

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 October 2020

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 Scott (virtually), Cllr E Surkovic, Cllr A Wood and Cllr J Woolveridge.

In Attendance: Buckinghamshire Council:- Cllr Reed, Cllr D Smith (virtually), Cllr S Chhokar (virtually) and Sue Moffat (Town Clerk).

69/20 Declaration of Interests - Councillors please give any declarations of interest at the beginning of the item on the Agenda.

70/20 Apologies for absence – An apology has been received from Cllr B Gibbs.

71/20 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 21st September 2020.

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

72/20 Public Speaking - 1. Mrs Nisbet, who lives at Bulstrode Court which is at the junction of Oxford Road with Windsor Rd, spoke about the increase of industrial traffic along the Oxford Road causing unacceptable noise and pollution. Mrs Nisbet has already contacted the Mayor at Gerrards Cross Town Council (GXTC) who has referred her to the Highways Authority at Buckinghamshire Council, but she believes her local council should be taking action. She also accused the Mayor of saying, in his reply to her, that he advised her to move from the Oxford Road. Cllr Brown strongly denied this and said he never advised anyone to move from the Oxford Road. Cllr Brown said this matter would be referred to the next Highways Committee on 2nd November and asked Mrs Nisbet for a written copy to be sent to the Town Clerk of what she said at the meeting tonight.

2. Richard Stone gave a presentation of the financial situation of Gerrards Cross Community Association (GXCA) due to Covid-19 (presentation circulated). Richard Stone explained the loss of income during Covid-19, and hopefully a way back to normality with community events and room bookings gradually increasing. However, there is still the loss of revenue due to lack of weddings, loss of big community events such as the Jumble Sale, and predicted shortfalls due to the Covid-19 situation as it is unlikely to change quickly. GXCA have furloughed staff during Lockdown but if the situation becomes worse it may have to have reduce staffing levels to just a caretaker and one member of staff. The plans are still to refurbish the Garden Room, which is structurally unsound, at an approximate cost which has been quoted of £80k. This would then give the Garden Room a guaranteed life of 40 years. To ensure this can happen, GXCA are asking for a 25k grant from GXTC. Mike Lawson added that GXCA have formed a ‘Creative Sales Team’ to keep GXCA in the public eye. To this end they have had a Quiz night recently to keep GXCA highlighted in the Community. In response to the question raised about seeking Lottery funding, Richard Stone responded that they have applied in the past but was unsuccessful as they believe GXCA is in a ‘rich area’.

Cllr Brown thanked R Stone and M Lawson for the presentation and said the grant application would be discussed at the next Council meeting.

73/20 Report from Buckinghamshire Council Councillors.

Cllr R Reed:- (i) In response to the question raised at the last Council meeting regards the Covid 19 incidence rates in Buckinghamshire Care Homes, he can now report there has been 64 since March and of these there have been 12 in the ‘old South Bucks District Council’ area. Generally, between 6 to 12 October there have

been 12 cases in Gerrards Cross and 3 in Denham. The number of cases in the old South Bucks and Chiltern area has now risen to 127 per 100,000; (ii) At the next Bucks Council unitary meeting this coming Wednesday the recommendation is to withdraw the draft South Bucks and Chiltern Local Plan; (iii) A large planning application has been received for Pinewood Studios. Cllr J Chhokar responded that GXTC will be considering this at the next Planning meeting.

Cllr S Chhokar:- Nothing much further to add to Cllr Reed's reports except it is very important for GXTC to complete the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr D Smith:- (i) As reported by Cllr Reed, the draft Local Plan will be discussed at the next Bucks Council meeting this week and possibly withdrawn due to the response of the Planning Inspector about the lack of cooperation with the Borough of Slough on housing needs, which he believes is a poor reason to withdraw the draft plan.; (ii) Covid-19 incidences are rising and he believes the situation will get a lot worse before it gets better; (iii) The Royal British Legion has announced there will be no Remembrance Parades this year due to Covid-19 but he will lay a wreath on behalf of Bucks Council.

74/20 To confirm the Minutes of the following meetings:-

Commons Committee 5th October 2020. At the proposition of Cllr Orme, seconded by Cllr Woolveridge, the Minutes of the Commons Committee were agreed by Council.

Highways Committee 5th October 2020. Regards Item 6, Update on Covid Measures in the town centre, Cllr Woolveridge asked if the covid-19 signs are to remain, can they be put up correctly and are there costs available for removal when the time comes? At the proposition of Cllr Wood, seconded by Cllr Orme, these Minutes were agreed by Council.

Planning Committee 28th September and 12th October 2020- Cllr J Chhokar confirmed the Planning Minutes which have included 2 planning consultations. He also asked for councillors when considering planning applications to always check if the property is in Green Belt as this will have an influence on the planning comments.

F & GP Committee – At the proposition of Cllr J Chhokar, seconded by Cllr Woolveridge, these Minutes were agreed after amending Minute 9 to read:- *'IB requested an additional £20k in the Highways budget for CCTV covering the triangle by Latchmore Pond. However, extending coverage to other areas in GX has not yet been agreed because establishing CCTV to cover the town centre is the current priority'*, so that it is clear the £20k has not been included in the proposed 2021-22 budget.

75/20 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) updates.

Cllr Orme reported that the NPSG have agreed it is best to ask the whole town for suggestions for 'Call to Sites' and this is now advertised on the NP web site and an article will be published in November's VOICE.

76/20 Communications – Articles have now been submitted for the next edition of VOICE which will be published in the second week in November.

77/20 Premises and Infrastructure Working Party – Cllr Orme explained that as the Minutes state, the PIWP decided to look first at the possibility of any upgrade to our present office at South Lodge. Since the meeting she has been in discussion with Cllr Surkovic regards the Health and Safety Executive guidance on minimum space per person which is about 53 sq ft. Therefore a space of 1200-1400 sq ft will be needed for any upgrade to Town Council Office. Tentative enquiries have been made and GXCA do not appear adverse to upgrading South Lodge but this will need to be agreed by the Trustees of GXCA. Although the Memorial Hall is a Grade 2 listed building, the 2 lodge houses are only in the curtilage. Cllr Orme is exploring the possibility of an architect to carry out a free feasibility study of upgrading South Lodge. At present there is no money in the budget for any building works but could investigate funding avenues such as grants or PWLB. The possibility of leasing other properties in the town centre has not been excluded. Also it was suggested joining forces with GXCA if the Garden Room was to be upgraded but it was agreed that GXTC and GXCA should be kept as separate entities.

At the proposition of Cllr Orme, seconded by Cllr Palmiero, the Minutes of the PIWP Committee were agreed by Council.

78/20 Facilities for young people in Gerrards Cross – Cllr Scott reported that she has been gathering information about what other councils have done to provide facilities for young people. Denham conducted a survey for young people and now a new BMX track has been installed. She is booking a date with Cllr S Chhokar, Chairman of the local Community Board, to discuss this matter.

79/21 At the request of Cllr Palmiero, 'To discuss future types of GX Town Council and Committee meetings regards face to face, virtual or hybrid' in light of Covid-19 virus'. Cllr Palmiero read out the following statement:

- There is no question that the best way to hold our meetings face to face. No need to debate that fact.
- But we are living in a time where everyone is being asked to compromise and in particular we as individuals are being asked by our government, to limit our interactions with others in order to try to slow down the spread of a very infectious virus.
- It doesn't matter whether we as individuals believe in what we are being asked to do or not - it does matter that as a council, we behave in a way that sets an example in the community.
- At the moment, as a council, we are not doing that. We are continuing to meet face to face, when so many others are compromising how they work and how they socialise, and despite strong guidance from NALC to not do so.
- The fact that it is not illegal to meet isn't good enough.
- In fact, it is precisely because so many citizens in this country are refusing to follow guidance, until it moves from being guidance to being law, that we now face lockdowns that will damage our economy and certainly destroy many businesses and livelihoods.
- In my opinion, it is morally indefensible that we continue to meet face to face when so many others do not.
- I also note that we never voted at full council on this topic - we just had an exchange of emails to which not everyone responded.
- I therefore request that we do vote - tonight at full council - whether to continue to hold face to face meetings or whether to move to remote meetings.
- If we vote to move to remote meetings, I will help set it up so that it is close to the level of efficiency that we have face to face - something I've been very used to for many years - and certainly better than hybrid meetings.
- Thank you for listening.

ES believes GXTC showed strong leadership by returning to face to face meetings but now with the infection rate rising she would agree to virtual meetings until times change. IB agrees with JP 100%. JO disagrees as Government has made it clear that businesses should return but stop the social side to limit contact. We should continue with hybrid meetings. HO is happy to continue with hybrid meetings which respects the decision of each councillor to attend face to face or virtual. AW agreed with HO. JC and JW both preferred face to face meetings. NB agreed with hybrid meetings. It was agreed to continue with hybrid meetings but for JP and IB to investigate options to improve the technology so everyone can hear clearly and be heard.

9pm Cllr Bayliss left the meeting.

80/20 At the request of Cllr O'Keeffe, 'Parking Review progress update'. Cllr O'Keeffe reported that in the informal consultation carried out by TfB there was a mistake regards South Park Drive and South Park View so GXTC is carrying out a second informal consultation for these 2 roads, free of charge, with the assistance of TfB. The following proposals are, if GXTC agree:- (i) South Park Drive -To retain some parking in the road in the road for school users, visitors and local shop workers. To put in a double yellow line along one side of the road. (2) South Park View -To retain a small amount of parking where it is safe to do so. This was agreed. AW thanked JO for all the work he has done for this Parking Review.

81/20 Royal British Legion Remembrance Service Sunday 8th November, 2020 – Gerrards Cross Branch of RBL regrets that the Remembrance Service will not take place this year due to Covid-19 virus. Organisations may lay a wreath at a time of their own choosing. It was agreed for the Mayor to lay a wreath at some time on the Sunday morning of 8th November.

82/20 It was agreed the Precept for 2021-22 to be £302,943, a 2% increase on the precept last year which was £297,026.

83/20 Finances

Resolved to note payments for October 2020.

84/20 Report on Meetings – members update on where they have represented the Town Council since the last meeting.

Cllr Brown – (i) SBALC meeting which he has circulated to councillors the briefing notes. At the meeting concern was raised regards the localism aspect of the Unitary Council and there being no forum to discuss organisational matters. The Community Boards appear to be replacing the district councils as a means to communicate with town/district councils and this is felt not to be the best way forward. Lastly, concern was raised about the lack of input by town/parish councils in to planning matters with the ‘new’ Bucks Council plus the fact the ‘10 resident rule’ has also been removed. It was agreed that CB should take these concerns raised by SBALC to the next meeting on behalf of GXTC

(ii) CCTV meeting – Still unsure if the power supply can come from the lamp post or the nearest feeder pillar; the latter would mean digging up the roads which would be expensive. However, Bucks Council are hoping to come back to us by the end of the week with an answer. CB made a strong case for the use of existing underground electricity cables to the street lights to supply power to the CCTV cameras on the street lights. Since the meeting JO has gone back to Bucks Council with an alternative arrangement; (iii) Parish Liaison meeting- Warren Whyte explained that Planning Enforcement has now taken a zero tolerance approach. A Complex Cases Task Force has been set up for major enforcement cases such as Wapseys Wood.

Cllr Woolveridge – GXCV where 12 volunteers turned up.

Cllr Wood – CCTV meeting and Parish Liaison meeting where he asked for Wapseys Wood to be referred to the Complex Cases Task Force and Warren Whyte agreed that it would.

Cllr Orme – Finance training course and GXCV.

Cllr J Chhokar – None.

Cllr Roberts – Not available.

Cllr O’Keeffe:-Had his own meeting with Bucks Council regards CCTV .

Cllr Palmiero – Zoom meeting with WeAreGX. to discuss organising a Christmas Shopping month to encourage the community to shop locally.

Cllr E Surkovic – None.

Cllr N Barnett – Lodged an Enforcement enquiry regards a mobile home which has been installed on a site in Fulmer Lane.

Cllr Bayliss – Not available.

Cllr Scott – None.

85/20 To note information received in the correspondence at the Town Council Office – None.

86/20 To confirm that the next Council Meeting of Gerrards Cross Town Council will be at 7.30pm on 16th November 2020 at GX Memorial Centre.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm

Signed.....

Date.....

| Payments 19th October 2020 | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---|
| Chq No/Bacs/DD | Payee | Net Exp. | VAT | Gross Exp | Total to Payee | Transaction Details |
| Commons | | | | | | |
| BACS | Fineland Forestry Ltd | 365.00 | 73 | 438.00 | 2670.00 | Prune back limbs of veteran oak - The Camp |
| BACS | Fineland Forestry Ltd | 1860.00 | 372 | 2232.00 | | Remove large dead tree, West common |
| BACS | Latchmore Garden Care | 145.00 | | 120.00 | 145.00 | Strim bridleway and footpaths Camp |
| BACS | A M S | 876.50 | | 876.50 | 876.50 | Monthly grass cutting contract for August |
| Highways | | | | | | |
| BACS | Leigh Electrical | 375.00 | 75 | 450.00 | 1074.00 | Monthly street lightling contract |
| BACS | Leigh Electrical | 480.00 | 96.00 | 576.00 | | Repair street light Gaviots Green |
| BACS | Leigh Electrical | 40.00 | 8.00 | 48.00 | | charge up and move MVAS |
| DD | Southern Electric | 253.46 | 50.69 | 304.15 | 304.15 | Unmetered electricity |
| BACS | Latchmore Garden Care | 25.00 | | 25.00 | | Strim Marsham Lane benches |
| BACS | Smiths CCTV contractor | 800.00 | 160 | 960.00 | 1200.00 | Complete ETA602 document for stress testing |
| | Smiths CCTV contractor | 200.00 | 40 | 240.00 | | Remove CCTV camera for replacement column |
| | Highways UK | 5957.50 | 1191.5 | 7149.00 | 7149.00 | Pothole repair |
| Administration | | | | | | |
| DD | Chess | 135.14 | 27.03 | 162.17 | 162.17 | Telephone and broadband monthly charge |
| card | Amazon | 102.91 | 20.58 | 123.49 | 123.49 | Microphone |
| BACS | CCS | 365.57 | 73.11 | 438.68 | 438.68 | Photocopying quarterly charge |
| | Bank charges | 7.70 | | 7.70 | 7.70 | |
| Parish Office | | | | | | |
| DD | CNG Power | 21.94 | 1.10 | 23.04 | 23.04 | Gas Charge (amended after meter reading) |
| DD | Gazprom | 40.52 | 2.03 | 42.55 | 42.55 | Electricity charge |
| BACS | GXCA | 1500.00 | | 1500.00 | 1500.00 | Quarterly ground rent |
| Neighbourhood Plan | | | | | | |
| BACS | Planet Evolving together | 660.00 | 132.00 | 792.00 | 792.00 | Consultancy fees |
| BACS | Webfx | 90.00 | 18.00 | 108.00 | 108.00 | website update and security |
| Communications | | | | | | |
| BAC | Nexus | 100.00 | 20.00 | 120.00 | 120.00 | Monthly software and support |
| DD | Vatu | 100.00 | 20 | 120.00 | 120.00 | Web site hosting and support |
| Card | Natwest OneCard | 66.00 | 13.20 | 79.20 | 121.44 | Microsoft 365 |
| Card | Natwest OneCard | 35.20 | 7.04 | 42.24 | | Microsoft 365 |
| BACS | Salaries | 4900.98 | | £4,900.98 | £4,900.98 | |
| | Total | 19503.42 | 2400.28 | 21878.70 | 21878.70 | |

Chairman.....

Date.....