



mirfield
town council

Minutes of Mirfield Town Council Meeting

Held on: Tuesday 21st January 2020 at 7.30pm

Held at: St Mary's Community Centre, Church Lane, Mirfield

Councillors Present:

M Bolt (Chairman), J Nottingham, S Naisbett, K Taylor, M Brown, J Roberts, M Connell, P Tolson, K Taylor, V Lees-Hamilton, S Guy

In Attendance:

Clerk: Lisa Staggs

Public: Members Kirklees Community Hub, Kirklees Officers, Revd Mirfield Team Parish

Press: None

MTC171/2019 Chairman's Welcome and Remarks:

The Chairman Cllr Bolt welcomed Cllrs and visitors. It was confirmed there was no intention to record the meeting. Cllr Bolt reports of a memorial event on Sunday 2nd February to remember those killed in the 1974 M62 coach bombing by the IRA, to take place westbound at Hartshead Moor Services. He also states that the issues with the planning process need addressing. Clerk to write to 4 other Town & Parish councils and ask if they have the same issues as MTC and contact YLCA to see if other councils also have issues.

MTC172/2019 Public Question Time:

None

MTC173/2019 Apologies For Absence

Councillors to send apologies and reasons for absence to the clerk or chairman for approval

Cllrs: Cllr Hirst, Cllr Benson

Cllrs sent apologies & it was resolved the absences were accepted

Cllrs Hinchliffe, Ibberson & Burton were absent but did not send apologies to the Chairman or Clerk

MTC174/2019 Declaration of Interest

Councillors to declare an interest, if applicable to any item on the agenda including any pecuniary interests whether they have been declared under the Council's Code of Conduct or Members Register of Pecuniary Interests.

Cllr Bolt declared an other interest MTC181(3i) property close by but not an adjoining property

Cllr Brown declared an other interest in Mirfield Allotments

Cllr Tolson declared an other interest MTC178(5) Member Mirfield Team Parish

Cllr Kath Taylor declared a pecuniary interest in Heavy Woollen Planning & Kirklees Licensing

MTC175/2019

Confirmation of Minutes

To approve minutes of the ordinary meeting of 7th January 2020 as a true and correct record including payments of **£250**. Minutes were circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read. Clerk states there is an amendment for the date of the next meeting. Cllr Naisbett **Proposed** once the amendment was made the minutes were a true & correct record Cllr Connell **Seconded Vote: All in favour**

MTC176/2019

Matters Arising From The Minutes:

To receive information on the following ongoing issues and decide further action where necessary.

1. To receive a report from Cllr Naisbett on Christmas Light Switch On and agree any action necessary – A report had been circulated by Cllr Naisbett prior to the meeting. Cllr Naisbett reports that the contractor has stated that there are numerous bulbs that need replacing. Cllr Naisbett to liaise with contractor for a quotation to discuss costs at a later meeting.

MTC177/2019

Internal Matters:

To receive information on the following items and decide any action where necessary.

1. To receive the decision of the Kirklees Monitoring Officer following a Code of Conduct complaint and decide any action/recommendations and sanctions necessary – It was resolved to take this item after MTC174.
7.35pm Cllr Guy left the room. The Clerk confirms that MTC adopted Kirklees Code of Conduct in May 2019 and as such has to comply with sanctions set by Kirklees following a complaint. She reads out the complaint made to Kirklees Monitoring Officer by Cllr Guy regarding Cllr Benson and the findings/decision and sanctions recommended by the Kirklees Monitoring Officer (See appendix below). Kirklees Monitoring Officer recommendations; the apology could be sent via a third party, Cllr Kath Taylor stated she disagreed and it should come direct from Cllr Benson, Cllrs were all in agreement. Cllr Lees-Hamilton stated that she was disappointed that Kirklees standards hadn't taken a stronger view as the comments made by Cllr Benson could have impacted on Cllr Guy's livelihood and RBL membership. Cllrs are in agreement with Cllr Lees-Hamilton. Cllr Nottingham **Proposed** MTC accepts the findings of Kirklees Monitoring Officer and the sanctions suggested imposed Cllr Connell **Seconded Vote: All in favour** Cllr Lees-Hamilton **Proposed** the following wording from Cllr Benson: Cllr S Benson: I apologise unreservedly for my inaccurate comments made about Cllr Guy. I fully accept the findings of the decision makers. I will publicise this apology on my own social media feeds & other communications in my control. I understand and acknowledge that Kirklees Council and Mirfield Town Council will also publicise the decision, findings and apology. Signed S Benson. Cllr Naisbett **Seconded Vote: All in favour**. Cllr Lees-Hamilton **Proposed** the Clerk send a letter with the sanctions and motions to Cllr Benson, delivered by Cllr Kath Taylor's hand. The apology to be sent to Cllr Guy and a copy to the Clerk with full apology on social media no later than 4th February. As confirmed by the Clerk, failure to do so will result in a further breach of the Code of Conduct, which shall be reported to the Kirklees Monitoring Officer Cllr Roberts **Seconded**

Vote: All in favour.

Cllr Connell who is Chair of the local Conservative branch, stated that he did not agree with the panels comments that this may have been a by-product of issues that had arisen within MTC following the defection of Cllr Benson from the Conservative Party to the Green Party. He stated that the branch bore no ill will to Cllr Benson. 7.50pm Cllr Guy returned.

MTC178/2019

Finance:

To approve the following accounts for payment:

JANUARY		
Payee	Description	Amount
Clerk L Staggs	January salary	£ 849.98
HMRC	January PAYE	£ 322.26
Clerk L Staggs	Nest Pension January	£ 81.06
Clerk L Staggs	Home Working Allowance	£ 18.00
St Mary's	January Room Hire	£ 42.00
Just Gardens	January Maintenance	£ 40.00
EJ Events	VE75 (Armistice Committee)	£ 2,000.00
First Medical Solutions	First Aid Christmas Lights	£ 120.00
TOTAL		£ 3473.30

Cllr Naisbett **Proposed** items 1-8 payment en block Cllr Guy **Seconded Vote: All in favour**

9. To receive a bank reconciliation to 31/12/19 – **Noted**

10. To receive a spend/income comparison with the adopted budget – **Noted**

MTC179/2019

Community:

To receive an update/discuss/note on the following items.

1. To receive a proposal for a Mirfield Town Council Youth Forum, discuss and agree a course of action – A member of Mirfield Team Parish is present and is the proposer of the Youth Forum. She is a former teacher and advisor to schools. She states that there is an issue with low level social behaviour and wants to engage young people as a solution to the problem. This involves engaging schools and pupils to promote democracy and understand structures, giving young people greater ownership of their community with MTC commissioning them to do projects. Cllrs are concerned that 60% of pupils are from out of area and would prefer this to be for Mirfield children, so a constitution would have to be agreed. Cllr Lees-Hamilton states that there is a council in Lancashire that has a youth council and a youth mayor. MTP member states that the youth forum could shadow the Mayor on events, with all Wards engaging with their local Primary Schools but joining together with the Secondary Schools. Cllrs are concerned that this is just not available to elite pupils or prefects and that pupils from all backgrounds and diversities be included to have fewer disengaged children, leading to anti-social behaviour. Cllr Bolt **Proposed** MTC establishes a Youth Council on the model suggested by member MTP and Clerk able to use her delegated powers to arrange room hire and costs involved Cllr Lees-Hamilton **Seconded Vote: All in favour** Cllrs agree so set a timescale of early Summer. Cllr Bolt **Proposed** Cllr Lees-Hamilton as link Councillor for the project Cllr Lees-Hamilton **Seconded**

Vote: All in favour

2. To receive an update on Mirfield Community Hub, discuss and agree a course of action – Mirfield Community Hub Coordinator is present. She gives Cllrs a power point presentation. In 2016 schools were losing money and families were struggling, with teachers taking on more roles than they should. Schools asked Kirklees to step in. Kirklees to fund a community service but network with partners with a shared vision. 7 Mirfield schools within the pyramid involved in this. The hub to provide knowledge, skills & resources, to be flexible in its approach, to support new groups and volunteers with a community lead insight involving inclusion and diversity. They have noticed ,with online questionnaires in schools a gap in youth activity. Locala can help with insight on triggers with early intervention. She reports that Mirfield Salvation Army have offered the site to run a Friday night group. This Start up group could meet with a Youth Council. She states it is an ideal venue with volunteers, open space, sofas & Wi-Fi. She states that her contract has been extended to September but with no permanent contract this is a challenge. In terms of support from MTC, she is just looking for MTC to know what the hub is doing and how it can be involved in a Youth Council. Cllrs offer support of mock interviews and possible mentoring. Safer Kirklees officers are present and state that there is a Community/Environment Support Manager based at Dewsbury Town Hall.

8.52pm Member Mirfield Team Parish, Community Hub Coordinator and Safer Kirklees Officers leave.

MTC180/2019

Correspondence

To receive the following new items of correspondence and decide any action where necessary.

1. NALC Study Tour 2020/21 (For Information) – **Noted**
2. YLCA South Pennine Branch Meeting (For Information) – **Noted**
3. YLCA Spring Training Conference (For Information) – **Noted**
4. NALC Chief Executive Bulletin (For Information) – **Noted**
5. YLCA White Rose Update (For Information) – **Noted**

MTC181/2019

Planning

1. To consider planning applications received from Kirklees Council.
2019/93796 – **Noted**
2019/94072 – **Noted**
2019/94106 – **Noted**
2019/94054 – **Noted**
2020/90034 – **Noted**
2020/90027 – **Noted**
2019/93954 – **Noted**
2. To consider planning decision notifications from Kirklees Council:
No Comments/Noted
3. To consider potential controversial/controversial applications:
 - i. **2019/90756/91971/93367/93202/93526** Land at Slipper Lane – Cllr Bolt reports that an application to discharge conditions has been submitted. Cllr Lees-Hamilton **Proposed** MTC request this application has planning committee approval Cllr Guy **Seconded**
Vote: All in favour. Cllr Lees-Hamilton **Proposed** MTC request Road Safety Plans for these development including junctions redesign Stocksbank Rd & Church Lane and an update on remediation plans for Taylor Hall Quarry site Cllr Guy **Seconded**

Vote: All in favour

MTC182/2019 Matters for Report and Information

Members wishing to raise items under this heading should consult the Chairman prior to the meeting.

Cllr Bolt reports that the webcast failed at planning committee. He also reported a peer review of Kirklees planning but no invitation for MTC or Ward Cllrs to take part.

Clerk states there will be an Environment meeting of full council to discuss the Mirfield Riverside Project on Thursday 6th February.

MTC183/2019 The Date Of The Next Town Council Meeting:

Date of next meeting **Tuesday 4th February 2020**

Time Meeting Closed.....**8.58pm**.....

APPENDIX:

Code of Conduct Complaint Reference 2018-049 – Cllr Sean Guy

The Kirklees Code of Conduct was adopted by MTC on 14th May 2019 MTC10/2019 (4)

Section 14 d MTC Standing Orders states

Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.

Although MTC are responsible to Kirklees standards, having adopted their Code of Conduct, and all investigations carried out by Kirklees, it is then referred back to MTC to implement sanctions. A member does not have to agree with the findings but has to comply with sanctions imposed. If he/she does not this in itself is a breach of the Code of Conduct.

Under those circumstances, it would be appropriate for the TC to consider making a referral to the Monitoring Officer for breach of the Code of Conduct

He or she should be aware of the fact that Kirklees will publish the decision notice on their website and that MTC would be able to do the same on the TC website.

Code of Conduct Complaint Reference 2018-049 – Cllr Sean Guy

With regards to sanctions, Kirklees suggest that the following should be considered:

- i) an apology from Cllr Benson, in writing or in person. If necessary, this can be made via a third party, e.g. the Chair of the Town Council.
- ii) an admission by Cllr Benson that the comments may not have been true