

Minutes of the ordinary Council meeting 24 January 2022 held at the Civic Hall, Uppermill.

Present: Cllr. Beeley (Chair) P. Byrne (VC)

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| S. Al- Hamdani | J. Batty |
| M. Bingley | H. Bishop |
| J. Curley | K. Dawson |
| L. Dawson | R. Knotts |
| L. Lancaster | B. Lord |
| P. Lord | K. Phillips |
| M. Scholes | G. Sheldon |
| D. Simpson | M. Woodvine |

Press and Public:

A. Belmore K. Bennett

Revd. Mike Donmall opened the meeting with prayers followed by a welcome by the Chairman

3228. To receive Public Questions

Question from Jayne Gibson

Does the Parish Council support Saddleworth as a whole parish, becoming a 20mph area throughout, and if so, how does the Council go about requesting this at Borough Council Level?

Jayne Gibson was unable to attend and requested the question be deferred to the February meeting. This was agreed.

3229. To receive apologies for absence

Cllr. J. Hudson and G. Hulme.

3230. To receive Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Sheldon had declared a non-pecuniary interest with regard to a planning application at the Planning Committee of 10th January 2022.

3231. To approve and confirm as a correct record the Draft Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday 22ND November 2021

Agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman at the meeting.

3232. To note the minutes of the Communications Meeting held on 17th November 2021

Noted

3233. To note the minutes of the Finance Meeting held on 24th November 2021

Noted

3234. To note the Minutes of the Strategic Planning Meeting held on 25th November 2021

Noted

3234. To note the Minutes of the Traffic & Transport Meeting held on 1st December 2021

Noted

3235. To note the Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 6th December 2021

Noted

3236. To note the Minutes of the Assets Management Meeting held on 13th December 2021

Cllr. Lancaster commented that he was disappointed with the decision to 'off load' the phone boxes to community groups. Cllr. Byrne said that the cost of maintaining the boxes was on average £200.00 per box plus and Saddleworth Parish Council no longer had the resources to maintain them.

Cllr. M. Scholes asked if a decision had been reached on the area around and included Pickhill Pond. Cllr. Sheldon informed him that he would approach the Uppermill Community Group to see if they would be happy to look after it.

Noted

3237. To note the Minutes of the Finance Meeting held on 15th December 2021

Noted

3238. To note the Minutes of the Strategic Planning Meeting held on 16th December 2021

Noted

3239. To note the Minutes of the Assets Management Meeting held on 6th January 2022 – amended to include Cllr. P. Lord in attendance

Noted **with amendment**

3240. To note the Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 10th January 2022

Noted

3241. To Note the Minutes of the Environment Meeting held on 12th January 2022

Noted

3242. To note the Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 17th January 2022

Noted.

3243. Disabled Access –Greenfield Railway Station

Following on from the Government's recent proposals to downgrade the Northern Powerhouse Rail from Manchester to Leeds and whilst accepting Saddleworth Parish Council doesn't have a strategic role in providing transport structure; it does have a duty of care to lobby for accessibility for all to Greenfield Railway Station.

The present station built in the mid-19th Century is impossible to access by wheelchair users for return journeys from Manchester to Huddersfield. It is also a barrier for access and egress for parents with prams or those with walking difficulties.

Therefore, Saddleworth Parish Council calls on Mayor Burnham, Debbie Abrahams MP and Oldham Council to use their best endeavours to bring forward the provision of lifts to both platforms with a covered link bridge to facilitate access for wheelchair users, parents with prams and passengers with walking difficulties.

This proposal is necessary in order to have a 21st Century railway station fit for use by all, as required by and in line with the clauses of the 2010 Equality Act.

A modern rail network stopping at Greenfield must facilitate access for all at the earliest opportunity.

Moved by: Cllr. John Battye, Seconded by Cllr. Kathryn Phillips

Cllr. Battye said that as Greenfield Station was the only railway station left in Oldham Borough, then it should meet current legislation with regard to accessibility.

Cllr. Dawson said that this discussion first started 27 years ago and there had still been no action from relative agencies. Cllr. Sheldon said that as there is a plan for electrification it was an opportunity to look at other issues at the station. The Chairman pointed out that the electrification programme had been put back and this issue needed resolving long before then.

The motion was carried unanimously

3244. Motion - Community Governance

Proposed by Cllr M. Woodvine and seconded by Cllr J. Battye

As the Local Government Boundary Commission for England has suggested, in its final recommendations to Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, it could be time for the Civil Parish of Saddleworth to commission a Community Governance Review - to alter its electoral arrangements, especially as it has existed for almost fifty years.

Doing this - as stated in the guidance published by the Ministry for Local Government, Housing and Communities - can be based on the size, population or boundaries of a Civil Parish. The aim of a Community Governance Review, in this instance, would be for effectiveness and convenience, community cohesion and a sense of place that is "*positive for people and distinctiveness*" but also to reflect identities and interests.

As such, and in order to achieve the above, this Parish Council will consult the principal authority on the practicalities and particulars of conducting a Community Governance Review with the intention to increase efficiency by:

- Reviewing the number of Parish Wards and rationalising their number of electors
- Reducing the number of Parish Councillors

These alterations to the electoral arrangements, if achieved by May 2023, will come into effect at the next set of Parish elections.

Cllr. Woodvine introduced the motion. Cllr. Battye said that the motion was not prescriptive but covered the need for further discussion.

Cllr Sam Al Hamdani said that any goals to reduce the number of councillors or wards would pre-empt any results of a review and recommended removal of this reference.

Cllr. Lancaster said that if the number of councillors were to be reduced perhaps this would encourage more competition.

Cllr. Curley said that the change of demographics in Saddleworth needed to be considered and what is the most efficient way to run a Parish Council and how to attract more councillors. Cllr. Knotts asked if there was a need to review. Cllr. Beeley said that a reduction in the number of councillors would, in essence, mean a reduction in volunteers within the community as parish councillors are all unpaid volunteers.

Cllr. Woodvine proposed that legal advice be sought from the principal authority and to amend the motion to exclude the section referring to reduction in wards and councillors.

The vote was 17 Agreed 1 abstention.

3245. Budget 2022/2023

To consider the budget and increase in the precept for 2022/2023 as recommended to council from the Finance Committee.

Cllr. Woodvine asked if the precept could be raised further to include a budget for the Whit Band Contest. Cllr. S. Al-Hamdani stated that the request was too late to be included in this budget, but to present for consideration for the budget of 2023/2024

The vote was 17 Accepted 1 Objection

3246. Oldham Council Resolution – Future Proofing our Properties from Flooding.

The motion was proposed by Oldham Borough Council and had been endorsed by the Environment Committee. Full Council agreed to the endorsement and requested the Clerk to write to the Chief Executive of Oldham Council to inform of the endorsement.

3247. CIA 2000 Quotation for Installation of new CCTV, Council Offices

To note the installation of a replacement CCTV system

Noted

3248. CIA Fire & Security Quotation for replacement of Fire and Security

Noted.

3249. Queens Platinum Jubilee

To consider events to celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee.

Cllr. Woodvine said that a beacon will be in place and funded from the borough's budget.

Cllr. Beeley suggested a tree to be planted in each village.

Cllr. Curley suggested a time capsule to be placed under each tree.

Cllr. Sheldon put forward that the parish hold an event to be held at the Saddleworth Civic Hall, possible 1950's theme. Cllr. S. Al-Hamdani suggested that any resident born on the day of accession -6 February 1952, be guests of honour at any event.

It was agreed that the clerk would schedule a meeting of the Civic Functions Committee to progress.

24. Armed Forces Covenant

For information - that at the February Full Council Meeting the Armed Forces Covenant would be signed before the Full Council meeting. All Councillors are invited to attend. Please note the event will be held at 7.00pm.

25. To approve the accounts for Payment for November 2021 (See attached)

Income: £4785.93

Expenditure: £17267.36

26. To approve the accounts for payment for December 2021 (See attached)

Income £4,118.08

Expenditure £19,322.60

Accepted and signed off at the meeting by the chair.

Date and time of the next meeting: 28th February 2022

Rescheduled Start Time 7.00pm