

Minutes of the Harworth and Bircotes Town Council meeting held on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at 7.15pm at the Town Hall, Scrooby Road, Bircotes, DN11 8JP.

**Present:** Cllr Evans (Chair), Cllr Smith, Cllr James, Cllr S Harrison, Cllr A Harrison, Cllr Barns, Cllr Horrocks, Cllr Schuller, Cllr Whitehead

**Others:** Mrs Davies (Officer) Mrs Tarburton (Community Development & Funding Manager), County Councillor Sheila Place and members of the public.

**17433 To receive and consider any apologies and reasons for absence**

Cllr A Harrison proposed to accept the apologies and reasons from Cllr Scully, Cllr Flynn, Cllr Hughes, and Cllr Jones; this was seconded by Cllr James and resolved by the Council.

**17434 To receive Declaration of Interest on any item on the agenda**

No Declaration of interests received.

**17435 To suspend the meeting to hold a public session**

The Chair suspended the meeting to allow members of the public to speak.

County Councillor Shelia place gave her county report regarding various highways issues. District Cllr Schuller gave a brief verbal report and District Cllr Evan's report is included in her Chair's report.

After discussions regarding the Harworth & Bircotes boundaries and re installing two litter bins, the Chair then reinstated the meeting.

**17436 The receive the Chair's report**

The Chair circulated her reports which are included at the end of the minutes.

**17437 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

Cllr S Harrison proposed to accept the minutes of the meeting held 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023 as a true record; this was seconded by Cllr Barns and resolved by the Council.

**17438 To receive the cemetery Health & Safety reports**

Cllr Barns reported that no health & safety actions are required following his cemetery inspections. The Officer reported that the independent memorial inspections are scheduled to take place around September/October time weather depending.

**17439 To approve payments as listed and receive financial reports for 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

The Officer previously circulated payment lists, copies of the June finance report, bank statements, budget, and variances for the Councillors to view.

Cllr S Harrison proposed to approve the payments and reports as above; this was seconded by Cllr A Harrison and resolved by the Council.

**17440 To consider purchase of a new four zone fire alarm control panel for the Information Centre**

The Officer reported that the Information Centre requires an updated fire alarm control panel at a cost of £585.00 by our security and fire system contractor.

After consideration, Cllr Barns proposed to approve the purchase of a 4-zone fire alarm control panel as above; this was seconded by Cllr James and resolved by the Council.

**17441 To consider replacing the lights in the town hall with LED ones**

The Officer asked if the current lights in the Town Hall could be replaced by the cheaper LED lights. The existing light bulbs are hard to find as suppliers no longer have any. This would be a considerable saving considering the number of lights in the building.

The Funding Manager reported on the decarbonisation grant which may help with having a feasibility energy and efficiency study conducted.

After discussion, Cllr S Harrison proposed to apply for the grant if the council fits the criteria; this was seconded by Cllr Barns and resolved by the Council.

**17442 To consider reinforcing the new cemetery gates after being vandalised**

Following the vandalism on the new cemetery gates; the Officer reported that the damage to the electric rams on the cemetery gates is extensive. However, to deter further damage in the future; there is an option to have metal covers for the rams made and welded into position.

After discussion, Cllr James proposed to have the metal covers fitted as above at a cost of £1627.00; this was seconded by Cllr S Harrison and resolved by the Council.

**17443 To consider proposal for Town Council lanyards and DBS checks**

Cllr S Harrison proposed that ID lanyards are available for those members who wish to take part in the Town Council's events and to consider if the Town Council requires to have DBS checks.

After consideration of DBS Checks and ID lanyards for events and staff members, Cllr A Harrison proposed to approve the purchase of lanyards and not to proceed with looking at DBS checks; this was seconded by Cllr James and resolved by the Council.

**17444 To approve the renewal of the health & Safety consultant's contract**

Cllr James proposed to extend the current health & safety contract for another 3 years; this was seconded by Cllr Barns and resolved by the Council.

**17445 To consider moving on to using digital cemetery records and paperwork**

After consideration, Cllr Horrock proposed to approve using the Scribe digital cemetery software package for the Styrrup Road cemetery; this was seconded by Cllr Barns and resolved by the Council.

At this point Cllr Smith left the meeting.

**17446 To consider a request for an air conditioning unit in the police station**

A discussion took place following a request from the police for an air conditioning unit to be installed in their area of the Information Centre.

Cllr Whitehead proposed that the Officer contact the Police Estates office for further information and investigate installing a meter that will separate the energy use from the police and the rest of the building; this was seconded by Cllr A Harrison and resolved by the Council.

**17447 To consider putting a 'disabled only' parking signs in front of the disabled parking in the car park**

After consideration of the above proposal, Cllr James proposed not to put disabled signs up due to issues regarding the enforcement of it and the signs would not be secured enough on the raised flower beds; this was seconded by Cllr S Harrison and resolved by the Council.

**17448 To consider requesting enforcement parking signs on the shop front parking bays**

The Officer suggested asking Highways if they could install enforcement parking signs on the shop fronts; particular to prevent parking on the pavement.

Cllr S Harrison proposed that the Officer approach Highways for an assessment of the area and install parking enforcement signs; this was seconded by Cllr A Harrison and resolved by the Council.

**17449 To consider planning applications as attached and planning correspondence****Application: 23/00672/COU**

Proposal: Change of Use from residential flat (C3) to storage for butchers' shop

Location: 113A Scrooby Road

Consideration: No objections

To consider comments regarding the removal of the post box at 2 Amanda Road, Harworth

Consideration: No objections

Cllr James proposed not to make any objections for the above applications; this was seconded by Cllr S Harrison and resolved by the Council.

**17450 To receive items for information**

The Officer gave the following update on the Town Centre Master Plan.

- 1) A Councillor engagement session took place on 7<sup>th</sup> July at the Town Hall
- 2) Two business forums took place on the 26<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> June
- 3) Four targeted sessions took place during 10<sup>th</sup> and the 24<sup>th</sup> of July with the Lunch Club, Bingo, Choose to Lose and the Tenants and residents Association
- 4) One street canvassing outside of the C of E School; another to one to be confirmed
- 5) Young Centre engagement to take place on 27<sup>th</sup> July
- 6) A stake holder mailshot has been distributed e.g., police, doctors, fire service.

The Harworth & Bircotes Town Centre Masterplan display and comments box is in the Town Hall from 26<sup>th</sup> June until 4<sup>th</sup> August.

An update from K Tarburton re events being held at the Town Hall or on the Civic Centre:

- The Food, Drink and Health event is on the Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> September at the Town Hall on the Civic Centre and car park
- The Retro bike event will take place on the 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> September at the Town Hall and Civic Centre
- The Pride parade will take place on the 27<sup>th</sup> September on the Civic Centre, Scrooby Road
- A Harworth & Bircotes school uniform swop is taking place on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> August 10am to 1pm in the Town Hall

#### **17451 Time and date of the next Town Council meeting**

The next Town Council meeting will take place on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7.15pm in the Town Hall, Scrooby Road, Bircotes, DN11 8JP.

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

**This month's report** raises issues, both locally and from the District Council, which will have an impact on Harworth & Bircotes, and hopefully bring benefits to the people in our community.

#### **1. Masterplan for Harworth & Bircotes**

Residents are now invited to engage with the proposals for the Masterplan. Opportunities for comments close on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, following which the details of the Plan are confirmed and then ratified by the Town Council before it goes to the District Council and adopted into the Bassetlaw Local Plan

#### **2. Summit at Bassetlaw District Council: Cost-of-Living Crisis**

I and District Cllr. Schuller attended a summit on this subject involving voluntary groups/organisations, B.D.C. officers, and a few district councillors; a summary of information from Citizens Advice Bassetlaw is provided at **Appendix A**.

What became clear is that people are struggling, and debt is a key factor for many, as was made evident in the presentations from the Food Bank, C.A.B. and B.C.V.S. One presentation showing the impact of poverty on health was particularly shocking – it felt to me as if we had not moved on from the 70's.

The concerns for summit attendees' summit are:

- What is happening **now** to help people?
- What can be done to help residents through next winter?

B.D.C. has/will use money from the U.K. Shared Prosperity Fund to support voluntary organisations working with local people.

#### ***Q. What can this Town Council do to help local people?***

#### **3. Open Space Audit by Bassetlaw District Council**

Planning Policy Officers will be surveying publicly accessible open spaces across Bassetlaw, as part of the ongoing work to help understand service/facilities provision across the district. Importantly, this will contribute to the next step in the production of the Bassetlaw Local Plan.

B.D.C. are therefore asking Members to provide information about the current open space provision in each ward, such as are they valued by the community? Are they well used? Are there any issues related to a particular space? The views of Parish/Town Councils are also being sought.

***Why does B.D.C. want this information?*** The feedback will help BDC understand whether the provision of open space in each settlement/part of a settlement is appropriate to meet the needs of communities.

As this work is being undertaken during the holiday period, a response is needed by **Tuesday 5 September**.

#### **4. Bassetlaw Electoral Review**

The Local Government Boundary Commission will be conducting an Electoral Review of Bassetlaw District Council. The intention is to examine and then propose new electoral arrangements, to address any electoral inequality.

**What does this mean?** The electoral arrangements for the District Council will change – this could mean changes to ward boundaries, the name and number of wards, and the number of district councillors. There are currently variances in the number of electors between the wards in Bassetlaw, as there are variances in the number of district councillors per ward.

A strict process is followed, Members and the public are consulted before any decisions are made, and all decisions are based on evidence. Growth, and future planned growth is a major consideration for the Boundary Commission; the intention is to forecast the number of electors (not population) per ward by 2030.

**Consultations will be held in 2024; the final recommendations will be published in Feb. 2025**

#### **APPENDIX A – Cost-of-Living Crisis**

The key issues identified by Citizens Advice Bassetlaw were:

- The cost of household energy, particularly the poorest families and those on pre-payment meters
- Housing. The rate of inflation and the rise in interest rates, affecting mortgages and those living in private rented accommodation.
- Price of fuel for cars and public transport
- Food has become more expensive
- People on benefits are struggling, especially for those on a low income, those claiming universal credit, and pensioners.
- Many households are struggling with a deficit budget, and for those who do have a 'financial cushion' there is the worry that it will eventually run out.

**Fact:** Rising household debt is predominantly driven by energy debts, despite two successive reductions in the energy price cap. For people who are having difficulty paying for their heating now - how are they going to manage in the winter?

Those worst affected are:

- Single adult households – with or without children
- Disabled people
- Mortgage holders and those in private rented homes

We know that inadequate food and heating affects physical health, and that the worry of debt can lead to mental health problems.

**Available Help:** Bassetlaw District Council is working with the voluntary sector and is providing them with funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to develop initiatives for people needing help, especially in the winter months.

The Town Council will work in partnership with voluntary organisations, plus, I have ordered for the Town Council/and local councillors a directory of all voluntary organisations involved, so that you can provide residents needing help with appropriate contact numbers.