

PADDOCKWOOD TOWN COUNCIL
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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF PADDOCK WOOD TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 20th
September 2021 IN THE DAY CENTRE COMMERCIAL ROAD AT 7.45 PM

PRESENT: Cllr M Flashman, in the Chair
 Cllrs H Atkins, R. Atkins, (TWBC) T Bisdee, D. Boyle, S Hamilton (TWBC, KCC), D Kent, A Mackie, R. Moon, M Ridger, Cllr D Sargison, R Turk, C. Williams,

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs N Reay, Borough Cllrs B. Hills, M Bailey,
 4 members of the public

QUESTIONS FROM RESIDENTS

No questions had been submitted in advance.

The Chairman was asked if she would be allowing members of the public to speak on item C50 Community Centre. The chairman advised that it would up to the council to determine whether Standing Orders should be suspended during the meeting.

The Chairman's comments at the TWBC Overview & Scrutiny Meeting on the 26th July 2021 were also questioned. The Chairman had stated that the Town Council had only considered Putlands Field and not the building itself. The Friends of Memorial Playing Fields felt this was misleading as the building had been considered following several meetings.

The chairman would respond in writing.

BOROUGH & COUNTY COUNCILLORS UPDATE (10 minutes)

No questions had been submitted in advance.

CC Hamilton was asked if she could find out when works scheduled for the Maidstone Road/Badsell Road junction were likely to take place.

CC Hamilton also asked for an update on the HIP.

BC Hills advised that he had joined a meeting with KCC Highways Officers & Churchill Homes in Commercial Road recently. Churchill Homes had undertaken to explore providing funding for additional Parking Enforcement officers during the construction period.

Cllr Bailey reported that the TWBC Cabinet on the 23rd September 2021 would be considering a recommendation that the Borough Council enters into an agreement with Town & Country Housing to facilitate the delivery of fourteen social rented homes, Ten x 1 and 2 bed flats at Hop Pocket Inn site in Paddock Wood.

C46 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest. The Clerk confirmed that there was no need for the

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declaration made at the previous meeting by Cllr Williams to be made again.

C47 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.

- (a) The minutes of the meeting held on the 19th July 2021 were APPROVED with the following amendments:
C39 - Cllr Bisdee was elected to the West Ward & Cllr Mackie to the East Ward.
C42 should read "Cllr Ray Moon & Mr J Thompson from the Friends of Memorial Field gave a presentation"
- (b) The minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on the 6th September 2021 were NOTED.
- (c) The Estates Meeting due to be held on the 13th September 2021 had to be postponed.

C48 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

C39 (g) Parking Enforcement – BC Hamilton had forwarded the attached response following the members concerns about illegal parking in Commercial Road. The Chairman of the Council would raise the matter at the next Business Association Meeting.

C49 MOTIONS FROM MEMBERS

The following motions for debate had been received under Standing Order 9. Standing Order 1 b states "A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded."

- a) Cllr R Atkins had submitted the following motion on the 5th August 2021 and amended on the 6th August 2021.
For the Town Council to ask its residents if it wants to proceed with the community centre project.

Cllr Hamilton seconded the motion.

Cllr R Atkins stated the following:

- The Council was undertaking its most expensive & controversial project ever.
- Residents should be asked if they want the council to proceed
- During the last three by-elections only one councillor who supported the project was elected
- Referenced the Council's Statement of Intent on Community Engagement

Cllr Hamilton supported Cllr Atkins proposal adding that the Council had never asked the public.

The Chairman invited members to comment.

The issues raised were as follows:

Cllr Turk:	In 2019 council elections all those members standing in support of the Community Centre were elected. Those who opposed it were not. In the 2021 by- elections the candidate who stated in their manifesto that they were in favour of the project was elected. The other candidates did not state their position either way.
Cllr Bisdee	Had not realised how divisive the project was and another public vote would make the decision either way

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Cllr Williams	The council had spent time talking to residents at public events over the years. Many wanted the council to “just get on with it” The public and local groups recognized that there was a need for a community facility
Cllr H Atkins	When asked his opinion he gave it during his election campaign
Cllr Mackie	There was a very low turn out for the parish poll, and it was very close result The Town council did not run an active campaign and did not do any canvassing
Cllr Kent	The polling station for the parish poll was only open for a short period of time The decision will be made at the TWBC planning committee on the 22 nd September
Cllr Moon	There was limited opening for the parish poll & no polling cards. 13.1% does not represent the town There was no overwhelming response to the Poll which was reflected in the Council’s decision. The Parish Poll is advisory and not binding How would Cllr R Atkins propose to consult all residents The Community Centre would be a plus for the town Building at Putlands would not be a plus
Cllr Ridger	A lot of time and money has been spent so far on providing information The Planning decision is only a couple of days away now

Cllr R Atkins responded by saying that the turnout of the Parish poll 13.1% and the results would be considered a win at an election.

A member of the council did hand out some leaflets at the railway station prior to the parish poll.

Residents should still have a say.

The motion was put to the vote:

5 in favour (Cllrs H Atkins, R Atkins, T Bisdee S Hamilton, D. Kent)

8 Against (Cllrs D Boyle, M Flashman, A Mackie, R. Moon, M Ridger, D. Sargison, R. Turk, C Williams)

The motion was therefore LOST.

b) Cllr Hamilton submitted the following motion on 6th August 2021

*I would like to propose that, given the current circumstances of economic uncertainty following the pandemic PWT Council asks TWBC as Planning Authority and the three developers who are providing 106 contributions for the community facility, to consent, in **principle (subject to negotiation)**, to vary the terms of the agreements to allow flexibility and extend deadlines (by a reasonable time) in order to:*

1. Allow engagement with stakeholders, new residents, and the Master Planning process so that current data is compiled, and the market can be tested in order that any site or location is fit for purpose and public money is appropriately used.

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2 Allow proper assessment and scrutiny, by engagement with competent persons and stakeholders, of the suitability of different locations to provide the facilities identified as required based on current evidence and data.

3. Allow existing facilities to recover in the post COVID economic climate. For example, School halls, Church halls, Masonic Hall, Wesley Centre, and other providers.

Cllr H Atkins seconded the motion.

Cllr Hamilton stated the following:

- An election does not reflect the views of the public
- Members are voted to individual wards
- The parish poll was democratic
- Putting the proposal forward due to economic concerns following the covid 19 pandemic
- The council has not engaged with stakeholders or carried out proper scrutiny
- Many local venues will be struggling following the pandemic
- It was misleading to say that the S106 money would be lost.

The Chairman invited members to comment.

The issues raised were as follows:

Cllr H Atkins	Even if PP does go through no reason not to go ahead with the project The motion makes no change – just asking for more time
Cllr Boyle	The impact of the loss of the S106 money should be put forward. Developers will try to get out of paying the money if they can
Cllr Kent	Would be prudent to talk to developers If the application is refused on the 22 nd September then will lose everything
Cllr Turk	Is now the best time economically to proceed Low interest rates Inflation is coming Creates work for local people The country is recovering from Covid 19 Delays will cost more money
Cllr Ridger	Other facilities can obtain grants to support them The council has carried out proper assessment If the S106 legal agreements fall through then the developers will keep the money
Cllr Sargison	Can Cllr Hamilton give ballpark figures on the savings possible if the proposals are taken up
Cllr Williams	The council has already received the first s 106 payment Other halls are back open and busy Many of the issues have been addressed – have consulted with the public at events and listened to feed back
Cllr Moon	The parish poll is not mentioned in the motion The Town Council has engaged with the community although there is some disagreement Residents of PW will be the losers if delayed

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Cllr Hamilton responded by saying:

There is no Plan B if planning permission is refused then all will be the losers. She had spoken to the developers, and they would re-consider re-negotiation.

She was asking for flexibility and asking what the responsible thing is to do.

Cllr Moon complained about Cllr Hamilton's use of the word "silly" during her response.

The motion was put to the vote:

4 in favour (Cllrs H Atkins, R Atkins, S Hamilton, D. Kent)

8 Against (Cllrs D Boyle, M Flashman, A Mackie, R. Moon, M Ridger, D. Sargison, R. Turk, C Williams)

1 abstention Cllr T Bisdee

The motion was therefore LOST.

C50 COMMUNITY CENTRE

a) Borrowing Approval has been received from the Ministry of Communities, Housing & Local Government. The Town Council may now apply to the PWLB for the required loan.

The Clerk advised that it would be up to members to decide how to cover loan repayments if they increase to more than currently budgeted £60 k. It was also pointed out that the new houses being built in Paddock Wood will increase the council tax income.

b) At a meeting of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Monday 26 July 2021 a petition relating to the Memorial Playing Field was considered in accordance with the Borough Council's published Petition Scheme. The petition related to the Town Council's plans for a new community centre on the Memorial Field. The Council Chairman & Mr Fred Lemont spoke on behalf of the project.

The O & S committee passed the following resolution.

"To forward to Paddock Wood Town Council, without prejudice, the petition and all submissions made to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 26 July 2021."

Cllr Hamilton proposed Cllr H Atkins seconded:

That the Council should suspend Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak during this item.

Voting 5 in favour

7 against

1 abstention

The motion was therefore LOST

Members briefly discussed the response from the Borough Council.

Cllr Williams proposed, Cllr Moon seconded:

As there was nothing new in the documents the Council should note the information and move on.

CARRIED 9 in favour (Cllrs D Boyle, M Flashman, A Mackie, R. Moon, M Ridger, D. Sargison, R. Turk, C Williams)

Against (Cllr R Atkins)

Abstained – (Cllrs H Atkins, Hamilton, T. Bisdee, D. Kent)

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- c) Working Party – a newsletter was being distributed to all residents. The clerk advised that due to delivery difficulties the distribution was taking longer than expected. The newsletter focussed on the Centre’s environmental sustainability. It was confirmed that there would be electric car charging points. Cllr Mackie & Mr Lemont had attended the U3A open event to promote the project.
The clerk was asked to forward the hall usage survey which had previously been carried out, to all members.
- d) The Planning Application is due to be considered by the TWBC Planning Committee on 22nd September 2021.
- e) The minutes of the board meeting held on 7th July 2021 are available on the website. The Chairman advised that once the final figures were available they would be submitted to members for consideration. She also advised that the membership of the board was as agreed in the governance document.
The Risk Register would be sent to members as soon as it was available.

C51 FINANCE

- (a) The receipts list voucher nos: 147 – 157 was NOTED
- (b) Cllr Flashman proposed, Cllr Boyle seconded:
That the payments list voucher nos:224 – 314 was APPROVED
CARRIED unanimously

C52 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The August meeting was cancelled due to lack of business and the September meeting was inquorate.

The group were waiting for the AECOM report.

C53 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES

- (a) Chairman’s meeting - meeting rescheduled for October.
- (b) Paddock Wood Business Association – meeting due to be held this week
- (c) Bereko Committee – had manned one of the water stations for the PW half Marathon which had been a rewarding fund raising event for the group.
- (d) KALC - meeting rescheduled for October.
- (e) Medway Valley Line – No meeting
- (f) Hop Pickers Line – meeting due 21st September 2021
- (g) Youth Council – group had met to plan the activities for the following year. They were also obtaining references for another adult to help with the group. During the last 12 months most meetings had been informal without minutes being taken of the meetings.
- (h) Putlands Leisure Centre Liaison meeting – a meeting was to be set up shortly.
- (i) Liaison Meeting with developers – Cllrs Flashman & Williams had met with Redrow & Persimmons. They will shortly be starting a website exhibition and consultation. The consultation will aid their plans and the expectation is that the plans will go ahead as the site is not in the AONB or Green Belt, despite the local plan not yet being passed. Members had a discussion on the importance of social housing, and the lack of provision in the area.

The Clerk reported that Churchill Homes plan to demolish the buildings on the Commercial Road site in October. The footway & parking would be blocked off during that period but would be re-opened in November for the Christmas period.

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Building work would commence in the new year when the parking and footway would again be blocked off. Temporary pedestrian lights would be installed either side of the site.

Churchill Homes would also notify resident of Commercial Road of their plans and the Clerk had offered the use of one of the notice boards by the carpark for them to post updates.

There was concern that there was no onsite parking for contractors but Cllr Hills had suggested they contact Network Rail to see if they could negotiate parking in the station car parks.

- (j) **Strategic Sites Meeting & Future Development Plans**
The Chairman reported that meetings had been scaled back to quarterly, with meetings with the Town Council and Neighbourhood Plan group continuing in between the official meetings. TWBC had been in contact with Network Rail &
- (k) **Royal British Legion – National Remembrance** would commence on the 28th October, with collections continuing up until 13th November. It will be the 100th anniversary of the first ever Remembrance Parade. The Parade would start at the church at 10.15 am with the service commencing at the war memorial at 10.30 pm.

C54 URGENT MATTER FROM THE POSTPONED ESTATES COMMITTEE

This matter has been added to the agenda as the PW & District Lions are waiting for a response so that they can proceed with bookings for next year.

PADDOCK WOOD CARNIVAL & ROCKIN' IN THE REC

Paddock Wood & District Lions have contacted the Council seeking permission to move the Carnival 'weekend' to run on the Saturday and Sunday - with Rockin in the Rec taking place on Saturday evening and maintaining the finish time of 9:30pm and the Parade and Fete to be held on the Sunday. This would be a trial for next year.

Members expressed some concerns about whether the fair would want to stay for the Sunday.

Cllr Hamilton proposed, Cllr Flashman seconded:

That the Council agreed in principle to the changes proposed. This would be a trial for 2022.

CARRIED unanimously

C55 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monday 18th October 2021.

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