

1st September, 2015

DURSLEY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the PROCEEDINGS at the MEETING of the COUNCIL held in the Community Meeting Room at the Fire Station, Kingshill Road, Castle, Dursley at 7pm on Tuesday, 1st September, 2015.

Action Summary:

9470.2	Compile priority tasks for Highways Lengthsman Crew.	9474.4	Letter to Neil Carmichael MP regarding proposed changes to Right to Buy and Littlecombe (minute 9466).
9472.2	Confirm TW Hawkins as successful tenderer for grass maintenance contract.	9475.3	Update Cam and Dursley Emergency Plan.
9472.3	Include Green Spaces Committee agenda item to discuss and agree hedge maintenance.	9477.1	Letter to Stroud District Council regarding CCTV in Dursley Town Centre.
9473.2	Letter to Stroud District Council in support of Lions request to name a street after Dennis Haddrell.	9478.1	Letter to Jonathan Bird following his resignation from Council.
9474.3	Circulate licensing decision for Capones and Ye Olde Dursley Hotel.	9478.1	Councillor Chappell to attend the Waste Management Forum 2/9/15.

PRESENT

Cllr C Nelmes, Mayor
Cllr N Grecian, Deputy Mayor

Councillors: J Ball, S Creswick, A Lodge, P Hayes, R Blackwell-Whitehead, S Abraham, M Chappell, L Patrick, M Nicholson, J Burdge and M Laybourne.

Also present: John Kay, Town Clerk and Leah Wellings, Deputy Town Clerk; District Councillor G Wheeler, County Councillor V Smith and Neil Carmichael MP; PC L Moffat and PCSO O Clarke; 2 members of the public - Mrs V Harding and Mr R Coombes.

Absent: Councillor F Firth

TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

9463

Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors A Stennett (Personal) and B Marsh (Personal).

MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

9464

Councillor Ball declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 8 (ii), minute item 9471.1 (i), as an employee of the Community Association.

Councillor Hayes declared a personal interest in agenda item 10.2, minute item 9473.2, as a member of the Lions Club of Dursley.

REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

9465

No requests for dispensations were received.

COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

9466

District Councillors' Reports

Councillor Wheeler reported on: the Littlecombe planning application, which the Development Control Committee (DCC) is considering on Tuesday 8th September and his push for a greater number of affordable houses, retention of the developer contribution to community facilities, and effective proposals to manage traffic at the Kingshill Road/Kingshill Lane junction e.g. roundabout; the case officer is recommending permission, the objections centre around the loss of long-stay car park, which is the subject of current discussions between the Town and District Councils; the need to refer the planning application for the Bymack's estate S.15/0144/FUL to the DCC and a bid for devolution by Gloucestershire's seven local authorities, health services, police and LEP.

Regarding the Littlecombe application, Councillor Laybourne asked whether plans would be re-landscaped to provide parking.

Councillor Wheeler informed Council that it is not within the zone of the current plan; he will take the issue back to Stroud District Council.

Regarding the Littlecombe application, Councillor Chappell raised concerns about the drop in planned affordable housing and the importance of ensuring 30% is delivered; 30% is in line with Stroud District Council guidance, why is the figure for this development much lower?

Councillor Wheeler explained that the Littlecombe application being considered is a new modified plan and under government legislation the developer can renegotiate the figures.

Councillor Patrick asked a question about the use of delegated powers in planning and the threshold for the size of development that is automatically referred to DCC.

Councillor Wheeler explained that the planning scheme of delegation changed some time ago and development size is no longer an issue.

The meeting noted that the Planning Case Officer for the Harding Drive application (S.15/0281/OUT) has indicated that a refusal decision is likely to be issued under delegated powers.

Report by the MP for Stroud

The Mayor welcomed Neil Carmichael MP to the meeting.

Neil Carmichael MP explained his commitment to visit as many parish and town councils as he can; he recently attended the Dursley Traders Forum and addressed concerns about business rates and banking; he is also pleased to see that Dursley is working on a Neighbourhood Development Plan and Stroud will have a Local Plan in place very soon.

Councillor Chappell raised concerns about the Littlecombe development and Section 106 arrangements; St Modwen receive 15% of the profit from the development and Stroud District Council, as majority landowner, receive the rest; important improvements to the road junction and affordable housing allocation should be part of the development but should not come under Section 106 monies; there is concern that the Section 106 money originally committed to the Community Centre is not likely to be awarded. Councillor Chappell asked for Neil Carmichael's view on the use and allocation of Section 106 monies given Stroud District Council's financial interest.

Neil Carmichael recognised the history of the site; the circumstances that led to Stroud District Council taking over ownership from the Regional Development Agency and the development barriers faced regarding contamination and sewage issues; ultimately Stroud District Council is responsible for dealing with these issues; section 106 is for community benefit, often it is the last to be spent and the issue requiring most discussion; there should be defined projects.

Neil Carmichael recognised that Section 106 could change, going up or down; he understood that St Modwen had spent millions on the site.

Neil Carmichael offered to explore the issues in greater detail if Council outline concerns in a letter to him.

Councillor Wheeler highlighted that the GL11 stakeholder group had identified community places for the original Section 106 funds of £350,000 which included the Community Centre, the Chantry Centre and Cam centre building (since been built), the group could reconsider and define the projects for this application.

Councillor Lodge asked Neil Carmichael for his thoughts on 'Right to Buy' and the potential loss of affordable housing in communities.

Neil Carmichael explained that the planning authority decide the level of affordable housing; in relation to the 'Right to Buy' policy and the proposed extension to include housing association tenants, the key difference is that money from the sale will go back into the system for more affordable housing; if Dursley requires more affordable housing then the case should be put to Stroud District Council to secure more, with considerations given to space for housing, a range of places and locations, the needs of the community and their aspirations.

Neil Carmichael drew attention to the Community Land Trust route, as a good option for developing and protecting affordable housing in a community.

Councillor Lodge raised concerns about the current commitment to build a replacement for every social rented home sold through the 'Right to Buy' scheme not being fulfilled, in reality the ratio is not 1:1 it is 1:19.

Neil Carmichael explained that a commitment will be made to ensure that the money is put towards building more affordable homes.

Councillor Chappell asked Neil Carmichael for his view on charging for the collection of food waste, ahead of Stroud District Council's Steering Committee on waste management meeting on 2nd September 2015.

In response, Neil Carmichael explained that he would like to see less food waste; as individuals we should all give greater thought to what is thrown out, what we use and buy; our resources should be used sensibly and we should be increasing recycling, aiming to recycle 70% of household waste in the Stroud District; he has no interest in having more landfill, Stroud should aim to have none.

Councillor Wheeler informed Council that there is no additional charge for food waste; Stroud do operate a green waste in pre-paid council sacks system and recycling levels are increasing.

Councillor Patrick expressed concerns about changes to waste collection and was unhappy with Stroud District Council plans to introduce fortnightly collections; the new bulky item charges (£15 for up to three items) is unhelpful if you only have one item.

Before withdrawing from the meeting, Neil Carmichael encouraged people to contact him should they wish to discuss any issues or concerns.

REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

9467

Mr Coombes, a member of the public, raised issues relating to Gloucestershire County Council Public Rights of Way (PROW), the handling of issues by the County Council and incorrect application of the law.

Mr Coombes raised issues with closures, orders and plans relating to CDU34; he felt that the County Council had been unresponsive to his concerns.

County Councillor Smith advised Mr Coombes to contact John Lane, the Public Rights of Way Lead Officer at Gloucestershire County Council.

Mr Coombes was advised by the Mayor to submit a formal complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman if Gloucestershire County Council failed to respond.

IT WAS RESOLVED to take agenda item 14.1 in part, minute 9477, prior to agenda item 6, minute 9469, so that PC L Moffat and PCSO O Clarke could provide a report.

TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM POLICE REPRESENTATIVES 9468

Council welcomed Dursley Police Team representatives PCSO Clark and the new community beat officer PC Moffat to the meeting.

PCSO Clark outlined the following crime statistics for Dursley for the June to August 2015 period:

- 97 reported crimes (compared to average of 115-120 for June to August over last 5 years).
- Non dwelling and dwelling burglaries have been very low.
- Anti social behaviour is lower
- Minor criminal damage crimes reported relate to town centre.

PC Moffat confirmed he had attended the recent licencing hearing for Capones and that the overall outcome (3am closure) was a good result; the timings of the club closure and Police shift patterns allow for more effective use of Police resources in the town.

PC Moffat reported on: the possible introduction of a pub watch scheme in Dursley and Cam involving local premises and the use of a radio system; considerations regarding the use of Special Constables to help with late night issues; the circulation of CCTV images in an attempt to identify the offender who vandalised the hanging baskets on Parsonage Street, the image circulated was captured from a nearby venue, the town CCTV system was faulty at the time.

PCSO Clark and PC Moffat withdrew from the meeting.

MINUTES 9469

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 4th August 2015 were signed by the Mayor.

BUSINESS RELATING TO HIGHWAYS 9470

9470.1 To receive a report from Council's Highways Representative

Councillor Hayes, Council's Highways Representative, had no matters to report.

9470.2 Update on the Highways Contract from Councillor Vernon Smith, Lead Cabinet for Highways

Councillor Smith thanked Council for inviting him to the meeting and started by introducing his career to date and his role as a County Councillor and Lead Cabinet member for Highways.

Councillor Smith's presentation outlined the history of Gloucestershire County Council's highways service, the Amey contract and current strategy. The following points were noted:

- The highways maintenance budget in 1996 was approx. £26 million; today it is reduced to £19 million.
- The highways service is moving from a reactive maintenance service to a proactive one; of the 70 highways crews, 32 are pot hole patching on a reactive basis, long term this figure will reduce as more long term maintenance work is undertaken by the crews.
- The roads are in a terrible state but this is slowly starting to improve.
- The highways team include 4/5 managers; county staff were transferred via TUPE to Amey the service provider.
- The Amey contract will deliver proactive works to highways drainage, a gully programme and major resurfacing projects. The move from a reactive service will take a decade.
- Major road works have recently been undertaken e.g. Walls\C&G roundabout and A40 resurfacing.
- Minor works are being dealt with under the Highways Local scheme; each County Councillor has an extra £2,500 this year to spend on highways maintenance (total £22,500) in their division.
- Each area will have a Lengthsman Crew; Dursley will have a crew for 1 week in October 2015 to undertake minor works identified locally by the Council and County Councillor.
- The County Council monitor works and will not pay Amey if the work is poor e.g. pot holes are now photographed before, during and after they are filled.
- The contract is being monitored by the Department for Transport and Highways and will be used nationally as best practice.

Councillor Patrick agreed that some roads are improving (e.g. Oak Drive) but raised concerns about the increase in Ragwort and asked for it to be eradicated in the area due to its toxicity.

Councillor Smith explained that weed sprays used today are quite weak; County Councillor Lydon could use the highway local funds to implement a weed spraying programme, this would need to be a division decision.

Councillor Creswick noted that at the County presentation on the contract she was informed that crews would assess the immediate area when completing a job and complete any additional works identified, this does not appear to be happening, is it part of the contract?

Councillor Smith explained that yes the 'Fix First Visit' makes economical sense, the change in approach by crews is a work culture one that will take

time; the new Lengthsman Crews will have all the equipment required to undertake works.

Councillor Chappell highlighted a recent traffic accident in the lanes at Coaley and the problems overgrown hedges were creating, narrowing routes and impacting on visibility; the cycle lane on the A38 has also created a bottle neck with traffic unable to overtake.

Councillor Smith admitted it was a mistake to reduce hedge cutting but explained that cuts are limited due to budget restraints; hedges on non major routes are only cut once a year, if a division wants extra cuts highways may be able to match fund. Regarding the A38, this question relates to planning and infrastructure, if it can be sent to Councillor Smith he can forward to the relevant Cabinet member Councillor Will Windsor-Clive for an answer.

Mrs Harding raised concerns about the escape route at Whiteway being overgrown with weeds.

The Clerk confirmed that this had been reported recently and highways had confirmed maintenance work would be carried out.

Councillor Laybourne raised concerns about the maintenance of footpaths along roads, in particular the footpath along the Dursley Road had narrowed due to overgrowth and was dangerous for school children walking this way to school; this footpath has been reported and still the siding work has not been carried out.

Councillor Smith agreed that footpaths are in a poor state but explained that sorting the roads out is the County priority at the moment; the division Lengthsman team could be given a programme for footpaths if the town decides that this is the priority.

Councillor Smith explained that the Local Highways Manager, Andrew Middlecote, would agree the allocation of the Lengthsman team; it is anticipated that Dursley will have the team more than once every quarter starting from October 2015.

Councillors were advised to forward highway jobs for the crew to the Council office; Councillor Smith can be copied into any highways correspondence if Council fails to get adequate responses from Amey.

Councillor Smith, Mr Coombes and Mrs Harding withdrew from the meeting.

BUSINESS RELATING TO COUNCIL FINANCE

9471

9471.1 Council's Accounts 2015/2016

- (i) **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the schedule of payments (Appendix A) be authorised and signed by the Mayor.

- (ii) Income received since the last Council meeting (Appendix B) was noted.
- (iii) The monthly management/budget report was noted.

GREEN SPACES

9472

9472.1 Report of the Chairman of the Green Spaces Committee

In the absence of the Committee Chairman there was no report received.

9472.2 To approve the tender for the Grass Maintenance Contract

IT WAS RESOLVED to approve TW Hawkins as the successful tenderer for the grass maintenance contract and confirm the service level for the football pitch maintenance, at a cost of £39,900.

9472.3 To receive an update on future hedge maintenance and pest control at the War Memorial Recreation Ground

The Clerk provided an update on the actions and proposals made by Tree Management relating to pest control and hedge management, following a site visit. These include installation of lockable bait boxes in the hedge, replacement of open litter bins with bait safe litter bins and cutting the hedge back; the bins have since been ordered.

IT WAS AGREED that the Green Spaces Committee discuss and agree a programme for hedge maintenance; the Clerk agreed to arrange for the kissing gate to be cleared.

TOWN IMPROVEMENTS AND AMENITIES

9473

9473.1 Report of the Chairman of the Town Improvements and Amenities Committee

In the absence of the Committee Chairman there was no report received.

9473.2 To consider a request from the Lions Club of Dursley to name a street after Dennis Haddrell

It was recognised that Dennis Haddrell was an active founding member of the Lions, he raised substantial funds for local causes in the Dursley area and had been awarded the Leslie D Gale award (1994). Street naming opportunities would arise in upcoming developments in the Dursley area.

IT WAS RESOLVED to support the Lions Club of Dursley to have Dennis Haddrell honoured by having a street named after him.

PLANNING

9474

9474.1 Report of the Chairman of the Planning Committee

The Committee Chairman had no matters to report.

9474.2 To receive the Minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings held on 18th August 2015

IT WAS RESOLVED to adopt the Minutes.

9474.3 To receive an update on the Licensing Committee Hearing (28/8/15) for applications 15/0092/LAPRNW & 15/00924/LAPRNW Capones & Ye Olde Dursley Hotel

Councillor Nicholson gave an update on the application for Capones following attendance at the hearing.

It was noted that members of the public, the police and the applicant's solicitor were also present; the committee permitted the sale of alcohol on a Thursday and Sunday from 10:00 to 13:30 and on a Friday and Saturday from 10:00 to 03:00 with approx. 20 conditions, including the closure of the rear beer garden by 11pm, levels of door supervision and noise measures.

Councillor Hayes gave an update on the application for Ye Olde Dursley Hotel following attendance at the hearing.

It was noted that the committee had permitted the sale of alcohol on a Sunday to Thursday from 10:00 to 00:00 and on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 to 02:00 with conditions, including the closure of the rear beer garden by 11pm and CCTV levels.

IT WAS AGREED that the Clerk circulate the formal decision notice when it is issued by Stroud District Council and monitor the situation.

9474.4 To consider the GRCC request to write to Neil Carmichael MP regarding the Government's proposed Right to Buy policy

Concerns were raised regarding the proposed changes to 'Right to Buy' and the potential loss of affordable houses for local people.

Councillor Lodge reiterated the concerns raised earlier with the MP (minute 9466) about the low level of affordable housing being delivered on the Littlecombe site and the current government commitment to build a replacement for every social rented home sold through the 'Right to Buy' scheme not being fulfilled, the ratio should be 1:1.

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Clerk write a letter to Neil Carmichael MP, based on the GRCC letter, expressing the concerns and implications of the 'Right to

Buy' changes as highlighted and asking for the current rural exemption to be continued.

POLICY AND FINANCE

9475

9475.1 Report by the Chairman of the Policy and Finance Committee

The Committee Chairman had no matters to report.

9475.2 To receive an update on the Youth Services Contact

The Mayor gave an update on recent activities relating to the contract; Sam Martin the new Community Youth Worker for Dursley and Cam started in position today; a programme of sessions in Dursley is now in place for a Monday (detached), Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday; the Youth Provider Network is applying for funding from Stroud District Council, other youth projects include gardening activities and a job club; details regarding the Joint Committee for Dursley and Cam will be considered by Council in October 2015.

9475.3 To appoint a Deputy Emergency Management Co-ordinator (Cam & Dursley Emergency Plan)

IT WAS RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Chappell.

9475.4 Councillors' Reports

- (i) **Kingshill House** (10/8/15) – The Clerk and Deputy Clerk attended a meeting and tour; the venue could be used in the future for meetings/events.
- (ii) **Dursley Welcomes Walkers** (10/8/15) – Councillor Grecian reported on the launch of the Lantern Way walk on 22nd August, the successful Japanese walkers visit, establishing strong links with the national Walkers are Welcome group and the upcoming walking festival.
- (iii) **Traders Forum** (13/8/15) – Councillor Abraham reported on an update following the MP Neil Carmichael's attendance at the meeting, the letters to all traders regarding encroachment of Parsonage Street, the festive lights switch on event and CCTV in Parsonage Street.

BUSINESS RELATING TO STAFF

9476

9476.1 Report by the Chairman of the Staff Committee

The Committee Chairman had no matters to report.

BUSINESS RELATING TO COMMUNITY SAFETY

9477

9477.1 To receive a report from Council's Police Representative

Councillor Nicholson, the council's police representative, reported on the recent vandalism of hanging baskets in Parsonage Street and disappointment that the Police had to rely on CCTV images captured on a privately operated system because the town's CCTV system is not working properly; the speed watch team has identified a new site on Kingshill Road outside the Fire Station and he will be representing the Council at the Police panel meeting on 22nd September 2015.

IT WAS AGREED that the Clerk write to Stroud District Council seeking answers to the following: *Why was the CCTV not fully operational? How long has it been faulty? Why was Council not informed? How long it is likely to be before the CCTV recording will be returned to normal?*

9477.2 To confirm Council representative at Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) meeting 9/9/15

A volunteer representative did not come forward.

Councillor Creswick informed Council that questions for the PCC could be submitted in advance of the meeting. The following was suggested: *Why isn't CCTV working in Dursley?*

Further questions can be submitted in advance via the Council office.

CLERK'S REPORT

9478

9478.1 Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was noted.

The Mayor informed Council that unfortunately Councillor Jonathan Bird had resigned from the Council due to time commitments.

IT WAS AGREED that Council write to Jonathan Bird thanking him for his hard work and efforts, in particular the key role he played as Chair of the Neighbourhood Development Steering group.

Councillor Ball confirmed her attendance at the forthcoming Citizens Advice Bureau meeting.

IT WAS AGREED that Councillor Chappell attend Stroud District Council's Waste Management Forum on 2nd September 2015, to find out more information about the changes to waste collection and charging.

MONTHLY AREA INSPECTIONS AND AUDIT CHECKS

9479

Details of Councillors scheduled to undertake area inspections and audit checks for August/September 2015 were noted.

Dursley Town Council

1st September 2015

The meeting closed at 9:07p.m.

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Town Mayor

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Date