

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

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Minutes of the VIRTUAL Council Meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 18th May 2020

Present: Cllr C Brown (Mayor), Cllr Bayliss, Cllr J Chhokar, Cllr N Holmes Cllr J O’Keeffe, Cllr H Orme, Cllr J Palmiero, Cllr P Roberts, Cllr Scott, Cllr E Surkovic, Cllr A Wood and Cllr J Woolveridge.

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

1/20 Declaration of Interests - Councillors please give any declarations of interest at the beginning of the item on the Agenda.

2/20 Apologies for absence – Apologies have been received Cllr B Gibbs.

To note and for it now to be Minuted from the last ‘trial’ meeting of the Council that the Mayor, Cllr Brown, announced the sad demise of Ian Gordon, a past member of Gerrards Cross Parish Council, a stalwart in the Community and a true gentleman. A Minutes silence was held in memory of Ian Gordon.

3/20 Under legislation of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, it has been agreed for:-

- Gerrards Cross Town Councils to hold remote meetings until 7th May 2021 or until such time as the Council determines and these include video and telephone conferencing via ZOOM.
- Method of voting at a remote meeting should be by a show of hands.
- Remote meetings excludes the Parish Meeting of Electors so this meeting has been postponed until next year.
- Not to hold the Annual Meeting of the Council this year. This being so the following will remain:-
 - (i) The current Mayor and Deputy Mayor will remain in place until the next Annual Meeting in May 2021.
 - (ii) Appointment of Committees will remain the same until the next Annual Meeting in May 2021.

Commons: Mayor and Deputy Mayor plus 5 Councillors – IB, JC, HO, JO, JP and JW.

Highways: Mayor and Deputy Mayor plus 6 Councillors - IB, NH, HO, JO, ES, TS and PR . Cllr J Chhokar asked to join this committee which was agreed.

Planning : All members.

Finance and General Purposes: All members.

(NB Chairman and Vice -Chairman of Commons, Highways and Planning Committees are elected at the first meeting in June).

(iii) Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Finance and General Purpose Committee will remain the same until the next Annual Meeting in May 2021. However, Cllr Surkovic asked to stand down as Vice-Chairman. Cllr Bayliss proposed Cllr Orme to be Vice-Chairman, seconded by Cllr Scott and agreed by Council.

(iv) **Appointment to Working Parties.**

BTCV Conservation Working Party – JW, CB, HO, JO.

Speed & Parking Working Party – IB, JO, AW, PR,

Concessionary Taxi Working Party – JW.

(v) Appointment of Representatives to outside organisations.

South Bucks Association of Local Councils (SBALC) – CB, AW, HO.

BCC Parish Liaison Meetings – CB, AW.

Age Concern – JW.

Wapseys Wood Liaison – CB, AW.

Denham Aerodrome Consultative Committee – PR, JO.

Gerrards Cross Community Association Representative to Community Council – Cllr Palmiero offered to fill the vacancy for 2020-21.

GX Library – ES.

Flag Officers – IB, JO.

4/20 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 16th March 2020.

At the proposition of Cllr Brown, seconded by Cllr Wood, these Minutes were agreed by Council and signed after amending Minute 132/19, Report from Cllr Surkovic, for the last sentence to be replaced with:- ‘Cllr Surkovic raised the need for the Town Council to have an emergency preparedness plan. Councillors discussed the proposal and it was agreed that Cllr Surkovic should draft such a plan.’”

5/20 Public Speaking - None.

6/20 To report on the following TRIAL meetings:-

Commons Committee 6th April/4th May 2020.– Noted.

Highways Committee 6th April/4th May 2020.- Noted. IB asked about the cost of CCTV. Agreed to discuss CCTV at the next Highways Committee meeting.

Planning Committee 23rd March, 14th April and 11th May 2020 of which this Committee has delegated powers to make comments. Cllr J Chhokar confirmed the Minutes. He went on to highlight Cllr Bayliss email regarding yellow bricks at “Mabrouk”, 31 Windsor Road. Cllr Chhokar had researched. Permission was given so nothing else to do

7/20 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) updates.

Cllr Holmes reported that there have been no further meetings. The Town Clerk reported that AECOM have carried out a Social Housing Needs Assessment but do not need to carry out a Settlement Capacity Study as this has recently been completed by SBDC (SM added to the Minutes, for information, that the overall housing requirement figure of 382 for GX was stated in the Settlement Capacity Study published in January 2020 by SBDC). AECOM will now carry out a report on the type and size i.e. comment upon the mix of housing currently existing in the area, the demographic profile of the population, and what sizes of home are likely to be needed to accommodate local people over the planning period. NH said it was important to have these assessments in the NP to provide GX more control in future planning. Cllr J Chhokar reported that recent news suggested that the Planning Inspectorate may object to the new emerging Local Plan. CB raised concern if this plan was rejected.

8/20 Communications Working Party Updates

(i) VOICE – Covid 19 edition of VOICE has been distributed and there has been good feedback from residents.

(ii) Dates for the Diary – Councillors to report any local events that are taking place in GX.

9/20 Resolved to approve payments for May 2020

- The payments for May, 2020 were approved. Payments included the payments of grants as agreed at the F&GP Meeting last September 2019. IB reminded Council that there is still £10k in the grant reserves if GXCA require further assistance but will need documentation of projects already completed with the grant funding.
- To fix a date for the next F&GP Committee meeting in order to note the end of year accounts and to earmark reserves for special projects – The Town Clerk suggested the last Monday in June.

10/20 At the request of Cllr O’Keeffe: To discuss ‘Recent email communications passing between councillors’. (JO has already circulated the documents concerned to councillors).

JO thanked the Council for having the opportunity to discuss this tonight. When he became aware of the emails (as already circulated) from HO and IB accusing him, respectively, of being gender biased and that he should be removed from the Planning Committee due to a conflict of interest with his work, he

was very hurt, very upset which led to him lodging a Subject Access Request. He also understood there was a meeting with IB, HO, CB, AW, JC and the Clerk about these emails which he felt was discriminatory as he did not have the right to respond. JO wanted to discuss this at Full Council and was not prepared to have a smaller 'mediatory' meeting as suggested by the Town Clerk.

These events all started when JO responded to a point of order on a planning issue raised by TS and, subsequent to this, 2 councillors then made critical comments to JO's response. The Chairman of Planning, JC, also commented on TS's email that we must keep to planning issues and not be subjective as GXTC does have a good reputation reporting on planning applications. JC wanted the accusatory comments made by the 2 councillors to JO withdrawn to de-escalate the matter but this did not happen. HO believes she has had problems from councillors over the past 3 years. She did not accuse JO of anything but just explained how these emails made her feel.

IB believes he has the right to express his opinion.

There was much in depth discussion on this matter and the general feeling was that we should all learn from this incident and more training would be appropriate to ensure this situation does not occur again.

CB stated that we should focus on the aims of the Town Council. We are 12 councillors all with the same common goal to look after GX. If we adhere to the Code of Conduct and Standing Orders, we can carry out the function of the Council in a respectful manner. Councillors should criticise the action and not the person. The only action the Council can take, if those involved cannot resolve it between themselves, is to suggest mediation or for a councillor to lodge a complaint to the Monitoring Officer at South Bucks Council.

In Conclusion, mediation would seem the way forward. JO was happy to undertake mediation as long as it prevents situations like this occurring in the future. IB and HO also agreed to undertake mediation.

The Town Clerk will investigate the Mediation Service available and the cost involved. Also it was agreed to have more training for all councillors on the Code of Conduct and Standing Orders to ensure there is mutual respect between councillors.

11/20 Report from Buckinghamshire Council Councillors

Cllr Smith reported:- (i) In the new Buckinghamshire Council the configuration of the last 6 months remain and the Shadow Executive have the power to make decisions without reference to members to scrutinise as there has been no meeting of the Council.

Cllr S Chhokar reported:- He believes Cllr Smith is potentially wrong and members of Buckinghamshire Council can make decisions. The councillors for GX remain as Cllr Smith, Gibbs and Chhokar until elections next May. If there any issues, such as Highways, then GXTC should take them to the Community Hub. Regards the Committee structure, Chiltern and South Bucks is the Planning area of which he is a committee member. He is also on the Strategic Planning Committee considering the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan which is connected to strategic planning, plus there is a Resources and Finance Committee. The Community Hub replaces the LAF and is a bigger scheme as it includes the Chalfonts. The Community Hubs have not taken off the ground yet. The Cabinet members take the lead on these and once undergone training will know how these hubs links in with parish councils and the voluntary groups. Funds have already been made available for Covid 19 volunteer groups at Denham, GX and the Chalfonts.

Cllr Reed reported:- (i) TfB have continued working in these difficult times during the Covid 19. There has been a decrease in labour so timescales are very flexible; (ii) Scheduled meetings of the new Buckinghamshire Council have been cancelled so decision making has been made by the Shadow Executive with no accountability; (iii) Status of the Local Plan has failed its first test by the Planning Inspectorate. There is a strong option for the Council to withdraw its plan. This would mean SBDC has wasted 5 years of work. No parish council has ever supported this plan. If the new Local Plan is turned down we may end up still using the 2011 Plan which will make it much easier planning applications to win on appeal. CB raised his concern again that if there is no Local Plan in place then planning rules would not be stringent enough to prevent overdevelopment. He thought there would be a Local Plan for the whole of Bucks not just South Bucks.

Cllr Smith interjected to explain it is not the Green Belt but the Duty to Co-operate which the Planning Inspector is questioning. The Borough of Slough is looking for 1200 homes in SBDC. SBDC did attempt to co-operate with Slough but the Planning Inspector's solicitors are mixing up a Duty to Co-operate with a Duty to Agree. SBDC did its best to cooperate.

AW asked why this has happened. Cllr Reed replied that there had been no meeting between the 2 parties for 18 months and when the Planning Inspector asked for the notes of this meeting, none could be produced.

12/20 Report on Meetings – members update on where they have represented the Town Council since the last meeting.

Cllr Orme - (i) Applied to be a volunteer at Hertfordshire Police CCTV Monitoring Centre in Rickmansworth.

Cllr Woolveridge: (i) Self isolating due to Covid 19 but still walk the commons and users are very appreciative of them.

Cllr J Chhokar – None

Cllr Roberts – (i) Attended Denham Aerodrome Consultative meeting before lockdown, where there was a presentation from NATS on changes to navigation systems, changing from Ground Beacon's to Satellites. When he receives the revised document he will circulate it a copy; (ii) VE Day celebrations on his front lawn in Moreland Drive with Jo and AW. He is trying to organise a flypast for VJ Day in August.

Cllr Holmes – None.

Cllr O’Keeffe : Meeting with Bob from GX Covid 19 Volunteers regard grant application..

Cllr Palmiero – None.

Cllr E Surkovic – None.

Cllr Bayliss – None

Cllr Scott – Bulstrode Way VE Day celebrations.

Cllr Wood – (i) Highways UK on various projects in GX. All positive,

Cllr Brown – (i) Highways UK meeting with AW and SM on Packhorse Rd and Oak End Way.

13/20 To note information received in the correspondence at the Town Council Office

- (i) SM assisted with the application for a £2000 grant from the Community Hub for GX Covid 19 Volunteer group. The application was successful and funding is in GXTC’s bank account for use by the Volunteer group.
- (ii) GXCA will be operating a ‘meal centre’ providing economic meals for vulnerable and elderly in GX to be delivered by volunteers.

14/20 To confirm that the next VIRTUAL Council Meeting of Gerrards Cross Town Council will be at 7.30pm on 15th June 2020.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Payments 18th May 2020						
Chq No/ Bacs /DD	Payee	Net Exp.	VAT	Gross Exp		Transaction Details
	Commons					
BACS	A M S	876.50		876.50	876.50	Monthly grass cutting contract for April
	Highways					
BACS	Leigh Electrical	375.00	75	450.00	1482.00	Monthly street lightling contract
BACS	Leigh Electrical	340.00	68.00	408.00		fit new head alley way by station
BACS	Leigh Electrical	340.00	68.00	408.00		fit new head 258Windsor Rd
BACS	Leigh Electrical	140.00	28.00	168.00		Make safe knock down Meadway
BACS	Leigh Electrical	40.00	8.00	48.00		charge up and move MVAS
DD	Southern Electric	264.89	51.26	316.15	316.15	Unmetered electricity
BACS	Bucks CC	1663.44		1663.44	1663.44	Marsham Way Feasibility Study
BACS	Latchmore Garden Care	55.00		55.00	95.00	Oak End Way Strimming
BACS	Latchmore Garden Care	40.00		40.00		Marsham Way strimming
	Administration			0.00		
BACS	BNP Paribas	264.97	52.99	317.96	317.96	Photocopy quarterly lease
BACS	Beverley Simpson & Co Ltd	250.00		250.00	250.00	Fourth quarterly internal audit
BACS	BMKALC	1315.59		1315.59	1315.59	Subscription
	Bank charges	5.60		5.60	5.60	
	Parish Office					
DD	CNG Power	29.53	1.48	31.01	31.01	Gas Charge
DD	Gazprom	40.86	2.04	42.90	42.90	Electricity charge
	Neighbourhood Plan					
	Communications					
BAC	Nexus	100.00	20.00	120.00	264.00	Monthly software and support
BAC	Nexus	120.00	24.00	144.00		Avast Anti virus
Card	Natwest OneCard	84.00	16.80	100.80	143.04	Microsoft 365
Card	Natwest OneCard	35.20	7.04	42.24		Microsoft 365
BAC	Gpex	378.00		378.00	378.00	Voice
	Grants					
Chq	Gerrards Cross Community Assoc.	£10,000.00		£10,000.00	10000.00	Grant as agreed at F&GP 30-9-19
Chq	Movers and Shakers	£1,000.00		£1,000.00	1000.00	Grant as agreed at F&GP 30-9-19
Chq	Leonard Cheshire House	£1,000.00		£1,000.00	1000.00	Grant as agreed at F&GP 30-9-19
Chq	Padstone Housing/Connection Support for Padstones Housing	£600.00		£600.00	600.00	Grant as agreed at F&GP 30-9-19
Chq	Chiltern Dial-a-Ride	£350.00		£350.00	350.00	Grant as agreed at F&GP 30-9-19
Chq	South Bucks CAB	£785.00		£785.00	785.00	Grant as agreed at F&GP 30-9-19
Chq	Bucks Vision	£250.00		£250.00	250.00	Grant as agreed at F&GP 30-9-19
BACS	GX & Fulmer Scouts	£715.00		£715.00	715.00	Grant as agreed at F&GP 30-9-19
	Salaries	4017.08		£4,017.08	£4,017.08	
	Total	25475.66	422.61	25898.27	25898.27	

Chairman.....

Date.....

