

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 VIRTUAL Council Meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 15th February 2021

Present: Cllr C Brown (Mayor), Cllr N Barnett, Cllr Bayliss, Cllr J Chhokar, Cllr J O’Keeffe, Cllr H Orme, Cllr J Palmiero, Cllr P Roberts, Cllr T Scott, Cllr E Surkovic, Cllr A Wood and Cllr J Woolveridge.

In Attendance: Buckinghamshire Council:- Cllr D Smith, Cllr R Reed, Cllr S Chhokar, Thomas Broom (from the office of Joy Morrissey MP), MoP Tim Greenfield and Sue Moffat (Town Clerk).

132/20 Declaration of Interests - Councillors please give any declarations of interest at the beginning of the item on the Agenda.

133/20 Apologies for absence – Apologies have been received from Cllr B Gibbs.

134/20 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 18th January 2021.

At the proposition of Cllr Brown, seconded by Cllr Wood, these Minutes were agreed by Council after amending: (i) Minute 125/20 to read ‘Cllr Scott’ instead of ‘Cllr Surkovic’ and Minute 122/20 to remove the word ‘generally’.

135/20 Public Speaking - None.

136/20 Report from Buckinghamshire Council Councillors.

Cllr R Reed:- (i) He did request a police report from TVPA at the November 2020 meeting of the Denham, GX & Chalfonts Community Board which he has only just received. The TVPA’s Denham and GX Neighbourhood Newsletter for February 2021 has now been circulated. However, it is unclear who decided the priorities and Cllr Reed has raised this question; (ii) Funding for the parking survey at Gaviots Green/Close which was agreed by the ‘old’ LAF has been requested but no response has been received from the Community Board; (iii) The Prime Minister has announced changes to the NHS to bring it back in-house which will abolish the Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Cllr D Smith:- (i) Only significant meeting he has attended was the Denham, GX and Chalfonts Community Board; (ii) Buckinghamshire Council have agreed a proposed budget for 2021-22 which will be published on the Council’s agenda tomorrow.

Cllr S Chhokar:- He wished to make it clear that he is not attending this meeting as Chairman of Denham, GX and Chalfonts Community Board but as a Gerrards Cross Buckinghamshire Councillor. (i) It has been brought to his attention by Joy Morrissey MP that some residents have parking issues at Gaviots Close; (ii) The Community Board is encouraging GXTC to support applications for funding local initiatives that fit in with the local criteria; (iii) The Community Board’s meeting last week was the last one with the current Council before elections in May. The Community Board will continue to carry on its work until the change of administration. If GXTC or individual councillors have any input as to where the Community Board should make improvements, it would be appreciated. Cllr S Chhokar expressed his gratitude to the councillors at GX for their participation with the Community Board.

Cllr O’Keeffe responded to Cllr S Chhokar about the parking issues at Gaviots Green/Close. He explained that Bucks CC consulted the residents in Gaviots Close and, as a result of this, the now new Buckinghamshire Council officers have asked Gerrard Cross Town Council to incorporate their recommendations with regards to Gaviots Close into the Gerrards Cross Town Council Parking Review. An informal public consultation was

carried out in August/September 2020. Other than one objection to the proposed yellow lines on the corner of Gaviots Close, no other comments were received. As a result of this consultation, after taking note of the objection to the yellow lines, GX Town Council agreed with the recommendation by Buckinghamshire Council for having double yellow lines on the corner of Gaviots Close. These recommendations and others for Gerrards Cross have now been passed onto Buckinghamshire Council in order for them to start the legal process with the view to having these recommendations implemented. This process also includes the legal requirement for a formal public consultation later this year. Provided all goes well, the timetable indicates implementation of these changes and others will commence in October and November 2021. Cllr S Chhokar thanked Cllr O’Keeffe for this information and will report back to Joy Morrissey MP.

137/20 To confirm the Minutes of the following meetings:-

Commons Committee of the 1st February 2021. At the proposition of Cllr Orme, seconded by Cllr Woolveridge, the Minutes of the Commons Committee were agreed by Council.

Highways Committee of the 1st February 2021. At the proposition of Cllr Wood, seconded by Cllr Scott, the Minutes of the Highways meeting on 1st February 2021 were agreed.

Planning Committee 25th January and 8th February 2021 - Cllr J Chhokar confirmed the Planning Minutes.

138/20 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) updates. If anyone has any questions they wish to raise about the Neighbourhood Plan, please send them to the Town Clerk who will forward these on to the NPSG for a response.

139/20 Communications – The next newsletter is in April when the reports from the Mayor and Chairmen of Committees for the Annual Town Meeting are published, plus this year GXTC’s Climate Change statement. Recently there has been some negative comments about the holly mulching work on East Common. Cllr Orme has written a statement about the work for the web site and the Council Office directed a link to this on Nextdoor. A discussion ensued as to whether councillors should comment to negative comments on Nextdoor and about communicating with the public when any major work takes place. Cllr Wood was happy to make his own response on Nextdoor but it was recognised that not everyone was happy to do so. It was suggested that in future, for major projects taking place, a notice should be erected on site and on the web site explaining what is happening in the area. Also, for GXTC to become more proactive with local news and updates which can be decided under the Communication item on each Council and Committee meetings.

140/20 Cllr Brown to report back on ‘Setting up a Working Party to investigate the possibility of introducing better medical services to Gerrards Cross’. It was agreed that, in light of recent announcements from Government that the NHS is under review, more capital will be invested in the NHS and the Clinical Commissioning Groups are likely to be abolished, this agenda item will be deferred until the final outcome from Government is known.

141/20 Colston Court to be nominated as a Community Asset – (i) Waiting to hear from the Asset Group of L & Q ; (ii) Need confirmation that Colston Court can be a Community Asset; (iii) Cllr Surkovic suggested there could be further community assets e.g. Everyman Cinema; (iv) Ask the NPSG if they have included any in the NP; (iv) ES, HO & JC will have further discussions on this subject.

142/20 To respond to the local Community Board Co-ordinator asking for ideas and suggestions for improving the Board's effectiveness. Cllr Brown has provided input on this at the Bucks Council’s Chairmen’s meeting where he mentioned the lack of interface with the new Buckinghamshire Council to raise major issues and the Community Board should be more town/parish council focussed. Cllr Orme pointed out that funding approval can take up to 6 months which is too long. Also, Cllr Scott said there should be better clarification if funding applications need to be match funded although Cllr Brown thought it best to ask for all the funding and use match funding as a fallback offer if needed. It was agreed that to improve the boards effectiveness a better understanding of the funding process was required and to formalise and increase the frequency of the Working Groups to make them more effective.

143/20 To respond to the draft Town and Parish Charter – It was agreed that the Charter is a good step forward in making town/parish councils on par with Bucks Council. Cllr Brown added that a section on pilot schemes has not been reflected in the Charter. CB and SM to complete a proposed response and circulate for approval.

144/20 At the request of Cllr Brown: ‘Reviewing efficiency and staff appraisals to discuss communications improvements, operations updates and staffing’. Cllr Brown has circulated an email on Council efficiency. It was noted that with the Covid lockdown, council work is being carried out remotely which may cause some difficulties. It was recognised that as the Council is becoming more proactive and taking on more devolved highways work, staffing levels need to be increased. Also, the Town Clerk has no-one to deputise for her when needed. To this end, the position of the retiring Assistant Clerk is being replaced with the position of Deputy Clerk and the hours increasing from 12 to 28 hours. Also, as already been agreed, the office is being refurbished and SM, IB and HO are working on this. IB hopes to present the quotes for this work to the next Council meeting. CB and SM will seek information on Staff Appraisal systems and CB asked HO for her help. This matter will be discussed at F&GP meetings.

145/20 At the request of Cllr O’Keeffe, ‘To resolve the issue and workings with regards to secret ballots and amend Standing Orders as agreed’. Cllr J Palmiero proposal to use Zoom secret ballot facility was agreed if the need arises. Also, to trial this facility before the Council meeting in May.

146/20 At the request of Cllr Scott, ‘To discuss footpath width for wheelchairs’. Cllr Scott proposed to contact the Leonard Cheshire Home for advice and conduct a survey for wheelchair users. It was pointed out that there are already available Inclusive Mobility (2002) Guidelines which advises that ideally the width of the footway should be 2000mm to facilitate two people in wheelchairs to pass each other comfortably. Where this width is not possible, a clear width of 1500mm should be provided, with an absolute clear minimum width of 1000mm in exceptional cases. However, it was recognised that these guidelines would be difficult to adopt in their entirety as some pavements are too narrow and other places may need overgrown hedges removed/cutback which are part of the street scene. It was agreed to refer this item to the Highways Committee and ask the LAT for advice.

147/20 Finances

- (a) Resolved to agree payments for February 2021- Noted and agreed.
- (b) To consider some reallocation of spare budget for 2020/21. The following spare budget was agreed:-
 - (i) Commons - £11,400 spare. £4,300 required for ditch clearance.
 - (ii) Highways - £13,000 spare. An additional £6400 required for pothole repair work.
 - (iii) Grants - £9,400 spare.
 - (iv) Communications - £5000 spare. £4100 required for IT upgrade.
 - (v) Salaries - £15,000 spare to be reallocated for office upgrade. Waiting for quote.

148/20 Report on Meetings – members update on where they have represented the Town Council since the last meeting.

Cllr Woolveridge – Age Concern Chirophy Clinic. Also informed the Council that Pat and Bill Collins are moving away from GX. GXTC to send a letter of appreciation for all their work they have done in the community.

Cllr Orme – (i) 26th Jan – Youth Services Working Group, (ii) 4th Feb -Meeting with residents at the Camp, Windsor Rd, regards overgrown boundary vegetation along the bridleway and; (iii) 11th Feb – Community Board meeting.

Cllr Roberts – None

Cllr Palmiero – None.

Cllr J Chhokar – None.

Cllr E Surkovic – None.

Cllr Wood – (i) Meeting with SM and the Highways Officer which was a very useful meeting; (ii) 27th Jan – Parish Liaison meeting; (iii) 2nd Feb – meeting with Highways UK and drained ditch at Packhorse Rd/A40 which was flooding and; (iv) Chairman’s Community Board meeting.

Cllr Scott – Chairing Youth Services Working Group. The next meeting is 23rd Feb if any wishes to join.

Cllr Bayliss – None.

Cllr O’Keeffe – None.

Cllr Brown – Chairman’s Community Board meeting, Parish Liaison meeting, Denham, GX, Chalfonts Community Board meeting.

149/20 To note information received in the correspondence at the Town Council Office – (i) GX Covid Group asked for support for the volunteers to receive the Covid vaccination. This was agreed; (ii)

Complaint about the state of Windsor Rd after the installation of the superfast broadband cabling and workman blocking driveways; (iii) A complement from a resident that the ongoing holly work on East Common is a very good idea and the Common is looking good.

150/20 To confirm that the next Council Meeting of Gerrards Cross Town Council will be at 7.30pm on 15th March 2021.

The meeting closed at 9.43 pm

Signed.....

Date.....