

PADDOCKWOOD TOWN COUNCIL
The Podmore Building, St Andrews Field, St Andrews Road
Paddock Wood, Kent, TN12 6HT
Telephone: 01892 837373
www.paddockwoodtc.kentparishes.gov.uk

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF PADDOCK WOOD TOWN COUNCIL HELD VIRTUALLY VIA
ZOOM ON Tuesday 28th July, AT 7.30 PM**

PRESENT: Cllr M Flashman, in the Chair
 Cllr R. Atkins (TWBC), S. Barrett, D. Boyle, S. Hamilton (TWBC & KCC)
 D Kent, R. Moon, M Ridger,
 D. Sargison, Cllr E. Thomas, (TWBC) C. Williams,

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs N Reay, Town Clerk
 6 residents, Borough Cllr M Bailey
 Mr J White (Project Manager) Mr D Deed (Technical Project Manager)
 Mrs D Haylett (TWBC)

APOLOGIES: Cllr R. Turk,

QUESTIONS FROM RESIDENTS

The following questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting. Chairman's response in *italics*)

Everyone at the July 20th Full Council Meeting appeared united against Southern Water having a pumping station taking up about a third of Foalhurst Woods car park. One of the reasons was that Foalhurst Woods is our only protected green space in Paddock Wood. Why, if there is such strong feeling about this being our only protected green space, are the council pushing ahead with plans for building a community centre on about a third of The Memorial Field when this area was actually bought as a memorial by the people, in trust for the people, for outdoor enjoyment

The need for a community centre in Paddock Wood has become more and more apparent in recent years. Paddock Wood Town Council has for some time been actively looking for a suitable site for such a centre and whilst there were a number of criteria to take into account the most realistic option was to build the centre on land already owned by the Town Council and centrally located so that people could walk to it.

There is no comparison between the Foalhurst Wood car park and the Memorial Field. Loss of community green space to a pumping Station is not the same as loss of community green space to a community facility that will be open to all. Foalhurst Wood, including the car park, is a protected green space with nature reserve designation. At an early stage discussion were held with Berkeley Homes to ensure there was an appropriate buffer zone between the housing and the reserve. Locating a pumping station in the reserve is not going to help. The Memorial Field is not a nature reserve and has no protected species.

Rather than harm the green space, I would hope and expect that the Memorial Field will see an increase in its use from being adjacent to the Community Centre.

As residents have been told previously it is untrue to say that the Community Centre will be occupying a third of the Memorial Field. As the plans stand at present, the area of grass being removed from the Memorial Field is only 15%.

The Memorial Field was not bought as a memorial by the people of Paddock Wood. Research into the ownership of the Memorial Field has shown that the field was owned by KCC who originally intended to build Mascalls School on the site. The deeds show that It was leased to Brenchley

Parish Council in 1948 (Paddock Wood being at that time part of Brenchley Parish). In 1953 a parish meeting was held by Brenchley parish council to discuss the borrowing of £3800 to meet the purchase price of the field, the cost of clearing it, fencing it etc. In 1954 the land was permanently transferred to them. There is no dispute that the people of Paddock Wood contributed money to a Paddock Wood Recreation Improvements fund and that the Paddock Wood War Memorial Welcome Home fund donated just over £1000 to this fund. As a result of their generous donation it was agreed that the memorial plaque should be fixed in the pavilion dedicated to those in the village who gave their lives in the second world war. However, the Town Council has been unable to find any evidence that residents paid for the purchase of the field. In fact, Paddock Wood parish council later tried to sell another playing field to pay back the loan taken out for the purchase of the Mascalls field.

The additional homes are also bringing further green space with them which will be freely available for residents of Paddock Wood to use.

The increase in precept gained from the new houses already built and occupied plus the security of the S106 funds provide the ideal time for Paddock Wood to benefit from a brand-new Community Centre.

In light of the parish poll where the residents took their time to come out and vote. The petition that Wendy Morris raised and received an overwhelming response, far more than the town council ever have and now all the new government changes that are coming into place for public spaces. Isn't it time for the town council to sit back and reflect on what they are delivering to Paddock Wood and not just become a Tunbridge Wells borough tick box in their 5-year plan?

Paddock Wood deserves the best community centre and in the right place. With these unsettling times it has shown just how much Paddock wood residents need open green space.
Don't let this become the town councils Calverley square.

Consultation with the public of Paddock Wood has taken place over a long period of time and started in earnest back in 2006 long before the current Tunbridge Wells local plan was put in place. There has been a wide range of consultation events both large and small all designed to ensure that the Community Centre will meet the needs of the majority of people of Paddock Wood. It will complement the Memorial Field does not detract from it.

As has been said many times the time is already ticking down on the S106 money. Further procrastination could prove to be expensive and changing the location would result in a very significant loss of funds to PWTC.

You mention a petition and a parish poll in your question. A petition was indeed presented to Paddock Wood Town Council in August 2018. However, out of 826 names presented only 594 were valid. Parish polls are only advisory, have restricted hours and no polling cards. There was a 13.07% turnout – 6.98% of those voting opposed building the Community Centre on the Memorial Field and 6.09% of the voters were in favour. The Town Council did not campaign in this poll although a few leaflets were circulating asking people to vote no. Hardly a resounding result.

After both the petition and the parish poll the Town Council did reflect on the project, before voting to continue with it. Town Council elections (for all 13 seats) were held in May 2019. In the East ward four members were elected unopposed, leaving three vacancies. However, in the West ward there was an election in which eight people stood for six seats. Two of the candidates were opposed to the project and neither of these people was elected. One person who only stood on the pro-Community Centre platform was comfortably elected. Town Councillors believe this was a mandate to continue to develop their plans and tonight's meeting is a further step on this pathway.

As part of the next process there are still opportunities to be considered and I am sure the council would support any changes which would reduce the impact on the field. Residents in a town with an expanding population will need not only open space but additional places in which to meet.

In future if questions are asked that have been previously answered residents will be referred to the appropriate minutes. They will not be answered again unless new information is available.

C33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

The Chairman proposed, Cllr Boyle seconded:

That Mr Dan Deed, Technical Project Manager, Mr Jonathan White, Project Manager and Denise Haylett, Head of Facilities & Community Hubs, TWBC should be allowed to speak throughout the meeting without a suspension of standing orders.

CARRIED unanimously

C34 APPOINTMENT OF THE CONTRACTOR FOR THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Members had received two copies of the report, one which had been redacted and published. The full report was confidential to members, and members were reminded that its contents should not be referred to publicly during the meeting.

The Clerk also advised that Mrs H Fenner's name had been left off the list for the evaluation team, and that Mike Ridger was a member of the working party.

Mr Deed outlined the background to the project for members, and explained the process going forward.

The council had given approval at RiBA 3 to move the project forward to procuring the principle contractor. The plans up to that point had shown:

- The scheme's footprint
- Buildability
- Function
- Areas of occupation & their usage
- Structure
- Aesthetic outlook

This provided a basis for improved costs estimating & budgeting. Using that design the tender competition had been carried out.

The technical design and works package procurement will be part of the RiBA 4 phase.

The Council had elected to go for a two-stage design & build approach. The principle contractor will be involved in developing all aspects of the project. There will also be more certainty on budgets as the project proceeds. Any changes which need to be made can be incorporated into the design as the project proceeds. This will involve a collaborative approach on all sides.

The KCC framework was used for the tender process. The tender was issued in May and four submissions were made, by the deadline in June.

The following factors were considered during the evaluation process:

- Design Team
- Requirements to run and operate site
- Preconstruction phase resources – H & S
- Post construction resources

- Overhead and profits were identified.

The returns were checked for compliance

The commercial review was carried out by the independent quantity surveyor from Fairthorn, Farrell, Timms. The quality review was carried out by the evaluation team as detailed in the minutes of 15th June 2020. Neither side was privy to the information being reviewed by the other party.

Commercial Analysis = 60%

Quality Analysis = 40%

The results of the review & evaluation are detailed in the report.

The council was not yet appointing a contractor to build the community centre, but to carry out all the preconstruction work.

Members asked the following questions and raised the points.

Can the contractor be a member of the Considerate Contractor Scheme? *The preferred contractor already is a member*

Foul drainage connection – concerns expressed regarding drainage capacity. The upgrade work should be carried out.

Only one contractor expressed concerns about the SW response all others were satisfied

Will the contractor be happy to work with residents on the design of the building?

The recommended contractor has an open collaborative approach. They will work with the stakeholders.

If a tenderer did not have a bond, were they excluded?

Only tender A provided one, the other three indicated that they would provide one. It was not recommended the Town Council enter a contract with a company who could not be bonded. Frankhams have already been paid for a design, why is the council paying for another design?

The costs are tight on the current design. The winning contractor can look at the buildability & tweak the current design to bring it in on cost. Had the project continued to be architect led it could have been too expensive.

Why did the Council “leave Frankhams”?

All the tenderers had the option to use Frankhams. One of the tenderers chose to do so.

How legally binding is the bond?

The bondsman will deal with underwriters, who will be liable if the bondsman fails. The town council is a small organisation and needs the protection of a bond.

Difference in staff costs between contractors A & D?

This will be to do with the hours allocated – Contractor A is proposing a Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) build which requires more staff hours up front, and much quicker when the actual built takes place.

Is there any commitment to employ local workers within the construction industry? The project could help local workers.

All contractors are local Kent contractors and so is the supply chain.

Will the different construction methods put forward by Tenderer A still allow for flexibility of the layout in the future?

The MMC will allow for that.

Both contractors A & B have used MMC designs, where else have these been used?

There are numerous MMC builds across the county.

Who decides on the 60/40 ratio on price & quality?

That is best practice

There appear to be some tables on the analysis missing.

The format of the report is standard practice as used by KCC procurement.

Who was the tenderer who asked the supplementary questions?

It was tenderer A.

Overhead and profits – although higher for contractor A - is deemed reasonable.

The QS will have market data and will have evaluated the figures from that data.

Tender query register – why were apologies given for confusion?

Pricing document was issued with construction value -so they were aware of what was expected. This generated some confusion which was clarified.

Planning may impact on the cost of the project

How has the effects of Covid 19 been considered?

It is not anticipated there being any supply shortages – the risks will stay with the contractor.

Only two sites stopped work during the lockdown.

The design can be looked at to see if there should be any changes to comply with Covid 19 guidelines

Facilities for the disabled – will there be extra costs?

If there is a requirement for Changing Places, then that will be looked at. The design will have to comply with any regulations which are coming forward.

A member of the working party has experience in this area.

Cllr Flashman proposed, Cllr Thomas seconded:

a) *It is recommended that authority is granted to enter into a contract with Tenderer A for the PCSA for the design of the new Paddock Wood Community Centre up to and including RIBA stage 4, with costs of £216,148.45 for a proposed contract period of 40 weeks.*

b) *PWTC will formally announce the successful contractor on completion of the 7-day cooling off period*

CARRIED 8 in favour, (Cllrs Thomas, Barrett, Boyle, Flashman, Sargison, Moon, Williams, Ridger) 3 Against (Cllrs Atkins, Hamilton, Kent)

Mr Deed & Mr White were thanked for attending the meeting and answering members questions.

C35 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monday 17th August at 7.30 pm

The meeting closed at 9 pm

Chairman