

24th January 2023

DURSLEY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the PROCEEDINGS at the MEETING of the COUNCIL held in the Community Meeting Room, Fire Station, Kingshill Road, Dursley at 7pm on Tuesday 24th January 2023.

Action Summary:

10869	Submit questions to Home Start.	10870.2	Submit precept request to SDC
10874.3	Appoint GAPTC as Internal Auditor	10875.3	Advertise Street Cleaning Operative position (spring 2023)

PRESENT

Cllr S Ackroyd (Mayor),

Councillors: M Woodward, S Creswick, A Stennett, M Stennett, D Horn, P Hayes, W Thomas, N Grecian, T Kinnison, M Nicholson, D Savvidou and T Stride.

Also present: John Kay, Town Clerk, Leah Wellings, Deputy Town Clerk; Shelley James, representing Home Start (Stroud & Gloucester) and one member of the public.

TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE 10863

Apologies were received from Councillors J Rubin, T White, L Patrick & D Cornell (all personal).

MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST 10864

Cllr Ackroyd declared a pecuniary interest a recipient of a payment for expenses (Agenda item 7(i), Minute 10870.1(i)).

REPRESENTATIONS FROM COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS 10865

County Councillor Thomas referred to her written update, with safety improvements planned for the Frocester Hill junction in April 2023 and GCC Highways considering a barrier due to the number of accidents over the winter period. An update showed that in 33 recent visits by the Parking Enforcement Officers to Parsonage Street, one Parking Notice has been issued.

UPDATE FROM THE DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR 10866

The Deputy Mayor reported that he had attended the recent re-opening of the Kings Head and reminded Councillors that the annual pancake race would be held on 21st February 2023.

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REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

10867

A member of the public highlighted her concerns about the planning application: S.22/2789/FUL. The application is a further housing development comprising of 10 dwellings at Littlecombe in the area known as Zone E. The concerns included close proximity to the boundary of The Knapp, loss of privacy for some residents of The Knapp, the removal of a green corridor and it was overdevelopment of the site. It was noted that soil stripping had already taken place at this location.

The Chair of the Planning Committee thanked the member of the public for highlighting the concerns and replied that the application would be considered by the Planning Committee on the 21st February 2023.

The member of the public left the meeting.

MINUTES

10868

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 6th December 2022 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

IT WAS RESOLVED to bring forward Agenda Item 11.4 to consider the grant application from Home Start (Stroud & Gloucester).

POLICY AND FINANCE

10869

To consider the three-year revenue grant from Home Start Stroud & Gloucester

Shelley James was invited by the Mayor to provide some further information on the organisation. Home Start have been helping local families for 23 years, mostly be referral from professionals – an average of 68 families are helped each year. The families helped have at least 1 child under 5 years of age. As with many charities, the organisation has seen the number of volunteers fall over the last few years, resulting in increased staff costs, most staff are part-time but require additional training as more social care issues are being handled by Home Start. Dursley is served by two co-ordinators and local volunteers.

Shelley replied to a number of questions from the Councillors, relating to the accounts, previous grants and staff/volunteers.

IT WAS AGREED that some queries remained outstanding, the Town Clerk would send the questions to Shelley and the decision would be delayed until the response had been received.

Shelley James left the meeting.

10870.1 Council's accounts for the financial year 2022/23:

- (i) **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the schedule of payments since the last Council meeting be authorised and signed by the Mayor.
- (ii) **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the bank reconciliation be authorised and signed by the Mayor.
- (iii) The income received since the last Council meeting was noted. The Clerk confirmed the payment from Tortworth Court was a refund, the Christmas tree had been paid directly by the sponsor.
- (iv) The updated expenditure summary report was noted.

10870.2 To confirm the draft Budget and Works Programmes for 2023-26, including the precept request for 2023/24

IT WAS RESOLVED to confirm the works programme for 2023 to 2026 and to set the increase in the precept at 2% for 2023/24.

The modest increase is in response to the rising inflation rate and an expected large increase in our energy costs but bearing in mind the financial pressures facing all residents as a result of the current cost of living crisis. An average Band D council taxpayer will now pay £216.66 a year, an increase of only £4.27 per year or an extra 8p a week.

TOWN IMPROVEMENTS AND AMENITIES

10871

10871.1 To receive the Minutes of the Town Improvements Committee meeting held on 17th January 2023

IT WAS RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meeting.

10871.2 Report of the Chair of the Town Improvements and Amenities Committee

Cllr Savvidou reported that she had attended the recent Cambridge Avenue playground consultation event held by Stroud District Council. A number of ideas were proposed, including accessible and eco-friendly play equipment.

10871.3 To receive an update on Tourism matters.

The Deputy Clerk confirmed a meeting of Visit Dursley would take place on 14th February, the town's events list had been updated and was available on the council website. All parties remained positive about continuing the Visitor Information Centre located in the Dursley library. The Stroud District Tourism Forum has a new chair; Sarah Brewster who is the manager of Stonehouse Court Hotel. We are awaiting the first draft of the town profile from Jackie Ellis of Tourism Angles.

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10871.4 To note the annual pancake race will be held at 12pm on Tuesday 21st February 2023.

The date and time for the 2023 race was noted, Councillors were asked to help marshall the event if available. It was decided that the event would be free to enter due to the very low entry fees received in recent years.

GREEN SPACES

10872

10872.1 To receive the Minutes of the Green Spaces Committee meeting held on 13th December 2022

IT WAS RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meeting.

10872.2 Report of the Chair of the Green Spaces Committee

The Chair reported that the new play equipment at Kingshill Play Area had been installed and would be available to the public on Thursday 26th January. Sadly, Kingshill Play Area had also been the subject on recent antisocial behaviour and vandalism, the Town Council are liaising closely with the local police and they hope to have some temporary CCTV coverage soon to aid the investigation.

10872.3 To accept the recommendation of the Green Spaces Committee to adopt the Schedule of Fees and Charges that will apply from 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024

IT WAS RESOLVED to accept the committee recommendation and adopt the fees and charges.

PLANNING

10873

10873.1 To receive the Minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings held on the 20th December 2022 and 17th January 2023.

IT WAS RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meetings.

10873.2 Report of the Chair of the Planning Committee

The Chair reported that the Committee had highlighted to SDC a number of sites where planning notices did not seem to have been displayed, impacting the notification to neighbours and nearby residents to potential developments.

POLICY AND FINANCE

10874

10874.1 To receive the Minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 20th December 2022

IT WAS RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meeting.

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10874.2 Report of the Chair of the Policy and Finance Committee

The Chair had no matters to report.

10874.3 To appoint the Internal Auditor for 2022/23 accounts.

IT WAS RESOLVED to appoint GAPTC as the internal auditor.

BUSINESS RELATING TO STAFF

10875

10875.1 To receive the Minutes of the Staffing Committee Meetings held on the 13th December 2022 and 10th January 2023.

IT WAS RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meetings.

10875.2 Report by the Chair of the Staff Committee

The Chair had no additional matters to report.

10875.3 To note the resignation of the Street Cleaning Operative and the Committee decision to readvertise the now vacant position.

The resignation and vacant position were noted and it was agreed to readvertise the position in the spring.

COUNCILLORS REPORTS

10876

Cllr M Stennett provided an update on the recent Cam, Dursley & Uley Joint Woodlands Committee including ash die back works, other tree maintenance works, ancient tree surveys, squirrel damage and committee positions.

Cllr Thomas reported her attendance at the DATE minibus meeting, where the Town Council was thanked for the grant award and the Cam & Dursley Transportation Group who are trying to obtain information from GCC on the bus timetable and cancelled buses.

Cllr Hayes reported the ongoing issues with drainage to GCC Highways on Kingshill Road and Garden Suburb.

Cllr Grecian reported that the Dursley Welcomes Walkers group were searching for volunteers to help arrange the 2023 event.

Cllr Stride reported that he had attended the recent Heritage Asset meeting which was attended by the Conservation officer from Stroud District Council; a draft list of assets had been confirmed.

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CLERK'S REPORT

10877

The Town Clerk confirmed that all staff were now at work following the festive holiday period and illness. Two of the grounds team had successfully completed their chainsaw refresher training.

INSPECTIONS

10878

The scheduled Councillor inspections and checks for February and March 2023 were noted.

The meeting closed at 8pm.

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Town Mayor

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Date