

MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING HELD BY ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

In accordance with (The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020)

Present: Councillors;

Tony Allen, Annette Dunning, Peter Dutton, Anne Fleming, Rosemary Lewis, Karen Prime, Jill Reece, Maureen Took, Jackie Wagner, David Wollweber (Chair).

In Attendance: Nick Rees (Town Clerk) County & District Cllr Tony Goldson, three members of the public.

Minutes

1. Apologies: Cllrs; B Chadwick & D Thomas
2. Declarations of interest: To receive declarations for pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests: None
3. Minutes: The minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 11th January, 2021 was accepted as a true record with the amendment under item 8; suggested by Cllr Dunning, that Cllr Goldson's initial advice was that residents would be contacted by letter not letter and/or phone.
4. Matters arising from the Minutes: Cllr Dutton asked whether contact had been made with the Saxon Way landowner, the Clerk reported that he had now spoken with the landowner and their intentions were to speak to HTC and ESC about a possible small development. This would be discussed in more detail at the next Planning Committee meeting. Cllr Dutton asked whether HACT had been contacted and the Clerk confirmed that he had informed them of the emergency fund and also informed HVC that provisions would be made if required.
5. Chair's Report: The Chair advised Cllrs that the Council had previously agreed that the public session could include items that were not on the agenda provided they were relevant to Halesworth. The Chair had no other reports for January that wasn't already covered in the following agenda items.
6. Public Session: [15 minutes on matters relating to the town] A resident read out a statement about the concerns she had over the large developments being determined in the current lockdown measures and the inability for many residents to access the plans and information. Cllr Dutton Chair of the Planning Committee was in agreement and the resident had made some very valid points. It was a very difficult task in the present circumstances. The Chair asked the resident to forward to the Clerk for the Council to comment on. Another resident raised concerns again about the signage for the A12 on London Rd, speeding in the town and a question about the river management and also whether HTC were taking over the public toilets and how this was funded. The Char asked the resident to forward these questions to the Clerk. Michael Imison attended the meeting and asked HTC to make more efforts to promote the Tamsyn Imison award.
7. To receive written reports on meetings and events attended by Council representatives: None received

8. District & County Reports: Cllr Goldson gave an update on the Covid-19 emergency and the roll out of vaccinations in the area..
9. Financial Matters: To consider the following: The Council accepted the report of the meeting held on the 18th January, 2021 with the amendment that Cllr Dunning was present
10. ABP Committee: The Chair asked the Clerk to summarise the current position. The Clerk reported that he had uploaded the presentation on the website explaining the precept and the implications with funding the assets. The Council had in previous meetings already approved the list of assets and to raise the precept accordingly in the five year projection, taking into consideration the Council's current reserves and the parachute payments that ESC were offering. The Clerk advised that the ABP Committee had agreed the conditions of transfer relating to the individual assets and had also agreed that the Clerk should obtain commercial surveys for all the buildings and structures. All this had been relayed to ESC and was contained in the ABP minutes but subsequently there had been another short meeting with Angus Williams (ESC Asset surveyor on Friday) that the Chair of the ABP would report on under item 3
 1. The report on the meeting held on the 22nd January, 2021 containing the proposed terms of the transfer as agreed by the Committee, was accepted.

Before considering the next item there were some questions raised by Cllrs and it was clear that not everyone agreed with the whole concept of accepting the assets from ESC and not everyone understood or accepted that the Council could afford to manage the assets or that raising the precept was acceptable. Cllr Lewis, Chair of the Finance Committee, explained that the process had been ongoing for the last five years and that Halesworth was in danger of being left behind. Most of the other market towns were further along with similar transfers and raising the precept was the only option available if the town wished to take control and improve its facilities. All this information was available on the HTC website. The Chair, Cllr Wollweber, reminded the Council that, unlike other towns, Halesworth had no assets at all and this transfer would enable the Council to take back control of its future for the benefit of the town.

2. The Council then considered the recommendation from the ABP Committee and it was RESOLVED 'that the Committee recommends to the Town Council that it engages the service of a solicitor to look after the interests of HTC for the transfer of assets and that ESC is informed of this decision.'
 3. To receive a verbal report of the meeting with Angus Williams and to consider any actions required. Cllr Fleming reported on the meeting which was intended to get feedback on the conditions HTC had sent with the list of assets. The costs of the demolition and Open Space maintenance was also raised and Cllrs Fleming and Lewis had put forward the case that these were additional costs and therefore HTC would expect ESC to contribute towards them. Angus Williams would take these comments and conditions back to ESC and would report back. In the meantime he had confirmed that the deadline for the April ESC Cabinet meeting had passed but the next meeting would be in May 2021. Cllr Fleming confirmed that this was all still subject to final negotiations and if HTC were not happy with the final offer it could walk away.
11. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group: The Council received and noted the report on the meeting held on the 20th January, 2021 and the report of the correspondence with the EA. There were questions regarding the report that the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan answered via Cllr Allen's Zoom session.
 12. Planning Committee: The Council received and noted the report on the meeting held on the 11th January, 2021 and noted that preparations were being made for the Extraordinary meeting of the Council on Monday the 8th February which would consider the two applications on the Campus site.

13. Environment Committee: The Council received the report on the meeting held on the 14th January 2021 and considered the following revised proposal, deferred from the last meeting-

After some deliberation it was RESOLVED that:-

- 1) The Council approved the planting of a wooded area on the South end of Swan lane plot. Further information about the species and planting plan would be helpful.
- 2) The Council would consider the costs of a storage container once more information was provided.
- 3) The Council requested that the Committee undertakes a consultation with neighbouring properties to establish whether a community garden was supported and then the Council would review this again at a later meeting.

14. Communications Committee: There had been no meeting recently.

15. Policy Documents: To consider approval of the following Policy documents; Financial Regulations, Risk Assessment, Asset Register, CCTV Policy and the proposal to adopt the NALC Standing Orders instead of renewing the existing HTC Standing Orders

The Clerk explained that the Model Standing Orders from NALC (National Association of Local Councils) were more up to date than HTC's current Standing Orders and that if the Council decided to adopt them then it would be easier to update them on an annual basis as legislation changed. It was designed for the Council to adapt as necessary but it had not been possible to review it in details at this stage. It was then RESOLVED that the Town Council adopted the NALC Model Standing Orders and these would be amended as required over a period of time.

It was also RESOLVED that the Town Council approved the following documents:
HTC Risk Assessment; with the amendment that Market and Allotment rents would be added to the 'Rents receivable section'
CCTV Policy.

Asset Register; with the amendment that the Basley Gym equipment's ownership would be investigated and added if necessary.

Financial Regulations; Items 1.4c & 1.4g would need to be clarified at the next Finance Meeting.

16. Correspondence: To consider the request that a bench is placed along Sparrowhawk Road at no cost to the Council, pending agreement with SCC Highways. It was RESOLVED that the Council supported the proposal but the resident would need to obtain permission from SCC Highways. If it was located on a verge then it may require HTC to sign a licence agreement which would have to be considered at a later stage.

17. Maintenance: None

18. Items for the Website/Noticeboard/Newsletters/Library. It was agreed to post more information about the vaccines, the community transport and that they were free.

19. Accounts for Payment: The following accounts were approved for payment

<u>4569.</u>	Community news – N Plan advert (Localism Act 2011)	50.00 + vat
DD/Standing Orders:		
<u>4570.</u>	Monthly salaries (LGA 1972 s112)	2623.39
<u>4571.</u>	EDF Electricity – Market Place no 2 (Food Act 1984 s50)	28.01

Bank & Cash Balances at 1st February, 2021

Current 728	£129,534.32
Unity Trust	£82,832.28
Community A/c	£5,296.20
Business Reserves 017	£92,699.93
Petty Cash	£71.83

The meeting was closed at 20.12pm