

PADDOCK WOOD TOWN COUNCIL
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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF PADDOCK WOOD TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON Monday 17th
April 2023 at 7.45 pm in The Day Centre, Commercial Road, Paddock Wood

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs N Reay, Town Clerk
 Mr C Smith, Estates Manager
 Mr J White, (Project Surveyor for Community Centre)
 Borough Cllr S. Wakeman, N Warne
 4 residents

APOLOGY: S. Hamilton, (KCC)

QUESTIONS FROM RESIDENTS (15 minutes)

The follow questions/comments were asked:

It doesn't project a good image of the council when items are discussed in closed session.

The chairman advised that the Clerk would write stating why the items were in closed session.

Two residents present had been elected un-opposed on to the west ward – could they remain if the council was in closed session.

The chairman advised that as they were not yet councillors they could not.

BOROUGH & COUNTY COUNCILLORS UPDATE (10 minutes)

There were no questions for the Borough or County Councillors

C140 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

C141 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.

Copies of draft minutes can be found on the Town Council website.

- (a) The minutes from the meeting held on 20th March 2023 were APPROVED.
- (b) The minutes from the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 20th March 2023 were NOTED. There was no meeting on the 3rd April 2023.
- (c) The minutes from the Estates Committee held on 11th April 2023 were NOTED.

C142 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES NOT INCLUDED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

QUESTIONS FROM RESIDENTS: The following questions were asked at the previous meeting. A response has been sent as follows –

When will the Memorial car park re-open to the public? This will be considered by the Council at this meeting later on the agenda.

Signed Council Chairman:

Date:

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As a member of the working party the resident would like to know where the additional funding for the fit out had come from? This was more to do with cash flow than shortage of funds.

It had been noted that the town council element of the council tax bill had increased by 41%. How were residents supposed to find out about the town council activities as the noticeboards in the town centre were not up to date? It was acknowledged that due to staff shortages the noticeboards had not been kept as up to date as they should have been. The Estates Committee had agreed to the removal of the Public Rights of Way Board by the car park as this was not a formal noticeboard and impractical to use on a regular basis.

C143 COMMUNITY CENTRE

It is proposed to hold a confidential session at the end of the meeting with the project manager to receive an update on the current financial position and the leases.

Borough Councillor Nance Warne was invited to address the meeting. B Cllr Warne had been the Borough representative on the CC Board. She congratulated the council on completing the project.

The following issues were raised before moving onto the agenda items below:

- Breakdown of the costs of the tennis courts & cricket wicket – a total of £151K of section 106 funding had been received for this element of the project. This included indexation from the time the agreement was signed. The PM would supply the breakdown. Money from S106 funding must be spent on the community centre.
- Notes of meeting of working party meetings held in January and March – Due to the absence of a notetaker, notes were combined from the two meetings and summarised the key points discussed at the two meetings.
- Members were advised the following:
 - There were drop down bollards across the entrance to the centre.
 - Work had been carried out to the tennis courts to correct the uneven surface of the tennis courts.
 - Discussions were being had with a local supplier to see whether he could provide the preferred chairs at a better price.
 - The furniture for the Elizabeth Thomas room had been funded by Cllrs Flashman and Williams – this had been bought “nearly new” and did not need to be funded from the project budget.
 - The furniture for the Centre manager was also “nearly new”.
 - A local garden centre was interested in providing the outside café furniture but needed to visit the site to assess what would be suitable.
 - There was no integrated hearing loop as the project group had been advised that it would not work with 3 separate halls which could be opened into one big one. Portable hearing loops would be purchased instead.
 - The final details of opening and closing the centre were yet to be finalised – but it would either be the centre manager or volunteers.
 - The chairman stated that any further questions on the project should be submitted to the Clerk in writing and a response would be sent.

Signed Council Chairman:

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- a) Members discussed the position of the project board and whether was still required. (Governance document previously circulated)
Following a discussion it was felt that the board had fulfilled its function and delivered the building. Apart from a few minor issues to sort out most of the work would be carried out by the Directors of the management company going forward.

Cllr Boyle proposed, Cllr Williams seconded:

The project board should be wound up after its final meeting this week.

CARRIED unanimously.

- b) Car Park - Members considered requests to open the car park at Memorial Field. The clerk raised concerns that whilst the hoardings remained in place the enclosed area at the back of the building would be accessible if the car park was opened. As the building was protected by CCTV this was not considered to a concern.

Following a discussion on the practicalities of opening the car park

Cllr Moon proposed, Cllr Williams seconded:

That the car park should be opened to the public as soon as possible.

CARRIED 7 in favour, 4 against, 1 abstention.

The clerk and estates manager would discuss with the contractors whether it would be possible to remove one of the panels in the temporary fencing to allow direct access onto the field.

- c) The centre manager has now been appointed and will start work on the 24th April 2023.

- d) Fit out –

Cllr Flashman proposed Cllr R Atkins seconded:

That Standing Orders should be suspended to allow a member of the public to speak.

CARRIED unanimously.

Concern was expressed that other suppliers were being looked at when the working party had spent time looking for specific chairs which they liked. The WP chairman assured him that she was looking at the same chairs – just from a local supplier and was hoping to negotiate a better price.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

The office and the meeting room had been fitted out. Quotes for the AV systems were awaited.

It was also confirmed that the centre manager would not be taking a directorship of the management company. The three existing directors would be remaining as directors.

C144 WESLEY CENTRE

The paperwork to register the building as an asset of community value is being completed. However, the clerk advised that the paperwork had been changed since the last time this exercise had been carried out, and more detail of the future plans for the centre were required. The Town Council did not have any fixed plans at present. It was suggested that after the elections the new council would look at this further.

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C145 FINANCE

- a) Cllr Flashman proposed, Cllr Boyle seconded:
The payments list voucher nos: 1055 – 1139 should be APPROVED.
CARRIED unanimously.
- b) The attached receipts list 268 – 310 was NOTED.

C146 CORONATION

- a) Paul Smith from the House of Portmerion has offered to source the mugs at cost price for the Town Council. This will be the Spode mug which is of far better quality than the council could obtain elsewhere. There are sufficient funds in the budget to allow for one mug for every pupil at Paddock Wood Primary School. The Clerk advised that the individual boxes would be supplied “flat pack” and members were asked to help assemble them as there were 610.
- b) The Estates committee considered the location of the coronation bench at its meeting on 11th April. It had been determined that the bench should be installed on the south side of the community centre, along with the memorial bench for David Henshaw. An oak tree would also be planted at Green Lane with a plaque to commemorate the coronation.

C147 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

The ATM was well attended with 50 residents in attendance. The draft minutes will be forwarded to members as soon as possible.

C148 CO-OPTION PROCEDURE

The Governance Committee had amended the co-option procedure.
Cllr H Atkins proposed, Cllr Kent seconded:
That the council accepted the revised procedure.
CARRIED unanimously.

C149 ELECTIONS

The nominations for the forthcoming town council elections have been announced and can be found on the website. They have also been posted on the noticeboards.

There were only 4 candidates for the West Ward therefore they are elected un-opposed. Co-option will be required to fill the remaining two spaces.

There are 9 candidates for the East Ward so there will be an election for the 7 seats.

Existing councillors remain in post until the 8th May 2023, the new councillors take up office on the 9th May 2023.

The Chairman will remain as Chairman of the Council until the election of the new chairman at the Annual meeting of the Town Council on the 15th May 2023.

C150 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES

- (a) Chairman’s meeting – No meeting has taken place.
- (b) Paddock Wood Business Association – there had been no meeting.

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- (c) Bereko Committee - the chairman of Bereko Town Council has sadly died. The Chairman has sent a letter of condolence via the Bereko Committee.
- (d) KALC – no meeting
- (e) Medway Valley Line – there were no updates regarding the grants for the signage and enhancing the area opposite the John Brunt pub. Pictures would be installed in the Station.
- (f) Hop Pickers Line – work on signage on the Black Path was continuing, and it was hoped to install a sculpture and or way marking signs on the lampposts as well as a dedicated website.
- (g) Youth Council – most members were currently taking exams so there was little activity at present. An article had been published in the KALC newsletter. Paddock Wood was the only parish in the county with a Youth Council.
- (h) Putlands Leisure Centre – the clerk was asked to arrange a meeting with TWBC.
- (i) Royal British Legion – no report
- (j) Highways Improvement Plan – nothing to report
- (k) Any other meetings attended on behalf of the Town Council – no report

Cllr Flashman proposed, Cllr Boyle seconded:

Under section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 the following items should be exempt from the press and public due to legal privilege & commercial confidentiality.

CARRIED unanimously

C151 COMMUNITY CENTRE

- a) Current financial position – members received a financial update from the project manager and received a copy of the cashflow spreadsheet.
 - All the major invoices had been paid.
 - Indexation had increased income.
 - All section 106 money must be spent on the community centre project, including the indexation.
 - The Capital cost of the project was on budget.
 - The costs were from the beginning of the project in 2016, not just the build costs.

Cllr Atkins proposed, Cllr Williams seconded:

That the project cost of £3.98 million, with more income to be received should be made public.

CARRIED unanimously.

Members thanked Jonathan White, Project Manager, for all his work on behalf of the Town Council.

- b) Leases – solicitors have been instructed and negotiations were underway with the nursery provider.

C152 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will take place on Monday 15th May 2023, at 7.45 pm in The Day Centre, Commercial Road.

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm

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Date:

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