

MINUTES of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday
4th January 2022, at 7.30 pm – in the The Ballroom,
Bentham Town Hall.

Present: Cllrs Bridgeman (Chair), Adams, Burton, Faraday, Hill, Marshall, Stannard, Taylor and Wills. DCllrs Brockbank and Handley. The Clerk Christine Downey. Five members of the public.

- 265 Apologies from members unable to attend: -
 265.1 To Note Apologies for absence given in advance of the meeting.
Cllr Swales. Cllr Ireton.
 265.2 To consider acceptance of reasons for absence.
None.
- 266 Declaration of interests: -
 266.1 To Note Declarations of Interest not already declared under members Code of Conduct or members register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.
None.
 266.2 To approve dispensation requests.
None.
- 267 To Receive Comment & Concerns: Public Participation – to hear matters raised by members of the public or Cllrs with an interest (that are allowed to speak) either on agenda items or for future consideration.
 (NB: for non-agenda items Members of the Council are not permitted to respond, except to ask questions for the purposes of clarification).
- Shirley Brown asked if events are still going ahead as normal at the Town Hall. It was reported that they are, and that each user group has a responsibility to follow current government guidance.
- Shirley also asked for an update regarding the provision of a microphone at future council meetings and it was reported that a quote for a microphone is awaited and will be considered in due course.
- 268 To Confirm the Minutes of the previous meeting of 20th December 2021. (Paper 2021/229)
RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of 20th December 2021 are agreed and be signed.
- 269 To consider what measures need to be in place to ensure that the Council keeps running smoothly and does not incur liabilities even if meetings cannot be held and to agree a way forward.
RESOLVED: That in the event of the Council not being allowed to hold meetings, or being unable to hold meetings,
That the council empowers the clerk/RFO to do anything expedient and necessary to ensure the continuous business of the council, and to deal with mandatory undertakings in order to prevent the authority from incurring liability during the period that delegation is applicable, and
That the council agrees that the officer will consult with the chairman and/or vice-chairman in the decision making but that the council acknowledges that it is the officer that is the decision maker, and
That responses to planning applications are covered by the powers of delegation to the clerk/RFO during the period that the delegation is applicable, and
That accounts for payment will be dealt with fortnightly. The clerk will circulate copies of all invoices, together with a payment schedule, to all councillors for examination. The online payments will then be set up and approved in the normal way.

- 270 To receive the Police Report and allow members to ask questions for information – if any.
Received.
- 271 To receive a report from the Public Safety Officer and allow members to ask questions for information – if any.
No report.
- 272 To receive the Clerks Report (for information only). (Paper 2021/230)
Received.
- 273 To receive reports from Councillor and Deputies (for information only) – if any.
Deputy Handley reported that he has a small balance of Ward Members Grant still available and that organisations can apply for a contribution towards projects.
- 274 Planning: -
- 274.1 To consider and comment upon New Planning Applications: -
- 274.1.1 2021/23497/FUL. Reinstatement of the original shop door to provide separate access to the existing domestic accommodation over the shop and change of use of the first-floor staff room to domestic accommodation. 38 Main Street, High Bentham, Lancaster, LA2 7HN.
RESOLVED: That the council has no comments on this application.
- 274.1.2 2021/23498/LBC. Formation of surface water drainage channel at base of all external walls of main building, and creation of additional air vents 3 no. Friends Meeting House, Burton Road, Low Bentham, Lancaster, LA2 7ET.
RESOLVED: That the council has no comments on this application.
- 274.1.3 2021/23532/FUL. Erection of 47 no, residential dwellings and associated infrastructure. Land to North of Springfield Crescent, High Bentham, Lancaster.

It was reported by Deputy Brockbank that if the planning officer recommends the application for approval that the application will probably be called in for consideration by the planning committee.

RESOLVED: That the council wish to lodge the following concerns and recommendations in respect of this application.

Drainage/sewerage/surface water/flooding:

The council is concerned that the available reports only deal with the site itself and fail to address the impact of the proposed development on the whole environment around the site.

The council recommend that United Utilities should be consulted about the current sewerage problems in the area before permission for any further development is approved.

Traffic:

There is already a considerable problem with traffic near the junction of Springfield Crescent and the B6480. A fact which is acknowledged in the traffic reports which indicate that the daily average of cars doing over 30 miles an hour in this vicinity is 850, and that there are between 32 and 35 cars daily doing over 45 miles an hour in this vicinity. The council is concerned that the increased risk/likelihood of an accident occurring at these speeds, with the increased traffic volume that the proposed development would bring has not been addressed.

The council is concerned that 47 new houses will potentially result in 94 more cars being on the road in an area which already suffers from severe parking problems. The council would like to see proposals from the Highways department and the police on how this will be managed/controlled if the proposed development proceeds; for example, will traffic lights be installed at the junction?

Privacy and right to light:

Some of the proposed new building overlook existing bungalows on Springfield Crescent. The council is concerned that this problem has not been resolved with the introduction of a buffer strip.
Noise and disruption:

The council recommend that if the development goes ahead that the noise impact during construction, and the impact from construction traffic, should be kept to an absolute minimum, by imposing a time limit for work on the site.

RESOLVED: Bentham Town Council to request a site meeting with the planning officer.

RESOLVED: Clerk to forward the findings of the traffic reports to the police and ask what is being done about the number of cars exceeding 30 and 45 miles an hour in this vicinity.

274.2 To receive correspondence on Planning issues – if any. (See Clerks Report).

Received.

274.3 To receive Planning Decisions – if any. (See Clerks Report).

Received.

275 To consider and note Highways Matters for information – if any. (Councillors can comment on any minor highway issues currently causing concern)

Tatterthorn Lane problem still not resolved despite work there recently.

Lots of parking on double yellow lines, particularly at the bottom of Goodenber Road.

There is a Land Rover being parked in the middle of the road in Low Bentham on a regular basis. This should be reported to the police when it is observed. It has been reported to Craig Lyons the public safety officer.

A speed camera has been operating out of the Electricity North West substation at the top of Gill Head Brow, just past the Golf Course. It is a very powerful camera, picking up cars two miles away, and in both directions. Easier to get permission to park up to operate from a unitary authority than elsewhere. Needs other sites to park, must be safe, not on public highway, with direct line of sight along the road, and needs permission from the correct person to park there. Machine needs a minimum distance to be set up and calibrate properly, and they do a risk assessment before parking up at a site. Problem areas are Springfield and Low Bentham Road. Craven will be getting another 9 vehicles and want places to operate. Craig Lyons the public safety officer has been in contact with the camera operators throughout.

It was suggested that the camera operators are the best people to identify suitable sites along the stretch from the Golf Club to the old Grammar School, or along Springfield, or elsewhere. If the operators can identify potential suitable sites, then the council could try and identify the correct person from whom permission is required, and request that permission. Clerk to ask PC Jayne Grace if she can suggest this to whoever is responsible for running the camera operations, or let the clerk know who to forward this request to.

276 To receive an update regarding the Councillors vacancy.

The update is that no applications have been received.

RESOLVED: To readvertise the councillor vacancy with a closing date of 23rd February 2022, to enable any applications to be considered at the 24th February full council meeting.

277 To consider the Register of Interests and agree updates from Members where necessary.

No updates received.

278 **To agree the Accounts for Payments as: -**

B&CE Armstrong	Christmas trees x 2	60.00
Clearglass Cleaning	Window cleaning Town Hall	110.00
Business Stream	Water- Town Hall	47.75

Business Stream	Water- Cemetery	8.51
The Automatic Door Company	Call out charge and fault fixing on sliding door – new internal battery	270.32
Viking	Stationery / stamps / telephone	213.56
Salaries and mileage	December 2021	3057.95
HMRC	PAYE & NIC	2868.57
Kingsdale Projects	Philip Harvey Playing Field work and Heritage Trail work	150.00
Sovereign	PHPF equipment checking as per estimate	698.40
Howard-James Garden Company	Replanting the planters at School Hill	20.00
Craven DC	Excess weight charge on trade waste	9.35
BT Group	Phone Town Hall	373.90
BT Group	Phone TIP	46.08
1 & 1 Ionis	Internet	18.00
SSE Swalec	Unmetered electric supply	95.27
Craven DC	Trade waste 2021/22	55.10
Total Energies	Gas Town Hall	920.36
Premium Credit Ltd	Insurance	334.76
NEST	Pension Contributions	153.49

RESOLVED: Approved

RESOLVED: To be authorised by Cllrs Adams and Faraday.

Accounts not agreed for payment: -

Tree Peaks Ltd	Tree work and replanting at Felstead	900.00
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RESOLVED: Clerk to request that tubex tree guards are added to the replanted trees.

RESOLVED: Cllr Hill to review the work and replanting and to report back to the council.

- 279 To consider the grass cutting tenders for the three-year period from April 2022 and to agree a way forward.
- RESOLVED: That the grass cutting contract for the three-year period is awarded to Kingsdale Projects.**
- RESOLVED: That the grass cutting contract is awarded as per Appendix A and Appendix B of the tender documents.**

Votes for the two different options were: -

A + B (same grass cutting regime as previously) = 5 votes.

A + C (new regime with some areas unmown, and some clippings removed) = 4 votes.

- 280 Community Youth Building.
- 280.1 To consider the letter regarding the lease on the Community Youth Building received 20/12/2021 and to agree a way forward and/or a response. (Paper 2021/231)
- RESOLVED: Clerk to reply acknowledging letter of 18/12/2021 and date of termination of lease as 18th March 2022.**
- RESOLVED: Clerk to request that a representative of the Bentham Youth Café & Community Youth Café is available on 18th March 2022 to conduct a walkthrough of the building with a council representative, in order to take meter readings, check the condition of the building and the contents, and report any damage.**

- 280.2 To discuss the lighting problem and agree a way forward. (Paper 2021/232)
RESOLVED: Cllr Wills to look at the lighting problem tomorrow and solve it if possible.
RESOLVED: Clerk to get an electrician to resolve the problem if Cllr Wills is unable to do so.
- 281 To receive reports from councillors who represent the Council on other bodies for information only – if any.
None.
- 282 Items for next meeting and minor items for information only.
AGENDA ITEMS
Audio equipment and microphone for town hall.
MINOR ITEMS
Cllrs Adams, Taylor and Wills will rehang the curtains in the ballroom. Thursday 6pm.
Clerk to instruct caretaker to return the chairs currently stored on the stage to their original locations.
Finance committee meeting tomorrow, one apology already received, and a second is likely.
- 283 Date of next meeting:
Finance committee meeting Tue 05/01/2022.
Precept meeting Mon 10/01/2022.
Full council meeting Thu 20/01/2022.
- There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.45.