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www.highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk

**FULL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY 26th SEPTEMBER 2023**

Present:	
Councillors:	K Smith (Chairman), S Apps, G Dennis, I Durnin-Duffy, N Gardiner, F Haines, A Houghton, N Key, J Murphy, P Newton-Smith, K Saunders, and R Williams
Town Clerk:	D Rose
Assistant Town Clerk:	C Haines
Representative:	Councillor J Grant - Swindon Borough Council (SBC) Cabinet Member for Communities and Joint Working
Members of the Public:	10
Apologies:	Councillor L Gow (Holiday), G Olley (Holiday) and S Weisinger (Swindon Borough Council Audit Meeting)

		Action
41	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None	
42	<p>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME & CORRESPONDENCE (Maximum 10 Minutes):</p> <p>Two members of the public asked the following questions:</p> <p>a. <i>What is Highworth Town Council (HTC) doing about the increased use of Heavy Goods Vehicles along Shrivenham Road? The road is not designed for traffic of that nature, if two vehicles come along at once they can only pass by one going on the pavement. There are two schools along that road and this is a major concern when they are walking to and from school, the air quality is also a problem.</i></p> <p>Councillor N Gardiner advised he is on the Transport and Working Group at SBC and will provide an update at the next Environment & Leisure (E&L) Committee Meeting on Tuesday 3rd October 2023.</p> <p>b. <i>I have contacted SBC to get road drains and gutters cleaned in Cricklade Road. This causes the pavements to get slippery under the trees. HTC have previously supported SBC by putting cones out so the area is kept clear.</i></p> <p>The Chairman requested the Swindon Borough Councillors to follow this up.</p>	VM NG

43 **SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCILLOR CABINET MEMBER J GRANT:**

Councillor J Grant thanked all for inviting him to the Meeting and gave an update on the new Administration in SBC, he believes it is very important to start a fresh partnership and move forward.

To assist in building the relationship and recognise parish concerns the following will happen:

1. A jointly negotiated protocol which clarifies all aspects of the parish/borough relationship.
2. A commitment to distribute all outstanding S106 / CIL monies owed within 3 months
3. A commitment to review all outstanding lapsed leases with a view to renewing those leases within an agreed timescale.
4. The recruitment of a Parish Liaison Officer who would be the first point of contact for parishes raising issues they have with the borough and for this officer being responsible for the resolving of those issues.
5. The introduction of a "Parish Hotline" for parish clerks to urgently raise concerns or issues.
6. Parish access to borough communications outlets to advertise parish events, services to a wider audience.
7. Regular engagement on parish and borough issues.
8. That any such discussion on the future service provisions would be set up asap and that agreement to any changes would be concluded within adequate time to allow both authorities to finalise their annual budgets.

The following questions were asked by HTC Councillors:

- a. *Parish Liaison Officer position has been filled internally?*
The in house appointment, should start within the next month.
- b. *For Central S106 monies that are not specific, is there a process to tell us what monies are available for us to apply for?*
No reason why all parishes can't know what exists, Highworth may want to bid for monies. Vision is for SBC to be a capital provider of money.
- c. *Great news about hotline for Parish Councils, but why has the service been taken away from the Borough Councillors?*
The hotline for the Parish councils is via email exactly the same as for Borough Councillors, there is no longer a telephone hotline.
- d. *Very happy the relationships are being reset. Is there a timeframe to when the processes are useable.*
Next week there is a meeting where the Chairs and Clerks from all councils will attend, a framework will be put in place then.
- e. *Parishes and SBC to work together when providing services such as cutting the grass.*
The Town Clerk has requested a review of the deed held with SBC.
- f. *We have issues with parked cars during road closures, is this something SBC could assist with?*
It would need to be looked at and consideration if staff are available, manpower and money to assist.

	<p><i>g. Congratulated SBC on wanting to work with the parish councils. I encourage you to come forward with ideas, plans, wish lists so we can have conversations.</i></p> <p><i>h. With the review of the Local Plan and review of Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) the Local Development Scheme (LDS) previous timetable was public, it didn't get updated so would like to know what is going on. Is there is going to be a delay? The Town Clerk to email Councillor J Grant so he can look into this.</i></p> <p><i>i. Can Officers be asked to respond to the Town Clerks in a timely manner. Some outstanding responses are over a year old.</i> Yes, if its going to work it needs to work from both sides. SBC needs to show more respect to the Parishes.</p> <p>The Chairman suspended standing orders</p> <p>Councillor J Grant asked for any questions from the public</p> <p>a. A member of the public thanked Councillor J Grant on his support for the Highworth Old Golf Course (OGC) and looks forward to that continuing. Appreciated attendance at the OGC Working Party Meeting, it was a very constructive meeting.</p> <p>The Chairman reinstated standing orders</p>	DR
44	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING:</p> <p>RESOLVED to confirm and sign the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 25th July 2023.</p>	
45	<p>COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:</p> <p><u>Meeting Minutes</u></p> <p>a. Finance & General Purpose – 18th July 2023 b. Neighbourhood Plan Committee – 25th July 2023 c. Environment & Leisure – 4th July 2023 d. Extra Ordinary Planning – 25th July 2023 & 15th August 2023</p> <p>The Committee Meeting Minutes were noted.</p> <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>e. RESOLVED to purchase fleet vehicles as recommended by E&L Committee (Minute reference 31). Voting was unanimously in Favour, and the Resolution was duly carried.</p> <p>f. RESOLVED to approve the Old Golf Course business proposal to be submitted to SBC. Voting was unanimously in Favour, and the Resolution was duly carried.</p>	DR DR

REPORTS BY SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCILLORS:**Councillor N Gardiner:**

Over the past couple of months, it feels like not a lot has happened inside SBC. On a positive note, and ensuring Highworth received the best possible quality of support, I have sat on several Chief Officers Appointments Committee meetings that have resulted in:

- New CEO - Sam Mowbray (12 month probation)
- New Director of Finance and Audit - Kim Chequer (6-12 month interim)
- New Chief Operating Officer - Sonia Grewal (6-12 month interim)
- New role within SBC for Corporate Director of Inclusive Economy and Sustainability - Brian Pinchbeck (6-12 month interim)

These positions have been filled internally with recommended people whom our CEO has faith in delivering a service in the short term. The last three roles will be externally advertised over the coming months.

Within Highworth, I have continued to pick up many caseworks near-daily to support our residents. This has covered the removal of unsafe trees, and the removal of fly-tipping in a number of locations. Off of our recent HTC meeting, I raised the state of our streets that required a cleaning crew to come out and much of this (where cars parked permitted) has now been done.

I am currently investigating the lease relating to the Highworth Junior Football Club sewage connection and supporting the Phoenix Diving Club's request to fundraise a new 1-metre diving board.

Councillor V Manro:

I have been dealing with:

- Potholes
- Waste
- Weed Sweeping and Gullies
- Green Waste
- Investigating the Section 38 Agreement on Aldi, the footpath and street lighting has still not be completed.
- Crossing on A361, SBC have assessed it previously, need to chase report that is coming through
- SBC Net Zero Committee are bidding for 1.8 million pounds to install EV Charging Points, so we could potentially include our car parks.
- Wiltshire Pension Committee are also looking at Net Zero.
- Requested at Police and Crime Commission Committee to increase local policing to help with antisocial behaviour in the town.

The flooding at Roundhills Meads I believe has finally been resolved.

Councillor S Weisinger:

The following report was emailed prior to the meeting:

- Attended 2 Audit Committees
- SBC Full Council in July
- Dealt with several resident issues across ward

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with Officers regarding works that HTC & SBC are responsible for and look at definitive areas, joined by the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk. Waiting for information from Officers • Met with Officer regarding Freke Arms junction • Information on Solar Farm in Stanton Fitzwarren which I have forwarded to Stanton Fitzwarren Parish Council • Councillors Surgery • Sent information into Planning Committee regarding a Planning Application in Blunsdon <p>Councillor K Saunders thanked Councillor S Weisinger for his help with a resident issue in Bydemill Gardens.</p>	
47	<p>REPORTS BY REPRESENTATIVES:</p> <p>a. Councillor K Saunders - Highworth Community Partnership Group (HCPG)</p> <p>Met recently, there are only six people in the group now where before there were twelve. A discussion was held if the group should fold, but there is a purpose and want to continue. There will be an AGM in November.</p> <p>b. Councillor R Williams - Highworth Twinning Association (HTA)</p> <p>Apologies, I am not up to date so am unable to give any information.</p> <p>c. Councillor K Smith - Visit Highworth Limited (VHL)</p> <p>The literary festival in August was an outstanding success, well supported with many people attending over the weekend, local author Jasper Fford was excellent. It was asked when it would be happening again but it is not yet known. Thanks go to all the organisers.</p> <p>d. Councillor L Gow – Swindon Local Council Forum</p> <p>In Councillor L Gow absence, Councillor K Smith advised he had attended the last meeting. There were large parishes present and it is hoped that parishes can co-operate with things such as a equipment. It is a good forum for information sharing.</p>	
48	<p>BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORTS:</p> <p>The following information is requested to go in future reports from the Borough Councillors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on anything that relates or impacts Highworth • Need a bigger picture, anything in Swindon that can affect Highworth • Don't need to know what meetings attended, just any relevant information from those meetings • Make HTC aware of any grant funding opportunities • Any requests we make through Borough Councillors please provide updates so we know its not forgotten <p>The Town Clerk is to email the Borough Councillors to request this information in future reports.</p>	DR

49	<p>D-DAY:</p> <p>The Town Clerk is to investigate more options and bring it back as a future Agenda Item.</p>	DR
50	<p>CROSSING TO LOWER REC - COUNCILLOR S APPS:</p> <p>RESOLVED by Councillor S Apps and Seconded by Councillor J Murphy for HTC to request to SBC a crossing is put on the A361 by the petrol station. Voting was unanimously in Favour, and the Resolution was duly carried.</p> <p>RESOLVED by Councillor J Murphy and Seconded by Councillor F Haines for HTC to go back to Backhouse and get clarification on the Road Safety Plan. Voting was unanimously in Favour, and the Resolution was duly carried.</p>	DR DR
51	<p>EXTERNAL AUDIT:</p> <p>RESOLVED by Councillor K Saunders and Seconded by Councillor R Williams to accept the External Auditors Report on the Annual Governance and Accountability Report. Voting was unanimously in Favour, and the Resolution was duly carried.</p> <p>It was noted that the Asset Register is under review.</p>	
52	<p>MEMBERS BUSINESS:</p> <p><u>Councillor J Murphy:</u> How do we track all outstanding actions from Councillors. The Town Clerk advised there is an internal spreadsheet and chase emails are sent.</p> <p><u>Councillor S Apps:</u> Installation of contactless payment for the public toilets is to be a future agenda item.</p> <p><u>Councillor K Saunders:</u> Recently saw an article on National Association of Local Councils (NALC) regarding utility bills. The Town Clerk confirmed ours have recently been updated. SBC Substance Issues Survey is available and ends Thursday 27th September 2023.</p>	DR
Meeting Closed 20:32PM		

Signed:

Date: