



Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council Meeting
Tuesday 24th January 2017
Sutton Coldfield Town Hall
7pm

Present

Cllrs Hodivala, Pears, Allan, Allen, Bennett, Cairns, Griffin, Hewett, Horrocks, Jenkins, Long, Mackey, Mosson, Okello, Parry, Passey, Perks, Pocock, Puri, K Ward, S Ward and Wood.

In Attendance

Olive O’Sullivan – Acting Town Clerk, Janet Eustace – LGRC, Mary Watkins – Finance Assistant.

There was 1 member of the press, 42 members of the public and 1 officer from Compass Support present.

There were several questions and suggestions around the Sutton Coldfield Library service. Jenny Wilkinson asked if the Town Council would commit funds to top up the service or invest in additional facilities to increase the library’s use. Several members of the public spoke in support of the continuation of a Library service located in the Town Centre.

Rebecca Clarke asked the Town Council to consider and support Neighborhood Planning to identify the best sites for play areas. A resident of Warden Road handed in a petition against the proposed play area at Mossy Bank and stated that residents had not been consulted. Another resident raised concerns around local parking issues and said that that a play area may be against a covenant that is in place on the Spinney and Mossy Bank. Alex Hurley asked why Park Court had been dismissed as a possible play area location and Ray Beech (Boldmere Neighbourhood Forum) stated that both Fir Tree Grove and Park Court could benefit from CCTV as they were vulnerable to Anti-Social Behaviour.

The Acting Town Clerk asked that people didn’t lose sight of the Town Council’s desire to do something positive for the community. It was confirmed that four sites were initially considered and the sites at Park Court and Fir Tree Close were deemed unsuitable. The Amenities Committee had resolved that initial consultation should take place on the remaining two sites, Mossy Bank and Boldmere Gate. This work would be undertaken by BCC and would include a public meeting at a local location where residents can view potential plans and registers their views, leafleting properties adjacent to the proposed sites with a questionnaire and a survey on the Town Council website. Once this has been completed, a summary report will be presented to the Amenities Committee and a full feasibility study will be commissioned on the preferred option.

Other questions and comments included the Town Council’s involvement on Brassington Avenue development, a request for Town Council support to SCART to ensure the Town Hall is sustainable, a thank you from Frederick Perks for adopting a more Dyslexia friendly style and a request from Alan Gardener that Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council commits to Britain in Bloom to improve our environment, encourage wildlife and engage with the community.

138 Apologies For Absence

The Clerk had receive apologies from Cllrs Ives and Ellis.

Resolved to accept the apologies received.



139 Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Parry, Puri and Pocock declared non pecuniary interests in the Library Lobby group and Boldmere Futures.

140 Mayors Announcements

The Mayor updated the group on her recent engagements and reported that she would be presenting an award at the Sutton Coldfield Sports Awards on Friday. The Mayor congratulated Cllr Bennett on winning an award at the 2017 Writers Guild Awards.

141 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Due to the confidential nature of the business of item 157 under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s3, it is likely a motion will be proposed to exclude members of the public and press during discussion of this item.

Resolved to exclude members of the public and press during item 157.

142 Minutes of the Last Meeting

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council held on Tuesday 13th December 2016 (previously circulated) be signed as a true record of the meeting with one small amendment to item 120 - 'Wildwood Neighbourhood Forum' was amended to 'Wylde Green Neighbourhood Forum'.

143 Matters Arising

Non reported.

144 Falcon Lodge Community Centre

Lisa Martinali, Director of Compass Support gave a presentation on the plans for Falcon Lodge and provided a 'Plan on a Page' ([attached](#)). She explained that Compass provides support services for many parts of the community including but not limited to; children, families, older adults and people seeking employment advice. They plan to take on the management of the Community Centre for the next 2 years and emphasized the need for community engagement and putting people at the heart of the process.

145 Minutes of Committees

Council to receive the minutes and approve the recommendations from the committees.

- a) **Amenities, Leisure and Community Services** held on 20th December 2016.
- b) **Amenities, Leisure and Community Services** held on 17th January 2017.
- c) **Planning and Highways** held on 11 January 2017.



There was some discussion around the plays areas (Amenities, Leisure and Community Services held on 17th January 2017). Cllr Long noted that Bob Churn had not ruled out Park Court as a location and that the community needed to have an opportunity to put their opinions forward. Cllr Bennett agreed that all four locations should have been fully debated by the Amenities Committee. Cllr Horrocks asked that the Committee decisions be respected. The Mayor asked that the findings from the play area investigations be reported to Full Council, to ensure openness and transparency. **Resolved** to accept the recommendations of the Committees.

146 Reports and Updates from Working Groups

a) Town Hall

Cllr S Ward reported that the meeting with Birmingham City Council (BCC) had been delayed again but he would continue to attempt to arrange.

b) Library

This item will be covered under Item 151.

d) Socially Responsible Community

Cllrs Cairns and Parry gave an update on the work that is still being carried out. A draft Social Inclusion Framework and Good Practice Model should be ready by the end of January. Work has taken place around the Volunteer Support Website and there were lots of events and projects planned; Social Inclusion Workshop, Myth Busting Packs, 'Spare an Hour' campaign and work with Schools around mental health.

e) Youth Engagement

Cllr Horrocks reported that there are plans for a Youth Engagement Workshop at the end of March 2017. The Workshop aims to bring different user groups together and address several areas including Social Media and Mental Health.

147 Disability Strategy

Cllr Cairns presented a Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council Disability Strategy.

Resolved to adopt the Royal Sutton Coldfield Disability Strategy.

148 Autism Service Consultation

Cllr Passey asked that the Council approve a survey to be undertaken to see what services are needed to support Autism groups in the area. The survey will contain four options and will be run by the Town Council for four weeks.

Resolved that the Town Council approved an online survey for Autism services.

149 Community Engagement Strategy

Resolved that Cllrs Horrocks, Long, Parry, Passey, Pocock and Wood will work with the Acting Town Clerk on a Community Engagement Strategy for the Town Council.

150 Notice of Motion

Cllr Perks asked the Council to sign up to Britain in Bloom and make Royal Sutton Coldfield an award winning Town. By engaging with Britain in Bloom we can use our spaces more effectively, nurture friendly competition and bring communities together. Cllr Wood thought this would be an excellent way to bring Civic pride through community engagement.

Resolved that this Council registers with The Horticultural Society's Britain in Bloom. RHS Britain in Bloom is a nationwide community gardening campaign to transform cities, towns and villages. It will allow community action to transform spaces. This motion will be fully inclusive to all residents of Sutton Coldfield and will cover all wards. The Council will encourage schools, local business, community groups and residents to set up their own groups to participate. The community has many gardening experts that the council can call upon to provide guidance when required by the local groups.

151 Notice of Motion

Cllr Parry urged the Council to set aside 50% of the unallocated funds as a safety net to secure a future Central library provision. It was noted that the consultation period on Library services in Sutton Coldfield is due to close on Friday and that Birmingham City Council (BCC) had already clearly outlined their plans to close the Town Centre library. Cllr Puri said this would be an investment in the Town Council's Pillars; Bright Future, Healthy and Happier and Proud to be Royal Sutton Coldfield. He stated that this motion was not asking for the Town Council to run or fully fund the service but to ensure that the Library was not forced to close whilst other viable options were investigated.

Cllr K Ward asked for an amendment to the Motion to include Cllrs Pears, Mackey and S Ward to meet with the Deputy Leader of BCC and relevant officers in the soonest mutually convenient time to enable a long term solution to be finalised. As BCC own the Library Service he wanted to open a dialogue with BCC to ensure the best deal for Royal Sutton Coldfield residents.

Cllr Pocock agreed with the Motion and amendment but asked for cross party representation at the negotiations.

Cllr Hewett thanked the Library Lobby for all their hard work and suggested that there should also be community representation at the negotiations with BCC.

Resolved that this Council has previously expressed support for the retention of a modernized library service within Sutton Coldfield town centre. Neither a location nor funding have yet been secured. In a recent conversation between Birmingham City Council and Cllr Ewan Mackey it was stated that £360,000 was required to keep Sutton Town Centre Library open. This Council therefore resolves to consider the allocation of up to £150,000 from the unallocated portion of its 2016/17 budget, to use if necessary to support the continued provision of a library service in the town centre after 1 April 2017 and for Cllrs Pears, Mackey and S Ward meet with the Deputy Leader of Birmingham City Council and relevant officers in the soonest mutually convenient time to enable a long-term solution to be finalised."

152 Accounts for Payment

Resolved to appoint Cllrs S Ward and D Allan to approve the online payments.



153 Use of Town Clerk's Delegated Powers

The Acting Town Clerk advised that she had authorised a donation to the Royal British Legion of £50, as it is customary for Town Councils to make a small donation alongside the payment for the Remembrance Sunday wreath.

20:37pm - Cllr Pears proposed that in accordance with Standing Orders the meeting be extended up to a period of one hour.

Resolved that the meeting be extended for a further hour.

154 Amendment to Standing Orders

The Acting Town Clerk asked Council to consider amending the Standing Orders, Section 1g to: "Amendments to motions that appear on the published agenda must be submitted to the Clerk by 5pm on the day of the meeting. The Clerk will forward the amendments to the Chairman and ensure that hard copies of the amendments are on the meeting table by 6:30pm."

The Acting Town Clerk stated that this would facilitate good discussion of the meeting as Cllrs would have the opportunity to read and digest amendments prior to the meeting commencing. The Acting Town Clerk confirmed that any new amendments could still be put forward in the meeting as a result of discussion/debate on the motion.

Resolved that the amendment to Standing Order 1g) lay on the table and be considered for approved at the next Town Council Meeting.

Resolved that the 'Office of Government Commerce' be amended to read 'Crown Commercial Service' under section 18 of the Standing Orders.

155 Appointment of Internal Auditors

The Acting Town Clerk advised that Finance and General Purposes Committee had been delegated to appoint the Internal Auditors but their next meeting was not scheduled until Feb 2017. She asked the Town Council to consider approving the appointment of Auditing Solutions Ltd so that they could start the process of an audit in February to adhere to statutory deadlines.

Resolved to appoint Auditing Solutions Ltd as Internal Auditors for 2016/17

156 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 21st February 2017.

157 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The following agenda items, subject to agenda item 141 were heard with the Public and Press excluded.

a) Staff in confidence – Update on recruitment.

Cllr Pocock left the meeting at 8:45pm.

Cllr Pears reported on the staffing issues.



Resolved that Ms O’Sullivan, currently on secondment from Birmingham City Council, should be appointed as permanent Deputy Clerk to the Council with effect from 1 April 2017 and that her starting salary should be scale point 56. Council noted that Ms O’Sullivan was already a member of the West Midlands Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

Resolved that Ms O’Sullivan be designated to be a member of the LGPS with effect from 1 April 2017.

Resolved that Ms O’Sullivan’s previous service with a public authority to count as continuous service.

Ms O’Sullivan re-joined the meeting and was congratulated on her appointment.

Council received proposals for the creation of a new post of Assistant Clerk on the range SP37 – 41. It was explained that a possible candidate with parish council experience and a CiLCA qualification had been identified.

Council **resolved** that this new post be created; that the candidate should be interviewed by Cllr Pears and the Deputy Clerk and that, subject to the agreement of the other members of the staffing panel, an appointment be made without further reference to Council.

Cllr Pocock re-joined the meeting at 8:55pm.

Meeting closed at 8:55pm.