



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HIGHWORTH TOWN COUNCIL 19 NOVEMBER 2019

PRESENT

Councillor (Mrs) J H Bishop (In the Chair)

Councillors: A Bishop
G Evans
N Gardiner
(Miss) J Murphy
(Mrs) M Penny
K Saunders
K Smith
R Williams
S Wolfensohn

IN ATTENDANCE

1 Member of the Public, Mrs J Stuckey (Business and Economy Manager, Swindon Borough Council (SBC)) and a Member of the Press.

APOLOGIES

56. Councillors G Olley, P Newton-Smith, (Mrs) L Vardy and S Weisinger



Highworth is a Fair Trade Town



Twinned with Wassenberg



Twinned with Pontorson

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (10 Minutes Limit)

57. None.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

58. None.

MOBILE PHONES

59. Reminder to Councillors and Public that mobile phones should be silenced.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMY MANAGER (SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL)

60. Mrs J Stuckey. She gave a presentation to the Council about Business Development (BD) and the 'Switch-On to Swindon' initiative, which was set up to promote inward investment and encourage businesses to move to or to set up in Swindon Borough. It also aims to support the retention and expansion of existing businesses. The BD campaign concentrates on four key-sectors in the Borough and Wiltshire, Industry 4.0/Digitisation, Cyber Resilience, MedTech and Bioscience.

Swindon is an affordable place to move to, both for businesses and potential employees, so the team also highlights opportunities in, for example, digital technology where the National Trust, Nationwide and Intel all have recruitment requirements.

She also explained how the Borough is working with many partners (over 100) both national and local, to co-ordinate support for those affected by the announcement in February of the phased closure of Honda.

The team does not market space, but seeks to find market opportunities for businesses, so Highworth is not specifically marketed – that job lies with the Property Agents who actively market units on Blackworth Industrial Estate.

The 'Visit Swindon' website is currently under review, and Highworth will feature on it in the future.

She asked that Councillors let the team know if they are aware of businesses with a propensity to grow so that support can be offered to help them.

MINUTES OF MEETING

61. **RESOLVED THAT THE MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 15 OCTOBER 2019 BE ADOPTED** (The minutes were duly signed)

MATTERS ARISING

62. None

CORRESPONDENCE

63. a. Highworth Town Football Club. A request to change the weekend of its Football Tournament to 6 and 7 June 2020 due to an England International fixture was agreed by Councillors with the usual reminder regarding noise and parking issues.

REPORTS BY BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

64. a. Councillor (Mrs) M Penny – she reported that she has dealt with the following issues:-
- Rivers Way has now all had the roof insulation and cavity wall insulation installed and residents are already feeling the benefit. Also, one resident had a badly fitting back door replaced and another had her garden wall rebuilt.
 - A resident in Queens Avenue had ongoing problems with her roof which is now starting to be repaired.
 - At the request of a resident, she has requested the bus timetables for the number 7 and 77 be put in all shelters in Highworth.
 - There were a couple of cases (including Squires Court) where Recycling/Garden Waste/Food Waste were not collected, this was rectified the following day.
 - She attended Councillors' Surgery where there were only a couple of queries (possibly due to the Rugby). One wanted to know how the Dial-A-Ride service was changing when it moved to Community Transport and how we were intending to advise users. (The Gentleman in question was a volunteer for the service).
 - Received a report regarding hedges/trees hanging over walls and interrupting safe passage in Cherry Orchard. She had walked the whole of this street and have found a couple of suspects who she will be reporting to SBC in due course.
 - She had a first positive meeting with the Cabinet Member and Rob Richards about the possible leasing of the golf course land.
 - She has again spoken to SBC Officers who keep referring jobs that are not in our contract or area back to HTC for resolution, this seems to be happening all over the Borough at the moment and she has asked for the problem to be resolved and for some retraining to be done.
 - At the junction of Cricklade Road and Wrde Hill there is an electricity sub-station where the wall surrounding it has toppled over. After extensive research this wall and the surrounding land was found to belong to a private person who has been informed of the problem but refuses to take any action.
 - The Clerk confirmed that reports regarding leaves will be decided on a case by case basis.
- b. Councillor A Bishop – he reported that he has attended the following Meetings and dealt with those issues listed:-
- Children's Health at SBC,
 - SBC Full Council Meeting,
 - SBC Planning Committee,
 - Councillor Surgery, some residents from Wrde Hill came to enquire about the latest news on Broadband, this has been referred to Councillor N Gardiner, they also enquired about proposed 'new builds' in Highworth.
 - Another resident had a query about his Council Tax and this was referred to Ellie in the Office.
 - Golf Course. This is being operated on a month by month basis,

- Blunsdon High Street has been swept and the gullies cleared.
 - Turnpike, Blunsdon, flooding problem caused by a developer filling a soak-away with concrete.
- c. Councillor S Weisinger – he sent in the following report in his absence, he has attended and dealt with the following meetings and issues:-
- Audit committee
 - 2 Scrutiny meetings
 - 1 full council meeting
 - Standards Committee
 - Councillors surgery
 - Council house enquiry regarding moving to Highworth
 - Streetlights out of order - repaired
 - Meeting with Maureen and officers regarding Highworth golf club
 - Blocked drain - cleared

REPORTS BY REPRESENTATIVES

65. a. Highworth Twinning Association (HTA) – Councillor R Williams reported that the Bavarian evening held on Saturday was well attended, it featured a Drag Artist and Les Bicyclettes. There is to be a French Film showing at St. Michaels Hall on 22 November 2019, tickets are £5.00 each.
- b. Highworth Community Partnership Group (HCPG) – Councillor N Gardiner reported that the AGM was relatively well attended. The previous year's work was reported including support for vulnerable people, the two Women's Institute groups, tourism (the Visitor Centre is now open and note was given to Mrs S Rendall who played a large part in achieving this). The Fox Roundabout has been delivered after 10 years. They were unsuccessful in the Great British High Street Awards, but did submit an entry. Other groups that have been helped are the Credit Union, May Day Market, Job Club, Highworth Action For Fair Trade, the Safe Places Scheme and Gloucester House – which has been very supportive of HCPG. The HCPG website is to be updated soon and the Minutes of the meeting added to it. Councillors were advised by Councillor K Smith that the town now has two Visitor Information Centres as the Lighthouse Bookshop continues to provide this service.
- c. Highworth Action for Fair Trade (HAFFT) – Councillor K Smith reported that although there have been no meetings, work is being undertaken writing the documents to renew the Fair Trade status of the Town for the coming five years.

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

66. a. Councillor R Williams. The Council was informed by Councillor (Mrs) M Penny that it is not possible to amend the phasing of the traffic lights to four-way, as they are too old. A request has been put in for them to be staggered when they are replaced, but it is not known when this is due to be done.

A letter is to be written to SBC to request that two concrete filled bollards are placed either side of the illuminated bollard at the Swindon Street traffic light junction to protect it – as vehicles keep knocking it over. He points out that drivers might be more careful if they risked damaging their vehicles.

- b. Councillor K Saunders. He requested that the phasing of the traffic lights be included in the letter to SBC.
- c. Councillor N Gardiner.
- He thanked everyone involved in the Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service. The Mayor, Councillor (Mrs) J Bishop has written letters of Thanks to the Highworth & District Branch of the Royal British Legion (RBL), and to the Vicar. A new 'Standard holder' and white gloves are to be procured for the Town Council.
 - Following Councillor (Mrs) M Penny's intervention, the draft lease for the Lower Rec has been received.

The Meeting closed at 8.11 pm