

Gerrards Cross Town Council

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

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Minutes of the Council Meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 18th October 2021 in The Garden Room at Gerrards Cross Memorial Centre

Present: Cllr. A Wood (Mayor), Cllr. M Bracken, Cllr. J Chhokar, Cllr Sarah Davey, Cllr. C Da Costa, Cllr. T Greenfield, Cllr. B Holborn, Cllr. J O'Keeffe, Cllr. B Peck, Cllr. P Roberts, Cllr. C Stuart-Lee.

In Attendance: Chris Brown (Associate Councillor), Jennifer Woolveridge (Associate Councillor), Sue Moffat (Town Clerk) and Amy McCreary (Deputy Town Clerk). Buckinghamshire Council Cllr S Chhokar. One member of the public.

76/21 To accept apologies of absence: Cllr N Barnett, Buckinghamshire Council Cllr P Bass, Buckinghamshire Council Cllr G Hollis and Buckinghamshire Council Cllr T Broom.

77/21 Declaration of Interests - Councillors please give any declarations of interest at the beginning of the item on the Agenda.

78/21 To approve the Minutes from the Full Council meeting on 20th September 2021. Cllr J Chhokar requested for the minute number 69/21 to be changed to show that he requested for the Town Clerk's list of her disagreement to the Staffing Committee's proposals. The Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk did query that this request had been made at the last meeting and these disagreements had been reported at the meeting in August to the Staffing Committee. The Council agreed for the Town Clerk to send her disagreements to the Staffing Committee within the next week.

79/21 Public Speaking A member of the public raised his concerns about the empty shops on the high street and asked the Council why businesses do not thrive in the area. He felt some of the shops that were open were not very attractive or in keeping of the town. One of his suggestions would be to offer some free parking to encourage people to stay in the town. Bulstrode Way car park could give one or two hours of free parking on a Sunday. Another option is to offer free parking at Station Road and Tesco's car parks on promotion days/evenings. Attract visitors to the Town through shopping evenings in the run up to Christmas with pop up units. Where the 40mph limit starts it should be reduced to 30mph and where the 30mph starts reduce it to 20mph. Another idea would be to close Packhorse Road off and have a farmers market.

Cllr Peck confirmed that the Council is also concerned over the empty shops but unfortunately the Council has no control over who rents the shops and the rates landlords charge. Cllr Wood suggested that the resident joins the WeAreGX group to discuss with local businesses the future of the high street. Cllr Davey confirmed that the farmers market had already been discussed and WeAreGX had been out to discuss the idea of local cafes providing discounts to customers on the same day. Associate Cllr Woolveridge confirmed there are two days free parking on Saturdays to the run up to Christmas.

80/21 Report from Buckinghamshire Councillors.

Cllr Santokh Chhokar informed the Council that there have been no South Bucks Area Planning meetings recently but there is one scheduled later this month. Cllr Santokh Chhokar attended the Finance and Resources Committee Meeting regarding development of a more user friendly customer reporting system. It will be streamlined using one platform. Cllr Santokh Chhokar has also been working with Buckinghamshire Council on the complaints system.

Cllr Bracken attended meeting with Buckinghamshire Council regarding the refuse contractor changing over from Biffa to Veolia, street cleaning and rubbish collection failures. Buckinghamshire Council have acknowledged that the street cleaning process has failed and are implementing a new tier system. The tier system allows for additional street cleaning when required. Cllr Bracken will update the Council of the street cleaning schedule once he has received it.

Cllr Bracken confirmed that refuse collection will have an integrated management system when Veolia take over. The new collection trucks have a button within the vehicle that they press every time a bin is collected. This will identify missed bin collections more efficiently. Cllr Bracken is discussing the missed collection process with Buckinghamshire Council, currently residents who want to complain are told it is not a complaint it is a service failure, which can be frustrating.

Cllr Wood has met with the Local Area Technician who confirmed that half of the town's drains and gullies have been cleared. Cllr Wood has checked with the residents that complained about the blocked drains and has received positive feedback. Buckinghamshire Council has requested input from the Town Council regarding the busier carriage and footpath schemes. The Local Area Technician has suggested that they will concentrate on repairing the road defaults and the Council should concentrate on the pathways. Cllr Wood is also on the Task and Finish Scheme for Transport for Bucks for when the TfB contract ends in 2023.

81/21 To confirm the Minutes of the following meetings:-

- (i) Commons Committee 4th October 2021 Cllr Greenfield proposed, Cllr Peck seconded and the Council agreed. *The Commons Committee Minutes stated that the Duck House needed to be ratified at the Full Council. Cllr Chhokar, Cllr Stuart-Lee, Cllr Greenfield and Cllr Holborn requested that their objection be recorded as they were not present at the meeting.*
- (ii) Highways Committee 4th October 2021 Cllr Wood proposed, Cllr Peck seconded, and the Council agreed.
- (iii) Planning Committee 17th September and 11th October 2021– Cllr J Chhokar confirmed the Minutes.

The Town Clerk to complete Community Board applications for the projects listed in the Highways Minutes.

82/21 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) updates

Cllr J Chhokar attended his first meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan which is now nearing completion. Cllr J Chhokar informed the Steering Group that there was no reference to the green belt area between Gerrards Cross and Denham which needed to be added. Cllr J Chhokar provided the group with the number of houses that are being built from information that he sourced from Buckinghamshire Council. Norman Holmes emailed Cllr Chhokar and stated that one of the Neighbourhood Plan group objectives was to:

“encourage new businesses and retail opportunities in order to maintain the vibrant feel of a thriving Town Centre that is the hub of the community”

Norman Holmes stated that he understood the restrictions the Town Council faced with this issue but requested to know their latest views, now Covid has diminished, on physical retail property locally and nationally.

83/21 Proposed new terms of GXTC's lease of South Lodge with Gerrards Cross Community Association Update– The Town Clerk confirmed that the lease is still being drafted.

84/21 At the request of Cllr O'Keeffe **'To resolve the issue concerning the CCTV system with regard to requests, procedures and CCTV access'** – Cllr O'Keeffe has contacted Chris Troughton, an ex-policeman, and discussed the Council's requirements for checking the CCTV policies and access rights. Cllr O'Keeffe to formally write and request a quote to verify the policies and users are legal and to give advice on the APNR cameras.

85/21 Improving out Town – To discuss the report of the Improving Town Initiatives Action Group and agree priority initiatives and action.

The Working Group met up and have categorised the initiatives into the follow categories:

- a) points on which we want full council view as priority for Community Board funding
- b) business as usual type issues with specific actions marked

c) items held in review - essentially no action at this time

The Council went through the list and voted on the following items:

- (i) Packhorse Road - A Pizza Exp stretch convert to parallel (reduced spaces)
B New parallel parking opposite old M&S (add new spaces)
– the majority of the Council voted to remain the same.
- (ii) Packhorse Road Lampposts – A Minimum: LED acceleration consider need for new lights – The Town Clerk confirmed these were Buckinghamshire Council lights.
B Maximum: New style lights. The majority of the Council voted for option A.
This will be taken to the Community Board.
- (iii) Packhorse Road, Road safety - A Signs and flashing signs aimed at speed reduction.
B Traffic calming on West Common
C Lower speed limit on A40 stretch
D New zebra crossing connecting the Commons.
The majority of the Council agreed to all of the road safety suggestions. This will be taken to the Community Board for funding.
- (iv) Extend CCTV to East and West Common – The Council agreed. This will be taken to the Community Board for funding.

86/21 To put forward projects for funding to the Denham, Gerrards Cross and Chalfont's Community Board – The Town Clerk to complete Community Board applications for the above projects. It was agreed that no quotes are required at this stage. There was a discussion over the location of the A40 40mph and if it was in the correct location. It was agreed for the Town Clerk to add this as an agenda item to the Highways Committee Meeting Agenda. Associate Councillor C Brown to find the previous correspondence regarding this matter. The Town Clerk to add this task to the Highways Outstanding projects spreadsheet.

87/21 Report from the Working Group to review the Councils Committees' practices -. The Working Group have had their first meeting and will provide an analysis at the next full Council Meeting.

88/21 At the request of Cllr Wood, 'To consider possible changes to Gerrards Cross Town Council's meeting calendar'– Cllr Wood has received feedback that Highways and Commons meetings are not allocated enough time and therefore would suggest having them on separate evenings instead of on the same night. This would also give the Council more time to discuss Community Board funding projects. To do this the Council would have to reduce the Planning meetings to one meeting per month. Cllr J Chhokar stated the importance of having a Planning Meeting twice a month because of the timelines in reporting comments to Buckinghamshire Planning Department. Cllr Peck suggested having a Planning meeting before Commons or Highways because the meetings are short and the Councillors have checked their plans beforehand. The Council agreed more time was required and to change the calendar to the following starting from January 2022

1. Planning
2. Highways
3. Planning followed by Commons
4. Full Council

89/21. At the request of Cllr Wood, '**Gerrards Cross Town Council's representations in the Town**' Cllr Greenfield and Cllr Da Costa are representatives on the WeAreGX group but have not received an invite to the WhatsApp group, Cllr Wood will follow this up with Steve Weston. John Palmiero has requested a Council contact as he would like to discuss activities for teenagers. Cllr Davey agreed to have a call with John Palmiero and Buckinghamshire Council regarding this project.

90/21 To approve payments for October 2021- Cllr Holborn queried the emergency repair costs of the CCTV cameras and whether we had a contract to cover call outs. The Town Clerk confirmed that there is no contract that covers call outs because the service charge would be more than the current process of

only being charged when required. This is the first time all cameras had gone down. Cllr Davey stated that in the Councils regulations councillors are able to see the invoices before the meeting. The Town Clerk confirmed that Councillors can come to the office to see the invoices. The Town Clerk to investigate the possibility of circulating all invoices to councillors electronically. Cllr Greenfield to come to the office to discuss the zipwire and the roundabout invoice.

93/21 Report on meetings - members update on where they have represented the Town Council:-
Cllr Holborn and Cllr Bracken met for the Working Group review Councils Committees practices.
Cllr Holborn, Cllr Greenfield and Cllr Stuart-Lee attended the Community Board meeting.
Cllr Holborn raised the flag at half-mast out of respect for MP Sir David Amess.
Cllr Holborn, Cllr Chhokar, Cllr Bracken, Cllr Peck, Cllr Wood, Cllr Greenfield, Cllr O’Keeffe, Cllr Stuart-Lee all attended the defibrillator training.
Cllr Chhokar, Cllr Bracken, Cllr Stuart-Lee, Cllr Greenfield attended the Improving Our Town Working group.
Cllr Chhokar attended the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group.
Cllr O’Keeffe had a meeting with Chris Troughton regarding CCTV.
Cllr Greenfield attended the Gerrards Conservation Volunteers group.
Cllr Peck met with Strutt and Parker to discuss defibrillators.
Cllr Wood and Cllr Da Costa met with Highways UK to look at various areas that need repairing.
Cllr Wood and Cllr Bracken met the Local Area Technician.
Cllr Wood met a resident to discuss that a stream that is not flowing.

Cllr Holborn to send feedback to the Community Board regarding how to improve the bidding process for grants.

94/21 To note information received in the correspondence at the Council Office – (i) Royal British Legion Remembrance Service at 10.40am on Sunday 14th November 2021 at the War Memorial; (ii) The Town Clerk to draft a response to Norman Holmes regarding any ideas the Town Council has to restore the high street.

95/21 To confirm that the next Council Meeting of Gerrards Cross Town Council will be on 15th November 2021 at the Memorial Centre.

The meeting closed at 9.28pm

Signed.....

Date.....