

LEEK TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the General Purposes Committee held remotely
on Tuesday 2nd June 2020 at 7.00pm

Chairman: Cllr. L. Swindlehurst

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

Apologies: Cllr. Worthington

1. **Minutes of the General Purposes Meeting** held 19th February and the decisions made by Council remotely in March and April 2020 were received for Chairman's signature.
2. **Minutes of the Town Council Meeting** held 19th May 2020 were received for Chairman's signature.
3. **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Interests and consideration for the granting of Dispensations** Cllr. Coleman declared an interest in Brough Park Running Club. Cllrs. Lyn Swindlehurst and Ben Emery declared an interest as trustees of Leek CAB.
4. **Matters Arising** The reports for Leek Moorlands Hospital and Leek Twinning will be postponed due to coronavirus. However, the campaign to keep the hospital open will continue. It was stated that some of the "Save Leek Hospital" signs are looking shabby and need to be removed or replaced.
5. **Monthly reports/updates:**
 - i) Allotments – The majority of the allotment rent has been paid, apart from the tenants who have recently taken on plots. Notices to Quit have been sent to tenants who have not paid. A large yellow trailer that had been parked on the car park at Cheadle Road has been removed by the tenant.
The annual show of Leek Allotment and Gardeners' Association has been cancelled, but the competition for the best kept allotments will go ahead. Judging will take place in early July and the prizes will be rent reductions for First, Second and Third of £15.00, £10.00 and £5.00 respectively.
It was also agreed that an additional category of best newcomer will receive a rent reduction of £10.00. The Mayor will help with the judging.
An enquiry has been received regarding the opening and closing times of allotment sites and a complaint has been received from a resident regarding the noise from a strimmer very early on a Sunday morning. It was stated there are no set opening and closing times, but tenants need to be considerate of nearby residents when using mechanical machinery.
 - ii) Events – Leek's outdoor market is to resume soon and the Sunday Supplement market may start in July. The flags and bunting will be installed to coincide with the opening of the markets. Comments made included:
It should not be seen as a celebration.
The town's retail sector will also be starting in the next few weeks.
The police will need to sanction it.
It will dress the town and raise community spirits.
As the pandemic passes, we will need to work with other councils and organisations to reconstruct the town.

Cllr. Matt Swindlehurst had contacted Leek Royal British Legion regarding ideas for Remembrance Sunday. Services will probably be held at the Monument and Ball Haye Green War Memorial, but parades may not be possible. We will follow national guidelines.
Hopefully, the Christmas lights and decorations will be installed but there may not be a switch - on event. The district council will organise a Safety Advisory Group meeting in July to discuss Remembrance Sunday and Christmas Lights.
 - iii) Friends of the Nicholson War Memorial – The Condition Surveys for the Monument and Ball Haye Green War Memorial have been undertaken by CTD Architects and they are both in good condition. The cost of the recommended repairs will need to be established.
Leek Royal British Legion has cancelled the Flag Flying services until further notice.

Three quotes were obtained to re-point the paving stones and steps around the Monument. The lowest quote was £8,215, which the Friends recommended to Council. It was resolved to appoint CLG Ltd to carry out the repairs.
 - iv) Neighbourhood Plan – No report.
 - v) Russell Street – It was suggested the space could be used to remember the covid crisis.
 - vi) Climate Change – A request has been made for a progress report from the district council's Climate Action group.

6. **Finance/Audit**
- a) **Financial Statement** The financial statement for 1 month to 30th April 2020 was received.
- b) **Grant applications**
- Dougie Mac** - 35x Infusion Lines for £98.00 and maintenance for 2 x Syringe Drivers for £100. It was resolved to donate £198.00.
- Brough Park Running Club**. It was resolved to donate £200.00 towards running costs.
- c) It was resolved to pay the following, which were precepted for in 2020/21:
 Mayor's allowance £2,800
 Deputy Mayor's allowance £350
 Leek Citizens Advice Bureau £10,700
 Support Staffordshire £2,200
- The following payments would be deferred due to coronavirus:
 Leek Sports Council £1,000
 Leek Arts Festival £1,500
 Leek Blues and Americana £1,500
- d) It was resolved to appoint She's Painting to paint the 5 cockerel benches on Derby Street and Overton Bank for £850.
7. **To receive items for information** To report matters for information not on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas
- i) Cllr. Molson stated that it is important to get back to the council chamber for town council meetings. The town councillors and a few members of the public would be able to meet and socially distance. Cllr. Molson has requested the use of the chamber, but has not yet received a reply. Councillors comments included:
- There are cleaning implications.
 Until SMDC has a plan to open the building, we cannot use the chamber.
 Everything we touch in the chamber would need to be cleaned.
 SMDC councillors have not replied to recent requests for information from three town councillors.
 Supermarkets do not clean everything that customers touch - the chamber could be left for 72 hours.
- Cllr. Lyn Swindlehurst would contact SMDC regarding opening the council chamber.
- ii) Cllr. Worthington had received complaints regarding excess litter and the bins not being emptied on Birchall Playing Fields.
 SMDC will be requested to lock the gates and Cllr. Matt Swindlehurst will take some photos.
8. **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".
9. **Confidential**
 It was resolved the tender for the Christmas decorations and flags and bunting for 2020 – 2022, would go to Protech Electrical Ltd.

Chairman.....

Date.....