



Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of the Northleach with Eastington Town Council held remotely on 20th January 2021 at 7pm

Members Present: Cllrs Rob Platts (Chairman), Brian Hulcup, Terry Morley-Blackwell, Mark Ogden and Andrew Wellman.

Officer in Attendance: Ms Pauline Rigby (Clerk/RFO).

Also present: County Councillor Paul Hodgkinson (item 3) and District Councillor Tony Dale.

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Alan Wellman sent his apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Platts declared an interest in Item 18, the lease to Men in Sheds, because he works for Cotswold Friends.

3. District and County Council Reports

District Cllr Tony Dale spoke about Cotswold District Council's work to distribute the latest covid business grants. This has become complex as there are 8 different grants that businesses could apply for and multiple different qualifying criteria. The council has worked hard to make the process as smooth as possible. Any business that applied for a grant prior to Christmas will be contacted, while businesses that have not claimed before can make an application and will receive a single payment.

He reported that Rob Weaver has become Cotswold District Council's new chief executive from 4 January 2021. This is a full-time position that replaces the Head of Paid Service. The Council has also adopted the new Local Government Association model standards code, which is the prevailing Code of Conduct. They will be asking all Town and Parish councils to adopt this code in the coming months.

County Cllr Paul Hodgkinson had advised that he would be late and arrived during the previous item. His main report was on the public health situation. The good news is that covid case rates in the county are coming down, having peaked about a week ago. That's not to downplay the seriousness of the situation. Hospitals are still under pressure but it is easing. To date nearly 60,000 residents in Gloucestershire have had the vaccination including three quarters of the over-80 age group. Meanwhile, all county council services are operating: libraries are open for click and collect, household recycling centres are open by appointment, road maintenance continues, and the Community Help Hub is still available for those that need it.

Drains have taken a pounding with recent flooding and the issue of drain clearance will be raised with the Local Highways Manager. Residents are encouraged to report blocked drains via the Report-It system online or with Paul Hodgkinson directly.

Members raised various highways issues. A 3.5 tonne limit sign on the Old A40 at Hangman's Stone is missing (there is a pole but no sign). It was noted that 'uneven road' signs have been installed to indicate the change in level from the old to new road surfaces; however, the pavement leading to the repaired section is in a dire state. The potholes on the A429 towards Bourton on the Water have been reported numerous times but not yet mended. Paul Hodgkinson said he would follow up.

4. Public Questions

There were no questions from members of the public.

5. Confirmation of Minutes

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Town Council on 16 December 2020 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

6. Action Point Update

The Town Clerk gave a summary of the Action Point Update.

7. Councillor Co-option

There were no candidates for co-option to the four vacancies on the Town Council.

The Clerk reported that there had been no request for a by-election so the most recent vacancy could also be filled by co-option.

8. Planning Matters

8.1 Application: 20/04640/TCONR

Address: St Peter And St Paul Church Church Lane Northleach

Details: Tree works according to the submitted schedule.

The application was noted without comment, as the Town Council is the applicant.

8.3 Application: 20/03797/LBC

Address: Dover House High Street, Northleach, Cheltenham GL54 3EW

Details: Opening up works for structural investigation and to reveal features, and reinstatement of lime plaster.

It was RESOLVED to support the application and submit the following response:

This property is an imposing building situated in a prominent position on our High Street. The structure and fabric of the building have been deteriorating for many years causing it to detract from the well managed condition of neighbouring properties. The Town Council fully supports this application which we hope will ultimately lead to the restoration of this significant and historic property and become an asset to the town.

8.2 Application: 20/04545/FUL

Address: Crickley Barrow Farm, Crickley Barrow, Northleach Cheltenham GL54 3QA

Details: Conversion of a Dutch barn to create a single dwelling with integral carer's accommodation

It was RESOLVED to submit a response of no objection.

8.4 **Application: 20/04647/FUL**

Address: Bob Houghton Ltd Midwinter Road, Northleach, Cheltenham GL54 3JD

Details: Demolition of existing storage building and erect a new storage building

This application had not been published on the agenda but was notified later. The Clerk reported that the Town Council found out about the application by chance when a staff member found the planning notice blowing down the street. Members requested that the Clerk contact the planning authority to explain what has happened, and that neither the local council nor local ward councillor had any knowledge of the application, so there may be a breach of process. It was agreed that the Council would not submit a comment until the matter has been clarified.

9. **Finance**

9.1 The bank reconciliation to 31 December 2020 was received.

9.2 The budget monitoring report to 31 December 2020 was received.

9.3 It was RESOLVED that a direct debit be set up to pay the BrightHR contract.

9.4 It was RESOLVED that membership of Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) be renewed at a cost of £25.

9.5 It was RESOLVED that payments in the sum of £ 4,661.47 be approved, as per the schedule appended to these minutes.

10. **Budget and Precept 2021-22**

The Finance and General Resources Committee had reviewed the draft budget at its meeting on 12 January 2021 and recommended it to the Council for adoption.

At the Chairman's request, the Clerk presented the budget. The council's financial situation has been severely impacted by the pandemic, and income from the Westwoods Community Centre is likely to remain low in 2021-22. It is proposed to increase the precept by 2% and release funds from reserves to balance the budget.

It was RESOLVED to adopt the budget presented.

It was RESOLVED to set the precept for 2021-22 at £78,916. This is equivalent to a charge of 98.94 per annum on a Band D property.

11. **Annual Town Assembly**

The Annual Town Assembly is scheduled for Wednesday 21st April 2021 and can take place online under current legislation. Cllr Platts proposed to revive last year's plan and invite environment groups to give presentations to the community. It was suggested that the meeting should be widely advertised with posters. A start time of 7pm was agreed. The Chairman has specific responsibility for calling the meeting.

Action: Cllr Platts to organise.

12. **Coronavirus response**

The Town Clerk explained the measures that have been taken by staff in response to the new lockdown. The Westwoods Community Centre must remain closed, except for a limited number of exempt activities. All local councils have received a letter from Play England urging them to keep playgrounds open.

13. Fortey Woods

The Clerk had not managed to make contact with the estates team at Cotswold District Council about the potential transfer of Fortey Woods to the Town Council. Therefore, it was agreed to defer consideration of this item.

14. Correspondence List

The Clerk explained that correspondence of note is usually circulated to members as it arrives. A travel survey aimed at organisations has just been received from the Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership with a short response deadline, and it was agreed that Cllr Platts would coordinate the response on behalf of the council.

Action: Cllr Platts

15. Items for Future Meetings

The topic of the Market Place Toilet Block was already noted.

16. Next Meeting

The next Town Council meeting is scheduled for 24 February 2021 at 7pm.

17. Confidential session

Cllr Platts left the meeting, having declared an interest in Men in Sheds.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Hulcup preside over the meeting.

It was RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following items, pursuant to s.1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as disclosure of commercial information is not in the public interest.

18. Men in Sheds Lease

18.1 The Clerk reported that, in the view of the duty planning officer, planning permission was required to site the Men in Sheds buildings at the Westwoods Community Centre. It was RESOLVED that the Town Council submit the planning application on condition that Cotswold Friends agreed to reimburse the council for the fee.

18.2 Members reviewed the draft lease and agreed upon the feedback to the solicitor. The Clerk was asked to contact the Council's insurer to clarify the insurance situation for the sheds already on site.

18.3 The Clerk explained that electricity had been connected to the sheds in early 2020, but no submeter had been installed to enable electricity to be recharged to the tenant. It was RESOLVED that a sub-meter be installed at an estimated cost of £150, with the understanding that this is payable by the tenant.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:50 pm

Signature of the Chairman on approval of the minutes: _____

Payments schedule January 2021

Regular payments

Date	Supplier	Service	Paid	Amount	Authority
21-Dec	Zen Internet	Broadband	DD	£ 32.40	LGA 1972 s133
22-Dec	Grundon	Commercial waste	DD	£ 56.53	Litter Act 1983 s5
23-Dec	Microsoft	Exchange email subscription	Card	£ 17.87	LGA 1972 s111
24-Dec	Cathedral Leasing	Sanitary bin quarterly charge	DD	£ 38.99	LGA 1972 s133
08-Jan	Google Ireland	Gsuite subscription	DD	£ 4.60	LGA 1972 s142
15-Jan	Zoom.us	Remote meetings software	Card	£ 9.59	LGA 1972 s111
23-Jan	Staff costs	January salaries, pension	SO	£ 1,862.59	LGA 1972 s112
	Subtotal			£ 2,022.57	

Invoices * Payment method shown where payment has been made.

Date	Supplier	Service	Paid *	Amount	Authority
03-Dec	Dave Payne Electricians	Replace MCBs in WW	BACS	£ 74.40	LGA 1972 s133
22-Dec	BrightHR Ltd	HR support, first payment	DD	£ 24.30	LGA 1972 s111
31-Dec	McCracken & Son Ltd	Grounds Maintenance Dec		£ 1,345.20	OSA 1906 s 9,10
12-Jan	BJ Unwin Forestry	Tree inventory		£ 1,080.00	OSA 1906 s 9,10
14-Jan	Bibury Landscapes	Xmas tree removal		£ 90.00	LGA 1972 s144
14-Jan	GRCC	Annual Membership		£ 25.00	LGA 1972 s111
	Subtotal			£ 2,638.90	

TOTAL PAYMENTS

£ 4,661.47