

Minutes of the Harworth & Bircotes Town Council meeting held on Monday 27th March 2023, at 7.15pm at the Town Hall, Scrooby Road, Bircotes, DN11 8JP.

Present: Cllr Evans (Chair), Cllr Smith, Cllr Jones, Cllr Hughes, Cllr Sidwells, Cllr Barns, Cllr Harrison, Cllr James & Cllr Flynn

Others: Mrs Davies (Officer) PC Martin and members of the public

17356 To receive and approve any apologies and reasons for absence

Apologies and reason received from Cllr Fear and Cllr Schuller. Cllr Hughes proposed to approve the apologies and reasons; this was seconded by Cllr Flynn and resolved by the Council – 9 votes.

17357 To receive Declaration of Interests on any item on the agenda

No declaration of interests received.

17358 To suspend the meeting to hold a public session

The Chair suspended to meeting to hold a public session.

PC Martin gave his police report and district council reports were circulated.

At this point the Chair asked for all members to introduce themselves to the new councillors and those here today for co-option.

17359 To receive the Chair's report

The Chair previously circulated her report as attached.

17360 To approve the minutes of the meeting held 27th February 2023

Cllr Smith proposed to accept the minutes of the meeting held 27th February 2023 as a true record; this was seconded by Cllr Barns and resolved by the Council – 9 votes.

17361 To consider co-option of a new Councillor

After interview – Cllr James proposed to approve Anne-Marie Harrison for the post of Town Councillor; this was seconded by Cllr Hughes and resolved by the Council – 9 votes. Mrs Harrison then signed her declaration of Office which was then signed by the Officer – Cllr Harrison then joined the meeting.

After interview – Cllr James proposed to approve Sarah Whitehead for the post of Town Councillor; this was seconded by Cllr Hughes and resolved by the Council – 9 votes. Ms Whitehead then signed her declaration of Office which was then signed by the Officer – Cllr Whitehead then joined the meeting.

17362 To receive the cemetery health & safety inspections – discuss the cemetery gates and any items from the Officer

Cllr Barns reported that there weren't any health & safety issues found during his cemetery inspections. Comments were received as to how nice the cemeteries are looking.

The Chair reported that there is a long-term problem with people damaging the Tickhill Road cemetery gates by forcing them open when locked - this is preventing the electricians to work and closing them during the evening.

Investigation into other security options for the gates is required.

17363 To approve payments and receive the financial reports for 28th February 2023

The Officer previously circulated copies of the payments for approval, financial reports as of 28th February 2023, copies of the bank statement balances and budget figures and variances which the Officer went through with the Councillors.

Two councillors verified the bank statement balances against the financial reports and signed them as required.

Cllr Harrison proposed to approve the payments and financial reports as of 28th February 2023; this was seconded by Cllr Flynn and resolved by the Council – 11 votes.

17364 To discuss having a memorial wood in the Styrrup Road cemetery

The Chair previously raised this under her Chair's report – see attached.

After discussion with the Council, Cllr Hughes proposed to form a working party group to look into this further and to develop protocols with advice from the ecologist; this was seconded by Cllr Jones and resolved by the Council – 11 votes. Cllr Whitehead, Cllr Harrison and Cllr Hughes put themselves forward for the working party – this will be formed after the elections.

17365 To consider any planning applications as attached below and planning correspondence

Application: 23/00212/VOC – Land at Plumtree Farm Ind. Estate, Plumtree Road, Harworth

Proposal: Vary condition of 2 of P.A 19/00409/FUL to retain units as built in accordance with drawing numbers 023/011/ASSP, 023/0110ABP and 023/11/ABD

Consideration: No objections

Application: 23/00270/HSE – 37 Moorgreen Way, Bircotes
Proposal: Proposed single storey side extension for disabled person
Consideration: No objections

Application: 23/00291/VOC – Land south west of Beverley Road, Harworth
Proposal: Variation of condition 2 on PA 19/00433/FUL to replaced site layout drawing no. 19/025/SL/G to site layout drawing No 10/025/SL/RevP
Consideration: No objections

Application: 23/00331/HSE – 20 Thornhill Road, Harworth
Proposal: Erect porch to front elevation, convert garage into rooms, install bow window and construct canopy roof over
Consideration: No objections

Proposal: Proposed base station upgrade at CS10916725 – Harworth Miner IFC, Scrooby Road, Harworth
Consideration: No objections

Cllr James proposed no to make any objections to the above applications; this was seconded by Cllr Barns and resolved by the Council – 11 votes

17367

To receive items for information

Cycle training - Cllr Sidwells gave some information on cycle training for Children in Harworth & Bircotes.

Harworth and Bircotes Town Council has recently been contacted by parents on the subject of assistance with teaching their children to cycle. The biggest cycle training scheme in the UK for adults and children is the Bikeability Scheme; which is delivered in Nottinghamshire by VIA East Midlands.

Two of the three Harworth & Bircotes schools, the Church of England and St Patrick's offer training to their pupils through the Bikeability Cycle Safety Scheme Training in how to cycle safely on public roads. It is regularly delivered there, usually for years 4 and 5, by VIA East Midlands. To qualify, parents have to assure the school their child can already ride a bike.

Cllr Sidwells recently contacted Via to enquire about the availability of one-to-one cycle training for children, particularly 'how to ride a bike' training. Via informed me that they offer cycle training to individuals or small groups, adults or children, provided there is at least one responsible adult with the children. There are two schemes offered, Learn to Ride, which addresses 'how to ride a bike', and Cycle Skills, which teaches skills needed to cycle safely on public roads.

For more information – check our www.bikeability.org.uk. You can discuss individual needs or book cycle training by contacting VIA East Midlands on 0115 977 4373 or through cyclesafety@viaem.co.uk

School places - The Chair reported that whilst meeting with Notts Council Council and the Academy owners; she asked them about the lack of school

places when people are struggling to place their child in the school, due to the growing population. Their first comments were 'have the parents appealed?' If parents appeal, then the County Councillor can get involved and help. With regard to the lack of places at Serby Park; the Chair asked about the extension promised for Serby Park School. The response was that they work in a five-year cycle; they do know about the growth taking place in the area. The Chair asked if they would let us know where Harworth & Bircotes are in this cycle – no response yet.

Allotment strategy

The Chair reported that an allotment strategy has been carried out regarding the request for additional allotments. There are some complications regarding this; the piece of land put forward is that the small access road is private; the owner has been contacted and is not in favour of allowing any access to the site for allotment users – which is shared view from the residents that live on that road. Access would also be required from the County Council land that would also have to be used to access the plot of land. The Chair some years ago approached the County Council about putting allotments on that site – their response was that it could be used under a five year lease and only to grow willow!

The land in question is further along the back on Milne Road and would have to be enclosed on four sides to deter vandalism and theft which will be a large expense. The owner of the land is prepared to lease it, but the issue is that public money cannot be spent on someone else's property – funding would need to be sought by a community allotment group; the national lottery doesn't usually give large amount of funding for only a small of people to benefit the funding. Two other sites were investigated for the strategy, but they were not suitable.

It is unfortunate that the Town Council doesn't own any land apart from the cemeteries.

The current allotments are highly subsidised for the water costs by the Town Council – whereas the District Council charges more rent and separately charges the cost of water as to the size of each plot.

With regard to the Officer who has been working many months trying to get some of the used water/drainage charges removed off the invoices, which should not be charged and has resulted in some very high invoices – this has finally been resolved and Waterplus now agree that we should not have been charged for any drainage/waste water. However, to date we have not received an invoice showing just a new monthly charge and therefore the increase of allotment rent that we previously discussed some months ago – will not happen till next year. The Officer suggested that a letter is sent out to allotment holders and ask them to be mindful of their water use so as not to cause high water costs i.e., not leaving hose pipes or sprinklers on.

HR Consultants renewal

The Officer notified the Councillors that the HR contract renewal is due 1st April; however, she has now received the document for continuing with the service – the cost is the same as previously charged plus an insurance cost. This year we have an option for free use of some monitoring software which keeps a check on sickness/ holidays etc. The Council is happy to extend the contract and to put this on the next agenda for approval.

HR Committee Meeting regarding wage increase

The Officer reported that an HR meeting has been called to discuss the living wage increases etc and she will also ask the HR consultants to update the staff contracts with current employment legislation where required.

Car Parking - Cllr Jones raised the issue of cars parking on the pavement next to the zebra crossing on the school/shop fronts – particularly preventing passing cars seeing if anyone is on the zebra crossing. The Officer reported that she has been in touch with Highways and Notts County Council's transport people and traffic wardens regarding this matter on the shop fronts. Photos of the cars parked on the pavement have been passed on to Highways to deal with. It was noted that the delivery drivers for the take aways are also parking in this area.

17355 Time and date of the next Town Council meeting

The next Town Council meeting will be held on the Monday 24th April 2023 at 7.15pm at the Town Hall, Scrooby Road, Bircotes, DN11 8JP.

17356 To exclude member of the public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to enable discussion regarding legal and agreement matters

No members of the public present.

The Chair gave a report regarding the partnership working with the District Council and the Town Council. With regard to the litter bin collection and mis- information being given to residents about who provides bins, a survey of litter bin usage and location is currently underway for the District Council to review.

The Chair also discussed legal matters with regard to the North Border School transfer.

Chair's Report

North Notts Border School: Meeting with Notts County/Bassetlaw Councils

You have all received my report on the meeting between Nottinghamshire County Council, Bassetlaw District Council, and the Town Council. The District Council plans to issue a short press release about the school; I would stress that the details/ issues to be addressed that I have outlined in my report to you, **remain confidential**.

A Memorial Wood

This idea came from a resident, who wanted to see an area in our community where families could plant a tree in memory of a deceased relative. One area immediately came to mind – the land at the end of the New Cemetery.

I discussed the idea with a consultant ecologist, his comments were as follows:

- The land is on a steep incline, **but** this is not a problem for trees.
- Tall trees should not be on the menu – height is indicative of the required root spread, so no oaks, elms or ash trees – they would restrict the number of trees planted because they would take up a lot of the available space.
- A menu of suitable trees is needed for residents to select from; these should preferably be trees native to Britain.
- Leave the grass uncut (may need cutting back once a year), but cut wide swathes (or grassed walkways) through it. This sends a clear message to the public that the uncut grass is intentional.
- The uncut grass, plus the trees, will attract wildlife and wild flowers, which I believe will please residents. It is also a clear statement that this Council supports the Green Agenda.

There is further work required, such as preparation of the site, deciding on a suitable tree menu, and drawing up protocols. Comments on the proposal are welcome.

Harworth and Bircotes Town Centre Masterplan

Consultation events are being planned to start late May/early June for comments on the Draft Plan, which has been developed using information gained from the previous round of consultation. Dates yet to be confirmed.

Likewise, for the Harworth and Bircotes Neighbourhood Plan

Council is working with Bassetlaw District Council and the original consultant who helped us previously, to gather accurate information and statistics about the Town, some of which has changed due to the growth of our community – this will be followed by more consultation with local people.

The Warm Hub will close on 31st March, along with the Tuesday Lunch Club, though there will be a Tuesday coffee morning at the Town Hall run by Cllr. Henderson on behalf of the Royal British Legion.

N.B. The Wednesday lunch Club will continue; funding is in place for the next year.

The Craft Market at the Town Hall is set to start again on Sunday April 2nd, and then on May 7th and June 4th.

The Homeless Man living/sleeping in the cemetery has been referred to the Outreach Team from Framework – I'm hoping he accepts the help on offer.

The Tree Surgeon is expected to be working in our Town the first week of April. He is hoping to get the work done in 2 to 3 days.

The Coronation

On a personal note, I have been invited to the coronation of the King and the Queen Consort, but it comes with several challenges:

- The invite is for 1 person, so I would have to travel by train with overnight bag and rollator
- The advice is to stay overnight in a hotel – I suspect hotels may already be fully booked
- The information states that you are expected to arrive at Westminster Abbey 'early morning', there will be queues, and then prolonged sitting, plus no guarantee of a direct sightline of the service.

I have decided that this is a challenge too far, so will be unable to attend.

Re-opening of Harworth and Bircotes Library

However, I will accept the invitation to attend the official opening of Harworth and Bircotes Library.

Street Bins

Bassetlaw District Council is working in partnership with the Town Council to determine the best distribution for/location of street bins. The Town Council is currently mapping and monitoring the use of all bins in the Town and will continue to work with B.D.C. to achieve the best, most appropriate outcome.

District Council information

Update on S.T.E.P. (Spherical Tokamak Energy Production)

As you know, STEP is a project sited at West Burton Power Station A, that is intended to show how fusion energy – which is predicted to be a safe, sustainable and a low carbon form of energy - can be put on the national grid. Last month District Councillors were invited to a presentation on the project by STEP personnel – until then, I don't think any Councillors realised just how big this project is going to be.

The Leader of B.D.C. is in regular talks with the U.K.A.E.A. (the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority) and E.D.F (who own the site) and other involved organisations; he is very aware of the importance of this project and the impact it will have on the local economy, and he is determined that B.D.C. works in partnership with others to make sure this is a success.

The good news is that the U.K.A.E.A has now formed a partnership with Sheffield University to help drive the development of the U.K.'s fusion industry. This kind of research is key to

the future of fusion energy and requires cutting edge techniques across all sections of engineering; fusion power will be an essential part of our long-term energy plans.

Importantly, it will create thousands of highly skilled jobs during construction and operation, and will attract other high-tech industries to Bassetlaw.