

## WESTERHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held at Russell House on  
Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at 7 pm

Present: Councillors: Mrs H Ogden (HO) – Chairman  
Mr E Boyle (EB), Mrs D Coen (DC),  
Mrs J Davies (JD), Mr C Elsdon-Wortley (CE)  
Mr B Holt (BH), Dr J Lord (JL), Mr C Pither (CP),  
Mr N Robson (NR), Mrs S Sheen (SS)  
and Mr K Thompson (KT)

In attendance: Town Clerk: Mrs A Howells (AH)  
Finance Officer: Mrs D Marshall (DM)  
SDC Cllr Diana Esler

Item		Action
1	<b><u>Apologies for Absence</u></b> Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Bird and Kay – holiday.	
2.	<b><u>Declarations of Interest not previously declared</u></b> Cllrs Ogden and Lord – Item 6.6	
3.	<b><u>Minutes of the Council Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021</u></b> It was resolved to approve and sign the minutes of the Council meeting held on 4 <sup>th</sup> October.	
4.	<b><u>Information items arising from the minutes of the previous meeting not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda</u></b> 4 Town Sign – The Clerk had received a response from KCC today. The response would be reviewed and this item would be placed on the January Agenda.	AH
5.	<b><u>To receive and consider the following Minutes of Committee:</u></b> Cllr Robson presented the Minutes which had been approved by the Committee: <b>5.1 <u>Planning and Development – 07.10.21</u></b> The SDC Local Plan was being updated to refresh the data base. The Committee had objected to the Gatwick consultation as it was felt that Gatwick had enough capacity to be able to delay any expansion plans for a significant period. SDC Cllr Esler reported that SDC has also objected to the proposal. <b>Resolved:</b> that the Minutes be adopted. <b>5.2 <u>Planning and Development – 21.10.21</u></b> <b>Resolved:</b> that the Minutes be adopted.	

	<p><b>5.3 <u>Planning and Development – 04.11.21</u></b>  <b>Resolved:</b> that the minutes be adopted.</p> <p><b>5.4 <u>Planning and Development – 18.11.21</u></b>  <b>Resolved:</b> that the minutes be adopted.</p> <p><b>5.5 <u>Allotments Playing Fields and Open – 01.11.21</u></b>  Cllr Lord presented the Minutes.  The results from the wood survey commission had stated that all but two pieces of equipment had no signs of timber decay. The Multi play and Agility Trail had some decay in the timber. APFOS would be discussing the report and any action needed at their next meeting and informing the KGF Working Group.  Members of the APFOS Committee approved the Minutes.  <b>Resolved:</b> that the minutes be adopted.</p> <p><b>5.6 <u>Youth and Community – 29.09.21</u></b>  Cllr Boyle presented the Minutes:  WTC had received a grant to help businesses coming out of Covid. They were being offered training in the use of social media. There had been good uptake and the sessions could be via zoom or face to face.  Cllr Ogden thanked Y&amp;C for the wonderful Christmas tree and lights display, it all looked really good.  Cllr Holt reported that the display of entries for the Christmas design a Light competition in Sta Mary's Church had been well received.  Congratulations were given to Cllr Coen for all her hard work putting together the Loneliness hampers. Cllr Davies read out a thank you card from one of the recipients.  Members of the Y&amp;C Committee approved the Minutes.  <b>Resolved:</b> that the Minutes be adopted.</p> <p><b>5.7 <u>Highways &amp; Lighting – 15.11.21</u></b>  Cllr Sheen presented the Minutes:  SDC Cllr Esler was asked to find out how many electric charging points were to be installed in Westerham, where were they to be installed and what was the timescale.  Members of the H&amp;L Committee approved the Minutes.  <b>Resolved:</b> that the minutes be adopted.</p> <p><b>5.8 <u>Finance and General Purposes – 22.11.21</u></b>  Cllr Sheen presented the Minutes.  Following the budget being approved in January, Committee Chairman would then meet with Cllr Sheen and the Finance Officer to discuss the three-year budget.  Two letters had been sent to Amey, Parking Project Contractor regarding the additional costings with copies sent to the KCC Cllr.  Members of the F&amp;GP Committee approved the Minutes.  <b>Resolved:</b> that the Minutes be adopted.</p> <p><b>5.9 <u>Health and Safety – 04.10.21</u></b>  The minutes from the Health and Safety Committee were noted.</p>	<p>DR</p> <p>DE</p>
6.	<p><b><u>Finance</u></b></p> <p><b>6.1 <u>Payment List to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021</u></b>  Cllr Sheen reported that she had nothing to bring to Council's attention. There were no other queries and the lists were approved.</p>	

	<p><b>6.2 Committee Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021</b> Cllr Sheen reported that the accounts were in line with what was expected and she had nothing to bring to Council's attention. There were no queries and the accounts were approved.</p> <p><b>6.3 Internal Auditors report</b> The Finance Officer reported that the Internal Audit took place on 20<sup>th</sup> November however a report had not yet been received. The Internal Auditor had not raised any issues on the day of the Audit.</p> <p><b>6.4 First draft budget 2022/23</b> The Finance Officer had circulated information regarding the Committee budget requests together with a consolidated draft budget. Cllrs were asked to review the proposals and give comments, views and suggestions to the Finance Officer by 18<sup>th</sup> December following which she would meet with the Chair of F&amp;GP. Thanks were given to the Finance Officer for all her hard work. A draft budget would be discussed at F&amp;GP and a decision made at Full Council on 24th January.</p> <p><b>6.5 Reserves</b> The Finance Officer had circulated an updated reserve list with proposed amendments recommended by F&amp;GP. Following discussion it was agreed that the Lighting Catenary Fund and Toilet Refurbishment Fund be incorporated into the Asset Repair Fund. It was also agreed to incorporate the Bequest reserve into the KGF Redevelopment Fund, appropriate plaques acknowledging the bequest would be displayed. The H&amp;L electricity contract was due for renewal early in 2023. In view of the tremendous increase in electricity costs during the term of the last 4 year contract, it would be advisable for the LED conversion programme to have been completed prior to entering a new contract; so that WTC had 100% LED lighting stock. H&amp;L would be short of £2,000-£3,000 of budget to complete the conversion programme in the current financial year and planned to finish early in 2022/23, using some of next year's budget allocation. Following discussion and with the recommendation of F&amp;GP, it was agreed to allow H&amp;L to go over budget this year by the shortfall amount and use the WTC asset repair reserve. The amount could then be transferred from H&amp;L's LED budget line on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to replenish the asset repair reserve. <b>Resolved:</b> To transfer up to £3,000 to H&amp;L from the Asset Repair Fund to enable H&amp;L to complete the LED programme.</p> <p><b>6.6 Grant to St Mary's the Virgin Church, Westerham</b> A grant application had been received from St Mary's Church to go towards the upkeep of the Churchyard. Following discussion it was agreed to make a grant of £1000.</p>	<p>SS/DM</p> <p>DM</p> <p>DM</p>
7.	<p><b><u>Future Use of The Green</u></b> Cllr Lord had circulated a paper detailing the repairs needed to The Green, the legal status of Town/Village Greens, together with an outdated policy paper. Winter and spring maintenance would be required to repair the damage to The Green. Following lengthy discussion it was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restrict use of The Green to non-commercial activities only subject to exceptional circumstances</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update the Policy document (APFOS Committee)</li> <li>Communicate the decision to previous users of The Green</li> </ul>	JL/DR
8.	<p><b><u>Covid- 19</u></b></p> <p>Cllr Lord reported to Council that Sevenoaks District had a high number of Covid cases and the new variant was widespread as it took over from the Delta variant as the key variant. Cllr Lord suggested that at Council meetings and any other large gathering Cllrs and staff should take a lateral flow test and act accordingly on the results. Committee meetings could continue to be held in the Chamber, but an alternative venue might be needed for the January Council meeting. Any government, NALC or KALC advice would be monitored and appropriate action taken.</p> <p>This was agreed.</p>	All  AH
9.	<p><b><u>Capital Projects</u></b></p> <p><b>9.1 King Georges Field</b></p> <p>The consultation on KGF Redevelopment was progressing well and WTC had received over 500 responses. It appeared that the draft plan had been well received and each element had received a high level of support. Unfortunately, there were a very low number of questionnaires completed by the under 18s. Feedback was still needed from Valence School and the Junior Football Club during the remainder of the month to improve our uptake in this age range. It was agreed that a financial position would be provided with each future update.</p> <p>The next steps would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a budget plan update (February meeting)</li> <li>Provide a project plan update (February meeting)</li> <li>Provide a full analysis to Council of the questionnaire responses in a form that can be presented to the public. (February meeting)</li> <li>Seek planning advice from SDC.</li> <li>First one-to-one funding mentor session scheduled for the new year.</li> </ul> <p>Cllr Ogden reported that she and Cllrs Boyle, Lord and Sheen had met with Henry Warde regarding the lease to the Northern part of KGF. Mr Warde had previously offered a new 67 year lease but now wished to gift the land. WTC was taking legal advice on the best way forward.</p> <p><b>9.2 Parking Project</b></p> <p><b>Crockham Hill:</b> A stretch of hedge had been removed at Crockham Hill to create the opening for the car park entrance to ensure that work was deemed to have been started to comply with FIT's permit requirement that work was started by the end of October 2021 and for the Planning Permission (which was granted in December 2018). The Crockham Hill scheme would be the last to be completed in the New Year and would take approximately 3 to 4 weeks.</p> <p><b>Madan Road:</b> The car parking bays at Madan Road had been created, with no issues. They were awaiting white lining to mark the individual spaces, to complete the project (this would be done at the same time as Hartley Road) A small bed had been created around the lamppost, which would need planting in the new year.</p> <p><b>Hartley Road:</b> The creation of bays at Hartley Road had been completed</p>	DM

	<p>apart from the white lining. There was one issue where a gas pipe was discovered that had not been identified in the utility searches. The contractors were able to work the design around the pipe.</p> <p><b>Costells Meadow:</b> Works at Costells Meadow started on the 26<sup>th</sup> November and would take 3 to 4 weeks to complete.</p> <p><b>9.3 20's Plenty and One-Way round The Green</b></p> <p>An update had been received from KCC stating that there had been a number of delays to this project. The signage works should commence this week with no definite start day. The resurfacing for the gateways would be delayed until week commencing 13<sup>th</sup> December.</p>	
10.	<p><b><u>Covers Farm KCC site visit</u></b></p> <p>A note from KCC Cllr Chard had been circulated and was noted.</p>	
11.	<p><b><u>Neighbourhood Plan</u></b></p> <p>A briefing note had been circulated from Cllr Robson with a recommendation from the Planning Committee. Thanks were given to Cllr Robson for the very thorough and detailed paper. Following discussion it was agreed not to proceed with a Plan due to the uncertainty regarding planning regulations and the impact of cost and staff time particularly given the redevelopment of King George's Playing Field project.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> Not to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan at this time.</p>	
12.	<p><b><u>Queen's Jubilee</u></b></p> <p>Cllr Davies reported she was working on a plan for activities for Crockham Hill and would brief Council in January.</p> <p>Cllr Holt reported he was working on a plan for Westerham and would present this to Council in January.</p> <p>The Clerk to investigate the cost and planting options for a small tree.</p>	<p>JD</p> <p>BH</p> <p>AH</p>
13.	<p><b><u>Annual Liaison Meeting with Sevenoaks District Council</u></b></p> <p>Cllr Ogden had circulated a note of the items discussed at the meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> October. Cllr Ogden reported that SDC had promised to set up a meeting of the landowners along the proposed Darent Valley Path to see if a way forward could be found. The Clerk to chase progress.</p> <p>SDC Cllr Esler reported on the latest position of the SDC Local Plan.</p>	<p>AH</p>
14.	<p><b><u>Policies and Procedures</u></b></p> <p>14.1 Freedom of Information Act – Publication Scheme 2021</p> <p>The draft Scheme had been circulated and was agreed.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> To approve the Freedom of Information Act – Publication Scheme 2021.</p>	<p>AH</p>
15.	<p><b><u>Correspondence</u></b></p> <p>15.1 A letter of thanks had been received from Westerham Food Bank for the grant received from WTC.</p> <p>15.2 An email had been received from the Westerham Sea Cadets inviting the Chairman and Cllrs to the Award Ceremony at Westerham Hall on 15<sup>th</sup> December. Cllrs Ogden and Lord to attend.</p>	<p>HO/JL</p>

16.	<p><b><u>Reports from Councillors</u></b></p> <p>Cllrs Ogden, Boyle, Lord and Sheen had attended a meeting with Henry Warde.</p> <p>Cllrs Ogden and Sheen had attended a meeting with the Bowls Club regarding KGF Redevelopment Project consultation.</p> <p>Cllr Lord had attended a meeting with the Junior Footballers.</p> <p>Cllr Holt had attended the Kent Police Public Engagement Event – Safeguarding Women and Girls on 11<sup>th</sup> November and it was a worthwhile event.</p> <p>Cllr Holt had put a piece in the CH Newsletter regarding KGF Redevelopment project.</p> <p>Cllr Holt would write a piece for each edition of the CH newsletter.</p> <p>Cllrs Boyle, Coen, Elsdon-Wortley, Holt and Thompson had helped at the Christmas Lights Switch on event.</p> <p>Cllrs Ogden and Robson had attended a zoom SDC Local Plan Housing session.</p> <p>Cllr Ogden had attended a SDC zoom session on Town Centre strategy.</p> <p>Cllrs Ogden had attended the KWG AGM, at which Cllrs Thompson and Pither had also been present in personal capacities.</p>	
17.	<p><b><u>TN16, Edenbridge Magazine &amp; website</u></b></p> <p>None.</p>	
18.	<p><b><u>Matters for District and County Councillors</u></b></p> <p>None.</p>	
19.	<p><b><u>Further matters for consideration at the next meeting</u></b></p> <p>Budgets</p> <p>Town Sign</p> <p>Queen’s Jubilee</p>	
20.	<p><b><u>Date of next meeting</u></b></p> <p>24<sup>th</sup> January – budget meeting</p>	

The meeting was concluded at 10.15 pm

Minutes confirmed as a correct record:

Chairman