best be utilised.

Cllr. SA reported that G Silverwood and Cllr. L Chinchin were to meet to discuss access for people to computer classes.

Cllr. SA had attended the press release photo in respect of support for Friends of Hollin Busk, and the People Keeping Well meeting.

Residents of Coppice Close were continuing to report issues with regard to the building development which was causing problems with blocked drains and flooding due to the inclement weather and lack of clean-up by the developers.

Cllr. SA noted that following the removal of garages at New Hall Woods there appeared to be car maintenance works being undertaken on the concrete bases left in situ and people living close by were complaining. The Clerk undertook to write to the Police to inform them of the situation.

Cllr. SA enquired whether it would be appropriate to put polite notices on peoples cars parking on/around Newton Avenue, asking for their co-operation as it was impossible to walk on the pavement, particularly so if you had a pram or required the use of a disability scooter.

Cllr. SA raised her concerns with regard to the outline planning proposal for 5 properties to be built on land at Haywood Lane as this would create further issues for cars passing and would be almost impossible for large wagons to negotiate.

Cllr. SA was pleased to report that water voles had been spotted in Pot House Woods.

c) Cllr. JAG reported that she had attended the Fox Valley Food Festival.

Cllr JAG wished to pass on her thanks to the staff and volunteers at Stocksbridge Community Leisure Centre who were organising the covid vaccine programme, it was working well and attendance was very good.

Cllr. JAG had taken part in both the litter picks held in May and June, had attended the Towns Fund meetings and the press release photo in support of the Friends of Hollin Busk. Cllr. JAG had also attended a British Legion meeting and they had requested that the flag be removed from St Matthias Church if this was possible as it was in a terrible state. The Clerk undertook to see if she could find out if the building was sold and if the flag could be removed.

Cllr. JAG informed that a Digital Inclusion meeting was to be held to pull provision together with Ward Pot funding being provided to The Venue for the purchase of computers.

Cllr. JAG had attended the People Keeping Well and Oxley Park meetings and noted the playground was well underway.

d) Cllr. MW reported that he had also attended the Oxley Park meeting, stating that he had been most impressed with the group of people and how the project was progressing.

Cllr MW had also attended both the litter picks held in May and June.

Cllr. MW had made a site visit to The Venue with Cllr. SA and felt it was a major asset to the Town which should be utilised to its full potential, it needed to work or it would be lost and felt that perhaps a professional agent should be approach to explore its possibilities.

Cllr. MW commented on the importance of the Steel Valley Project to the area, noting the amount of works/projects they undertook within the Valley and surrounding areas. The volunteers were slowly coming back and £10,500 had been awarded to the group from the Joseph Sheldon Trust and National Lottery for clean ups within the area, fly tipping being an ever present issue. SVP had received payment for works undertaken at Liberty Steels and some works had recommenced, however, they were not starting on any new projects apart from at the Rotherham site.

Tree and wild flower planting had been undertaken in Oxley Park, 10 new cycle routes proposed, flood management works for SLLP, projects in New Hall Woods, Bitholmes Wood and Towns Fund bid, schools and parks involvement.

Cllr. MW reported that he had met with local residents regarding the outline planning proposal for 5 properties on Haywood Lane. They had raised concerns with regard to flooding, overshadowing, increase to traffic and heavy vehicles. This site had formerly been a quarry/mine works and was now a haven for wildlife. Numerous bore holes would need to be sunk to ascertain if the land was viable and it would be a further loss of a green space with ensuing issues of water run-off for surrounding properties should the development go ahead.

Cllr. RJC noted his concerns regarding traffic issues, highway layout, access and egress.

The Clerk undertook to add this item to the agenda of the July Town Council meeting for further discussion and appropriate objection.

50. To Receive a Verbal Report from the Mayor

The Mayor, Cllr. RJC reported that he had attended the following events since the last meeting:- Attendance at both Valley Medical Centre and Deepcar Medical Centre to present the 2021 Awards and plaques from the Town Council in recognition of outstanding efforts during the covid pandemic.

Attendance at Stocksbridge Nursery Infant School and Stocksbridge Junior School to present each school with the £100 book tokens awarded from the Town Council in recognition of their hardwork and efforts during the covid pandemic. Cllr. RJC was in the process of arranging the presentation of the remaining awards and book tokens.

Cllr. RJC reported that he had attended the Garden Village Community Association meeting and the Hollin Busk press release in support of the Friends of Hollin Busk.

Cllr. RJC reported that the Hollin Busk Inquiry had now commenced and he had spent most of the day there giving his backing/reasoning for the application to be refused. Members of the Friends of Hollin Busk were each taking a turn at answering questions on different topics and being cross examined. Cllr. RJC advised that the Inquiry would run to the end of the month and did not expect any decision to be made until the end of July and undertook to keep members informed.

51. Christmas Illuminations 2021

The Clerk tabled a quotation received from City Illuminations Ltd for the Town Council's Christmas Illuminations 2021, as had been agreed at the last meeting. In view of impending improvement works to Manchester Road agreement had been reached with City Illuminations that they would work around any building works at that time.

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

RESOLVED:- That the Town Council accept the quotation from City Illuminations Ltd of £9204 plus VAT for the Town Council's Christmas Illuminations 2021, any revisions required due to potential building works on Manchester Road to be discussed and agreed at the time if required.

52. Accounts and Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/2021

The Clerk reported that the internal audit for the accounts for the financial year 2020/2021 had been completed. Copies of the Internal Auditor's report had been previously circulated together with copies of the Accounts and Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

There was one issue arising on the Internal Audit report, being that staff names were included in the cashbooks re salaries, this ought to be job roles instead due to GDPR. The Clerk had already made the necessary amendments.

The Clerk reported that she had received notice that the external audit of the Town Council's Accounts would take place this year in July. Notice of audit and electors rights had been advertised accordingly.

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

RESOLVED:- That the Town Council:-

- a) Approve the accounts for the year ended 2020/2021
- b) Approve Section 1 of the AGAR, Annual Governance Statement 2020/2021
- c) Approve Section 2 of the AGAR, Accounting Statements 2020/2021
- d) To receive the report of the Internal Auditor
- e) To authorise the Clerk to display the necessary notices

All members were in agreement.

Cllr. SA enquired how much CIL money the Town Council was now in receipt of. The Clerk noted that this was around £58,000 and stated that it would be good to hold a further Participatory Budgeting event but felt that this would best be scheduled for Spring 2022 when it was hoped things would finally be back to normal following the pandemic and also by that time a further tranche of funding would have been received.

53. Towns Deal Bid

Cllr. JAG gave an update on the current situation with respect to the proposals for Manchester Road showing drawings of proposals so far with regard to Stocksbridge Library. Plans had to go through the planning process, be costed through and go to public consultation prior to any works commencing. The decision to start with the Library had been made due to time constraints, a

master plan having to be submitted by December 2021 with works commencing 2022. A Trust Fund would be formed to manage the funding once it is received and when income comes in it would fund the remainder of the project. Public ground works were proposed for both sides of Manchester Road in similar paving to that already in place on the walkway leading down to Fox Valley. There were also proposals to reinstate the steps in the Clock Tower Gardens, all following public consultation to ascertain if that was what residents wanted.

Cllr. JAG informed that interviews were taking place for a Communications person the next day and once in situ it was hoped that more information would be forthcoming for the public.

54. 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 A Grocutt, seconded by Cllr. M Milton and

RESOLVED:-

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

R Crowther	Mayor's Allowance	£1000.00	LGA72(S111)
T Bisatt	Flowers for Cllr. Grocutt	£ 30.00	"
T Bisatt	Zoom subscription	£ 11.99	"
Viking	Stationery	£ 141.60	"
Word for Word Ltd	Plaques for Awards	£ 144.00	"

(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:-

Firths Window Cleaning	Window cleaning	£ 55.00	<u>Made Under Power</u> LGA72(S111)
NRC Services Ltd	Cleaning	£ 664.39	"
Copymark (Service) Ltd	Photocopier usage	£ 5.08	"

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

Sheffield City Council	Business Rates – ARC	£ 523.50	<u>Made Under Power</u> LGA72(S111)
Sheffield City Council	Business Rates – History Society	£ 39.36	"
Sheffield City Council	Business Rates – Bol toilets	£ 58.80	"
Societe Generale	Photocopier lease	£ 194.40	"
British Telecomms Ltd	Phone Charges	£ 120.42	"
British Telecomms Ltd	Redcare Line	£ 43.16	"
Veolia	Waste removal	£ 112.74	"
Moorepay	Payroll monthly charge	£ 141.81	"
Intuit Ltd – Quickbooks	VAT software subscription	£ 14.40	"

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

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