

KNIGHTON TOWN COUNCIL CYNGOR TREF-Y-CLAWDD



MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25 OCTOBER AT 7PM
AT THE CIVIC CENTRE, WEST ST., KNIGHTON
AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING

Present: Councillors D Williams (Chair/Mayor), H Adams-Evans (Deputy Mayor),
C Branford, C Bevan, M Vaughan, T Sharp, R Edwards, T Taylor, B Butler.
Apologies: Councillors B Caine, S Vaughan, B Andrews. County Councillor A Williams.
In Attendance: K Compton (Press), L James (Clerk), Members of the Public (2),
County Councillor C Kenyon-Wade.

Public Participation

The Chair opened the meeting by inviting members of the public to address the council in accordance with Standing Order 3.

Minute 01 (agenda item 1): Apologies were received from the above-named councillors.

Minute 02 (agenda item 2): Cllr. D Williams declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 10.a.

Minute 03 (agenda item 3): The minutes of the full council meeting held on 20th September 2023 were approved as true and accurate. Proposer: Cllr. Adams-Evans. Seconder: Cllr. T Sharp. There were no matters arising from the minutes (agenda item 4).

Minute 04 (agenda item 5): Monthly receipts and payment for September were approved. Approval proposed by Cllr. Adams-Evans and seconded by Cllr. Sharp.

Minute 05 (agenda item 6): Clerk's verbal report.

Vacant seat - The resignation of Cllr. P Barrett did not prompt a request for an election to fill the seat and so the council will now move to co-option. The deadline for applications will be Wednesday 8th November, with a decision to be made at the Full Council meeting on 15th November. Application forms will be available and the invitation to apply posted in the usual places.

Online banking - HSBC received forms signed by signatories and the Clerk (as a new primary user) and have replied to say another form needed to be filled in online. The SMC account is still open and depending on how HSBC perform, we may still switch.

Following the governance meeting on 4th October, the Clerk has prioritised approving Financial Regulations, drafting key policies and carrying out risk assessments on all Council owned or run buildings. Risk assessments are also to be carried out on all staff and the work they do.

Staffing - Clerk's hours increased to full time on Monday 16th October and will stay this way for 6 months. The new cleaner started work Wednesday 11th October and his contract has been circulated to full council. Staff appraisals for all staff to take place in November, and again in April.

Training Plan - The Clerk has circulated the statutory guidance and training schedule from One Voice Wales, as yet there has been very little response from Councillors. Please can all Councillors respond by end of November so that the training plan can be allocated funds in next year's budget.

Requests for Financial Assistance - are now met with a request that the Council is informed of the benefit to the community and has sight of 'the books' before awarding assistance.

Civic Centre – winter weather. The boiler works and the roof does not leak. Emergency lights still need attention, inside and out. Quotes for the work are being obtained.

Minute 06 (agenda item 7): Mayor's verbal report

"On the 22nd September I attended the Twinning Association function at the Community Centre and spent a lovely couple of hours talking about many things especially rugby! In the last month I also

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attended the refugee visit and welcomed them to our lovely town. On the same day, I went to the Colour Run fundraising event organized by friends of Knighton School, which was a great success and congratulations to all involved, either in organising it or helping on the day, you are a credit to our town and community. I would also like to publicly welcome Rob Edwards to the Council, as this was overlooked at his inaugural meeting. Welcome, Rob! Likewise, I would also like to publicly thank Pete Barrett for the help and advice he provided to the Council before resigning and wish him the best in the future. Also, thank you for all his hard work and enthusiasm to Cllr. Caine, who leaves the Council at the end of this month.”

Minute 07.a.(agenda item 8): County Councillor Reports

County Councillor A Williams was unable to attend the meeting and instead submitted the following written update:

“WLGA - this was working with the Welsh Government on Leadership across Wales. It was a great weekend. Making lots of contacts in other counties. The weekend was in Llandudno on the 22nd and 23rd of September.

Air Ambulance - I attended an on-line review of the ongoing consideration. Currently there is no standout outcome. They have put out all the information they have been provided to answer questions put to them by the public. Phase 2 - they would like people to now re-engage with them online or over the phone. I am attaching the site to find the information at the end of this report, I am hoping you could put it on the Council website site.

I was asked to sit on a panel of council leaders to interview for the appointment of the CEO for Powys County Council. It was a great privilege to be asked, we interviewed 3 people. The lady that was put in place is someone we all know as she worked for Powys council previously. Emma is bright and very capable lady. I am in no doubt she will do a sterling job.”

Minute 07.b.(agenda item 8): County Councillor C Kenyon-Wade reported that Powys County Council is taking applications for grant funding for bus shelters that may be appropriate to fund the replacement of the bus shelter at Bowling Green Lane. The grants are small – for example £3,000 could be applied for to cover the cost of a 2.6m (2 bay) shelter, but additional funding of £1,750 would need to come from (or be raised by) Knighton Town Council to cover the cost of a 5.1m shelter. The funding must be used to purchase specific bus shelters via a Powys CC supplier. These shelters are open fronted which could deter vandals as they would be acting in plain sight. A discussion ensued and Council requested that County Councillor C Kenyon-Wade find out about the additional cost of providing a solid rather than mesh back to the shelter to provide better cover when raining. It was agreed that the current shelter is not fit for purpose due to vandalism and age. Cllr M Vaughan asked about a shelter being provided for Presteigne Road where school children wait. County Councillor C Kenyon-Wade advised that although grants are not available for school bus shelters, she has been told by Sarah Layton of Powys CC that a shelter could be erected on Presteigne Road, but she would need to know the exact location/site to establish suitability. Cllr Sharp requested that County Councillor C Kenyon-Wade also find out if an accessible request stop and shelter could be reinstated at Fronhir.

It was proposed by Cllr. D Williams that the council make the grant application to go ahead with the replacement shelter and that it should be for partial funding of the 5.1m shelter. Cllr M Vaughan seconded the proposal. The proposal moved to a vote and the motion was PASSED, with 8 out of 9 councillors present voting in favour of going ahead with the 5.1m replacement bus shelter from Powys and for the Council to fund the difference. One Councillor abstained.

Minute 08 (agenda item 9): The Chair read out 2 pieces of correspondence. The first was from the Slow Walking Network, previously shared by email and brought to full council at the request of Cllrs. Sharp and Taylor. It was agreed that Cllrs. Sharp and Taylor and the Clerk would investigate the project in more detail and report back. The second piece of correspondence was a thank you letter from a resident, regarding dangerous trees felled near the allotments and children’s play area.

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Minute 09 (agenda item 10): A request from the Knighton Show Committee (Bonfire Night) for financial assistance of £200.00 was discussed. When asked how much was awarded last year, Cllr. Williams reported that Council moved to award an amount last year, but payment was not made. The Clerk was asked to revisit last year's minutes and accounts to confirm this. Cllr. Williams (in his capacity as Treasurer to the Knighton Show Committee) provided the current bank balance of the committee and this was considered along with the application form. Both were satisfactory.

It was proposed by Cllr. Sharp and seconded by Cllr. Adams-Evans to award the amount of £200.00 as requested this year and, depending on the Clerk's findings, to also pay the amount that was agreed last year. The motion PASSED as Council voted unanimously in favour, except for Cllr. Williams who did not vote due to his declared non-pecuniary interest.

Minute 10 (agenda item 11): There were no planning applications to consider.

Minute 11 (agenda item 12.a.) Remembrance Day plans are underway, Councillors to meet at the Cenotaph at 9am on 29th October to clean the monument. Cllrs. Branford and M Vaughan have already put-up large poppies around the town, purchased from the Royal British Legion at a cost of £45.00, which will go to the Legion's Poppy Appeal. The P.A. system will be provided by the Community Centre this year. Invitation to lay wreaths have been issued. The band, bugler, Parade Marshall, Reverend Goodband and the readers (roll call) have all been confirmed.

Minute 12 (agenda item 12.b.): It was agreed that the Christmas lights would be put up on Sunday 26th November. The switch on date and time was confirmed as Friday 01 December at 6pm. Cllr. Adams-Evans requested the Council consider a more dramatic switch on involving a countdown and a lever. The logistics of this are to be explored. The tree has been ordered and new lights are required (same lights as street ones). All last year's decorations and lights to be checked. The Clerk to ask Restorella if they can create a grotto at the Civic Centre again this year. A change to last year's order was agreed – that Santa go around the town before arriving at the Clock Tower at 6pm for the light switch on rather than after the switch on, as this led to queues forming at the Civic Centre with families waiting for Santa. Santa will now come directly from the Clock Tower to the Civic Centre. Cllr. M Vaughan raised the issue of crowd control and that a 'zigzag' queuing system would be more organised and safer (Clerk to research). Cllr. Adams -Evans offered to contact Co-op and Premier for donations of mince pies and sweets. A request received to hold a Christmas market at the Civic Centre on the same night was refused due to lack of space, based on the number of attendees last year. It was proposed by Cllr. Adams-Evans and seconded by Cllr. Williams that the Council purchase 300 books at £1.00 each from Knighton's local Usborne representative, as gifts for the children. Any surplus will be donated to a local organisation or held over for next year. This was moved to a vote and PASSED with Council voting unanimously to approve the purchase.

Minute 13 (agenda item 13.a.): The annual review of the Council's Financial Regulations (FR) was made along with a review of the relevant Standing Order. FRs 4, 5, 6 and 11 were discussed in detail. It was agreed to lower the threshold for procurement via the tender process from £25,000.00 to £10,000.00 (FR11.g.) and to remove FR6.22 as the Council does not hold petty cash. It was proposed by Cllr. Butler and seconded by Cllr. Taylor to approve the regulations and amendments above. It was RESOLVED that the Financial Regulations are approved for financial year 2023/24.

Minute 14 (agenda items 13.b. and 14): The review of the Personnel Committee Terms of Reference and the appointment of 2 new members to the Personnel Committee were both deferred until the next meeting.

Minute 15 (agenda item 15): Cllr. Sharp requested that the 2 missing bollards at the Cenotaph be replaced as soon as possible. The Clerk agreed to contact Powys CC Highways to action this.

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Minute 16 (agenda item 15): Cllr. M Vaughan advised of a manhole cover lifted on Ludlow Road. Cllr. Vaughan to advise Clerk exactly where this is so she can contact Powys CC for action.

Minute 17 (agenda item 15): Cllr. Edwards has reported to Powys CC Highways department that the 20mph sign on Knucklas Road is not visible and that trees at the junction of Knucklas Road and West Street are overhanging and hazardous. Cllr. Edwards expressed his thanks to the Council road sweeper personnel for their hard work on clearing the weeds along Knucklas Road.

Minute 18 (agenda item 15): Cllr. Edwards reported on a visit to the road alongside the allotments. There are many potholes and although a quote has been obtained to fill these, the work has not yet been carried out. Cllr. Edwards maintained that the road is now in need of resurfacing, not just repairing. Cllr. Taylor advised that the perception among residents there is that the Council have prevaricated. The Clerk was instructed to ask the company who provided the original quote to revisit the site and to obtain two further quotes / estimates for the work from other companies.

Minute 19 (agenda item 15): Cllr. Williams acknowledged receipt by the Clerk of the report from the Knighton Youth Group, in relation to how the grant from the Council has benefitted the group. A grant awarded by Powys CC has not been issued and the group is having to reapply. County Councillor Corinna Kenyon-Wade agreed to contact the relevant people at the Community Centre to see if she can help. Cllr. M Vaughan asked if the Town Council could help in the meantime, and it was agreed that the group could make an application for further financial assistance. The mayor confirmed that his chosen charity for his term will be the Youth Group.

Minute 20 (agenda item 15): Cllr. Edwards asked the Clerk for an update on the public toilets, the Clerk advised she would provide an update in the coming days as she was waiting to find out when work could start.

Meeting closed at 8.25pm