

# LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

## MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 2022/09/26 – 28

Minutes of Meeting of the Council

held at Watney Hall, 3 Hill Street, Lydney on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at 7.00 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors T Saunders (Mayor - Chair), S Cave, J Greenwood, A Harley, C Harris, S Holmes, R Holmes, R Kemsley, P Macklin and E Taylor (three vacancies)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr S Holley - Town Clerk (Minutes)  
No members of the public were present

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### Mayor's Welcome and Housekeeping

The Mayor gave the usual opening 'housekeeping' announcements.

The Council was invited to stand in silence for a Minute to mark the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The Council was invited to remaining standing for a further Minute to mark the passing of former Mayor John Bartle (2004/05).

### 1. **APOLOGIES**

(i) Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Leach and Taylor.

(ii) Councillors Greenwood and Vaughan were absent.

(iii) The Mayor reminded the Council that three members had resigned since the last meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> July and requested that the Minutes record the Council's thanks, especially to former Councillor Steve Stockham, who had served on the Council for the longest of the three and done a valuable job as Chair of the Planning and Highways Committee.

### 2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

(i) Councillor S Holmes declared an interest in Agenda Item 10.3 – Assets of Community Value on that she was a member of the management committee for Lydney Community Centre

(ii) For openness, Councillor S Holmes also declared an interest in Agenda Item 11 – with regard to the first payment to Lydney Community Centre under its new Service Level Agreement (SLA). Also because Councillor S Holmes was a member of the centre's management committee.

(iii) For openness, Councillor R Holmes declared an interest in the same item with regard to the first payment to Lydney Town Hall under its new SLA. Councillor R Holmes had been the Lead member for the Council negotiating the SLA concerned.

(iv) For openness, Councillor T Saunders also declared an interest in the same first payment to Lydney Town Hall. Councillor Saunders was the Council's appointed member on the Town Hall Committee.

(v) The Town Clerk advised that none of these declarations gave rise to a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest; however, the members concerned voluntarily undertook to abstain from the voting.

### 3. **OPEN FORUM**

No members of public were present.

### 4. **MINUTES**

Meeting of the Council held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Unanimously APPROVED.

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## 5. REPORTS

(i) The Council noted a written report from County Councillor Alan Preest which covered the County Council's arrangements following the death of the Queen, the Tour of Britain cycle race and various duties Councillor Preest had undertaken, or was due to undertake, in his capacity as Chairman of the County Council. A supplementary report provided an update on the Gloucestershire Homes for Ukraine scheme.

(ii) The Mayor thanked staff and Councillors for their help and support during the August Recess; despite it being the holiday season there had still been plenty to do and she and the Deputy Mayor had been in the Office more than ever.

(iii) The Mayor informed the Council that the free Swimming Pool Sessions paid for by the Civic Fund had been well received.

(iv) The Mayor advised that a number of Councillors and staff had received training on the Pear Mapping software at the end of July. This should facilitate work on a number of projects and queries.

**Action – Town Clerk**

## 6. FINANCIAL MATTERS/RFO REPORT

### 6.1 Payments

In order to accommodate the official period of Public Mourning to mark the passing of the Queen, the meeting of the Council scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> September had been postponed to the present date. However, the usual run of payments had to be made so (following informal consultation with Councillors, giving the opportunity for questions) the payments had been made by the Clerk. The same payments were now presented for ratification, which was Proposed by Councillor C Harris, Seconded by Councillor S Holmes and unanimously APPROVED.

### 6.2 Income and Expenditure Report/Balance Sheet/Bank Reconciliations/Debit Card Report

NOTED.

**Action – Town Clerk**

### 6.3 Bank Mandate - Signatories

To resolve to amend the bank mandate, authorising the Senior Administration Officer and the new Assistant Clerk to join the Town Clerk as alternative full power signatories (any one Officer with any two named Councillors, in the usual way)

**Action – Town Clerk**

### 6.4 Budget-Setting for 2023/24

The Council NOTED a report from the Town Clerk / RFO setting out the process for Budget-Setting. The Committees would be consulted on potential projects and aspirations for inclusion.

## 7. ARRANGEMENTS FOLLOWING THE PASSING OF HM QUEEN ELIZABETH II

(i) The Mayor reported on the efforts to implement 'Operation London Bridge' the national arrangements to mark the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. It had not helped that an important source of advice had changed the advice on timings on the day of the Queen's passing and changed them back the following day. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor had taken a Book of Condolence to Rodley House, the Springs Centre, the Victoria Centre and Lydney Community Centre to allow residents to sign it. A question now for the Council was, where to store the

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Books of Condolence (including a printout of the online version on the Council's website). It was unanimously AGREED they should be kept at the Town Hall.  
(ii) The Council also AGREED in principle to plant a commemorative tree and a suitable bench (possibly circular), ideally close to the Platinum Jubilee Tree in Bathurst Park. Formal approved would be subject to a future report with more detail and with costs.

**Action by the Town Clerk and Head Groundsman**

## 8. **NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND 'LYDNEY FORWARD / REGENERATION PROJECTS AND REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PLAN**

- (i) The Council received a report from Councillor A Harley regarding capacity to continue some of these projects following the resignation of three Councillors. If appropriate, to consider appointing key members to fill such vacancies.
- (ii) Councillor Harley stressed that not everything needed to be done at once; for the Town Centre Improvement Projects it was achievement enough to have identified particular areas in need of attention.
- (iii) The Riverside Walk Project had also achieved a lot, but there remained difficulty with the section adjacent to the new Lidl store. It appeared physically possible to install a 2 metre path between the store boundary and the Lyd, but ownership of the land remained uncertain and Pear Mapping might help clear this up.
- (iv) Councillor Harley was content to remain Lead Councillor for the Neighbourhood Development Plan, for which the next step was to get the Steering Group together, with two or three Councillors and two or three stakeholders. Place Studio would provide a briefing. Councillors C Harris, P Macklin and T Saunders volunteered. Mr Steve Stockham would be a community stakeholder. Councillor Harley would issue invitations.
- (v) Councillors Harris and Kemsley were content to remain on the Town Improvement Project, but agreed that the Riverside project should be given priority.
- (vi) Councillor Harley reminded the Council that other vacancies remained following the three resignations, but they could wait until the outcome of the By-Election. She added that the Council still needed to identify its priority projects for the next nine months.
- (vii) Councillor Harley was thanked for her hard work on Regeneration.

## 9. **LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION**

- (i) The Council was requested to consider a response to an invitation from Forest of Dean District Council to arrange a presentation on its arrangements for the Local Plan. The Mayor had asked Mr Tim Gwilliam to attend the next meeting of the Council (*Clerk's note: subsequently re-arranged*).
- (ii) Members of the Council's Planning Committee would meet informally on 5<sup>th</sup> October to discuss Town Improvement ideas and a response to the Local Plan.

**Action by Councillor Harley**

## 10. **ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE**

- 10.1 The Council NOTED the expected purchase of the Co-op for conversion to accommodate the two Doctor's Surgeries (which were expected to relocate from their present sites). In view of the Council's previous nomination of the Co-op as an Asset of Community Value, it now had the opportunity to exercise its Community Right to Bid for it. However, in view of the Council's nomination

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saying that one reason for nominating the building as an asset of community value was to allow it to be used to re-home the doctors' surgeries it was unanimously AGREED that the Council would not propose its own scheme to the same end and therefore would not exercise its right to delay the sale or submit a bid.

- 10.2 In view of the above, the Council was requested to consider whether to investigate the possibility of a Community Right to Bid for either of the existing Doctor's Surgeries (also nominated by the Council for the Register of Assets of Community Interest) – possibly for conversion to a town centre Council Office. It was AGREED to obtain the building plans for both surgeries from the Planning Portal in order to consider them for suitability at a future meeting. The Council acknowledged that some form of Business Plan would be necessary if such development was to be considered desirable.
- 10.3 The Council was requested to consider nominating Lydney Community Centre as an Asset of Community Value in view of the lease from the County Council having only a few years to run. Proposed by Councillor R Holmes, Seconded by Councillor S Cave and APPROVED with the following Record of Voting: For – 7, Against – 0, Abstention – 1, Absent/Apologies – 4, Vacancies – 3  
*(Note: Councillor S Holmes abstained from this vote, having declared an interest)*  
**Action by the Town Clerk**

## 11. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS WITH LYDNEY COMMUNITY CENTRE AND LYDNEY TOWN HALL

(i) The Council received the first six monthly reports from Lydney Community Centre and Lydney Town Hall, covering the first six months of 2022/23 in respect of free or discounted use by community organisations, with a view to approving the first payment of £2,500 to each organisation in accordance with their respective Service Level Agreements.

(ii) The report from Lydney Community Centre was ACCEPTED and the first payments AGREED following a Proposal by Councillor Peter Macklin, Seconded by Councillor C Harris, with the following Record of Voting: For – 7, Against – 0, Abstention – 1, Absent/Apologies – 4, Vacancies – 3

*(Note: Councillor S Holmes abstained from this vote, having declared an interest)*

(iii) The report from Lydney Town Hall was ACCEPTED and the first payments AGREED following a Proposal by Councillor Peter Macklin, Seconded by Councillor C Harris, with the following Record of Voting: For – 7, Against – 0, Abstention – 1, Absent/Apologies – 4, Vacancies – 3

*(Note: Councillor T Saunders abstained from this vote, having declared an interest)*

## 12. REPORT ON THE COUNCIL'S PLAY EQUIPMENT

The expected report from Kompan had been received less than an hour before the start of the meeting, so it was simply NOTED and DEFERRED for the next meeting. It would also be referred to Bathurst Park Recreation Trust (there were no proposals for Lydney Recreation Trust).

## 13. EVENTS

To consider any updates or proposals for Council events (as appropriate): -

(i) Report on the Community Event held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2022. Councillor Saunders provided a report on this event in the Park, for which the Council had provided a donation of £1,000. It was noted with regret that a number of

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organisations had pulled out at the last moment, for various reasons. The final cost was being worked out but had been very low given the increased income from stalls and Robert Hitchins sponsorship of £3,500

(ii) Proposal for Youth / Arts activity from Camphill Trust and Sportily

The Mayor presented a proposal for youth / art work by Sportily and the Camphill Trust at a cost not exceeding £2,600, to be met from a combination of the Youth and Arts budgets. The events would be free to users. Proposed by Councillor S Cave, Seconded by Councillor R Kemsley and unanimously AGREED, subject to the activities being prominent badged as a Council event.

(iii) Other Council / Trust events

Work on the Remembrance Parade and the Christmas Lights Parade was proceeding.

14. **CIVIC REGALIA**

- 14.1 Alteration of 'Mayoress' Badge – The Council was requested to consider a proposal from the Mayor to commission an alteration to the badge currently for the 'Mayoress' to read 'Mayor's Consort'. (Note: 'Mayoress' is a term now considered out-of-date and sexist, being originally intended for the wife of an always male Mayor. It does not signify a female Mayor). In view of the cost exceeding £900 the Council decided to DEFER consideration to allow investigation into the cost of buying a new replacement badge instead of converting the existing one.

**Action by the Town Clerk**

- 14.2 Town Crier's Uniform / Regalia – Following a Proposal from Councillor S Holmes, Seconded by Councillor A Harley, an estimate of £700 to £1,000 to commission a Town Crier's uniform / regalia from a local provider was unanimously APPROVED.

**Action by the Mayor**

15. **ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE REMEMBRANCE PARADE AND SERVICE 2022**

- (i) The Council unanimously AGREED to support the usual request from the Lydney Branch of the Royal British Legion, that the Council repeat its previous support in kind for the buffet lunch to follow the Parade and Service.  
(ii) The Council noted that the Legion had said the above request may be supplemented by an additional request for funds to purchase additional large poppies to supplement or replace those placed on lampposts in previous years. No further information had been provided in time for the meeting, so this was DEFERRED.

16. **GIGACLEAR - REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE WORK AT PRIMROSE HILL AND ADJACENT TO THE COUNCIL OFFICES**

The Council made NO OBJECTION to a request from Gigaclear to undertake work at Primrose Hill and adjacent to the Council Offices, to allow connection of broadband services to poles and boxes on Council land. Plans had been provided and advice that the work would have minimal impact, and only on the periphery of Council land.

**Action by the Town Clerk**

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17. **ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND EXTERNAL BODIES**

17.1 The Council RATIFIED the informal decision not to pay for Poll Cards for the By-Election(s) on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, following consultation during the period of national public mourning, due to the urgency in providing an answer to the Elections Team.

17.2 The Council was requested to consider appoint members to positions on various Committees, Working Groups etc. urgently required to be filled in advance of the By-Election(s):

(i) Chair of the Planning and Highways Committee  
Councillor C Harris was unanimously elected.

(ii) Council appointee to Lydney Grammar School Foundation and other vacancies left following the resignation of three Councillors

It was AGREED these should remain vacant until after the By-election(s) in order to accommodate new members.

18. **COMMITTEE BUSINESS REFERRED TO THE COUNCIL AND REPORTS FROM THE CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES, SUB COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES AND FROM LEAD COUNCILLORS**

Councillor S Cave reported damage to the Skatepark fence.

19. **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

The Town Clerk reported on a near-drowning in The Cut (Pidcock's Canal). The canal itself was owned and maintained by Glatfelter Lydney in Church Road, but Lydney Recreation Trust owned the adjoining land with a public footpath. In view of the risk to the public the Town Clerk (in his capacity as Trust Secretary) was investigating the cost of warning signs and noted members suggestions for an appropriately firm warning.

20. **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

21. **DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

7pm on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022. The Council AGREED that meetings should return to the Council Offices.

**CLOSED SESSION**

22. **MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

The Council resolved to continue in 'Closed Session' under the provisions of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as the following business to be conducted was considered to be of a confidential nature.

23. **STAFF MATTERS**

Confidential Minutes only.

The meeting closed at 10.30 pm

Chair .....

Date .....