

Holme Valley Parish Council

Draft MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY, 14 December 2020 at 20:00 hrs on the zoom Online platform

Those present:

Chairman: Cllr R Hogley

Councillors: G Barker, K Bellamy, T Bellamy M Blacka, D Carré, P Colling, J Dalton, P Dixon, T W Dixon, S East, B Feeney, D Firth, D Gould, C Greaves, Di Hall, B Lockley, M Pogson, J Roberts, S Sheard.

Clerk: Mrs L Bennett. Deputy Clerk, Rich McGill also present.

Public Question Time

There were two members of the public present who represented the Holmfirth Tech and spoke under item 153.

2021 140 Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 amended by the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

The meeting was being recorded via the Zoom technology.

2021 141 To accept apologies for absence

Cllrs Davies, Brook and Sweeney gave apologies which were accepted.

2021 142 To receive Members' personal and disclosable pecuniary interests in items on the agenda and to consider any written requests for new DPI dispensations

None received.

2021 143 To receive any Officer interests in items on the agenda.

None received.

2021 144 To consider whether items on the agenda should be discussed in private session

No items to be held in private session.

2021 145 To confirm the minutes of the previous Full Council meeting, held on 9 November 2020 numbered 2021 113 to 2021 139 inclusive.

Resolved; to approve these minutes.

2021 146 To approve the Committee Minutes under delegated powers

2021 147 Resolved to note the Minutes of The Planning Committee meeting on 2 November 2020 numbered 2010 71 to 2021 87 incl.

2021 148 Resolved to approve the Minutes of The Extraordinary meeting of the Community Assets Support Committee on 2 November 2020 numbered 2021 50 to 2021 57 incl.

2021 149 Resolved to approve the minutes of the Climate Emergency Committee on 16 November

Holme Valley Parish Council

2020 numbered 2021 32 to 2021 41 incl

- 2021 150** **Resolved** to approve the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Service Provision Committee on 23 November 2020 numbered 2021 23 to 2021 32 incl
With the addition to Item **2021 30** “that Cllr Roberts warned against the planting of living trees without due regard to how big they might grow”
- 2021 151** **Resolved** to approve the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting on 23 November 2020 numbered 2021 88 to 105incl.
- 2021 152** **Resolved** to approve the minutes of the Finance and Management Committee meeting on 30 November 2020 numbered 2021 43 to 2020 57 incl.
- 2021 153** **To consider the future relationship between the Holmfirth Tech, a Community Benefit Society, who have now been declared a Community Anchor by Kirklees Council.**
Standing orders were suspended to allow an open discussion between the representatives of the Tech and the councillors.

The Holmfirth Tech, acting as a Community Anchor is seen as a ‘hub’ for local groups, gathering information about where there are gaps in local services and developing initiatives to meet that need. They will not be running these services themselves but rather providing rooms where the specialists such as the third sector leaders can run these groups. The Tech already works with Kirklees Council and was keen to work more closely with the Parish Council to address community needs.

The representatives talked about the negative impact that Covid-19 had on its own ability to gain income from room hire. The Tech needs to expand the use of the building during daytime to build on the 17% usage which existed before Covid arrived. The Tech is also still looking to raise another £107,500 to complete the purchase of the Tech from Kirklees College which has to be paid by May 2022 in order to secure the building permanently. They also need £200,000 to refurbish the building and bring it up to standard.

Some Councillors raised concerns about the Parish Council being asked to fill these gaps in funding and the representatives described various measures whereby they intended to raise money and keep the historic building as a resource for the Valley. The Holmfirth Tech Ltd is a Community Benefit Society, a charitable body and the Directors are similar to Trustees so are unpaid and do not profit from it.

The Community Anchor will continue to build on the services it offered local residents through the Covid-19 crisis and has identified need in the areas of employment and mental health services. Often these gaps are where, in former years, Kirklees would have provided services but these have now been withdrawn due to funding shortages.

One councillor spoke from his experience at the Community Anchor in the Colne Valley explaining how it had become evident during the Covid crisis that these local hubs were best placed to identify need and work towards getting new services started.

The contributors were thanked for coming to the meeting and the Chairman said that the Council looked forward to working alongside the Tech to further this venture in providing services that the community needed.

Referrals from the Climate Emergency committee

Holme Valley Parish Council

2021 154 To consider a partnership between the Holme Valley Climate Action Partnership and the Holme Valley Parish Council.

The Holme Valley Climate Action Partnership was formed between a number of active, local organisations who wanted to further the expressed aims of the Holme Valley Parish Council when it declared a Climate Emergency on 25 March 2019. The HVCAP is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with powers to employ staff, secure funding and support climate action activities in the Holme Valley. The Memorandum of Understanding (attached to the agenda) describes how the Parish Council and the Holme Valley Climate Action Partnership can work together to achieve the aims set out in the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Resolved to agree to sign the Memorandum of Understanding.

Referrals from the Finance and Management Committee

2021 155 To approve the payment Schedule for December to date.

Resolved to approve the Payment Schedule Ki. For December 2020

2021 156 Request for a virement of £1000 for a grant of £2000 to be made to the Holmfirth Arts Festival (where Finance and Management grants are usually capped at £1000)

Resolved to defer this item to the next meeting where it could be established which budget could be used for the virement.

Referrals from The Service Provision Committee

2021 157 Request for a virement of £1000 so that the Holme Valley Transport Scheme could be paid £2000 this year rather than the usual amount of £1000.

Resolved that this £1000 could be vired from the budget for the Valley Minibuses since that budget is due to be underspent by £6000. This underspend is due to the buses being cancelled during the Covid Lockdown and it is very likely that this patient focused service was called on more often as a result.

Referrals from the Community Assets Support Committee

2021 158 The Community Assets Support Committee request that the Council approve a virement of £2000 from the budget for the lettable space at Garside Buildings to the Community Grants Budget to enable a grant of £2000 to be made to the Hepworth Band Room.

The Chairman of C.A.S.C. informed the Council that there had been a recent application from the Hepworth band room for a £2000 grant towards the programme of refurbishment and the CASC committee wished to support this before the end of January 2021 so that the group could achieve match funding. This initiative was seen favourably as the band room is well used and the Band is of national importance.

Resolved to approve the virement of £2000 from Garside Buildings budget heading to the Community Assets budget.

Holme Valley Parish Council

2021 159 **The Council considered the Budget plan for 2021/22.**

The RFO had provided a detailed report on the suggested changes to the budget from last year and the issues to be considered.

- 1) There would be underspends on this year's budget because of the effect of Covid-19 on services
- 2) More items were being moved to earmarked reserves rather than being kept in the budget as they were uncertain to be needed.
- 3) It was currently predicted that there would be £70,000 of surplus but this might well reduce to £50,000 as virements were made toward the end of this year.
- 4) It could be seen from the budget plan that some committees planned to keep their expenditure the same whereas Community Assets Committee had planned ahead through the Expressions of Interest process so knew they needed to increase their budget to be able to support the range of community assets seeking support.
- 5) The Service Provision Committee had moved allowances for Defibrillators and CCTV into earmarked reserves and increased the budget for Youth Provision.
- 6) Finance and Management were asking to double the amount for community grants from £10,000 to £20,000 to acknowledge the passing of time since the last ceiling was established and the effect of Covid which rendered so many local services, events, and projects to be suffering from loss of income.

The Finance and Management Committee had asked the RFO to produce three plans for the 2021/22 budget showing how there could be reductions in the Band D charge for residents according to how much of the reserves were to be drawn down into the budget. If £18,000 of reserves were drawn down, then the Band D charge would stay the same as for the last two years. If more money was taken from reserves such as £50,000 then the band D charge could be reduced by £5 per household and consequently the precept would reduce by £50,000.

Resolved to accept the budget plan for option A where the Band D charge stayed the same as in 2020-21 and £18,000 was taken from reserves to fund the uplift in the budgets of various committees.

2021 160 Resolved that the charge for a band D property in 2021/22 would be kept the same as last year.

2021 161 Strategic Priorities for HVPC; a paper prepared by the Chairman
This item was deferred to the next meeting as this meeting was running over time.

2021 162 To consider raising the amount of expenditure which the Clerk can authorise in agreement with a committee chairman from £500 to £1000. (Financial Regulations 4.1)

The Clerk requested that there was an increase in the amount the Clerk is delegated to authorise outside committee approval. The challenges of new work undertaken by the Climate Emergency Coordinator rendered the current limit to be prohibitive. Any spending is always within budget but often the infrequent meetings of the committee (four per year) were not enough to allow the work to be carried out promptly.

Holme Valley Parish Council

There were differing opinions expressed and some councillors felt this limit was still appropriate and was there to prevent profligate use of Council money.

Resolved to support the change in the Financial Regulations 4.1 so that the Clerk is delegated to authorise spending up to £1000 in conjunction with the Chairman of any committee and that the spending will be reported back to the next relevant committee meeting.

- 2021 163 To consider whether Council would approve a change to the process of authorisation of payments whereby the signatures of two councillors could be gained by email during the Covid restrictions.**

The Clerk asked that she and the RFO were not expected to travel to Cllr's houses to gain signatures while the weather could be inclement and more importantly, visiting houses presented a risk to health during the COVID pandemic. All the attachments to any invoice could be shared electronically and the Clerk / RFO could answer any questions from Councillors accordingly (as was the case with the current physical signing process). There were mixed views on this approach and some councillors wished to maintain the existing system.

Resolved to approve electronic authorisation of payments where an acceptable substitute for hand-written signatures could be substituted in the current restrictions of working from home.

Policy Updates

- 2021 164 To note the Risk assessment and Health and Safety measures that had been considered for staff at the Civic Hall.**

Noted. These formats will be shared with Library staff at the Honley Library when that asset comes under the ownership of the Council. There is no expectation that the Clerk will assess the risks to health and safety of staff working from home. The forms will be on view in the office.

- 2021 165 Councillor Attendance Log.**

Resolved to approve this format. The Log will be published on the Council website and will be updated monthly. Councillors are required to contact the clerks if they notice inaccuracies that need amending.

- 2021 166 Financial support for Church Clocks.**

It remains the opinion of the Clerk, supported by Advice notes from NALC that the Council is prevented from funding churches in any way. The Finance and Management Committee has suggested that the Council write to higher authorities to resolve this matter.

Resolved that a letter would be written to the Local MP asking for the issue to be addressed and also to write to the Minister for Housing and Communities in a similar vein. Cllr Pogson to work with the Clerk to address these actions.

- 2021 167 Past Chairman's jewels.**

Holme Valley Parish Council

There was a motion proposed that the past chairman's jewel be purchased for last year's Chairman at the cost of £312.89, as this was the expectation the previous post holder would have had, but that any future expectation of an item to mark a term of office should be ceased.

Resolved to approve this motion.

2021 168 **Council Noted** the expression of thanks and a report from Upperthong Village Hall for a £5000 grant from CASC towards the renewal of windows in this listed building.

2021 169 **Chairman's report was brief owing to the late hour.**

The Chairman wished to be reassured that all councillors had been circulated with information regarding the grants available from One Community and she encouraged councillors to share that information with their local community.

One councillor asked that the Full Council meetings have shorter agendas in future as the meetings always carried on beyond the advised maximum of two hours.

22.20 PM **Close of Meeting.**

.....
Chairman

Holme Valley Parish Council