



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HEDNESFORD TOWN COUNCIL

on Tuesday 7th February 2023 held at Pye Green Community Centre, Bradbury Lane,
Hednesford

**Members of the public were able to attend in person and the meeting was livestreamed
on the Council's Facebook Page**

Present:

Cllr Darrell Mawle (Mayor)
Cllr Paul Woodhead [Chair of Regeneration & Community Committee]
Cllr Laura Harrison (Chair of PGCC Committee)
Cllr Sharon Jagger (Chair of FP&Ops Committee)
Cllr Garry Jones
Cllr Chris Harborow
Cllr Arthur Roden

In attendance: Lindsey Smith (Chief Officer) Matthew Johnson (Community Officer) Duncan Rollo (CCDC – Community Safety and Vulnerability Officer)

Members of Public: There were 6 members of the public present

1. Public Participation

Cllr Mawle updated that PCSO Rob Evans was due to attend the meeting but was called away on an urgent job that prevented him from attending. Cllr Mawle shared an update from PCSO Rob Evans with regards to the issue of anti-social drivers in Tesco Hednesford underground carpark:

2 arrests had been made the same day (07.02.23) in relation to individuals in high performance cars with the intent to supply drugs. An arrest was also made in recent weeks regarding an individual with no insurance. The car park is being regularly patrolled and it is a work in progress.

Cllr Mawle advised that any Police matters raised from the public would be passed onto PCSO Rob Evans. No matters from the public were raised.

A member of the public – Chairman of Cannock Chase Arts Council - enquired as to Hednesford Town Councils response to the closing/relocation of Museum of Cannock Chase informing that CCDC claim that it will save £100,000 per year despite their being no clear evidence and wanted to know how Hednesford Town Council are planning to respond to the proposal.

Cllr Mawle provided an overview of CCDC proposal stating that the museum is not closing but it is proposed to move to museum to another Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles location. Cllr Mawle advised that there are no Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles in Hednesford so any proposed move will mean the museum being moved outside of Hednesford. CCDC have a cabinet meeting on 15th February 2023 upon which they will vote upon the motion to relocate the museum. Cllr Mawle advised that he is personally not going to support the move and that as the news only very recently became known that it was too late to include it on the agenda for the full council meeting before informing that members of the public are able to attend the meeting at CCDC.

Cllr Woodhead informed that the issue will be on the agenda at the next full council meeting for further discussion and for a formal response to be agreed and sent to CCDC. From the perspective of Hednesford Cllrs and residents the museum is a very important aspects of the towns offer to visitors. Cllr Woodhead encouraged members of the public to write into Hednesford Town Council via the clerk as to their objections and concerns.

Cllr Jagger enquired as to the rationale behind the decision and questioned the lack of detail to inform the decision.

Member of the public stated that there has been no consultation whatsoever before going on to inform that the building and museum brings in schools from across the wider West Midlands area. The same member of the public wanted to know if the museum does relocate then what is the proposed future for the building before adding that it is outrageous as to how it has all been dealt with.

District Councillor Paul Jones offered to take questions regarding the proposal.

Cllr Harborow informed that he has been contacted by 5 separate individuals today alone regarding the matter and that it is very important to get the necessary information from CCDC as soon as possible as CCDC are proposing to cur services to Hednesford and that the museum needs to stay in Cannock Chase.

Cllr Mawle informed that although CCDC are voting on 15th February 2023 that a consultation will have to follow before any other action can be taken.

ACTION: Hednesford Town Council to bring issue to next full council meeting to agree Hednesford Town Council response to CCDC

Member of the public from Pye Green Christian Centre raised concerns about serious deficiencies in the masterplan for the build of the new housing developments off Pye Green Road stating that original plans showed a spine road connecting all the new developments but that this has not happened. Now 5 new roads lead out onto Pye Green Road plus the footpath is on the wrong side of the road. With the new primary school in the middle of the development and with each child needing to cross Pye Green Road up to 20 times a week this equates to over 300,000 crossings of the road per year which the member of the public feels will lead to serious problems.

The same member of the public went on to explain that on the original plans that there was a hub in the centre of the developments but now there is a small shop development instead which does not necessarily meet the needs of the new developments due to there being a lack of GP facilities in the area. The member of the public (representative from Pye Green Christian Centre) informed that they have been approached by three GPs in the area who are looking to set up facilities in the area with an idea to provide a medical centre. Pye Green Christian Centre have land that they could make available for this and invited Hednesford Town Council to support this in any way that they can/feel is appropriate.

The member of the public provided an overview of the work currently being done at the Pye Green Christian Centre and expressed the desire to bring something positive into the community. The member of the public closed by inviting Hednesford Town Council Councillors to make a visit to the centre to find out more.

Cllr Mawle thanked Pye Green Christian Centre for the invite and introduced Community Officer, Matthew Johnson, to the member of the public as the best contact to the council.

Cllr Mawle closed the public participation section of the meeting and opened the Full Council meeting.

2. Apologies:

Cllr Mandy Dunnett (training course)
Cllr Stuart Crabtree

3. Declarations of Interest:

Cllr Mawle declared DOI for agenda item 12 as he helps with Friends of Hednesford who work in partnership with Hednesford in Partnership

Cllr Harrison declared DOI regarding Friends of Hednesford Park

4. Previous Minutes:

The minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 02nd November 2022 were reviewed and approved subject to a spelling correction on page 3 and the addition of costing for the Remembrance event on page 7

Proposed: Cllr Mawle
Seconded: Cllr Woodhead
Agreed: All in favour

5. Duncan Rollo - CCTV

Cllr Mawle requested a change in the order of the agenda.

Duncan Rollo – Community Safety and Vulnerability Officer for Cannock Chase District Council gave an update. Still compiling the CCTV figures for January 2023 but informed that the cold weather has had a big impact on the levels of incidents as people tend to stay indoors with welfare checks going up. Overall, the concerns that were seen in Hednesford

high street and Hednesford park have calmed down a lot and have been displaced and they are not seeing anti-social behaviour or gangs congregating. Main issue is the boy racers. Tesco is a gathering point, and the police have this well managed, but concern is on the arterial routes and the noise generated from the vehicles. Working with other partners to manage this.

Cllr Roden enquired about an update on the trees in the town that are still blocking the CCTV cameras. Cllr Roden informed that Hednesford Town Council are paying for CCTV but that the trees are preventing the cameras from being used. Duncan Rollo informed that the trees do prevent some of the visibility but that they are under tree preservation orders which make it difficult to cut them back. Duncan Rollo informed that he has received acknowledgement that the request to evaluate the trees has been received from CCDC.

Cllr Mawle asked if Duncan Rollo can push CCDC for a response regarding cutting back the trees before the trees come back into full leaf. Cllr Roden informed that any pruning needs to be done before the end of February.

Cllr Jones asked if there is any concern about crimes that might be being missed due to lack of camera visibility.

Duncan Rollo advised that there is no huge concern about this but that somethings may be being missed due to lack of visibility and that the cameras are missing 20-30% of the coverage. There is also a significant cost associated with cutting the trees back. Cllr Harrison shared some knowledge on what is involved in this process and a conversation followed about risks and concerns of potential data being missed.

Cllr Jagger expressed her thanks on behalf of the council for whatever has been done to resolve the anti-social behaviour in the parks.

ACTION: Duncan Rollo to expedite a response from CCDC for the cutting back of the trees blocking CCTV visibility.

6. Mayors Announcements/Update:

- I. Cllr Mawle expressed thanks for all their hard work to Friends of Hednesford – Community Volunteers for their action and contribution for the Christmas decorations in the town centre, and for the bulb planting and litter picks.
- II. Cllr Mawle expressed thank to all Councillors for their time in attending lots of Committee meetings in recent weeks as the precept was prepared.
- III. Cllr Mawle thanked Cllr Harrison, Community Officer Matthew Johnson and all the groups that attended the Historic Hednesford Event on 22nd January 2023. It was a huge success with over 300 people attending.

- IV. Cllr Mawle informed that the Hednesford Farmers and Craft Market returns on 25th February 2023 from 10am to 3pm.
- V. Cllr Mawle provided an update on an issue that was raised by a member of the public at December 2022 full council meeting with regards to access to homes off Cardigan Place on market days. Cllr Mawle advised that having spoken with Parking Eye, that Parking Eye have informed that they will not issue tickets to residents driving up the one way ramp from Aldi carpark on market days. Dates and times have been provided to Parking Eye and residents have received a letter advising them of this.
- VI. Cllr Mawle reminded all Councillors of full council meeting etiquette and requested that they raise their hand if they wish to speak.
- VII. Cllr Mawle requested that a late addition be made to the agenda and informed that with the May elections coming up that all residents now need photo ID to be able vote. Full details are available on Hednesford Town Council Facebook page or by the following links:
The full list of accepted ID is available on the Electoral Commission's website electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID.

Anyone that does not have an accepted form of photo ID can apply for free photo ID online at voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk/ or by completing a paper form available on request from the CCDC Council offices.

The deadline to apply for free ID before the 4 May elections is 5pm on 25 April. Applicants must be registered to vote, and will need to provide their date of birth, National Insurance number, and a photograph with their application. Voters will need to show approved photo ID at the polling station to receive a ballot paper.

7. Chief Officer Update

Chief Officer – Lindsey Smith informed that the Finance Officer post has been successfully recruited to with the Officer commencing in role on 13th March 2023.

Chief Officer informed of a change of date for next PGCC Committee Meeting from 13th February to 20th February 2023.

Chief Officer Informed that all planning applications received have been circulated to all Cllrs for consideration. No objections were received. Chief Officer advised members of the public that all planning applications can be found on CCDC planning portal - [Citizen Portal Planning \(agileapplications.co.uk\)](https://citizenportalplanning.agileapplications.co.uk)

Chief Officer provided information of UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Thriving Communities 2022 – March 2025. Hednesford Town Council were informed of the 26th of January 2023. Aim of the fund is to level up the success of communities and centres, improve local spaces, support local arts, cultural, heritage and creative

activities and support for town centre retail and wrap around support for small businesses.

Hednesford Town Council have been awarded £47,500 over 3 years.

Chief Officer advised that on 7th February 2023 that Hednesford Town Council were advised that the £10,000 22/23 allocation needs to be spent by 31st March 2023 =

£3,750 capital - £6,250 revenue

£18,125 in Y2

£19,375 in Y3

Chief Officer informed that consultation will take place for 23/24 spend with residents but that due to the tight timescales that this is not possible for 22/23 spend

Cllr Woodhead requested that the Chief Officer circulate information following attendance at funding meeting on 08th February to all Cllrs and for Cllrs to input ideas on how the funds can be best utilised.

Cllr Roden enquired as to who conducted the interviews for the Finance Officer. Cllr Woodhead informed that all Cllrs are involved in the recruitment of the Proper Officer but once the Proper Officer is employed that recruitment of Officers falls under that role and due processes were followed.

Cllr Harborow enquired if he had missed an email about the Prosperity Fund and was informed that he had not as the Chief Officer was only made aware of the fund on 26th January. Cllr Harborow then enquired how many other Cllrs knew of the Prosperity fund prior to the council meeting and was informed that Cllrs were aware when the council agenda pack was issued. Cllr Mawle assured Cllr Harborow that he had not been overlooked in the information sharing.

ACTION: Chief Officer to update Cllrs following fund meeting and to request input for spend.

8. Community Officer

Community Officer, Matthew Johnson provided an update on the permanent location of Platinum Jubilee Beacon. Friends of Hednesford park are prepared to take over ownership, maintenance, and responsibility for the beacon. CCDC will take back ownership of the beacon and install it in Hednesford Park utilising a small grant from Hednesford Town Council to plant it up.

Cllr Woodhead informed the motion has been discussed at Regeneration and Communities Committee meeting and Hednesford Town Council will need to transfer ownership so are no longer liable for the asset but that this had already been discussed and actioned. Cllr Woodhead thanked Friends of Hednesford Park for taking on the responsibility for the beacon to ensure it can continue to be enjoyed.

Cllr Harrison declared a late DOI as the committee member of Friends of Hednesford park as she was not aware of the context of the motion prior to the discussion at full council and will not take part in the vote for the motion.

Proposed: Cllr Woodhead
Seconded: Cllr Jagger
For: All

ACTION: For Friends of Hednesford Park to take ownership of the jubilee beacon

Community Officer, Matthew Johnson, thanked Cllrs for their feedback on the draft volunteer policy and explained that the policy is a strategic document to how volunteers will be engaged, recruited, and managed. Community Officer requested for council to adopt the policy.

Proposed: Cllr Mawle
Seconded: Cllr Harrison
For: All

ACTION: For Volunteer Policy to be adopted

9. Verbal update from Committee Chairs

I. Regeneration and Community Committee

As Committee Chair, Cllr Woodhead gave a verbal update on the next market taking place on 25th February, that booking forms are being received from traders wishing to attend and that all licences required are in place. The previous market manager has left the role and the market will be run by Cllrs as volunteers for the time being.

II. Pye Green Community Centre Committee

As Committee Chair, Cllr Harrison gave a verbal update that the focus of the last committee meeting was the precept and a new hire agreement for PGCC has been approved. The glasswasher in the bar has now been delivered and is installed and working. EICR works have begun with a date for the power off in the centre being 20th February 2023. Quotes for the roof will be brought to the next committee meeting and the damage to the ceiling in the IT room is still waiting to be resolved but is in hand. There are 2 bookings for a police surgery in meeting room 2 at the centre utilising the free room use for community and not for profit groups.

Cllr Harrison passed on huge thanks and credit to Community Officer, Matthew Johnson for the huge success of the historic Hednesford event. Over 300 people attended with 40 feedback comments received. 39 of the 40 respondents stated the event was very good. 1 stated it was excellent. Of the 40 only 6 were negative but related to the room being too hot and the disabled parking bay not wide enough.

Cllr Harrison expressed a formal thank you to everyone who was involved in any way with the Heritage Event at PGCC. Coverage was made in the Express and Star and Chronicle newspapers, former chair of Hednesford Town Council Alan Pearson, District Councillors Brain Jones and Paul Jones, Chair of District Council Martin Buttery and local MP Amanda Milling all attended. Cllr Harrison informed that it was such a success that it now being looked at as a district event to bring all areas of the district together.

Cllr Woodhead passed on his congratulations for the success of the event despite his initial reservations about the event being held and pleased to be proved wrong.

Cllr Woodhead raised a query about the police utilising the free community meeting room at PGCC to hold their surgeries as his previous understanding was that the use of the free room was for local community groups. Cllr Woodhead informed that district have pulled funding and regular attending at the library as they no longer wanted to commit to outreach work and queried if they are now getting what they did but are no longer paying for it.

Cllr Harrison informed she was unclear if this is the case and that her understanding was to be able to provide a contact point for the community. Cllr Harrison and Cllr Woodhead agreed to discuss this further outside of the meeting.

III. Finance, Personnel & Operations Committee

As Committee Chair, Cllr Jagger gave a verbal update concerning finance, personnel and operations matters. Cllr Jagger informed that information had not been received from other committees regarding the budget following the call for information at the November 2022 full council meeting, which in turn made the last finance, personnel and operations committee meeting a bit of a challenge. Cllr Jagger informed that the committee has been able to serve a balanced budget which will be presented later in the meeting.

Cllr Jagger advised that after the budget has been agreed that she will resign as chair of the finance, personnel and operations committee. Cllr Jagger expressed that in her view that the structure of the committee is no longer fit for purpose and is ineffective. The structure was intended to streamline the work of the council but in her observations only serves to make more work for the officers and is more time consuming than some people realise. Cllr Jagger recommends a review of the committees going forward.

Cllr Jagger stated that she has enjoyed her role as Cllr and stated that it has been both challenging and rewarding. Cllr Jagger informed that you have to learn on the hoof and are given no training as to how to be a Cllr. Cllr Jagger thanked her council colleagues for their support and wished the best for the next Hednesford Town Council Administration. Cllr Jagger thanked the officers and staff for their unremitting

and conscientious loyalty to Hednesford Town Council before informing that a colleague will be presenting the budget proposal further down the agenda.

10. Motion from Cllr Sharon Jagger

Cllr Jagger brought a motion for full council to approve the adoption of the Local Government Associations Debate not Hate campaign to address abuse and intimidation of elected members and candidates. Cllr Jagger informed that it impacts the democratic process as candidates who would be very good at the role are reticent to stand.

Cllr Woodhead advised that district have adopted the same campaign. Some of the stories that were shared at district meeting are horrendous. It is important to debate issues and disagree but to ensure that everyone disagrees well and in the right way and for everyone to call it out when they see it whether it is online or in person irrespective of own views on the issue being debated.

Cllr Roden enquired as to whether the debate not hate campaign also related to Cllr to Cllr debates. Cllr Roden was informed that it does.

A conversation followed between Cllr Mawle and Cllr Roden regarding the sending and receiving of each other emails and the frequency and content of these emails.

Proposed: Cllr Jagger

Seconded: Cllr Woodhead

For: 6

Abstain: 1

11. Motion from Cllr Paul Woodhead

Cllr Paul Woodhead brought a motion for the continuation of the allocated CIL funds for the Hednesford Hopper for events throughout 2023. To date approximately £300.00 of the £1,200 has been spent and does council wish to continue so that an updated QR code can be obtained.

Member of the public enquired as to what CIL is and was informed by Cllr Paul Woodhead that it is the Community Infrastructure Levy fund received from developers across the parish.

Cllr Harborow asked for an explanation what the Hednesford hopper is and for clarity if it is an existing service or a bespoke service. Cllr Woodhead confirmed it is an existing service run by Chase Rider and can be used on both pye green circular routes and the Cannock to Rugeley and Cannock to Lichfield buses on market days free of charge.

Cllr Harborow stated that he feels that this is a very good use of CIL monies.

Cllr Roden informed that he cannot find any paperwork to inform that the proposal for the Hednesford Hopper has ever been brought to full council for approval. Cllr Woodhead provided some background information and informed that it was approved for trial.

Proposed: Cllr Woodhead

Seconded: Cllr Jagger

For: 6

Abstain: 1

12. Motion from Cllr Darrell Mawle

Cllr Darrell Mawle proposed a motion that the remaining £4,000 in the Community Grant budget be used to enable Hednesford in Partnership to lead on a Coronation event in May 2023 so that the planning, booking and organising can proceed. Cllr Mawle informed that Hednesford in Partnership are looking to apply for national lottery funding but that the funding may not be successful. Councillors will need to decide if they wish to reclaim the £4,000 back should Hednesford in Partnership be successful in gaining the lottery grant.

A discussion followed with an agreement that awarding the money enables Hednesford in Partnership to be able to start and plan the Coronation Event. Consensus was that the monies, or part of the money, should come back to Hednesford Town Council if the bid to the national lottery is successful.

Cllr Jones informed that due to a condition in grants from the national lottery that no money can be spent until it has been received and cannot be used for things that have already been booked.

Proposed: Cllr Mawle

Seconded: Cllr Harborow

For: 7

ACTION: For Chief Officer and Community Officer to liaise with Hednesford in Partnership about the administration of the £4,000

13. Motions from Finance, Operations and Personnel Committee and Cllr Chris Harborow

A lengthy discussion took place about which aspects of the budget could and could not be discussed in an open forum, together with queries as to why the budget could not be agreed at the meeting which took some considerable time. The outcome of the discussion was for the Chief Officer to gain clarity from Staffordshire Parish Councils Association and as no consensus could be reached together with some concerns about Cllr Harborow's motion not being reviewed by the Chief Officer and Responsible Finance Officer that the decision was made to roll the budget over to the

March full council meeting. Majority agreed that discussions could take place in private with the final decision being made in public.

14. Precept

Council was informed by Cllr Mawle that as both budgets – from Cllr Harborow and Finance, Personnel and Operations Committee - advised a 5% increase in precept that this is what needs to be voted on at the meeting with the budget spend to be agreed at the March full council meeting.

A conversation followed about increased costs nationally means that an increase in precept is unavoidable to maintain current levels of provision with concerns raised by some Cllrs that residents are potentially being asked to pay more for less. A discussion took place that in not increasing the precept would mean that even less would be able to be provided to residents.

Proposed: Cllr Woodhead

Seconded:

For: 5

Against: 2

Cllr Roden asked for Cllrs name to be added against their vote but was advised that this request needs to be made before a vote is taken.

ACTION: Budget decision to be rolled over to March full council meeting on 7th March 2023. Chief Officer to seek clarification on matters that can be permitted to be discussed in public

15. Private and Confidential Business

At 9pm Cllr Mawle resolved to close the meeting and move into private and confidential business.

16. Date of next meeting

Date of next full Council meeting is Tuesday 7th February 2023 @7pm

