

Gerrards Cross Town Council

South Lodge, East Common, Gerrards Cross SL9 7AD 01753 888018

Clerk to the Council - Mrs S Moffat clerk@gerrardscross.gov.uk

www.gerrardscross.gov.uk



Minutes of the Council Meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 19th March 2018 at Gerrards Cross Memorial Centre.

Present: Cllr C Brown (Chairman), Cllr I Bayliss, Cllr J Chhokar, Cllr N Holmes, Cllr J O'Keeffe, Cllr H Orme, Cllr P Roberts, and Cllr J Woolveridge.

In Attendance: BCC/SBDC Cllr B Gibbs, SBDC Cllr D Smith, SBDC Cllr S Chhokar, David Stanning, Andrew (Fish and Chip Shop), Simon Dean (BP Collins Solicitors), Ian Nunn (Nunn Hayward Chartered Accountants), Ian Everitt (Waitrose) and Sue Moffat (Town Clerk).

Would Councillors please give any declaration of interests at the beginning of the item on the Agenda

227/17 To accept apologies of absence – Apologies were received from Cllr M Baker and I Gordon.

228/17 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 19th February 2018.

At the proposition of Cllr Brown, seconded by Cllr Woolveridge, these Minutes were agreed by Council and signed.

229/17 Public speaking from residents on matters relevant to the meeting's agenda.

Local resident and businesses were present to object to SBDC's consultation on increasing car park charges in Gerrards Cross. David Stanning, a local resident, said he has been communicating with SBDC for 9 years to try and improve parking in GX. He estimates that SBDC makes £200,000 profit from car park charges in GX which goes in to the general income stream. Mr Stanning then went on to refer to the 2013 Court Case, R (Attfield) v. London Borough of Barnet, whereby the High Court held that the London Borough of Barnet was not entitled to increase parking permit charges under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to create a surplus which it could use to cover the cost of other transport initiatives funded by the General Fund. SBDC should be aware of this. Businesses in GX are getting hammered and any increase in car park charges will drive people out of GX. The obvious route of attack is increasing the charges for commuters as they earn more money in London and only clog up parking spaces in Gerrards Cross. He would like to emphasise this to SBDC.

Simon Dean stated that he is a Senior Partner for BP Collins and the Company employs 110 staff. He estimates that his staff pay £50,000 p.a. in parking charges and this will rise to £130,000 if the increased charges are introduced. Increased parking charges, coupled with all the double yellow lines preventing parking on the roads, will drive businesses out of the town.

Ian Nunn who is a partner at Nunn Hayward Accountants, was in total agreement with David and Simon. He estimated that his Company would need a 100% rise in their work rates to cope with the extra charges. His company employs 60 staff and he estimates that his staff will pay an extra £28,000 p.a. if the increased charges are introduced. Nunn Hayward Accountants have been in GX for 30 years but now actively considering leaving GX Town Centre. If Nunn Hayward and BP Collins both leave the town he estimates there will be a loss of revenue to the town of over £1m.

Andrew, from the Fish and Chip shop, said that businesses already pay high rates and £1000 p.a. for one bin emptying. Something needs to be done to help businesses even if it is a park and ride.

Cllr Brown changed the order of the agenda to allow Cllr Gibbs to report.

230/17 BCC/SBDC Cllr Gibbs Report - First Cllr Gibbs responded to the objections made in the Public Participation. The long term solution is for GX to have more car parking space. SBDC are still wanting to enlarge Station Road car park. SBDC have now set up a property company which means they can borrow money from the Government at reasonable rates as long as there is a good business case in place. When the planning application for a new car park was retracted, due to the objections of local residents, SBDC withdrew the request for the loan. New plans for a bigger car park are being worked on now and then these will need to go through the consultation process again and if successful a loan can be sought. Cllr Smith interjected to say a multi-storey car park in Station Road would need the support of the businesses and the local community in order for SBDC to fulfil this aim.

Cllr O'Keeffe suggested that Bucks CC may wish to consider changing the on street parking from one hour to two hours to assist short term users of the town, such as shoppers and business clients, which would alleviate the parking problem.

Cllr Gibbs will take back to SBDC the concerns of local businesses and the Town Council regards the consultation on increasing car park charges.

Cllr Holmes asked what was happening about the discussions GXTC had instigated to increase Station car park for commuters. GXTC contacted Network Rail and Chiltern Rail and there have been 2 meetings with these parties and SBDC. The next meeting was to be held in February after SBDC and Chiltern Rail scoped the possibility of a carrying out a Feasibility study. Cllr Gibbs responded that SBDC is still waiting for further information from Chiltern Rail. Network Rail are not allowed to borrow money, Chiltern Rail do not have the money and want SBDC to carry out all the project work or there may be a developer who would. Cllr Holmes asked if Cllr Gibbs could accelerate the date of the next meeting.

7.58pm Cllr S Chhokar joined the meeting.

Bucks CC Report - Cllr Gibbs reported:-

1. The roads have deteriorated even further with the recent cold weather. There is to be some more money released from the reserves. This will be the maximum that can be prudently released but bearing in mind the extent of problem, although it is a welcome addition, it is nowhere near enough. Cllr Gibbs suggested a free apps to report potholes which also shows the exact location:- FixMyStreet. The more communications about potholes the more likely it is that they are mended. Cllr Gibbs is concerned about Bucks CC criteria for allocating funding for roads because at present it is worked out on length of road rather than road usage so the South of the County always loses out to the North.
2. Wapseys Wood – Enforcement is being carried out on the Travellers site by SBDC. Cllr Gibbs will also continue to fight for the closure of the Waste Fill site at Wapseys Wood which, as pointed out by Cllr Brown, should have been closed and reinstated by December 2017.
3. Slade's Farm - The request to develop the Slade's Farm site for gravel extraction was approved by the Development Control Committee. The contractor will have to reinstate the site on a section by section basis as the gravel is extracted. There will be a high bund around the site which could be of benefit to local residents during the working of the site as it is likely to lessen the noise from the motorway. The contractor is also going to plant an orchard on site where there used to be one. Cllr Gibbs has asked that Hedgerley Lane, from the new exit road to the Roundabout, be maintained because of expected HGV damage. The contractor's agent agreed that this was possible. This will be followed up. Cllr Brown added that in the light of Bucks CC's inability to enforce the closure and restoration of the Wapseys Wood waste site by the agreed date of 31 December 2017, the undertaking that Slade Farm will be fully restored after 15 years cannot be taken seriously. Cllr Gibbs replied that she had been pushing hard to ensure that Slade Farm would be restored by the agreed date.
4. The County Council budget has been written in the context of severe funding cuts from central government. 80p in every pound is spent on Adult social care and Children's services both of which are statutory requirements. The annual grant has decreased from £61 million five years ago to £8 million this year. (Next year this is likely to be zero.) Consequently the basic Council Tax has been increased by 2.99%. In addition there is to be an increase of 3% which is ring fenced to be spent on social care. This means that there will be a weekly increase of £1.40 for a band D home.

8.10pm Cllr Gibbs left the meeting.

231/17 To confirm the minutes of the following meetings:-

1. Commons Committee held on 5th March 2018

Minutes were proposed by Cllr Orme, seconded by Cllr Woolveridge and agreed by Council and signed. Cllr Orme gave a brief summary of the contents of the Minutes and added

2. Highways Committee held on 5th March 2018

At the proposition of Cllr Holmes, seconded by Cllr Bayliss, the Minutes of the Highways meeting were agreed by Council and signed and Cllr Holmes gave a brief summary of the Minutes. Cllr Bayliss presented the proposed Response to South Bucks District Council (SBDC) public consultation to amend SBDC Off Street Parking Places Order 2010, which was unanimously agreed and is as follows:-

Gerrards Cross Town Council (GXTC) is strongly opposed to your proposed increase in parking charges, and also object to your recent changes in parking hours. Our parking policy is to primarily cater for local shoppers and residents, then provide affordable parking for office and shop workers. Commuters should be discouraged from parking in SBDC car parks or clogging up residential side streets as they add little to the life of the town.

Our aim is to promote and support a vibrant and prosperous town. We want people to choose Gerrards Cross as their first-choice destination for shopping and dining as well as visiting solicitors, hairdressers, travel agents, cinema, etc. What is your aim?

We are very concerned that there are a number of shops that are now vacant and apart from very high rents charged by landlords, and high business rates, any increases in parking charges will put these businesses and their employees under further pressure. Parking in Uxbridge and High Wycombe is considerably cheaper and they both offer a far greater choice of retail outlets. In one private car park in Gerrards Cross the price for parking is £1 for each hour up to 5 hours, after which it increases to £9 for the rest of the day. This encourages local shoppers, and at the same time discourages commuters from parking all day. This would be our suggestion for the new charges in your car parks in Gerrards Cross and your income would probably be unaffected.

You recently extended the payable parking time to 8pm without consulting us, nor notifying businesses. This can only have the effect of discouraging people from visiting our restaurants and slowly stifling the evening life of the town. Your increase in revenue must be marginal when compared to the damage it causes to businesses and has also led to an increase in street parking with the consequent noise to neighbours when diners return to their vehicles.

Charges for Sunday parking were also introduced recently without any consultation and although they are not high, they also act as a deterrent to visitors and should be removed

We are available to meet with you and discuss these matters so please contact the Gerrards Cross Town Clerk to arrange a suitable date, time and venue.

3. Planning Committee Meeting on 26th February and 12th March 2018.

Cllr J Chhokar confirmed the planning minutes and gave a brief summary of the contents highlighting those planning applications where objections were raised. He went on to thank Mikael Bernston, who recently retired as a councillor, for all his contribution to the Planning Committee.

232/17 To confirm Mike Lawson and Mikael Bernston have resigned from GX Town Council. The Official Vacancy Notice is now on display on the noticeboard as from 6th March. If within 14 days of this date (excluding weekends) 10 electors do not give notice to the Returning officer at SBDC for a by-election, then we can fill these casual vacancies by co-option. 14 days will bring us to the 26th March. The Chairman, Cllr Brown thanked Mikael Bernston for all the hard work he had done for Gerrards Cross Town Council. (Mike Lawson was thanked at the last Council meeting).

233/17 To confirm the interview panel for the co-option procedure.

It was agreed that Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Chairman of Committees would be on the interview panel which would then make recommendations to Council.

234/17 Communications Working Party Updates

The Minutes of the meeting on 5th March 2018, were considered. Cllr Woolveridge raised concern about the article on Colston Hall for GX Community Association (GXCA) which was to be published in the next edition of VOICE, as it was promoting a commercial enterprise and could possibly open up the floodgates for other commercial ventures to be published in the future.

Cllr Brown and Cllr O’Keeffe declared an interest being members of the Management Committee of GXCA.

Although it was recognised that Colston Hall was for the use of the community and GXCA was a non-profit making organisation, the promotion of private hire for special occasions, weddings and corporate events may be classed as a commercial venture. At the proposition of Cllr Woolveridge, seconded by Cllr Bayliss, the motion was carried to remove the wording regards private hire. (Cllrs Brown and O’Keeffe did not participate in the vote as both had declared an interest).

It was agreed that at the next Council meeting the Council needs to clarify the difference between community activities and commercial activities so it is clearly understood for any future newsletters.

Cllr Orme asked that the Communications Agenda should be sent to all councillors in case there are those who wish to attend.

Lastly, the Assistant Clerk, Clair McCoy, was thanked for all her work in producing the Social Media Report.

235/17 BOOST Updates- Resolved to approve the proposals made in the Minutes of the BOOST WP meeting on 12th March 2018. Cllr Brown pointed out that the main change was to disband the BOOST WP and set up a Community Forum which will be independent to GXTC but facilitated by GXTC. GXTC could provide financial support if required by means of a grant. Cllr Holmes raised concern that although GX Traders Association was no longer functioning, GXTC must continue to find ways to assist in making it viable again. Cllr Brown and Cllr Holmes volunteered to attend the meetings of the Community Forum although all councillors would be welcomed.

236/17 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) update

Cllr Holmes reported there has been no meeting since January but now ready for the next stage and a meeting has been organised for 3rd April.

Cllr Orme asked for approval of the Consultants invoice of £522.50. This was approved by Council.

237/17 To consider a change of title of the ‘Commons’ Committee to reflect all the work undertaken by this Committee, for example ‘Commons and Camp’ Committee or ‘Open Spaces’ Committee.

This was deferred to the next Commons meeting for consideration. It was agreed that IHG and BBOWT volunteer works would be dealt with by the Town Clerk who would then approach the appropriate Committee.

238/17 To resolve to respond to the Minerals and Waste Consultation by 19th April 2018.

<https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/environment/planning/minerals-and-waste-local-plan/new-local-plan-proposed-submission-stage/> Cllr Brown offered to draft a response to be ratified by Councillors.

239/17 To resolve to respond to Buckinghamshire’s Draft Freight Strategy (2018-2036) by 9th April 2018.

<https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/transport-and-roads/transport-plans-and-policies/freight-strategy/>

It was agreed for all councillors to send comments to the Town Clerk who will formulate a response.

240/17 To decide any projects to put forward for funding in 2018-19 from Denham and Gerrards Cross Local Area Forum (approximately £10,000 would be available if the budget is agreed by LAF to be shared between stakeholders):-

(i) Cllr Orme proposed asking for £1000 towards using the Foam Stream system to control Crassula in Latchmore and New Pond and this was agreed.

(ii) It was agreed to ask for £2500 to plant more trees in the streets.

(iii) Cllr Roberts suggested that the proposal to carry out a Feasibility Study for a zebra crossing in East Common close to the junction with Mill Lane might not be viable as he has been informed by the Police that it would be too close to the Mill Lane junction. Will need to check with Highways.

(iv) Ask the Youth Club if they have any projects requiring LAF funding.

241/17 MODERNISING LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE – It was agreed to submit representation to Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to provide the views of Gerrards Cross Town Council regarding the decision of the Secretary of State minded to implement, subject to Parliamentary approval and further discussions, the locally-led proposal to

replace the existing five councils across Buckinghamshire with a single council for the area. (Feedback to MHCLG by 25 May). It was agreed to restate the previous response agreed at the Council meeting on 12th December 2016 i.e. *'The Single Unitary (BCC) option requires the localisation of the existing District Council functions in the form of Community Hubs and Planning Committees. Both the 2 Unitary and 3 Unitary options require the creating of a Combined Authority to replace BCC. Each of the 3 options involves recreating the existing structure. We believe that leaving the existing structure in place and focusing on improvements and cost reductions will achieve the same end without the disruption and cost of a major reorganisation'*.

Also it was agreed to press for towns and parishes to have the opportunity to participate in strategy and expenditure decisions. Cllr Brown offered to draft a response for ratification at the next Council meeting.

242/17 To approve payments for March 2018

- (i) Cllr Bayliss proposed the payment schedule and this was approved by Council.
- (ii) Cllr Bayliss proposed delegated authority for the Town Clerk and himself (Chairman of Finance Committee) to ratify any outstanding invoices between now and the 31st March; being the end of the financial year. This was agreed.
- (iii) Cllr Bayliss proposed to spend an additional £1700 for the security of the Town Council office. This was agreed.

243/17 Report from County and District Councillor

SBDC Report- Cllr D Smith reported:- (i) SBDC will try and attempt to carry on as normal the work of district council until the final decision is made regards Secretary of State being minded to' implement the locally-led proposal to replace the existing five councils across Buckinghamshire with a single council for the area. If Unitary Authority is agreed this is unlikely to be implemented until 2020.

244/17 Report on Meetings – members update on where they have represented the Town Council since the last meeting.

Cllr Bayliss:- (i) Foam Stream demonstration.

Cllr Orme:- (i) Meeting with Chairman and Secretary of Bulstrode Camp Road Association; (ii) Foam Stream demonstration; (iii) BOOST WP meeting.

Cllr Roberts – (i) Denham Aerodrome Consultative Committee meeting. Two letters of complaint were received from members of the public.

Cllr O’Keeffe:- (i) Foam Stream demonstration; (ii) GX Conservation Volunteer morning was cancelled due to bad weather

Cllr Holmes:- Meeting with Cllr Saunders to offer his advice regards Neighbourhood Plan and how it operates; (ii) Medical Services meeting.

Cllr Woolridge:- (i) GXCV morning but was cancelled due to bad weather; (ii) SBDC’s Chairman’s reception at Stoke Park and; (iii) BOOST WP meeting

Cllr Brown:- (i) SBDC’s Chairman’s reception at Stoke Park ; (ii) CCG Medical meeting at Amersham Hospital and BOOST WP meeting.

245/17 To note information received in the correspondence at the Town Council Office.


None.

246/17 To confirm that the next meeting of Gerrards Cross Town Council will be held on Monday 23rd April, 2018 at 7.30pm at the Memorial Centre.

The meeting closed at 10.06 pm

Signed.....

Date.....


23/4/2018

Payments 19th March 2018						
Chq No/Bacs/DD	Payee	Net Exp.	VAT	Gross Exp		Transaction Details
	Commons					
BAC	Amersham TC	520.00	104.00	624.00	6214.94	Weekly playground checks x 20
BAC	Amersham TC	420.00	84.00	504.00		Remove, renovate and store picnic benches x2
BAC	Amersham TC	620.00	124.00	744.00		Playground Repairs
7148	GTB Plant Hire	2455.00	491.00	2946.00	2946.00	Crab Hill footpath
BAC	Donoghue Construction Ltd	1820.00	364.00	2184.00	2184.00	7 Additional skips for Latchmore Pond work
	Highways					
BAC	Leigh Electrical	375.00	75.00	450.00	1938.00	Street lighting contract
BAC	Leigh Electrical	340.00	68.00	408.00		Supply and fit new head Windsor Rd 261
	Leigh Electrical	680.00	136.00	816.00		Supply and fit 2 new heads Station Rd
BAC	Leigh Electrical	220.00	44.00	264.00		Cut back trees around street lights on Hedgerley Lane
DD	SSE Southern Electric	576.78	115.35	692.13	692.13	Unmetered Supply
BAC	Amersham TC	1809.56	361.91	2171.47		Devolved Highways Work - February 18
BAC	Amersham TC	1809.56	361.91	2171.47		Devolved Highways Work - March 18
BAC	Windowflowers	1004.75	200.95	1205.70	1205.70	Quarterly Annual Maintenance charge
	General Admin					
BAC	GXCA	38.00	0.00	38.00	38.00	Room hire
DD	Chess	112.19	22.44	134.63	134.63	telephone & broadband rental and charges
BAC	Viking	119.09	23.82	142.91	142.91	
BAC	SBALC	64.00		64.00	64.00	Subscription 2017/18
	Neighbourhood Plan					
BAC	Planet (Evolving Together)	522.50	104.50	627.00	627.00	Consultancy fees
	BOOST					
	Council Office					
DD	SSE Southern Electric	34.11	1.7	35.81	35.81	Electricity
BAC	GXCA	1375.00		1375.00	1375.00	Quarterly ground rent Jan-March18
	Communications					
BAC	Nexus	100.00	20.00	120.00	120.00	Monthly Office 365 and Ipad Support
Card	Microsoft E1	78.00	15.60	93.60	135.84	Office 365
Card	Microsoft 365 E3	35.20	7.04	42.24		Office 365
BAC	Total salaries	3903.87		3903.87	3903.87	
	Bank Charges	9.10		9.10	9.10	
	Total	19041.71	2725.22	21766.93	21766.93	

Signed
Chairman F&GP

Date

J.J. Bayliss
19/3/18