



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
HEDNESFORD TOWN COUNCIL
Wednesday 02nd November 2022

Meeting held at Pye Green Community Centre, Bradbury Lane, Hednesford.
Members of the public were invited to attend in person
The Meeting was Livestreamed on the Council Facebook Page.

Present:

CLlr Darrell Mawle (Mayor)
CLlr Arthur Roden
CLlr Garry Jones
CLlr Paul Woodhead (joined the meeting at 720pm)
CLlr Mandy Dunnett
CLlr Sharon Jagger
CLlr Laura Harrison
CLlr Chris Harborow

In Attendance: Officers: Lindsey Smith (Chief Officer) Matthew Johnson (Community Officer),
Duncan Rollo (Community Safety and Vulnerability Officer – Cannock Chase District Council)

Members of Public:

There were 4 members of the public

1. Public Participation

appointments and want to re-start sessions at the community centre but have been informed that they will now be charged for the room hire which they have not previously. CLlr Mawle informed that there is an item on the agenda which if passed will mean that the room will continue to be free of charge

2. Apologies

CLlr Debbie Cartwright
CLlr Stuart Crabtree

3. Declarations of Interest

None

4. Minutes

The minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 04th October 2022 were reviewed and approved

Proposed: Cllr Woodhead

Seconded: Cllr Dunnett

Agreed: All in favour

5. Mayor's Announcements/ Updates

- I. Daffodil planting on Sunday 30th 10pm (Friends of Hednesford Event)
Cllr Mawle thanked Friends of Hednesford Park for all their hard work in organising the daffodil planting in Hednesford park and that we all look forward to seeing them bloom in the Spring
 - II. Farmers Market – 29.10.22
Cllr Mawle thanked everyone who helped and supported in the running of the monthly Farmers and Craft Market in Hednesford on 29th October especially for all the volunteers who stepped up as the Market Manager was on leave. Cllr Mawle reminded all that the next market will take place on Saturday 26th November and that if anyone is free and able to support this again then the help would be very much appreciated
 - III. Christmas Lights Switch on – 02.12.22 - Hednesford in Partnership
Cllr Mawle informed that Hednesford in Partnership supported by Hednesford Town Council are continuing to coordinate the Christmas Light Switch on and all enquiries are to be made to Hednesford in Partnership on the first instance
 - IV. Christmas Market – 10.12.22
Cllr Mawle informed that the December market will be taking place on the 2nd weekend of December
 - V. Remembrance Day Event Nov 13th /Friends of Hednesford Display
Cllr Mawle informed that Friends of Hednesford are unveiling a top secret at an event at the War Memorial on Wednesday 9th November at 215pm. The event has been 2 years in the planning and is to mark the 100th anniversary of the Memorial. It is only a short event, but everyone is welcome to attend
- 6. Duncan Rollo – CCTV Update**
Duncan Rollo from Cannock Chase District Council introduced himself – Community Safety and Vulnerability Officer – advised that he had been in post for 12 months and that it was important to update the Council every quarter on the statistics relating the CCTV and to also answer any questions relating to Community Safety

Cllr Mawle enquired about the ASB figures for August 2022 (latest figures that were available) and when do the CCTV know when to contact the Police

Duncan Rollo advised that the August 2022 figures were 18 ASB incidents and 6 Drug related/county lines incidents with the amount of times Police were contacted by CCTV controller being 7. Duncan Rollo explained that ASB covers a broad spectrum and that it is down to the CCTV operators to make a judgment call as to whether the Police should be contacted. Duncan Rollo stressed that just because the Police have been contacted does not guarantee a Police response

Cllr Mawle asked if the information relating to the 7 incidents passed to Police could be expanded on to provide more information as to why the call was made and that this information would be useful for the HTC to have. Duncan Rollo advised that this would be possible going forward

Cllr Roden asked if there was anything that can be done about the foliage on the trees blocking CCTV cameras along Market Street. Duncan Rollo informed that due to tree preservation orders that are in place that it is very difficult to request branches and foliage to be removed and that it only effects the camera at the location on Market Street and one of the cameras in Hednesford Park during a few of the summer months

A discussion followed around who was responsible for the pruning of the trees due to complications with land ownership. Duncan Rollo informed he will try and find out who is responsible and what cost is involved

Duncan Rollo enquired if the Army Cadet unit next to Hednesford Park were still experiencing issues and was advised by Cllr Jagger that the issue has now seems to have resolved

Cllr Harrison asked how much coverage that the CCTV cameras have of Tesco undercover carpark. Duncan Rollo advised that there is zero coverage of the underground carpark, but that Tesco have their own CCTV covering this area. Cllr Harrison asked if the CCTV cameras cover the area by the recycling bins on Tesco outdoor carpark. Duncan Rollo informed that the cameras cover the majority of the outdoor carpark although there are a few 'blackspots' and that they had not been made aware of any issues in this area

Cllr Jones asked about the People Power Fund (where groups bid for a pot of money set aside by the Police Commissioner) Duncan Rollo informed that the approach has changed this year and that each district is eligible to put one bid forward. £100,000 is available with £20,000 being top sliced and all monies need to be spent by the end of the current financial year. Each bid is limited to £5,000

Cllr Jones asked which projects had been put forward and was updated by Duncan Rollo that initially 5 bids were suitable although the one was Brereton – a fishing project which could have been rolled out district wide – was rejected and that at the moment there was no bid on the table for the area

Cllr Woodhead informed that the data from CCTV was really helpful and asked if it could be amended for HTC needs and requirements to include a breakdown of cases. Cllr Woodhead also asked what the advice is to the public for reporting issues as the 101 non-emergency number was incredibly difficult to get through to and opportunities to create a 'heat-map' of incidents which would help focus resources and build a picture locally of priorities is being lost. Duncan Rollo advised that it is always best to report online where possible. Duncan also advised that PSCO Rob Evans can also be emailed with concerns and his email should be made available to the community

Council asked Duncan Rollo if the community safety team can increase the awareness of reporting online via their promotion across Hednesford as the more issues are understood HTC can in some small-scale way look at putting interventions into place

Duncan Rollo informed that there will be a robust Police presence at the Christmas light switch on 2nd December, both in Hednesford Park and the Market Street area

It was agreed that Duncan Rollo should be invited to the HTC meeting every quarter

7. Community Officer Update – Matthew Johnson

Previously agenda item 8

Cllr Mawle asked Council if they were happy to bring forward agenda items 8 and 9 so that Community Officer – Matthew Johnson – would be able to leave before the end of the meeting

Council agreed

Community Officer Matthew Johnson gave a current update on his projects and activities:

Community Support Grant

Number of groups applied 14. Nine approved by Cllrs Harrison, Cllr Woodhead, and Cllr Jagger in conjunction with HTC Community Officer. Unsuccessful applicants have been contacted in some instances for further information and the Community Officer is supporting other groups in other ways

9 Groups have been successful in being awarded funding:

Hednesford Lions:

Ongoing project to maintain the gardens of Hednesford War Memorial and implement regular seasonal planting scheme

Hednesford Town Supporters Association

Purchase of pitch upkeep equipment to maintain quality of playing surface. This will make the pitch more accessible for more groups to use it.

Friends of Hednesford

Material to support the local history photographic project currently being undertaken alongside Hednesford Library Volunteers

Material for dressing the town for events: Flags / Christmas decorations new & replace / Daffodil Bulbs to complete the Daffodil project along Rugeley Road

Cannock Chase Shed

Part of UK Men's Shed Charity Group. Woodworking mend, make or repair. Have done Make & Repair projects for community groups and schools within Hednesford. Wish to purchase a Radial Drill for group

Chase Parkinsons Support Group

Provide support and encouragement for people living with Parkinsons and their carers. Grant for funding weekly exercise classes with specialist neuro physio therapist

Our Lady of Lourdes Church

To set up a social / lunch group for people who are socially isolated. Groups identified during covid. Alongside this will be social events and professional community support organisations such as Citizens Advice

Hednesford in Partnership

Grant for administration fees, annual fees and subscriptions to support voluntary led initiatives

Fireworks

Supporting children and young people with their mental and emotional wellbeing through music, mindfulness and sign language. Grant to go towards producing their pantomime this Christmas

Miners Memorial Group

Maintain area around the memorial and raised beds along Market Street. Drought resistant plants, pea gravel, perennial plants, woodchip, tools.

Grant this year of £5000 plus a further £6000 has been identified from Community Grants carried over from last year and confirmed by our RFO. Another round of invitations to apply will be made available. Details to follow

Remembrance Events

HTC have offered to help St Peter's Church with the production of Remembrance Event Orders of Service. I have advised that this could form part of a project for community grant award for next year with some community involvement.

Risk Assessments / Road Closures are all in place. The event on 13 November will be as per NOTICE

Community Officer, Matthew Johnson thanked Councillor Jagger for her help and assistance in pulling the remembrance event together. Community Officer, Matthew Johnson informed that he will pull all aspects of the organisation of this event into one working document for future use

Christmas Lights Switch On – in partnership with HiP

Community Officer, Matthew Johnson is supporting Hednesford in Partnership by organising the road closures for Market Street and the delivery of the Christmas Tree and checking of lights

Hednesford Town Council Object Inventory

The objects held by Hednesford Town Council need to be inventoried, checked for Title, either loan or gifted. Provenance of objects needs to be established. Any storage or conservation issues need to be addressed. Community Officer, Matthew Johnson, is planning to bring in some free professional assistance through Staffordshire Archives & Heritage through their Museum Development Officer. Community Officer, Matthew Johnson advised that HTC are not establishing a Museum at HTC but that this will be a project for Volunteers to work alongside officers

AED Relocation from Coop site

Working alongside Community Heartbeat to resolve this. They need to speak to Mid Counties Coop to formally de-register the AED device and have it relocated to Acorns Florist who have agreed to accept it (negotiated by Cllr Woodhead)

Additional Bleed Kit (Daniel Baird Foundation via Councillor Roden)

Community Officer, Matthew Johnson, has liaised with AED Donate who administer the AED device outside PGCC. They are happy for the Bleed Kit held by Cllr Roden to be installed inside the existing AED cabinet. The Cabinet will be labelled accordingly. Community Officer, Matthew Johnson will work with Cllr Roden to get this installed

Community Engagement Event

To be held on Friday 25 November at PGCC. 11am – 3pm. Arranged through Andy Smith, Community Support Officer for CCDC. Community support organisations, NHS, etc.

Citizen's Advice

To recommence the face-to-face service on Wednesdays either 9.30 - 12.30 session or a 10 -2pm. Start proposed on 16th November **TO BE CONFIRMED**

Wayfarer Project

In partnership with SCC, CCDC and Together Active.

Funds were received to engage the community in Hednesford North to design and create a series of rest stops, with an aim to increase physical activity levels and stamina etc of residents through a community engagement project which will result in them co-designing a series of rest stops from Brindley health car park – up to Marquis Drive and the Toc H trail (People with mobility issues)

Volunteer Policy

Community Officer, Matthew Johnson has completed a draft policy for approval by Councillors and enquired whether Cllrs would like sight of the copy before it goes to full council at a later date. All Cllrs present indicated that they would

Cllr Woodhead stated that it was good to go back to the groups to help improve their grant applications and that it was important for all Cllrs to promote the grant to all the groups that they are aware of

Cllr Jones queried why Hednesford in Partnership had been awarded a grant when they have already had 2 substantial awards from HTC for financial support

Cllr Jagger advised that they had not thought of this. Cllr Mawle enquired about the criteria for applying and was informed that the criteria does not state that the grant cannot be awarded for running costs. Council was reassured and asked that in future that they are mindful of groups who have had other funding from HTC

A discussion followed about the testing and use of the Christmas lights and that they were inherited from the previous administration and are degrading. There is a need to be mindful of factoring in costs into the budget if they need to be replaced. Some of the lampposts have rust on them and cannot be used for displaying Christmas lights. It may seem that there are less lights this year due to this issue. Other locations need to be explored to see if the lights/displays can be used elsewhere.

Cllr Woodhead welcomed the return of CAB and queried how the success was going to be measured. Cllr Jones informed that there is no previous written agreement to refer to. Cllr Woodhead stressed the need that CAB are aware of what the £5,000

grant awarded to them is to be used for and wanted to know how they will report back.

Cllr Harrison informed that the conversation had already been had with CAB and that CAB are committed to reporting but that a formal agreement does need putting into place. It was agreed that this needs to be done in partnership with the FPOC committee and to include Chair of PGCC, Chief Officer and Community Officer. Cllr Jones informs that there will already be agreements in place with CAB and CCDC and that HTC can use those as a template

Cllr Roden wished it to be noted that Cannock Town Centre Christmas Light Switch on is the same date as the November Farmers and Craft Market and enquired if the Hednesford market date should be moved. Cllr Roden was informed that the dates for the market have been set since December 2021 and that the market is daytime and the Cannock Light Switch on after the Hednesford market has closed

8. Permanent Location of Platinum Jubilee Beacon

Previously agenda item 9

Community Officer, Matthew Johnson informed that HTC have had the beacon since June and that it would be good to make some use of it. He informed that Friends of Hednesford Park have approached HTC about using the beacon as a planting feature as part of Cannock Chase Can and Community Officer, Matthew Johnson invited suggestions from council about what should be done with the beacon

Cllr Harborow started that wherever it was placed it would need to be made sure that it was not vulnerable to theft and would probably need to be fabricated to prevent this

A discussion took place about the locations of other beacons in other districts

Cllr Woodhead agreed that it would need to be secure, but the question was where it should go and that HTC need to be mindful of land ownership issues and maintenance costs. It would still be an asset of HTC so would HTC still be responsible for maintenance even if it was not outside HTC

A further discussion followed about where to locate the HTC Platinum Jubilee Beacon, whether it should be passed back to CCDC or gifted out of council responsibility. It was agreed that it should be passed to the Regeneration and Communities Committee To decide and for a motion to be brought to next council meeting

9. Verbal Update from Committee Chairs

Previously agenda item 7

Cllr Mawle requested that only items not already discussed to be updated

Regeneration and Community – Cllr Woodhead

Cllr Woodhead updated that the Wayfinding project had been passed to Community Officer, Matthew Johnson, to take on

Cllr Woodhead updated that it is anticipated that a copy of Hednesford Life will be out prior to Christmas. Cllr Jagger has agreed to support Officers in the delivery of this

Pye Green Community Centre – Cllr Harrison

Cllr Harrison paid respects to the sad news of the passing of a much-loved member of the community while attending an evening event at PGCC. Condolences have been sent to the family and the whole of HTC send their thoughts to family and friends at this sad time

Cllr Harrison updated on the minutes from the PGCC Committee the previous week including the roof repair in the IT room, Fire Risk Assessment, quotes for the cooling system, the creation of a marketing subcommittee, the delay in purchasing new glass washer and fridges

Cllr Harrison updated on the Heritage Event on 22nd January 2023 together with the historical items register

Cllr Mawle asked what the other organisations involved in the Heritage event would be doing. Cllr Harrison informed they are lending items into the event that are pertinent to the local area

Cllr Jones stated that he was disappointed that energy was being put into a community event when there is still no PGCC maintenance plan or marketing plan. Cllr Jones felt the Heritage event is a distraction from more pressing matters

Cllr Harborow stated that it was nice to be able to use the community centre for what it was intended for and the event is a good way to bring the community back into the centre

Cllr Jagger stated that it is a good idea as Pye Green gets little attention and it is a way of giving identity to the community as they have lots to share but queried how this falls in line with the terms of reference of the PGCC Committee. Cllr Jagger further stated that it should not just be the PGCC Committees responsibility to address the deficit but that she did agree with Cllr Jones that other more important actions have not yet been addressed

Cllr Mawle informed that Cllr Harrison has only been Chair of PGCC Committee for 6 months and has already achieved so much and is working incredibly hard despite so many things going wrong with the centre. Cllr Mawle stated that everyone has to accept that the plan to have the lease of PGCC taken over did not happen and that everyone needs to try and move forward as best as they can and that it isn't helpful

pointing out things that haven't happened while pushing everything onto one person isn't fair. The priority is to get PGCC onto a steady footing

Cllr Mawle informed that the event will help bring people back into the building and repair relationships and requested that Cllrs support the event or move out of the way

Cllr Roden informed that previous events, like the Heritage Event, saw 100's of people attend

Cllr Woodhead said he was concerned about the use of Officer time but fully supports community engagement and is very interested to see how it goes

Cllr Harrison summarised that lots has been going on behind the scenes and a lot of the issues have been inherited from the previous administration and that HTC needs to work with a community that has disengaged with HTC. A community centre needs to be a community centre and that the community wants to see something back

Cllr Jagger reiterated that it is all about the terms of reference of the PGCC Committee

Cllr Harrison informs that she has never seen them

Cllr Mawle stated that the terms of reference need to be identified and shared

Finance, Personal & Operations – Cllr Jagger

Cllr Jagger updated that HTC are currently in the process of recruiting a Deputy Chief Officer with Responsible Finance

Cllr Jagger also formally requested all committees consider their budgets and spending in preparation for the precept

Cllr Jones stressed that all committees are accountable to HTC

10. Q2 Finance Report

Information was provided from HTC Interim RFO

Cllr Jones updated that overall HTC are in a slightly better position than previously thought

11. AGAR Return Completed Audit

Annual Governance Accountability Return was accepted and will be published on HTC webpage

Thanks was expressed to Cllr Jones and Sandie Morris for overseeing the AGAR in the absence of a RFO at HTC

12. Planning – Items for ratification

Planning Items were ratified

13. EICR Report

Cllr Harrison gave an update on the EICR report as discussed in the PGCC Committee meeting and asked for the report to be accepted onto council records

Proposed: Cllr Harrison

Seconded: Cllr Dunnett

For: 8

Against: 0

Cllr Woodhead asked if there are any items that are of lower priority that can be left for the time being

Cllr Jones re-stated that it the result of a legacy inherited, and a maintenance plan would be beneficial

Cllr Mawle suggested that it may be beneficial to bring a company in to complete the maintenance plan due to Officer time restrictions and also due to the technical nature of the work being required

Cllr Jagger agreed informing that maintenance is separate to the running of HTC and cannot be an Officers job or fall to one person to complete

Cllr Harrison stated that HTC have been informed that all works need to be completed but until we can stop fire fighting it is near impossible to draw up the maintenance plan

Cllr Woodhead informed he is supportive of a firm coming in and drawing up the maintenance plan

14. Motion from Councillor Harborow

A motion was brought by Cllr Harborow to review the Mayor's statement regarding answering questions from the public on 4th October 2022

A lengthy discussion took place about the importance of community engagement and that is important for HTC and Cllrs to be seen as approachable and accountable and accessible, while at the same time demonstrating a robust response to online abuse.

Proposing to change the way things are done is suggesting a new policy which is the remit of Officers and not Councillors. A debate followed about who had the authority to issue a written response and did all Cllrs need to be involved with this, while it was agreed that HTC could not be accused of not engaging. All agreed that online abuse is not acceptable and will not be tolerated

Cllr Mawle advised that his use of the word 'all' was misleading and that he has not stuck to this at the last meeting or this meeting and informed that the wording will be changed to reflect this. It will be changed to answering short and informal comments. Anything requiring a more detailed response will still be in writing

Cllr Mawle further commented that the public have plenty of other ways to contact HTC and the Cllrs and that the motion was brought as it was felt that it would be the best thing for the time being

Discussion continued that in allowing Cllr Harborow's motion will take up too much of Officer time and create operational issues. Other councils no longer broadcast live meetings and HTC have no obligation to do so and that free speech should not mean abuse

Cllr Harborow acknowledged the change of the word 'all' was reassuring and asked that the motion be reviewed in 6 months' time while stating it was important to let the public know that they can come to the meetings in person and ask questions

Cllr Mawle informed that the public have always been able to come to council meetings and participate in the Public agenda item

Cllr Woodhead stated it was unfortunate that a handful of individuals felt it appropriate to make personal comments and would encourage those with opposing views of strong opinions to stand for council at the next election

Proposed: Cllr Harborow

Seconded: Cllr Roden

For: 2

Against: 5

Abstain: 1

Cllr Roden informed that he as stepping down from the FPOCs Committee and was advised by Cllr Mawle to submit this in writing

Meeting concluded at 9:25pm

