

PADDOCK WOOD TOWN COUNCIL
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**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING held on Wednesday 3rd April 2019 at the
DAY CENTRE, COMMERCIAL ROAD AT 7 PM.**

PRESENT: Cllr Mrs Flashman in the Chair,
Cllrs Atkins, D. Boyle, J Flashman, D. Henshaw, S. Hamilton,
D. Sargison, E. Thomas, C. Williams

APOLOGIES: Cllrs Moon, Steward & Turk

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs N Reay, Clerk
Actin Insp Griffiths, PCSOs Stanley & Fuller, Kent Police
Mrs A Gumley, PW Guides
Mr G Sharpe, Samaritans
11 residents

1. **CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME**

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that Chief Inspector Steenhuis – Kent Police – had sent his apologies. Acting Insp Griffiths would speak in his absence.

2. **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th April 2018 were APPROVED.
The minutes of the meeting held on 19th December 2018 were APPROVED.

3. **GUEST SPEAKERS**

- a) Acting Insp Griffiths introduced himself. He had spent 19 years in the police force and was now part of the Tunbridge Wells Community Safety Partnership. The CSU had offices in Tunbridge Wells Police station and the borough council offices. Its role was to protect the vulnerable in the community.
There are currently 12 operational PCSOs attached to the CSU and 4 in vulnerable persons posts.
There is also one sergeant and 4 community Police Constables.

The Paddock Wood Police Station will be closing this summer and the PCSOs re-located to the Fire Station across the road. This should not affect operational matters.

The local response team had been based at Tonbridge Police Station since January 2018, although Tunbridge Wells Police Station is still open to the public.

The police are aware of the level of anti-social behaviour in the town by youths. The PCSOs were working hard to combat the problem and there is a lot of work going on behind the scenes. There have been several Community Policing operations going on and TW Police have been working with Maidstone colleagues and British Transport Police. A criminal behaviour order has been sought for one individual, however this

must be issued by the court. Many of the activities, however, are not criminal, but anti-social.

It is recognised that there is limited youth provision in the area. Recently a youth hub had been set up in the Wesley Centre. This runs courses on Anti bullying, Risk taking, careers advice & work readiness, in addition sports and arts programmes. Youths can self-refer or be referred by local agencies.

Acting Insp Griffiths asked for help in getting the message out to vulnerable residents on telephone fraud. He quoted several instances where the elderly and vulnerable had been scammed out of large sums of money. The police were working with the Community Banker from NatWest bank and would be present in Waitrose on the 12 April 2019. They were also willing to visit groups and offer advice and support.

Residents then discussed the following issues.

Future police numbers

A further 200 have been budgeted for, and some are undergoing training at Tonbridge Police Station. They will be distributed where there are most vacancies

Cars are sometimes seen driving down cul-de-sacs for no apparent reason.

If seen regularly resident should notify the PCSOs and give them details. Alternatively call 101 or report suspicious behaviour online.

Although the PCSOs have limited powers they do gather information for the police.

Crime figures

The level of crime in the area is very low – one of the safest places in Kent to live.

Shop safe – very good initiative, the CCTV cameras are still live and running and there are no plans to get rid of them. They may however be centralised.

Cars on Pavements

The Police can ticket drivers if they see them driving on the pavement, otherwise it is a matter for the Borough Council. The police can & will put pressure on TWBC to increase enforcement patrols. It is not considered to be an obstruction if pedestrians can pass by.

It is illegal to ride a bike on the pavement.

The Chairman thanks Acting Insp Griffiths for attending.

- b) Groups who have received grant funding from the town council in the last 12 months reported to the meeting on how the funding was spent.

Gavin Sharp – Trustee for the TW Samaritans

The branch has been in Tunbridge Wells for 50 years and has 150 volunteers. The branch needs to self-fund £30,000– 40,000 a year. They receive no government funding at all. They get around 40,000 calls a year and are open 365 days a year.

The Samaritans offer a listening service for those in distress and despair, by telephone, email text or face to face.

The town council was thanked for its contribution to the Tunbridge Wells Samaritans.

Angela Gumley – 5th Paddock Wood Guides

The company was set up two years ago and now has 25 guides with another 5 waiting to join. There are 3 leaders.

A new programme was recently introduced, and the council grant enable new badge books to be purchased for all the girls.

The Town Council was thanked for its contribution.

4. **TOWN COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

In May 2018 Elizabeth Thomas stepped down from her second term as Chairman of Paddock Wood. As her Vice-Chairman I was delighted to be elected to the post of Chairman for 2018-19 by my fellow Town Councillors.

Paddock Wood Town Council aims to provide residents with a high standard of service, and I want to take this opportunity to update you on several key achievements and set out some challenges and opportunities for the year ahead.

The Neighbourhood Plan and Community Centre project continue to take up a lot of our time and you can read more about these projects further on in the Annual Report.

The next challenge we will face will be to examine the draft Tunbridge Wells Local Plan which will be made public in June 2019. All residents are asked to make their views known to the Borough during the eight-week consultation period over the Summer. Much land in the Paddock Wood area has been put forward to the Borough Council for possible development and this is the time when we will find out which land the Borough considers to be suitable. The Town Council will also be making its views known but your views are equally important.

The Council will do all it can to ensure current and future development within the parish are carried out sympathetically and in keeping with the existing community. Flooding, surface water drainage and sewage disposal also feature high on our agenda.

We continuously monitor our expenditure and examine very closely how and where we spend the money. Every project must be considered and evaluated in terms of cost-effectiveness, and benefit to the community at large. The Council was pleased that it has been able to set a budget which is only a 0.3% increase on last year.

We are extremely fortunate with both our staff and our Estates team. Our thanks go to them all but to Nichola Reay and Claire Stewart for the way in which they have dealt with new challenges and experiences this year. I am also particularly grateful for the help that has been given to me as a new Chairman.

I would like to thank all Councillors for their contributions over the past year. We are all unpaid volunteers who give up our own time in order to represent our Community. Our powers are limited but we aim to work with, and, influence Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Kent County Council whenever we can.

Several of our current Councillors have made the decision not to stand again in the forthcoming election in May. Their wise and invaluable contributions will be greatly missed.

If you require any further information regarding matters affecting Paddock Wood please do get in touch with us via the Town Council offices, the Town Council website, Twitter or Facebook.

In the words of my predecessor Cllr Elizabeth Thomas "As Town Councillors our role is to hear courteously, answer wisely, consider soberly and decide impartially. All for the love of it!"

Copies of the Annual Report can be found at the back of the room or online at www.paddockwoodtc.kentparishes.gov.uk.

5. **QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS ON ANY ONTHER MATTERS**

The following matters were raised:

Mr J Thompson for The Friends of Memorial Field stated that they were not against the building of a community centre as was suggested in the Annual Report – just the location. The group thanked the council for what it was trying to do, but it was the wrong site. They want to look at Putlands being converted to a community centre.

Was the Council aware that Fusion was losing money – what will happen in 2 years' time when the contract ends?

Cllr Williams advised that the NP was looking for Putlands to be for indoor sports and that section 106 money had been allocated for improvements. It will not be known if a pool is planned for Putlands until the Local Plan is released.

The Green Infrastructure Policy Objective B states:

To protect and enhance the countryside setting of the main residential area of Paddock Wood.

It was felt that this disconnected to what was happening.

Paddock Wood should be calling the shots due to the level on development

Cllrs Mrs Flashman stated that it was important that residents' comment on the local plan when it was released.

The TWBC indoor built sports needs assessment June 2016 show that £1.39 m had been allocated for athletics – increase the track for 2 – 6 lanes. The town is being dictated to by TWBC.

The FMF had been in touch with TWBC to request a tree preservation order on the Scots Pines adjoining the Memorial Field and Eastlands.

Mr Kent asked why had the council allowed staff to sabotage the cricket square by driving tractors over it and allowing football to be played over it? Why were the funds not available to maintain the pitch?

Cllr Boyle advised that the Estates Committee had received a presentation from Paddock Wood Cricket and had commissioned the ECB to carry out a survey of the wicket. That should be available in time for Monday's Estates meeting.

The final point made at the meeting by PWBA association was that the Town Centre group was moving ahead. The first Town centre Forum meeting was scheduled for The following evening.

The chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.24. pm

CHAIRMAN.