

LEEK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the General Purposes Committee held Tuesday 18th February 2020

Chair: Cllr. L Swindlehurst

Present: Cllrs: Benefer, Coleman, Cawley, Johnson, Molson, Ottewell, Wood, Swindlehurst, Wales

Apologies: Cllrs: Emery and Worthington

60. **Minutes of the meeting** held 21st January were received for the Chair's signature.

61. **Declaration of Disposable Pecuniary Interests and Other Interests and consideration for the granting of**

Dispensation: Cllr. Benefer declared an interest in allotments, and Cllr. Johnson declared an interest in the Neighbourhood Plan and an item in the accounts.

62. **Monthly reports/ updates from sub-committees:**

i) **Allotments** – Cllr. Coleman: A grant has been secured via the Police that will enable the Allotments Holders and Garden Association to address boundary issues. There have been further incidents of vandalism at Peggs Field and the police have been informed. It is considered imperative that all incidents are reported to the police to ensure an accurate record of incidents is compiled.

ii) **Events** – Cllr. M. Swindlehurst – V.E. day plans are ongoing and posters have been designed. A productive meeting with Licensing had taken place and a meeting will be held with the Safety Advisory Group in March for VE Day75 and Party in the Park. The regulations relating to inflatables are changing, which will need to be taken into account for the waterslide at Party in the Park. This procedure will be discussed at the Events committee and fed back to this meeting.

Scooterfest will be supported by the Events Committee regarding Safety Advisory Group advice.

The meeting with Alpha Omega Security regarding the Christmas Light Switch On, resulted in an agreement that they will arrive 30 minutes before all events. The complaint about their late arrival resulted in a reduction in the cost to the Town Council.

There is an ongoing consultation with two organisations regarding sponsorship and more details will follow as this progresses.

Cllr. Wood has written to Cllr. Wain, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Property, to request the use of the Trestle Market for this years Pumpkin Festival. No response has yet been received.

Remembrance Sunday discussions have commenced with the new Chair of the Royal British Legion. A working group is to look carefully at the involvement of the Town Council. Cllr. Johnson stated that this would be a further use of Town Council resources that had not been agreed. Cllr. Wood agreed. Discussion followed resulting in proposals that we proceed with caution and that SMDC should also be considered in these discussions, considering that this is a very prestigious event for the whole of the Staffordshire Moorlands.

Cllr. Benefer stated that the Royal British Legion are the guardians of Remembrance, working with local Councils. Cllr. Wales pointed out the significance of the impressive turnout and sense of civic pride in this event.

iii) **Friends of the Nicholson War memorial** – Cllr. Benefer – the last meeting discussed V.E. Day and the 75th Anniversary event in 2025.

Leek Townlands Trust, who own the land that the Nicholson War Memorial is built on, is considering offering the land to the town council for a peppercorn rent. It was agreed that the town council should proceed with caution and a full exploration of the implications will be needed.

iv) **Neighbourhood Plan** – Cllr. Wales – the group wish to present the plan to town council as agreed. Date confirmed as next meeting **24th March at 6.00pm** before the main meeting. (Planning meeting to be rearranged to facilitate this.)

v) **Leek Moorlands Hospital** – Cllr Wood declared there was no further report at this stage.

vi) **Twinning** – Cllr Wood – progress for the next visit to Este is progressing well. There is a planned quiz night on 10th March with teams of four, and a meal at the Leek Bar and Grill will take place soon.

vii) **Russell Street** – Cllr. Wales – the plans for what is under the area have now been received and progress on design etc will take place between Cllrs. Wales and L. Swindlehurst.

viii) **Climate Change** – Cllr Bener. Report received noting progress in planning involvement in Party in the Park and V.E. day celebrations. Plans for Birch Gardens and other potential development opportunities relating to climate change identified. The meeting is progressing well and attracting new members. No response to the question posed by L. Swindlehurst of pesticides received, to pursue. Pollution Officer to be invited to General Purposes meeting in April. (Cllr. L. Swindlehurst to arrange).

63. Finance / Audit:

a) **Payment of Accounts.** The cheque payments were approved.

b) **Financial Statement and Financial Report.** Statement for 10 months to 31st January 2020 were agreed and approved. Cllr. Wales asked where the painting ‘Storm over the Roaches’ was housed. It was agreed that it should be visible, as it is such a valued asset.

c) **Risk Assessment** – The town council’s risk assessment and insurance cover was agreed.

d) **Internal Financial Controls** – The Internal Financial Controls were reviewed. Cllr. Wales requested an amendment i.e. a councillor and an **authorised** person should be responsible for counting significant sums of cash.

64. Correspondence:

i) There were no objections to an application for a Premises Licence for Sparrow Park and Unit 1, Smithfield Centre, (Cllr. Johnson declared an interest as he knows the owner).

ii) The SMDC invitation to attend a Corporate Peer Challenge event on April 2nd 7.00pm was noted.

65. Exclusion of the press and public - for confidential matters relating to allotments and employment matters.

Date and time of next meeting 24th March 2020: 6.00pm Neighbourhood Plan presentation followed by Town Council and General Purposes meetings.

Chairman.....

Date.....