

Minutes of the Harworth & Bircotes Town Council meeting held on Monday 5th December 2022, at 7.15pm at the Town Hall, Scrooby Road, Bircotes, DN11 8JP.

Present: Cllr Evans (Chair), Cllr Smith, Cllr James, Cllr Wratten, Cllr Barns, Cllr Flynn, Cllr Hughes, Cllr Jones and Cllr Fear.

Others: Mrs Davies (Officer), PC Martin and County Councillor Sheila Place. No members of the public present.

17303 To receive and approve any apologies and reasons for absence

Cllr Schuller sent her apologies and reason for absence. Cllr Flynn proposed to approve the apology and reason; this was seconded by Cllr Wratten and resolved by the Council – 9 votes.

17304 To receive Declaration of Interests on any item on the agenda

No declaration of interests received.

17305 To suspend the meeting to hold a public session and receive Police, County and District Councillor reports

PC Martin gave his crime report. It was noted that Town & Parish Councils are now required to purchase their own speed guns if they wish to continue with the Community Speed Watch scheme; previously the equipment belonged to the police.

County Councillor Sheila Place gave her County report.

Apologies received from District Cllr Challinor and Cllr Schuller - no reports submitted.

District Cllr June Evans gave the following report:

Impact of Inflation on Councils

All district councils have been affected by inflation, and certainly all those in Nottinghamshire are dealing with a predicted budget gap - Bassetlaw has the second lowest in the county at £1.36m. The causes range from increased energy prices, increased cost of fuel (think 'refuse wagons'), materials and labour (particularly for Housing Services) and a recent pay award.

Plus, other organisations are dealing with similar budget pressures, some of whom are paid a levy by district councils.

Internal Drainage Boards are a typical example. They are public bodies who manage water levels in an internal drainage district where there is a special need for drainage, and undertake works to reduce flood risk. They are dealing with higher costs, just like everyone else, but they are particularly affected by the price of electricity because of the number of pumping stations they operate and maintain. I understand they are expecting a 38% increase in cost, and they will have no choice but to pass that cost on to councils in their drainage area.

As the financial experts tell us, it's going to be a tough 2 years!

S.T.E.P. Fusion Energy Programme at West Burton

The U.K. Atomic Energy Authority is wasting no time, as the first jobs have been advertised. In the meantime, the Leader of B.D.C. is involved in discussions with the company, and has visited a site in Oxfordshire. As he points out, this development presents Bassetlaw with huge opportunities for employment and development.

Bassetlaw's Draft Local Plan

The Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan: Publication Version 2020-2038, outlines the vision, objectives and planning policies needed to guide development across Bassetlaw up to the year 2038. It proposes the level of housing needed, where development for employment should take place, the infrastructure that is needed to support growth and many more economic, social and environmental priorities.

Since the Council submitted its Local Plan to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in July this year, the Planning Inspectorate has appointed two Inspectors to carry out a detailed, independent review of the Plan, the supporting evidence and comments previously submitted by the public and interested parties. The Inspectors will chair a programme of hearings, which will take place at Worksop and Retford Town Halls on selected dates between Tuesday 29th November and Tuesday 13th December, with a number of reserve sessions also in place. Further details can be found at www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/the-draft-bassetlaw-local-plan.

PC Martin and Cllr Place then left the meeting.

17306 To receive the Chair's report

Update on the Review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

On 22nd November an informal meeting was held regarding the Neighbourhood Plan at the request of Helen Metcalf, consultant. Although Helen had some information about planning applications/consents for our town, she was seeking clarification and accuracy on some of the details; she also wanted hard data e. g. about population numbers and design codes, which planners will seek to supply.

Helen also explained that there is no requirement to review the Neighbourhood Plan every 2 years. What matters is that the policies in it are still relevant, and therefore are still in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework – if so, the attributed weighting of the Neighbourhood Plan is not reduced.

Helen also wanted a tour of the town. I was able to do this with her the following week, she was particularly interested in the new developments, and she took many photographs of what she saw. I believe the information gathered and requested will go towards forming the basis of an accurate Neighbourhood Profile.

Devolution

A public consultation on the proposals for Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire is open until January 9th, find out more at eastmidlandsdevolution.co.uk

You can also join the Teams Live online public engagement meeting on 7th December 6pm – 7.30pm. To join the meeting simply go to [Have Your Say – East Midlands Devolution](#) and click on the Teams Live meeting link before the start of the meeting

Cost-of-Living Crisis

As you know, the Town Council already offers a luncheon club, and encourages use of the Town Hall by groups as a ‘warm place’. I have managed to acquire 40 slow cookers, thanks to a local resident. The cookers are now with the Children’s Centre and will be used to complement their Food Club; they will be given to families over the next few weeks. Not only are slow cookers very cheap to use, they also require little attention when in use, and are excellent for tenderising cheaper cuts of meat - I understand they make rice pudding, too!

17307 To approve the minutes of the meeting held 24th October 2022

The Officer previously circulated copies of the draft minutes for the Councillors to view. Cllr Jones proposed to accept the minutes of the meeting held 24th October 2022 as a true record; this was seconded by Cllr Barns and resolved by the Council – 9 votes.

17308 To approve payments and receive the financial reports for 31st October 2022

The Officer previously circulated list of payments for approval plus additional payments at the meeting; plus, copies of the financial reports at of 31st October 2022; bank statement, budget, reserves and variances for the councillors to view.

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

The finance committee is to meet in January to review the budget ready for the next full council meeting.

17309 To receive the cemetery health & safety inspections and any items from the Officer

Cllr Barns has carried out his cemetery inspections with no H&S actions required.

The Officer reported that due to the very heavy rain fall; some of the graves in the old cemetery had suffered soil subsidence and had sunk into the ground; these were cordoned off until the grave digger came and refilled the graves. A smaller amount of sinking occurred in the new cemetery which the grave digger also topped up a few days later.

Someone had vandalised one of the water tap pipes in the old cemetery; by way of bending the water pipe over at the very bottom of the pipe – this could have resulted in having to dig up the pipes to repair at a considerable cost. Thankfully, the plumber was able to prevent the situation getting worse.

17310 To consider any planning applications as listed below and planning correspondence**Applications:**

Ref: 22/01339/RES – Land south of Scrooby Road and north of Snape Lane

Ref: 22/01395/RES – Land south of Scrooby Road and north of Snape Lane

Ref: 22/00785/RES – Phase 2A (unit 3) Mulberry Logistics Park, Blyth Road

Ref: 22/00787/RES – Phase 2A (unit 3) Mulberry Logistics Park, Blyth Road

Cllr Hughes proposed not to make any objections to the above applications; this was seconded by Cllr James and resolved by the Council – 9 votes

17311 To approve co-option of a Town Councillor

After consideration of the application and interview of an applicant to fill the vacancy. Cllr Fear proposed to approve the Co-option of Mr Chris Sidwells onto the Town Council; this was seconded by Cllr Flynn and resolved by the Council – 9 votes.

The Declaration of Acceptance of Office to be signed on or before the next meeting.

17312 To appoint the Internal Auditor for 2022/23

Cllr Jones proposed to appoint Mr Parkin as the Internal Auditor for 2022/23; this was seconded by Cllr James – 9 votes.

17313 To consider increase of the level of fidelity insurance

The Officer reported that the level of fidelity insurance needs to be increased to £500,000 to cover the additional funds currently held. After discussion, Cllr Jones proposed to increase the limit to £500,000; this was seconded by Cllr Barns and resolved by the Council – 9 votes. It was suggested to increase the limit when the 3 year insurance expires in May as it may be a new insurance company that is chosen when it is renewed.

17314 To review the General & Financial Risk Assessment

The Office previously circulated copy of the General & Financial Risk Assessment for the Council to review. The Officer has highlighted that a fidelity insurance increase was recommended.

Cllr Flynn proposed to approve the General & Financial Risk Assessment with no amendments and noted the proposed increase of fidelity insurance to £500k; this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved by the Council – 9 votes.

17315 To consider quotations for installation of kitchen equipment

The Officer reported that four contractors had been approached for a price of the installation of the new kitchen equipment. All four had visited the hall; but unfortunately, only two came back with a price despite chasing them up for their quotations.

The Council considered the quotes and Cllr Smith proposed to appoint Mr Hyland-Smith; this was seconded by Cllr Hughes and resolved by the Council - 9 votes.

17316 To receive items for information or future agenda items

Items for information:

- Cllr Jones asked if a thank you to the residents who help her with litter picking around the Common Lane area could be put in the magazine
- The Chair reported that a response has been sent to the Brass Band regarding keys for the storage room
- Following on for looking at possible short term safe investments; Councils can't use banks or building societies, however, a suggestion has been put forward for the Council to investigate
- Following on from the last meeting when the Chair proposed to change the Information Centre name to the Queen Elizabeth II Centre and asked residents for their opinion or suggestions. The District Council's working group will be meeting next week to consider any suggestions passed on from the parishes.

Items for future agenda:

- 2023 meeting dates
- Budget/precept

17317 Time and date of the next Town Council meeting

The next Town Council meeting will be held on 16th January at 7.15pm in the Town Hall, Scrooby Road, Bircotes, DN11 8UP