



9 February 2016

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Town Council will be held at 7:30 pm on Tuesday 16 February 2016 at Pye Green Community Centre, Bradbury Lane, Hednesford. You are invited to attend for consideration of the matters shown on the agenda.

Yours sincerely

Peter Harrison
Town Council Manager/Clerk

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public are invited to address the council and ask questions before the meeting begins

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes – to approve the minutes of the Meeting held on 5 January 2016 (enclosed pages 25 to 30 of 2015-16)
4. Chairman's Announcements

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5. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
To receive notes of a meeting held on 12 January 2016 (enclosed (pink)) and 9 February 2016 (to follow)

6. Report of the Town Council Manager/Clerk
To consider the following:

a) Planning

To confirm the action of the Town Council Manager/Clerk in consultation with the principal speaker in submitting observations on planning Applications (enclosed agenda page 1)

b) Hednesford in Partnership

To receive a verbal report of a meeting held on 8 February regarding town events

c) Heart of Hednesford Restoration Project

To receive notes of a meeting held on 18 November 2016 (enclosed agenda pages 3 to 4) and to report that HoHRP has registered for the 'Clean for the Queen' campaign on 4 to 6 March

d) Library Update

A meeting was held at the library on the evening of 28 January 2016. In attendance were representatives from the County Council, the South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (SSSFT), Hednesford Town Council and a small number of library users

Concern was expressed regarding the arrangements for the meeting and that there had been no information regarding the "stakeholders" who had been invited. It was apparent that a number of key community groups were not represented

The County Council representatives gave details of the background to the review which had resulted in Hednesford being designated as a Community Managed Library. It was stressed that it was the County Council's intention to ensure that libraries were not closed

SSSFT had come forward and had expressed an interest in managing several libraries in the County including Hednesford

Representatives from SSSFT gave an overview of their vision and why they were getting involved with libraries (A copy of the presentation was emailed to all members of the Town Council on 2 February 2016)

Negotiations were taking place with the County Council with a view to completing a legal agreement to enable SSSFT to take over the management

The main principles of the arrangement would be as follows

1. The agreement would provide for SSSFT to run the library for a period of 5 years – commencing in Mid 2016

2. The County Council would continue to provide some support for a limited time to ensure a smooth transition of the service
3. The County Council would meet the revenue costs of running the library except staffing costs and the cost of any enhancements or improvements
4. The County Council would provide a Community Support Officer (shared with several other libraries) to facilitate provision of books, IT systems and other advice and support
5. A pool of at least 25 volunteers would be required to provide the service and ensure the library could maintain its current opening hours
6. Comprehensive training, starting in March 2016 and taking place over a period of approximately 8 weeks, would be provided for volunteers
7. All volunteers would be insured
8. A management committee including representation from the County Council, SSSFT, community organisations, users and volunteers as appropriate would be established
9. SSSFT would not be converting library buildings for use as formal clinics or alternative uses

Some individuals present at the meeting indicated their willingness to consider becoming volunteers. However, concern was expressed that if there was not an identified coordinator (ideally paid) practical problems may arise in organising the service

The County Council in association with VAST were launching a volunteer recruitment campaign

A suggestion box had been placed in the library for people to leave their ideas and comments regarding the future of the library

e) Future of St. Saviour's Church High Mount Street

A meeting was held on 1 February 2016 to discuss the future of the church. The meeting (which had been advertised in the local press) was well attended with representatives of the PCC and the local community present

The Vicar of Hednesford and the Archdeacon of Lichfield outlined the history of the church and that it had been built at a cost of less than £600 in 1888 to serve a growing mining community

The church had to undergo a quinquennial review and the most recent had identified serious structural problems with the building

The congregation numbers had fallen and now stood at 10/12 parishioners

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) had given consideration to the situation

and had looked at a number of options. However bearing in mind the substantial cost of undertaking essential repairs and the fall in congregation numbers they had concluded that keeping the church open was not viable and it would have to close

The process for closure would take at least 12 months and was something that had to go through the Diocesan Office to be formally approved by the Church of England

Following this there had to be a final service of thanksgiving at St. Saviour's which it was hoped would be attended by the Bishop of Wolverhampton

After valuation the building and land would be placed on the open market for sale and (if sold) it would be a matter for the new owner to decide whether to renovate the existing building and determine its future use or to demolish the structure and use the land for some other purpose (all subject to planning permission)

Members should note that the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group had identified the building as one that should be included in the Neighbourhood Plan as being of local historical and architectural interest. In the light of the information regarding the structural problems, it may have to be recognised that preserving the building in its present form is not sustainable

The proceeds of the sale (less the costs incurred by the Diocesan Office) would be retained for use by the Hednesford PCC – for the benefit of the local area

The church was keen to maintain its ministry in the Green Heath area and had entered into fruitful discussions with West Hill School with a view to using a room there for services etc. It was proposed that the new church would be called the Green Heath Community Church

f) Vacancy SPCA Executive

There were insufficient nominations received, prior to the Association's recent AGM, for members of the SPCA Executive representing parish and town councils in the Cannock Chase District. As a result, a vacancy remains to be filled for a member to serve a two year term of office concluding in December 2017

The Executive Committee holds four ordinary meetings each year; in 2016 the dates will be 7 March, 6 June, 5 September and 5 December. Meetings are held at Staffordshire Place, Tipping Street, Stafford.

The closing date for nominations is 26 February 2016

g) Staffordshire County Council Review of Future Management of Countryside Parks and Green Spaces

To receive the minutes of a meeting of the Cannock Chase AONB Advisory Partnership and Parish Councils Meeting to discuss the Management of Staffordshire's Countryside Estate and the final submission made to the County Council (enclosed agenda pages 5 to 28)

h) CCTV Monitoring

To consider the monitoring statement for December 2015 and January 2016
(enclosed agenda pages 29 to 32)

i) Finance

To note income received and confirm payments made up to 31 January 2016
(enclosed agenda pages 33 to 36)

7. Items from Last Meeting

a) Food is Free Project (Information enclosed agenda pages 37 to 46)

b) Public Footpaths (Cllr L Whitehouse)

c) HGV's (Cllr L Whitehouse)

8. Items for Information and next agenda

9. To resolve that the public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

10. Employee Pension Arrangements

The law on workplace pensions has changed. Under the Pensions Act 2008, every employer in the UK must put certain employees into a pension scheme and contribute towards it. This is called 'automatic enrolment'

Arrangements have been made to register the Town Council with the Pensions Regulator and employees have been notified of their pension rights under the new provisions

Further information will be provided at the meeting