

**LEEK TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the General Purposes Committee held Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

**Chairman:** Cllr. L. Swindlehurst

**Present:** Cllrs: Benefer, Cawley, Coleman, Emery, Johnson, Molson, Ottewell, M.Swindlehurst, Wales, Wood and Worthington

One member of the public was present.

38. **Minutes of the Meeting** held 15<sup>th</sup> September were received for Chairman's signature.

39. **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Interests and consideration for the granting of Dispensations** Cllr. Benefer declared an interest in 40 (i) as he is an allotment tenant and Cllr. Johnson declared an interest in 41(a).

40. **Monthly reports/updates:**

i) **Allotments** – It was resolved to increase the annual allotment rent in 2020 to £35.00 for a full plot and £17.50 for a half plot. This is the first increase in six years.

ii) **Events**

**Christmas Lights** – The Mayor and the Leek and Moorlands Carnival Queen will switch on the lights at 7.00pm. 2nd Leek Scouts will lead the parade and local band Sound Party will be on stage after the lights are switched on. Members of the Events committee will be meeting the Safety Advisory Group tomorrow. Fifteen to twenty stewards will be needed and we will hire security guards if necessary.

**Website** – There has been a good response to the photo competition, which ends on 31<sup>st</sup> October. Cllr Ottewell will be promoting it on Moorlands Radio and Totally Locally vouchers will be given to the winners.

**Events Forum** – Many representatives from community groups attended the forum on the 8<sup>th</sup> October and the event organisers are starting to collaborate.

**VE Day 75 Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2020**– Planned activities include: Community stallholders, military vehicles, jive dancers and a band. It was resolved that £1,200 can be set aside for the event and an “Andrews Sisters” tribute act will be booked. This will be precepted for in 2020/21.

**Gazebos** – The stallholders were very pleased with the new backs and sides.

**Trestle Market** – Cllr. Matt Swindlehurst stated that the Trestle Market, which is operated by SMDC needs to be made available for events. Councillors made the following comments:

It is a great idea, but it needs an emergency exit.

The slope into Derby Street could be the emergency exit.

There is a huge shortage of venues in Leek and SMDC needs to make it fit for purpose.

We need to use it as often as we can.

There are security concerns regarding the stock belonging to the Butter Market tenants.

It was resolved that Cllrs. Matt and Lyn Swindlehurst would contact SMDC to discuss the issues.

iii) **Friends of the Nicholson War Memorial**

A third quote for £1,914.00 has been obtained to repair the water ingress from the clock faces.

Although the company cannot provide a guarantee that the repairs will make them watertight, it is recommended that council approve this quote.

It was resolved that the repairs to the clock faces would go ahead for £1,914.00.

The Tower Captain of St George's Memorial church in Ypres had visited the Nicholson War Memorial and was very impressed with Leek. Thanks were given to the mayor and town clerk for assisting with the visit.

- iv) **Neighbourhood Plan** – A public consultation meeting had taken place on 9<sup>th</sup> October and another is scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> November at Leek Fire Station. The link to the neighbourhood plan website would be added to the town council website.
- v) **Leek Moorlands Hospital** – A decision will probably be made in December.
- vi) **Twinning** – Eleven visitors from Leek travelled to Este on 26<sup>th</sup> September for Eurofest and the Mayor delivered her speech in Italian.  
Visitors from Este will arrive in Leek for the Pumpkin Festival on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November and other activities planned include: a trip to Llandudno and a pie and pea event at Leek Cricket Club on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November (tickets are £10.00). The Mayor and all councillors are invited to attend a welcome meeting in the council chamber on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November from 10.00am  
  
£200.00 donation will be paid to Leek Twinning, which was agreed at the town council meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019.
- vii) **Russell Street** – Five contractors have been invited to quote for the work.
- viii) **Climate Change Working Group** – The advisory group’s terms of reference were agreed, which includes:  
To identify and recommend ways the town council can best support the district council’s Climate Emergency Declaration. Possible initiatives would involve: encouraging allotment holders to garden organically, re-wild sites, eliminate single use plastic in Leek and encourage the installation of electric vehicle charging points.  
It was stated that the first public electric charging point has now opened at Morrisons.  
  
Making Leek Bee Friendly – Cllr. Cawley’s report was received and he had contacted a charity called Bee Friendly who will provide advice and support. There are funding opportunities from DEFRA and a forum could be established involving schools, churches and community groups. One suggested idea is to hold a Festival of Bees next July.

41. **Finance/Audit**

- a) **Payment of Accounts** In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 section 5 (150), the following were accepted for payment.
- b) **Financial Statement** The Income and Expenditure Statement for six months to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019 was received.
- c) **External Audit** – The external auditor’s report and recommendations were received. It was resolved to adopt adapted Financial Regulations recommended by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

Values agreed by council:

Section 4. Budgetary Control and Authority To Spend

- the council for all items over £2,000
- a duly delegated committee of the council for items over £500
- the clerk, in conjunction with the mayor for any items below £500

Section 11 (g) Contracts – Three quotes required for contracts above £1,000 and below £25,000

- d) **Grant Applications** The grant application was considered and it was resolved to donate £200.00 to Be You Crew.  
£800.00 has been donated to community organisations this financial year from a budget of £1,500.

42. **Brough Park** – It was stated that a wild flower area in Brough Park would be a good idea.

43. **Correspondence** – The letter of thanks received from Dougie Mac regarding the donation of £200.00 was received.
44. **Exclusion of the Public** - The Chairman moved: “That in accordance with section 19 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by reason of the confidential nature of the business next to be transacted, the public and press be excluded from the Meeting”.
45. **Confidential**  
It was resolved that more detail would be requested from the Friends of the Nicholson War Memorial, regarding an application to Heritage Lottery, for the centenary of the Monument in 2025.
46. **To receive items for information** To report matters for information not on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas.
- i) As the town council has a duty of care to employees, improvements to town council office security will be investigated. This had been discussed a few years ago.
  - ii) Additional administrative assistance will be looked into for the town clerk.

Chairman.....

Date.....