



**Chipping Norton Town Council**  
The Guildhall, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 5NJ

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Minutes of a meeting of the **Community Committee** held online by ZOOM video conferencing system on **Wednesday 3rd March 2021 at 7.15pm**

The following members were present:

Cllr Coleman  
Cllr Graves  
Cllr Mazower  
Cllr Poole (left the meeting at 8.50pm)

Also in attendance:

Cllr Butterworth  
Steve Milton, Locum Clerk  
Kay Linnington, Deputy Town Clerk  
Sonia Murgia, Accounts Clerk

**1. Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** that, subject to the inclusion of Cllr Graves in the list of attendees, the minutes of the last meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

**2. Public Participation**

There were no questions or statements.

**3. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Tuckwell.

**4. Declaration of interests**

There were no declarations.

**5. Chipping Norton Sports Awards**

Graham Beacham provided an update on arrangements for the Chipping Norton Sports Awards 2021. The organisers were now considering dates in June and he confirmed the Cricket Club had offered the ground. He recommended avoiding school holidays and clashes with other events, including youth cricket fixtures. Members thanked Graham for his work on the awards.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) that a budget of £1,000 be made available to fund the Sports Awards, this is twice the normal amount to recognise the impact of COVID-19 on local clubs and sports groups.
- (2) that the event be held on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June (with the following Sunday as a reserve date) at the Cricket Club;
- (3) that additional family activities be added to the programme to encourage a larger attendance; and
- (4) that a working party comprising Cllrs Coleman and Poole together with Graham Beacham be

set up to agree the final format and programme.

## 6. Annual Town Meeting

The Committee noted that due to COVID-19 restrictions the annual town meeting in April would have to be convened using ZOOM. The Mayor outlined her ideas for a three-part meeting:

- **Part 1:** 'Thank You' to the local front line services for their work during the pandemic possibly with local heroes' awards.
- **Part 2:** Community showcase – featuring short presentations from local groups explaining their plans, post-pandemic. This could be a short 3 minute video or Zoom presentation.
- **Part 3:** 'Any Questions' for the Town Council.

Keith, from Chippy News, offered to design and publish a half page promotional advertisement. This would need to be agreed by the print deadline of 12<sup>th</sup> March. He also offered to use his database of community groups to send an email seeking participation in the event and calling for nominations for the COVID-19 local heroes. The Chair agreed to liaise with members of the Committee to agree the copy for Keith.

**RESOLVED:** that the kind offer of the Chippy News be accepted and the Chair be authorised to agree the final wording of the advertisement following consultation with members of the committee.

## 7. Grants Policy

The committee considered the draft grants policy (previously circulated). Members felt that grants should fall within the remit of this committee. The Chair suggested holding back a sum of money, as a contingency should grants be submitted after the traditional deadline. The Mayor suggested apportioning some of the grants pot for a participatory budgeting event, where local groups would submit bids and an audience would vote to decide the winner of the funds. It was considered this would work well with young people and could be organised by the youth worker once appointed. Members questioned the priority criteria applied in paragraph 3.5 (h)

### RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL

- (1) that the scheme of delegation be amended to place responsibility for grants policy and administration with the Communities Committee;
- (2) that paragraph 3.5 (h) be removed from the policy; and
- (3) that the words 'and this will be applied on a case-by-case basis' be added to paragraph 7.1

## 8. Cemetery Charges

The Committee considered the schedule of fees and charges (previously circulated). The Chair reported that the fees in Chipping Norton were a lot lower than the other Oxfordshire market towns and she proposed increasing the charges to bring them into line. The Locum Clerk explained that cemetery charges were notoriously inconsistent across the sector and suggested taking an average figure from the local towns and applying increases over 3 years to reach the median.

**RECOMMENDED TO FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** – that a review of cemetery charges be undertaken with a view to bringing them into line with comparable market towns in the region.

## 9. Committee Work Programme

The Committee noted the work plan and considered the following matters:

- (1) **ROSPA Playgrounds Inspections** The Committee noted that the works authorised at the last meeting were now in train.

**(2) Town Hall**

The Committee considered the schedule of Town Hall charges (previously circulated). It was noted that the hall would be reopening from the end of April and the Deputy Clerk had already received enquiries.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) that in order to help local groups to recover from the impact of COVID-19, no increase be applied to the Town Hall fees and charges in 2021-22; and
- (2) further consideration be given to the promotion and marketing of the Town Hall once the new Clerk is in post.

**(3) Dog Bins**

The Chair reported a request for an additional dog bin on Back Alley. Members noted that there were already bins located at end of the alley.

**RESOLVED:** that the request be declined and attention be drawn to the existing bins in this area of town.

**(4) Community Liaison**

The Committee discussed ways to deepen community involvement. They noted plans for the annual town meeting and suggestions about the use of participatory budgeting for grants. It was agreed to review the outcome of these proposals before reviewing this matter further.

**(5) Cemetery**

Members noted that arrangements were now agreed for the community clean-up on 10<sup>th</sup> April. Members agreed to use the annual town meeting to try and increase the number of litterpicking volunteers.

(In accordance with Standing Orders the Committee agreed to extend the meeting by 20 minutes)

**(6) Pool Meadow**

**RESOLVED:** that a site inspection be held and a report submitted to a future meeting of this committee. The inspection committee to comprise the Chair, the Mayor and the Grounds Maintenance Operative.

**(7) Community Noticeboards**

The Deputy Clerk reported on quotes received, unfortunately they were not all prepared on exactly the same basis and therefore comparison was not straightforward.

**RESOLVED:** that the Locum Clerk and Deputy Clerk be delegated to accept the quote in consultation with the Chair.

**(8) Benches**

The Mayor reported that a pole washing system and petrol driven pressure washer had now been purchased and delivered. The grounds maintenance operative would be able to clean the benches in the Market Square but they would need to be professionally oiled or painted. A quote of £88 per bench had been received.

**RESOLVED:** that the quote for the painting of the benches be accepted to be funded from contingencies.

**(9) Defibrillators**

The Chair reported an offer from the Lions Club of a donation of £2,000 towards the cost of

maintaining the town defibrillators. The committee was saddened to hear that the Lions Club was discontinuing its operations in the town and paid tribute to the work of the group over many years. The Mayor reported that the grounds maintenance operative was familiar with the defibrillators but this would need to be added to his job description and be included in a future job evaluation to ensure it was reflected in his remuneration.

**RESOLVED:** that the offer of funding from the Lions Club be accepted and responsibility for the defibrillators be accepted by the Council.

**(10) Middle Row Lighting**

The Mayor reported that everything was now in place to move forward with the installation of lights in Middle Row. The committee noted that indemnity forms were being collected from the premises involved in the project.

**RESOLVED:** that Blachere Illumination be instructed to install the lights without further delay.

**10. Date of next Meeting – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.45pm

Signed as a correct record:

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Chair

Date: