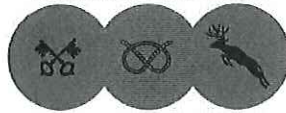


Hednesford Town Council



Gateway to the Chase

4 February 2020

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Town Council will be held at **7:00 pm** on Tuesday 11 February 2020 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

Additionally, County and District Councillors and local PCSO (if present)

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes – to approve the minutes of the Meeting held on 7 January 2020 (Enclosed **pages 57 to 64 of 2019-20**)
4. Chairman's Announcements

Peter Harrison JP BA(Hons)Town Council Manager/Clerk
Pye Green Community Centre Bradbury Lane Hednesford Staffordshire WS12 4EP
peter.harrison@hednesford-tc.gov.uk
Tel: 01543 424872 Skype: HTC.clerk

5. Action Planner/Monitor and Future Business

To consider/review the above (Enclosed **agenda pages 1 to 10**)

6. Items Requested to be included on Agenda at last Meeting

Open Space (banking) between Co-op and Railway Station (Cllr A Roden)

7. Reports from Principal Speakers

To consider reports from Principal Speakers

Communications and Engagement

Draft Media Policy

For consideration (Enclosed **agenda pages 11 to 16**)

Finance and Council Procedures

Personnel Committee

To consider the establishment of a Personnel Committee, agree a terms of reference and appoint members to serve thereon (Enclosed **agenda pages 17 to 18**)

Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures

To approve proposed Grievance and Disciplinary procedures (Enclosed **agenda pages 19 to 32**)

Accounting Arrangements

As a result of decisions taken by the Council regarding the budget for 2020-21 it is necessary to review the accounting arrangements. It is proposed that the Town Council Manager/Clerk in consultation with the Finance and Council Procedures Speaker be authorised to acquire software or such other services as are necessary to enable the Council to maintain its accounts in the manner required. In the current financial year there remains an IT provisions account and initial funding can come from that source. Any ongoing costs will need to be included in estimates of expenditure for future years

Homelessness and Vulnerable Adults

Homelessness Bus

Highways

Painting Zebra Crossings Victoria Street and Station Road

Flooding and Beehive Island

Parking Bays, Market Street

Broken Paviers, Anglesey Crescent

Wellbeing, Isolation and Loneliness

Environment

Biffa Waste Disposal Site – Odour Complaints

Following the last meeting of the Council a joint letter from Bridgtown, Heath

Hayes and Wimblebury and Norton Canes Parish Councils and Hednesford Town Council has been sent to Public Health England and a reply is awaited (copy Enclosed **agenda pages 33 to 34**)

In addition the issue has also been debated at Cannock Chase Council Community Scrutiny Committee. Since the last meeting of the Town Council the Environment Agency has issued 2 updates which have been sent to members

National Community Energy Campaign
With reference to Minute 5. e) i) of 12 November 2019 to consider a letter received from the MP (Enclosed **agenda page35**)

Youth and Community Cohesion

Problems at Hednesford Raceway Event -12 January 2020

At the invitation of Staffordshire Police, the Principal Speaker, on behalf of the Council, attended a meeting of interested parties held on 17 January 2020

Options to ensure that any future events at the raceway have better management of parking were explored

After attempts to engage Incarace last year, and the agreed verbal plan which ultimately failed, it was agreed that a more robust and onerous approach is required moving forwards.

Given there were over 1000 cars trying to park, there is no single solution to the parking issue. An agreement was made with Hednesford Town FC which saw 150+ cars parked on their site but this soon reached capacity. This was advertised late by Incarace with no address details and no shuttle by bus, and a PCSO had to step in on behalf of Incarace to make this happen in the first place.

A lack of marshals at the main venue also meant that parking space was not used effectively.

Parking enforcement was discussed, but ultimately this will not stop the issue and is not seen as a long term solution. Towing vehicles would have proved difficult given the size and scale of the problem, and fines can only be issued for parking on double yellow lines.

Incarace have a protected lease for the track as it is a historic lease, so any attempts to impose conditions via the lease would require the consent of Incarace.

Concerns were raised regarding public safety at the event, primarily blocked access for fire engines and ambulances. In this regards Incarace are seen as breaching their duty to the public.

It was agreed that Incarace will need to submit an Event Management Plan

for any future large scale events which will be subject to scrutiny by the Safety Action Group at CCDC which is also attended by Staffs Police & Fire Service. Unless a satisfactory plan is submitted well in advance, those organisations will then be able to use their powers to prevent the event taking place.

Regarding the damage to the park, this will be repaired by CCDC and the fencing replaced. Fencing was already missing so reports of this being removed were unfounded. Costs are estimated to be £25-30k. There is a lack of evidence to identify the perpetrators and links to Incarace would be unlikely to stand up in court. Fencing will be prioritised, as the site is now more widely known as being accessible to vehicles and is therefore at risk of being used by travellers. Repairs to the field will need to wait for dryer weather.

It has been suggested that the Town Council write to Incarace to voice our own concerns, and other agencies and the public do the same. Amanda Milling will also be writing to them.

Hednesford Town Council will likely be invited to discussions about the Event Management Plan with Incarace at the appropriate time for wider public scrutiny.

Sean O'Meara from the Community Safety Team at CCDC will be writing to Incarace in the next few days to set this in motion

In addition, it has been noted that the Incarace venue in Birmingham has closed and this may lead to increased attendance at Hednesford for the maximum 20 events that can be held per annum

The Vicar of Hednesford and the Churchwardens and Hednesford PCC have also contacted the MP, County and District Council to highlight the great inconvenience caused to worshippers attending St. Peter's Church, Church Hill

St. Peter's School Governor

Community Projects and Events & Chair of Pye Green Community Centre Management Committee

VE75

For the Council to consider funding requirements in respect of this event including hire of vintage bus, bouncy castle, DJ and transport of air raid shelter and incidentals at a cost of £800

Other matters for information from Principal Speakers

Bleed Kits

8. Report of the Town Council Manager/Clerk

To consider the following:

a) Planning

(Enclosed **agenda page 36**) *With commentary by the Principal Speaker for Planning*

b) Community Grants

To consider applications (Copies of the applications were included with the agenda for the Council Meeting held on 7 January 2020):

The recommendations of the members appointed to undertake initial scrutiny of applications (Cllrs K Downes and M Dunnett) are enclosed (**agenda page 37**)

The budget available for grants is £4800

Regardless of whether or not an application complies with the Council's guidance, the overriding consideration for members is whether or not the requirements of Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 are fulfilled

This is the power of local authorities to incur expenditure for certain purposes not otherwise authorised:

A local authority may.....incur expenditure which in their opinion is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to, their area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants, but a local authority shall not, by virtue of this subsection, incur any expenditure—

(a)for a purpose for which they are, either unconditionally or subject to any limitation or to the satisfaction of any condition, authorised or required to make any payment by or by virtue of any other enactment; nor

(b)unless the direct benefit accruing to their area or any part of it or to all or some of the inhabitants of their area will be commensurate with the expenditure to be incurred.

In determining the above members are reminded of the need to declare any interests and abstain from voting where appropriate

c) Principal Speaker Roles

To consider the creation of a principal speaker role "New Estates" for the recently co-opted new member of the Council

d) Bus Shelters

To consider the arrangements for the future repair, maintenance, replacement and provision of additional bus shelters in Hednesford

At the current time the County Council is responsible for the bus shelters in Victoria Street with all other shelters being the responsibility of Cannock Chase Council. No regular cleaning or maintenance is undertaken by either Council

Both Councils have indicated that it is likely they would agree to the Town Council taking on the maintenance of bus shelters

If the Town Council wish to agree to such an arrangement it should also consider if it wishes to take on the full responsibility for the bus shelters in its area. For example, replacement of existing shelters, due to damage and potentially provision of new shelters All the Town Council needs to do is to pass a resolution to that effect and submit a formal request to the District and County Council. CCDC say it might need to take the request to Cabinet for approval

Whilst the shelters in Victoria Street are relatively new some of the other shelters in Hednesford have been in place for very many years and it is suggested that before the Town Council accepts any responsibility for them that the District Council provides some assurance that they are structurally safe

e) The Cannock Chase Miners Memorial, Market Street, Hednesford

To consider the following from the Management Team of the Friends of Hednesford

“The Friends of Hednesford [formerly Heart of Hednesford] community volunteers are in the final stages of compiling a heritage project to be displayed in Hednesford library. This will consist of donated reference books about local mining history as well as a catalogue of those named on memorial bricks, displayed on the recently restored lectern donated by St Saviours Church upon its closure.

This heritage project has been almost two years in the making. We intend to host an official launch and invite all parties involved in the creation of this memorial.

When we queried the maintenance plan – as the lamp itself is tarnished and the dedication plaques worn – we discovered that Hednesford Town Council accepted responsibility for this 4 years ago; per Town Council meeting of 8th November 2016 (Minute 4.g) “*the Town Council offer to arrange for future regular maintenance of the named bricks*”. However, there has never been a maintenance inspection of the bricks, the wall nor the lamp monument and, so far as we are aware this has never been cleaned.

Friends of Hednesford (FoH) community volunteers regularly clean and clear moss from the bricks at ground level underneath the town clock. The Town Council minuted this arrangement at their meeting on 14th February 2017. Sharp sand is urgently required to be swept over the pavers to ensure they remain secure, and FoH were under the impression that this work would be undertaken as part of the ongoing maintenance plan in place. FoH have never cleaned the lamp itself, nor the bricks or plaques on the wall outside the

library and are writing to let the Council know that all of this essential maintenance is now demonstrably very necessary.

Members of the public have been coming into the library to report the filthy state of the lamp monument and the poor state of the brick wall and dedication plaques and asking who is responsible for ongoing maintenance and when will this be done. The lamp appears to have candle-bulbs inside, but the light is barely visible – this could be because they need replacing or simply because of the build-up of dirt on the lamp.

As the monument apparently falls under the Council's insurance policy, a regular inspection by a suitably qualified structural engineer ought to be undertaken. FoH had assumed that the Town Council has all this in hand, but this is apparently not the case.

The Cannock Chase Miners Memorial is an iconic and much-visited monument in Hednesford town centre. Friends of Hednesford are very proud to be the custodians of keeping the ground level pavers and bricks clean and weed-free and have been grateful to the Council for paying for occasional replacement of tools and purchase of cleaning equipment. We are writing now to ask the Council to ensure that the whole monument is inspected and the lamp cleaned as a matter of urgency, and that any necessary maintenance or repairs are carried out in the very near future, with ongoing maintenance clearly planned going forward.

FoH are more than happy to continue assisting with the upkeep of this memorial in the same way we have been, and we confirm we will regularly notify the Council of any maintenance issues which need to be dealt with moving forward”

f) Post Office – Broadway

To consider correspondence from the Post Office (Enclosed **agenda pages 38 to 41**)

g) Parking Bradbury Lane

To consider the following from Mr R Wilkes

“I am writing to you all reference the overspill parking on Bradbury Lane.

As I'm sure you are already fully aware of the situation the parking on Sunday morning 's has now escalated to a point where some 80 cars, vans and 4x4's were parked this morning making it very difficult to exit Greenwood Park safely. Cars are being parked on both sides of the road leaving only a single carriageway for vehicles to travel in both directions. I do understand that you had double yellow lines painted around the Junction of Greenwood Park, but in my opinion they do not extend far enough along Bradbury Lane to give sufficient vision. Only this morning my wife had a very near miss while trying to get out, this in my opinion is an accident waiting to happen, and I hope this email my just prevent injury in the future.

There is a security guard who seems to have been given the role of parking warden, but again he hasn't the authority to conduct this duty as he isn't being given the tools to make any sort of difference.

I also notice that the cones being used for traffic management are of the wrong type, the cones in use are construction cones and without the correct signage mean absolutely nothing to the average motorist.

I believe the cones required should be Police no parking signs, and yes I do realise that they may just move the problem to another area.

I have spoken to the supervisor at 5c's but he doesn't seem to be getting the management support he requires.

I also notice that cars of all types are parking on the grass area adjacent to the facility and when I looked earlier this is slowly being made into a mud bath, part of this area was only reseeded last year and hasn't had time to establish before being ground to mud, a total waste of money.

I believe extra signage need to be installed, proper cones used and a traffic management plan be drawn up, otherwise a fatality will probably occur and then it would be who'd have thought it, and at least after making you aware my conscience will be clear, not to mention the degraded aspect that local residents have to view.

Incidentally apart from the usual cars only two additional cars were parked on the designated overspill carpark"

h) Accounts

To confirm payments made and note income received up to 31 January 2020
(Enclosed agenda pages 42 to 49)

9. Minutes and Reports from Community Groups and Others

a) Friends of Hednesford

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2019 (Enclosed
agenda pages 50 to 51)

10. Items for next agenda

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

12. Christmas Lighting Arrangements – 2020 to 2022

The arrangements with the contractor for this service came to an end in 2019. Quotations were obtained for future Christmas lights and consultations have been undertaken with partners Heath Hayes and Wimblebury and Norton Canes Parish Councils. The Council is recommended to consider re-appointing the previous

contractor for a further 3-year term and confirming the arrangements for Hednesford Town Council to continue as lead authority. This proposal is supported by partner Parish Councils (A background note is **circulated to members only confidential agenda pages 52 to 54**)

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HEDNESFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT 7:00 PM ON TUESDAY 7 JANUARY 2020 AT PYE GREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE, HEDNESFORD

PRESENT: Cllrs P Woodhead (Chairman and Communications and Engagement Speaker), R Kingston (Vice-Chairman and Community Projects and Events Speaker), K Downs (Youth and Community Cohesion Speaker), M Dunnett (Environment Speaker), A Fittes (Planning and Economic Development Speaker), E M Hunneyball, S Jagger (Wellbeing, Isolation and Loneliness Speaker), G Jones (Finance and Procedures Speaker) and A Roden (Highways Speaker)

IN ATTENDANCE: P Harrison (Town Council Manager/Clerk), L Bowman (Assistant Clerk), County Cllrs P Hewitt and B Jones, Cllrs S Crabtree, J Preece, L Bullock and 21 members of the public including residents from Hednesford and surrounding area and representatives from Town organisations

APOLOGIES: Staffordshire Police and District Cllr A Pearson

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Representatives from the Environment Agency and Poplar's Landfill Site Operator (Biffa) and Amanda Milling MP had declined an open invitation to attend the Town Council meeting but written statements from all 3 had been received and were circulated at the meeting. The statements outlined the reasons for malodours emanating from the waste disposal site for several weeks and the action being taken to remedy the problem which it was anticipated would take up to a further month

Members of the public who had direct experience of the problem expressed strong concerns about this situation and the length of time it was taking to resolve the current issue. Not only that, they flagged up examples of previous and ongoing operational difficulties with this site and their fears for the present and long-term possible detrimental health impacts on people

In summary the main concerns and questions surrounded

The role of the Staffordshire County Council in granting planning permissions for the land fill site

The effectiveness of the Environment Agency in monitoring activity on the site

The day to day management of the site by the operator (Biffa) and the apparent lack of contingency arrangements the company appeared to have in place to deal with similar problems that it knew had arisen at some of their other sites

The potential negative impact on the value of property and on businesses operating or proposing to locate in the area

The possible detrimental effects to health and well-being of residents and workers as a result of breathing in over a long period the malodours emanating from the site

It was reported that Biffa had offered the opportunity for members of the public to visit the site to see the operation. Members of the public were encouraged to continue to report any concerns and problems to the Environment Agency

A meeting of a Cannock Chase Council Scrutiny Committee was being held at 10:00 on Monday 13 January 2020 when representatives from the Environment Agency and Biffa would be in attendance. Members of the public were invited to attend (Please see minute 5.d) below)

A resident raised concerns about the effects of the large scale ongoing and future residential development on land to the west of Pye Green Road. It was noted that the land had been included in plans for residential development and outline planning permission granted some time ago. The latest planning applications were for 158 residential properties of varying types. Applications for further developments could not be ruled out. The Town Council would ask the planning authority to include in any permissions granted conditions requiring the developer to take measures to alleviate any negative impact on existing residents during the construction period

Reference was made to the ongoing arrangements regarding installation of speed indication devices and where they were to be located and changes to speed restrictions in Lime Pit Lane

It was mentioned that there had been no police representative at Council meetings for some time. The Chief Inspector would be reminded of the importance attached to police attending Council meetings

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2019 were approved as a correct record

2. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed best wishes for the New Year

The Chairman reported on the death of former Town Councillor Brian Gamble and the meeting observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect

3. ACTION PLAN/MONITOR AND FUTURE BUSINESS

Consideration was given to this and it was

RESOLVED:

That this be noted and continue to be updated and reviewed with the aim of completing outstanding actions

4. ESTIMATES OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND PRECEPT FOR 2020-21

Consideration was given to budget proposals submitted by the Chairman and the Finance and Council Procedures Speaker together with results of the outcome of public consultation and other financial information including details regarding the precept from Cannock Chase Council and a statement from the Town Council Manager/Clerk regarding balances and provisions accounts

RESOLVED:

- a) That a precept of £194,500 be demanded from Cannock Chase Council to contribute to estimated expenditure in 2020-21
- b) That the proposed budget of income and expenditure as shown at Annex 1 to the minutes be approved
- c) That information on estimated balances as at 31 March 2020 and 31 March 2021 be noted and provision of £5000 be made to cover any costs arising from an election

(Cllr A Roden requested that his name be recorded as having abstained from voting)

5. REPORTS FROM PRINCIPAL SPEAKERS

Consideration was given to reports from Principal Speakers

RESOLVED:

- a) **Communications and Engagement**
That it be noted that the production of the first issue of the Town Newsletter was still progressing
- b) **Homelessness and Vulnerable Adults**
That it be noted that arrangements were being put in place for a meeting with Cannock Chase Council regarding homelessness and a meeting with CAB was still to be progressed
- c) **Highways**
That the Town Council note the updates from County Councillors and continue to liaise and collaborate with them to ensure that highway repairs and improvements are undertaken in particular:
Painting of zebra crossing, Victoria Street
Improvements at Beehive Island (confirmation of start date for the works including painting of zebra crossing in Station Road)
Loading Bays Market Street (possibility of a Traffic Order making some parking bays to be available for loading only at certain times of day)
Broken Paviers Market Street/Anglesey Crescent (identifying responsibility and arranging repairs)

Mini Roundabout, Sharon Way
Shaftesbury Drive and Booth Street (repairs)

d) Environment

Biffa Waste Disposal Site – Odour Complaints

That the Town Council contact Bridgtown, Heath Hayes and Wimblebury and Norton Canes Parish Councils with a view to agreeing a joint letter/statement expressing the concerns raised by residents as outlined in the public participation section of the meeting referred to above calling for an independent investigation of all the circumstances including any implications for public health and this be sent to Public Health England the Director of Public Health for Staffordshire and copied to the Environment Agency, Biffa, the MP and other interested bodies

e) Wellbeing, Isolation and Loneliness

That it be noted that the Shiny Fork was now participating as a “Chatty Café”

f) Youth and Community Cohesion

That it be noted that the Speaker was continuing to liaise with schools to arrange a meeting to explore with them greater collaboration with the Town Council

g) Community Projects and Events & Chair of Pye Green Community Centre Management Committee

That it be noted that the Speaker was continuing to liaise with regard to organising events in connection with VE 75 and, in due course, would be asking the Council to consider funding some aspects (including the hire of a vintage bus) out of the budget for community events

6. REPORT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MANAGER/CLERK

Consideration was given to this report

RESOLVED:

a) Planning

That the action of the Town Council Manager/Clerk in consultation with the Principal Speaker in submitting observations on planning applications listed at Annex 2 be confirmed

b) Commonwealth Games – Update

That information received from the Managing Director of Cannock Chase Council be forwarded to members for information

c) CCTV Monitoring

That the reports for November and December 2019 be noted

d) Community Grants

That the applications received up to December 2019 be noted and they be given detailed consideration at the next meeting of the

Council following scrutiny by members appointed to undertake this role

e) Recognition of Participation in the Christmas Event
That, as a token of appreciation, £100 each be awarded to:

St Peters Primary Academy ¹
Westhill Primary School
Hednesford Valley High
Chadsmoor J&I School
Kingsmead School
Michelle Cox
Split Mask Company
Hednesford Lions ²
Hednesford in Partnership ³
Friends of Hednesford ⁴

and the Town Council Manager/Clerk and the Chairman make arrangements for presentation of cheques

Declarations of interest were recorded from Cllrs

¹ P Woodhead

² A Fittes

³ A Fittes, R Kingston and P Woodhead

⁴ S Jagger

e) Principal Speaker Roles

That further consideration be given to this at the next meeting of the Council

7. ITEM FOR NEXT AGENDA

Maintenance of land – Co-op Car Park

8. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That the public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

9. BUDGET CONSIDERATION – PYE GREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE

Members discussed various matters relating to the Pye Green Community Centre

RESOLVED:

That a written report on this matter be prepared for future consideration

The meeting ended at 9:20 pm

Signed:

Dated

Annex 1

Hednesford Town Council – Budget Proposal 2020-2021

What we will deliver within the budget

- All current activity continues
- 3% cost of living increase to salaries
- Two new roles and associated delivery budgets, addressing local priorities as follows:
 - Community Officer @ 3 days per week
 - Town Centre Development Manager @ 2.5 days per week
- These add approximately £45,000 to the running costs of the council
- Doubling the community grants pot open to application, to £10,000
- The releasing of £30,000 of reserves to fund one off community start-up and project costs
- A balanced budget across all cost centres as below

Proposed Budget

RECEIPTS	General	Community	Town	PGCC	TOTAL
Precept	34000	63000	56500	41000	194500
Other income	1164	1305	5455	36656	44580
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 35,164	£ 64,305	£ 61,955	£ 77,656	£ 239,080
	percentage of precept				
	17%	32%	29%	21%	
PAYMENTS	General	Community	Town	PGCC	TOTAL
Personnel	26449	31218	29014	33793	120474
Office Costs	1300	615	615	1650	4180
Marketing & Communications	2500	1000	2750	1400	7650
Insurance/Legal/Subscriptions	2110	435	435	2150	5130
Fees & Charges	250	75	75	17582	17982
Councillor Costs	900	250	250	150	1550
Town Activities			28000		28000
Community Events		14000			14000
Community Grants		16000			16000
PGCC Utilities & Rates	1470			13230	14700
PGCC Services				3050	3050
PGCC Equipment & Repairs	100	800	800	4600	6300
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£ 35,079	£ 64,393	£ 61,939	£ 77,605	£ 239,016
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	£85	-£88	£16	£51	£64

The Precept

This investment requires us to increase the precept by a total of £57,000, to a total of £194,500.

Whilst we acknowledge this is a projected increase in the precept as a whole of about one third; we also project that the average elector would see an increase of only around £4 per year.

Community Infrastructure Levy and s106 Spending

The Town Council has an accumulated contribution from developers for projects which improve the town and will be spending some of this on projects which benefit the community including cycle infrastructure, orientation signage and bus shelters. We will seek partnerships with community organisations to help deliver these as a true reflection of the beneficial work bringing the town and its people together under common objectives.

Annex 2

Council Meeting 7 January 2020 – List of Planning Applications

19/405	Extension and demolition of conservatory – 5 Buckthorn Close	No Objection
19/402	Lawful Use/Development Cert – 34 Berry Hill	No Objection
19/398	Advertisement – Tesco Superstore, Victoria Street	No Objection
19/389	Two storey side extension- 1 Shaftesbury Drive	No Objection
19/386	Proposed two storey side extension – 3 Mary Street	No Objection
19/378	Notification for Prior Approval for a proposed larger home extension: Erection of conservatory measuring 4m in depth and 3.25m in height (2.35m to eaves) to replace existing - 11 Fisher Street	No Objection

Hednesford Town Council

Action Planner/Monitor & Future Business – Council Meeting 11 February 2020

Instigated	Item	Action Required	Current Position	Due Date	Responsible
	Heritage Lottery Bid including use of CIL Monies	To be progressed with HIP	More information awaited	?	PW/PH
	Fencing of Cannock Chase	Consider further public meeting if demanded	Pending	None	
	Bus shelters/stops improvements	To consider what action to take regarding this	For further consideration and has been raised with St Modwen development Pye Green Road. Information sought from Cannock Chase Council & County Council On agenda 11/2/20	?	PW/PH
	PR & Social Media Policy	Policies to be drafted for Council to consider	On agenda 11/2/20	11/2/10	PW/PH

Instigated	Item	Action Required	Current Position	Due Date	Responsible
	Estimates for 2020-21 and Precept	To be considered	Completed (see also below)	7/1/20	PW/GJ/PH/LB
	CCTV Monitoring Form	CCDC asked provide update	CCDC will provide from 1/1/20	11/2/20 and then ongoing	PH
10/9/19	DVSA Test Centre	Negotiation with DVSA for use of PGCC as a local test centre	Meeting held with DVSA property officers to discuss practicalities - Response received and practicalities being given further consideration	Not known	PW/RK/PH/LB
10/9/19	Café Kiosk Hednesford Park	Seek greater use of building for community use	CCDC negotiating with commercial operator. Continue to lobby for greater community use	Not known	PW/PH

Instigated	Item	Action Required	Current Position	Due Date	Responsible
	Homelessness and Severe Weather Policy	Meeting to discuss with CCDC Housing Options Team	Meeting being progressed following approach to Managing Director of CCDC	11/2/20	DC/PH
	Ethical Investment Policy	Policy to be drafted for Council to consider	Enquiries being made. But no examples can be found from other local councils	7/4/20	PW/PH
	Internal Audit Review	Review of internal audit arrangements before audit of 2019-20 accounts	Enquiries being made	31/3/20	GJ/PH/LB
	Installation of SID's	Purchase and Installation of 2 SID's	Order placed and awaiting installation	11/2/20	PH
	Climate Emergency Task Group	To recommend proposals for action	Meetings being held	Ongoing	MD

Instigated	Item	Action Required	Current Position	Due Date	Responsible
	Rewilding	To identify areas of land for rewilding and/or community orchards and investigate means of funding	Publicity release issued. Further enquiries being made. Location plans to be prepared to identify land ownership. Liaison with Kingsmead concerning first site in Victoria Street	11/2/20 Council Update and ongoing	MD
	Christmas Event	Preparations for the 2020 event including award of lighting contract	Commenced	11/2/10	LB/PH ALL
	Local Government Boundary Review	To consider the implications of the boundary review of the Cannock Chase District	Views of Cannock Chase Parishes being sought. Responses received indicate support for a comprehensive parish review of Cannock Chase District	2021 ?	PW/PH

Instigated	Item	Action Required	Current Position	Due Date	Responsible
(See also 7/1/20 below)	VE75	Coordination of events in connection with this Anniversary	Principal Speaker to update Council regularly	10/5/20	RK
	Armed Forces Day	Event to mark Armed Forces Day in 2020	Ditto	27/6/20	
	Commonwealth Games	Consider opportunities for Hednesford	3 Member panel appointed to pursue and to update Council regularly	11/2/20	PW/AF/MD
10/9/19	CAB	To explore greater collaboration with CAB	Follow up meeting to be arranged	17/12/19	DC/KD/SJ
12/11/19	Remembrance Sunday	To liaise with Town Organisations regarding the arrangements for future commemorations including marshalling due withdrawal of support from Police	Not commenced	8/11/20	RK
12/11/19	Places of Welcome Organiser	To assist in recruiting a volunteer for this role	Completed	?	SJ/ALL
12/11/19	Publication of Town Council Magazine	To arrange for publication of first issue	Final funding to be confirmed and content to be agreed	02/20	PW/RK

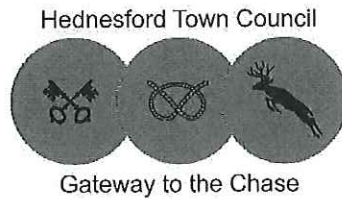
Instigated	Item	Action Required	Current Position	Due Date	Responsible
12/11/19	Consultation regarding Cannock Chase	Public meeting with Cannock Chase SAC to be arranged	Request for meeting submitted -and will be pursued when more detailed proposals are published	?	MD/PH
12/11/19	Community Grants	To carry out initial scrutiny of applications and determine Grants to be awarded	Panel reviewing those received. On agenda for meeting on 11/2/20	11/2/20	PH/KD/MD
12/11/19	"Chase Up" Project	To collaborate with Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles in respect of this project	To be commenced	2024	ALL
18/11/19	Provision of cycle racks in town centre	Establish costs and potential sites for cycle racks in the town centre with a view to Council considering installation	Enquiries being made. Subject to approval of a S.106 agreement (re. Land West of Pye Green Road) cycle storage will be provided at the station	?	PW/PH

Instigated	Item	Action Required	Current Position	Due Date	Responsible
29/11/19	Disciplinary and Grievance Policies	Review	Consider adopting new models suggested by NALC	11/2/20	PH/GJ
20/11/10	Local Government Pension Scheme – Policy on Exercise to Discretionary Functions	Review	Consider adoption	11/2/20	PH
2/12/19	Woodland Trust Tree Planting Scheme	Subject to approval from CCDC to consider carrying out tree planting at Anglesey Nature Reserve	Consider participating in scheme	Ongoing	MD
17/12/19	Invite MP to meet with Councillors	Letter sent	Acceptance received	Ongoing	PH
17/12/19 7/1/20	Invite new Chief Inspector of Police to Council Meeting And Police presence at meetings	Invitations sent x 2	Response – PCSO will attend meeting on 11/2/20	11/2/20	PH

Instigated	Item	Action Required	Current Position	Due Date	Responsible
7/1/20	Precept	Precept demand to be sent to CCDC	Completed	31/1/20	PH
7/1/20	Precept	Information to be prepared for publication in Council Tax leaflet	Being prepared	29/2/20	PH/LB
7/1/20	Budget Outcome	Community Officer appointment	Being considered JD/Person Spec to be agreed and recruitment	1/4/20	All
7/1/20	Budget Outcome	Town Centre Development Manager	Being considered	1/4/20	PW
7/1/20	Budget Consideration	Funding of Pye Green Community Centre	Options paper to be prepared	?	PW
7/1/20	Budget Implication	Introduce new accounting arrangements	Under review on agenda 11/2/20	1/4/20	PH/LB/GJ
7/1/20	Highways	Painting zebra crossing Victoria Street	Referred to Highway Authority	?	County Cllrs
7/1/20	Highways	Improvements Beehive Island	Referred to Highway Authority	?	County Councillors
7/1/20	Highways	Loading Bays Market St	Referred to Highway Authority	?	County Councillors

Instigated	Item	Action Required	Current Position	Due Date	Responsible
7/1/20	Highways	Broken Paviers Market Street/Anglesey Crescent	Referred to Highway Authority	?	County Councillors
7/1/20	Odour Complaints Biffa	Joint Parish/Town Council letter to Public Health England and other interested parties	4 Town and Parish Councils agreed to content of letter. Reply awaited	11/2/20	PW/PH
7/1/20	Youth & Community Cohesion	Further meetings with schools regarding collaborative working etc	Ongoing – update reports to Council	Ongoing	KD
7/1/20	VE 75	Council to consider providing some funding for events being arranged	Ongoing – update reports to Council Agenda 11/2/20	10/5/20	RK
7/1/20	Christmas Event	Presentation to cheques to participating schools etc	Being organised	11/2/20	PH/LB/PW
7/1/20	Principal Speaker Role	Agree speaker role for newly co-opted Town Councillor	Being considered	11/2/20	EH
7/1/20	Maintenance of land rear of former Co-op	Include on agenda for Council Meeting 11 February 2020	To be considered	11/2/20	PH

Instigated	Item	Action Required	Current Position	Due Date	Responsible
13/1/20	Hednesford Raceway Complaints	Consider means of alleviating parking problems and congestion on race days	Council represented at a meeting convened by police – outcome to be reported to Council Meeting	11/2/20	KD



PRESS AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to define the roles and responsibilities within Hednesford Town Council

1.2 It is not the intention of this policy to curb freedom of speech or to enforce strict rules and regulations. Rather, the intention is to establish a framework for achieving an effective working relationship with the media and set out guidance on the use of social media. The Council welcomes the opportunity to talk to the press and publish information on social media in order to facilitate debate on issues in the public arena.

2 KEY AIMS

2.1 The Council is accountable to the local community for its actions and this can only be achieved through effective two-way communications. The press, radio, TV, internet – are crucially important in conveying information to the community so the Council must maintain positive, constructive media relations to increase public awareness of the services and facilities provided by the Council and to explain the reasons for particular policies and priorities.

2.2 Media has a vital role to play on behalf of the local community in holding the Council to account for its policies and actions. It is important that there is access to Officers and Members and to background information to assist in this role. To balance this, the Council will defend itself from any unfounded criticism and will ensure that the public are properly informed of all the relevant facts using appropriate channels of communication as necessary.

3. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 The law governing communications in local authorities can be found in the Local Government Acts 1986 and 1988. The Council must also have regard to the Government's Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity. Some aspects of the Code are relevant to this policy: - • "Any publicity describing the Council's policies and aims [and the provision of services] should be as objective as possible, concentrating on facts or explanation or both." • "Publicity touching on issues that are controversial, or on which there are arguments for and against the views or policies of the Council should be handled with particular care. Issues must be presented clearly, fairly and as simply as possible, although councils should not oversimplify facts, issues or arguments." • "Publicity should not attack, nor appear to undermine, generally accepted moral standards." • "Local authorities should not use public funds to mount publicity campaigns whose primary purpose is to persuade the public to hold a particular view on a question of policy."

3.2 In particular, Officers and Members should always have due regard for the long-term reputation of the Council.

3.3 Confidential documents, exempt Minutes, reports, papers and private correspondence should not be leaked. If such leaks do occur, an investigation will take place to establish who was responsible and take appropriate action in accordance with the Standing Orders and Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.

3.4 Where an issue arises that is, or is likely to be, subject to legal proceedings then advice should be taken before any response is made.

3.5 There are a number of personal privacy issues for Officers and Members that must be handled carefully and sensitively in accordance with the council's policies on Freedom of Information and Data Protection. These issues include the release of personal information, such as home address, telephone number and personal email address (although some Member contact details are in the public domain), disciplinary procedures and long-term sickness absences that are affecting service provision. In all these and similar situations, advice must be taken from the Town Council Manager/Clerk before any response is made.

4.0 CONTACT WITH THE PRESS

4.1 When responding to approaches from the press, the Chairman of the Council should be the authorised contact in consultation with the Town Council Manager/Clerk. However, if the subject of an enquiry relates to the work of one of the Council's Principal Speakers, the Chairman of the Council may delegate the authorised contact role to the relevant Speaker in consultation with the Town Council Manager/Clerk.

4.2 Statements made must reflect the Council's opinion.

4.3 Other Councillors can talk to the press but must ensure that it is clear that the opinions given are their own and not necessarily those of the Council.

4.4 Caution should be exercised when submitting letters to the editor for publication in newspapers. There are occasions when it is appropriate for the Council to submit a letter, for example to explain important policies or to correct factual errors in letters submitted by other correspondents. However, such letters should be kept brief and balanced in tone and correspondence should not be drawn out.

4.5 Letters representing the views of the Council should only be issued by the Town Council Manager/Clerk following agreement by the Council, the Chairman or relevant Speaker. If individual Members choose to send letters to express their own opinions on Council policies, they are strongly advised to check their facts first with the Town Council Manager/Clerk. It should always be made absolutely clear whether the views put forward are those of the Council or of an individual Member.

4.6 At all times consideration should be given as to how the correspondence may affect the reputation of the Council.

5 ATTENDANCE OF PRESS AT COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE MEETINGS

5.1 Agendas and minutes of meetings will be on the Council's website.

5.2 The Local Government Act 1972 requires that all agendas, reports and minutes be sent to the press on request, prior to the meeting.

5.3 The press are encouraged to attend Council meetings and seating and workspace will be made available.

6 ELECTIONS

6.1 The Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity contains guidance for providing publicity for Members and for publicity around elections. The code makes it clear that Council resources should not be used on publicising individual Members unless it is relevant to the particular position they hold in the Council.

7 PRESS RELEASES

7.1 The purpose of a press release is to provide important public information or to explain the Council's position on a particular issue. It is the responsibility of all Officers and Members to look for opportunities where the issuing of a press release may be beneficial.

7.2 Any Officer or Member or PR advisor appointed by the Council may draft a press release. However, publication must all be only be issued by the Town Council Manager/Clerk following agreement by the Council, the Chairman or relevant Speaker in order to ensure that the principles outlined in section three (Legal Framework) are adhered to, that there is consistency of style across the Council and that the use of the press release can be monitored.

8 NOTICES

8.1 The Council website and social media will be used to convey information on matters of interest and latest news and will be updated regularly

8.2 The Council notice boards will be used for the advertising notices of meetings and other council information.

9 SOCIAL MEDIA

9.1 Social media is a collective term used to describe methods of publishing on the internet. This policy covers all forms of social media and social networking sites which include (but are not limited to):

Hednesford Town Council Website

Facebook and other social networking sites

Twitter and other micro blogging sites

Youtube and other video clips and podcast sites

LinkedIn

Bloggs and discussion forums

Email

9.2 The use of social media does not replace existing forms of communication.

9.3 The current Code of Conduct for Hednesford Town Council applies to online activity in the same way it does to other written or verbal communication.

9.4 Individual Hednesford Town Councillors and the Officers are responsible for what they post online, in both a council and a personal capacity. Generally, Hednesford Town Councillors and Officers have the same legal duties online as anyone else, but failure to comply with the law may have more serious consequences.

9.5 Town Council use of Social Media Social media may be used to:

- Distribute agendas, post minutes and dates of meetings

- Broadcast (live stream) meetings

- Advertise events and activities

- News stories linked website or press page

- Advertise Vacancies

- Re-tweet or share information from partner agencies such as Principal Authorities, Police, Library, Health etc.

- Announce new information to the community

- Post or share information from other Town related community groups such as schools, sports clubs, community groups and charities

- Refer resident queries to the Town Council Manager/Clerk and all other Town Councillors

10 CODE OF PRACTICE

10.1 When using social media (including email) Hednesford Town Councillors and Officers must be mindful of the information they post in both a personal and a Town Council capacity and keep the tone of any comments respectful and informative. Online content should be accurate, objective, balanced and informative.

11 RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

11.1 Town Councillors and Officers must not:

- hide their identity using false names or pseudonyms

- present personal opinions as that of the Town Council

- present themselves in a way that might cause embarrassment to the Town Council

- post content that is contrary to the democratic decisions of the Town Council

post controversial or potentially inflammatory remarks

engage in personal attacks, online fights and hostile communications

use an individual's name unless given written permission to do so

publish photographs or videos of individuals without permission or of minors without parental permission

post any information that infringes copyright of others

post any information that may be deemed libel

post online activity that constitutes bullying or harassment

bring the council into disrepute, including through content posted in a personal capacity

post offensive or discriminatory language relating to race, sexuality, disability, gender, age, religion or belief

conduct any online activity that violates laws, regulations or that constitutes a criminal offence

12.2 In addition, the following actions are also prohibited

Publishing untrue statements about a person which is damaging to their reputation is libel and can result in a court action and fine and/or damages. This also applies if someone else publishes something libellous on Hednesford Town Council's social media site. A successful libel claim can result in an award of damages against the Town Council.

Posting copyright images or text on social media sites is an offence. Breach of copyright can result in an award of damages against the Town Council.

Publishing personal data of individuals without permission is a breach of Data Protection legislation and is an offence.

Publication of obscene material is a criminal offence and may subject to a custodial sentence.

12.3 Town Councillors' views posted in any capacity in advance of matters to be debated by the Town Council meeting may constitute pre-disposition, predetermination or bias and may require the individual to declare an interest at council meetings

13 TOWN COUNCIL TO APPOINT A MODERATOR

13.1 The Town Council will appoint a nominated person as moderator of Town Council social media output and be responsible for posting and monitoring content to ensure it complies with this Social Media Policy.

13.2 The moderator will have authority to remove any posts made by third parties from Town Council social media pages which are deemed to be of a defamatory or libellous nature.

13.3 Anyone with concerns regarding content placed on social media sites that denigrate Hednesford Town Councillors, the Officers, or residents should report them to the Town Council Manager/Clerk of the Council.

13.4 Misuse of social media content that is contrary to this and other policies could result in action being taken

Hednesford Town Council

Personnel Committee Terms of Reference

First adopted by the full Council: 11 February 2020

1. Purpose

To ensure effective use of human resources of the Town Council, compliance with all relevant employment and other related legislation and implementation of any relevant policies, procedures or good practice.

2. Membership

The committee shall comprise at least 3 and no more than 5 members in total, to be elected by the full Council, usually at the first meeting following an election and as required thereafter. Non-voting persons including Town Council employees may be invited to attend as appropriate at the discretion of the Chair or as agreed by the Committee. This will usually include the Town Council Manager/Clerk (Proper Officer).

3. Chair & Vice Chair

To be elected by full Council as required.

4. Quorum

The quorum shall be three.

5. Meetings

Members shall be summoned to attend meetings in accordance with Standing Orders. Public Notices of the meeting shall be given in accordance with Standing Orders, however meetings shall not normally be open to the public as they will usually include discussion of confidential items relating to the employment of staff.

6. Minutes

Minutes including any recommendations for full Council consideration will be recorded by the Town Council Manager/Clerk (or as delegated by the Chair) and circulated to all members of the Committee and to full Council members.

7. Powers

- a) To consider, agree and ensure implementation of any changes to policy, procedure, training or practice which are required to comply with all current Employment Law and any related legislation such as that pertaining to employee or volunteer Health, Safety and Welfare, Terms and Conditions of Service (eg. minimum wage) or other relevant legislation, or non-legislative but established good practice as appropriate and agreed by the Committee.
- b) To consider and if appropriate to approve requests for expenditure that exceed the Town Council Manager/Clerk's authorisation level for employment related budgets such as staff expenses, recruitment or training. To put forward any recommendations to change such budgets during the budget development process.
- c) To review employees pay awards and increments, usually for inclusion in the annual budget proposal. If following the budget (for example due to delays in national agreements or relevant benchmarks) the Committee may implement such awards as they see fit, as long as they do not exceed the maximum levels set by the budget.

- d) To develop, review and agree job descriptions, person specifications, and employment contract paperwork for all staff including as a result of a re-grading request, and also covering posts shared with other organisations or those outsourced; excepting changes to the Town Council Manager/Clerk job description or person specification which also requires full Council consideration and approval. Also excepting changes to any terms and conditions relating to pay, holiday entitlement or sick pay entitlement, which also requires full Council consideration and approval. The Committee may consider and make recommendations on these items.
- e) To support the Town Council Manager/Clerk in managing significant Personnel matters such as (but not limited to) capability assessments, grievances, disciplinary, or long term sickness absence management as appropriate, in accordance with Council policies or procedures or established best practice. This is expected to include members' involvement in the formation of any panel for hearings and/or appeals panels, ensuring independence of such panels from one another; and considering and approving any temporary backfilling of absent staff. In the case of any significant Personnel matter that directly concerns the Town Council Manager/Clerk, the Chair of the Personnel Committee is expected to act as the lead in such a matter in discussion with the wider Committee.
- f) Where a process as per (e) above has led to such a position, to have the delegated power to dismiss an employee, except in the case of the Town Council Manager/Clerk, where final dismissal shall require approval of the full Council.
- g) To ensure that all staff have an annual appraisal, to review a summary report from this process and consider any recommendations as a result. To arrange for at least two Committee members to undertake the annual appraisal of the Town Council Manager/Clerk.
- h) To agree (usually) two Committee members to form along with the appropriate senior staff member/s, the Recruitment and Selection Panel for any employment process. To grant such panels the full authority to make offers of employment to prospective employees as appropriate; excepting offers to the Town Council Manager/Clerk (Proper Officer) whose final appointment shall need to be considered and agreed by the full Council. On making an offer of employment the panel shall offer no more than the advertised salary agreed for the job plus a maximum of up to an additional 5%, which shall only be offered in the case of exceptional candidates.

HEDNESFORD TOWN COUNCIL DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Introduction

- 1 This policy is based on and complies with the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice (<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2174>). It also takes account of the ACAS guide on discipline and grievances at work.

https://www.acas.org.uk/media/1043/Discipline-and-grievances-at-work-The-Acas-guide/pdf/DG_Guide_Feb_2019.pdf

The policy is designed to help Council employees improve unsatisfactory conduct and performance in their job. Wherever possible, the Council will try to resolve its concerns about employees' behaviour informally, without starting the formal procedure set out below.

- 2 The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- 3 This policy confirms:
 - informal coaching and supervision will be considered, where appropriate, to improve conduct and / or attendance
 - the Council will fully investigate the facts of each case
 - the Council recognises that misconduct and unsatisfactory work performance are different issues. The disciplinary policy will also apply to work performance issues to ensure that all alleged instances of employees' underperformance are dealt with fairly and in a way that is consistent with required standards. However, the disciplinary policy will only be used when performance management proves ineffective. For more information see ACAS "Performance Management" at <https://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=6608>
 - employees will be informed in writing about the nature of the complaint against them and given the opportunity to state their case
 - employees will be provided, where appropriate, with written copies of evidence and relevant witness statements in advance of a disciplinary hearing
 - employees may be accompanied or represented by a companion – a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official - at any investigatory, disciplinary or appeal meeting. The companion is permitted to address such meetings, to put the employee's case and confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case

- the Council will give employees reasonable notice of any meetings in this procedure. Employee must make all reasonable efforts to attend. Failure to attend any meeting may result in it going ahead and a decision being taken. An employee who does not attend a meeting will be given the opportunity to be represented and to make written submissions
- if the employee's companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within five working days of the original meeting date unless it is unreasonable not to propose a later date
- any changes to specified time limits in the Council's procedure must be agreed by the employee and the Council
- information about an employee's disciplinary matter will be restricted to those involved in the disciplinary process. A record of the reason for disciplinary action and the action taken by the Council is confidential to the employee. The employee's disciplinary records will be held by the Council in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- audio or video recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the disciplinary procedure are prohibited, unless agreed by all affected parties as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition
- employees have the right to appeal against any disciplinary decision. The appeal decision is final
- if an employee who is already subject to the Council's disciplinary procedure raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after the completion of the disciplinary procedure
- disciplinary action taken by the Council can include a written warning, final written warning or dismissal
- this procedure may be implemented at any stage if the employee's alleged misconduct warrants this
- except for gross misconduct when an employee may be dismissed without notice, the Council will not dismiss an employee on the first occasion that it decides there has been misconduct
- if an employee is suspended following allegations of misconduct, it will be on full pay and only for such time as is necessary. Suspension is not a disciplinary sanction. The Council will write to the employee to confirm any period of suspension and the reasons for it,
- the Council may consider mediation at any stage of the disciplinary procedure where appropriate (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process that requires the consent of affected parties

Examples of misconduct

4 Misconduct is employee behaviour that can lead to the employer taking disciplinary action. The following list contains some examples of misconduct: The list is not exhaustive.

- unauthorised absence
- poor timekeeping
- misuse of the Council's resources and facilities including telephone, email and internet
- inappropriate behaviour
- refusal to follow reasonable instructions
- breach of health and safety rules.

Examples of gross misconduct

5 Gross misconduct is misconduct that is so serious that it is likely to lead to dismissal without notice. The following list contains some examples of gross misconduct: The list is not exhaustive

- bullying, discrimination and harassment
- incapacity at work because of alcohol or drugs
- violent behaviour
- fraud or theft
- gross negligence
- gross insubordination
- serious breaches of council policies and procedures e.g. the Health and Safety Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy, Data Protection Policy and any policies regarding the use of information technology
- serious and deliberate damage to property
- use of the internet or email to access pornographic, obscene or offensive material
- disclosure of confidential information.

Suspension

6 If allegations of gross misconduct or serious misconduct are made, the council may suspend the employee while further investigations are carried out. Suspension will be on full pay. Suspension does not imply any determination of guilt or innocence, as it is merely a measure to enable further investigation.

7 While on suspension, the employee is required to be available during normal hours of work in the event that the council needs to make contact. The employee must not

contact or attempt to contact or influence anyone connected with the investigation in any way or to discuss this matter with any other employee or councillor.

- 8 The employee must not attend work. The council will make arrangements for the employee to access any information or documents required to respond to any allegations.

Examples of unsatisfactory work performance

- 9 The following list contains some examples of unsatisfactory work performance: The list is not exhaustive.
 - inadequate application of management instructions/office procedures
 - inadequate IT skills
 - unsatisfactory management of staff
 - unsatisfactory communication skills.

The Procedure

- 10 Preliminary enquiries. The council may make preliminary enquiries to establish the basic facts of what has happened in order to understand whether there may be a case to answer under the disciplinary procedure.

If the employee's manager believes there may be a disciplinary case to answer, the council may initiate a more detailed investigation undertaken to establish the facts of a situation or to establish the perspective of others who may have witnessed misconduct.

- 11 Informal Procedures. Where minor concerns about conduct become apparent, it is the manager's responsibility to raise this with the employee and clarify the improvements required. A file note will be made and kept by the manager. The informal discussions are not part of the formal disciplinary procedure. If the conduct fails to improve, or if further matters of conduct become apparent, the manager may decide to formalise the discussions and invite the employee to a first stage disciplinary hearing.

Disciplinary investigation

- 12 A formal disciplinary investigation may sometimes be required to establish the facts and whether there is a disciplinary case to answer.
- 13 If a formal disciplinary investigation is required, the Council will appoint an Investigator who will be responsible for undertaking a fact-finding exercise to collect all relevant information. The Investigator will be independent and will normally be a councillor. If the staffing committee considers that there are no councillors who are independent (for example, because they all have direct involvement in the allegations about the employee), it will appoint someone from outside the Council. The Investigator will be

appointed as soon as possible after the allegations have been made. The Council will inform the Investigator of the terms of reference of the investigation. The terms of reference should specify:

- the allegations or events that the investigation is required to examine
 - whether a recommendation is required
 - how the findings should be presented. For example, an investigator will often be required to present the findings in the form of a written report
 - who the findings should be reported to and who to contact for further direction if unexpected issues arise or advice is needed.
- 14 The Investigator will be asked to submit their findings within 20 working days of appointment where possible. In cases of alleged unsatisfactory performance or of allegations of minor misconduct, the appointment of an investigator may not be necessary and the Council may decide to commence disciplinary proceedings at the next stage - the disciplinary meeting (see paragraph 22).
- 15 The Council will notify the employee in writing of the alleged misconduct and details of the person undertaking the investigation. The employee may be asked to meet an investigator as part of the disciplinary investigation. The employee will be given sufficient notice of the meeting with the Investigator so that he/she has reasonable time to prepare for it. The letter will explain the investigatory process and that the meeting is part of that process. The employee will be provided with a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure. The Council will also inform the employee that when he/she meets with the Investigator, he/she will have the opportunity to comment on the allegations of misconduct.
- 16 Employees may be accompanied or represented by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official at any investigatory meeting.
- 17 If there are other persons (e.g. employees, councillors, members of the public or the Council's contractors) who can provide relevant information, the Investigator should try to obtain it from them in advance of the meeting with the employee.
- 18 The Investigator has no authority to take disciplinary action. His/her role is to establish the facts of the case as quickly as possible and prepare a report that recommends to the staffing committee whether or not disciplinary action should be considered under the policy.
- 19 The Investigator's report will contain his/her recommendations and the findings on which they were based. He/she will recommend either:
- the employee has no case to answer and there should be no further action under the Council's disciplinary procedure

- the matter is not serious enough to justify further use of the disciplinary procedure and can be dealt with informally or
 - the employee has a case to answer and a formal hearing should be convened under the Council's disciplinary procedure.
- 20 The Investigator will submit the report to the Council which will decide whether further action will be taken.
- 21 If the Council decides that it will not take disciplinary action, it may consider whether mediation would be appropriate in the circumstances.

The disciplinary meeting

- 22 If the Council decides that there is a case to answer, it will appoint a panel of three councillors, to formally hear the allegations. The panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. The Investigator shall not sit on the panel.
- 23 No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the panel. The employee will be invited, in writing, to attend a disciplinary meeting. The panel's letter will confirm the following:
- the names of its Chairman and other two members
 - details of the alleged misconduct, its possible consequences and the employee's statutory right to be accompanied at the meeting
 - a copy of the information provided to the panel which may include the investigation report, supporting evidence and a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure
 - the time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the hearing so that he /she has sufficient time to prepare for it
 - that witnesses may attend on the employee's and the Council's behalf and that both parties should inform each other of their witnesses' names at least two working days before the meeting
 - that the employee may be accompanied by a companion - a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official

The purpose of the disciplinary meeting hearing is for the allegations to be put to the employee and then for the employee to give their perspective. It will be conducted as follows:

- the Chairman will introduce the members of the panel to the employee and explain the arrangements for the hearing
- the Chairman will set out the allegations and invite the Investigator to present the findings of the investigation report (if there has been a previous investigation)
- the Chairman will invite the employee to present their account

- the employee (or the companion) will set out his/her case and present evidence (including any witnesses and/or witness statements)
 - any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question the Investigator and any witness
 - the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up
- 24 The Chairman will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision with reasons, in writing, within five working days of the meeting. The Chairman will also notify the employee of the right to appeal the decision.
- 25 The disciplinary meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be further investigated by the panel.

Disciplinary action

- 26 If the panel decides that there should be disciplinary action, it may be any of the following:

First written warning

If the employee's conduct has fallen beneath acceptable standards, a first written warning will be issued. A first written warning will set out:

- the reason for the written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action
- the employee's right of appeal
- that a note confirming the written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for a specified period of time (e.g. 12 months).

Final written warning

If the offence is sufficiently serious, or if there is further misconduct or a failure to improve sufficiently during the currency of a prior warning, the employee will be given a final written warning. A final written warning will set out:

- the reason for the final written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal
- the employee's right of appeal

- that a note confirming the final written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for a specified period of time (e.g. 12 months).

Dismissal

The Council may dismiss:

- for gross misconduct
- if there is no improvement within the specified time period, in the conduct which has been the subject of a final written warning
- if another instance of misconduct has occurred and a final written warning has already been issued and remains in force.

- 27 The Council will consider very carefully a decision to dismiss. If an employee is dismissed, he/she will receive a written statement of the reasons for his/her dismissal, the date on which the employment will end and details of his/her right of appeal. If the panel decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file. Action taken as a result of the disciplinary meeting will remain in force unless it is modified as a result of an appeal.

The appeal

- 28 An employee who is the subject of disciplinary action will be notified of the right of appeal. His/her written notice of appeal must be received by the Council within five working days of the employee receiving written notice of the disciplinary action and must specify the grounds for appeal.

- 29 The grounds for appeal include;

- a failure by the Council to follow its disciplinary policy
- the panel's disciplinary decision was not supported by the evidence
- the disciplinary action was too severe in the circumstances of the case
- new evidence has come to light since the disciplinary meeting.

- 30 Where possible, the appeal will be heard by a panel of three members who have not previously been involved in the case. This includes the Investigator. There may be insufficient members who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of three members of the Council who may include members of the earlier panel. The appeal panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members.

- 31 The employee will be notified, in writing, within 10 working days of receipt of the notice of appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The employee will be advised that he/she may be accompanied by a companion - a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.

- 32 At the appeal meeting, the Chairman will:
- introduce the panel members to the employee
 - explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the disciplinary decision
 - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
- 33 The employee (or companion) will be asked to explain the grounds for appeal.
- 34 The Chairman will inform the employee that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, usually within five working days of the appeal hearing.
- 35 The appeal panel may decide to uphold the disciplinary decision of the staffing committee, substitute a less serious sanction or decide that no disciplinary action is necessary. If it decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file.
- 36 If an appeal against dismissal is upheld, the employee will be paid in full for the period from the date of dismissal and continuity of service will be preserved.
- 37 The appeal panel's decision is final.

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HEDNESFORD TOWN COUNCIL

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Introduction

1. This policy is based on and complies with the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice (<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2174>). It also takes account of the ACAS guide on discipline and grievances at work. (https://www.acas.org.uk/media/1043/Discipline-and-grievances-at-work-The-Acas-guide/pdf/DG_Guide_Feb_2019.pdf). It aims to encourage and maintain good relationships between the Council and its employees by treating grievances seriously and resolving them as quickly as possible. It sets out the arrangements for employees to raise their concerns, problems or complaints about their employment with the Council. The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
2. Many problems can be raised and settled during the course of everyday working relationships. Employees should aim to settle most grievances informally with their line manager.
3. This policy confirms:
 - employees have the right to be accompanied or represented at a grievance meeting or appeal by a companion who can be a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official. This includes any meeting held with them to hear about, gather facts about, discuss, consider or resolve their grievance. The companion will be permitted to address the grievance/appeal meetings, to present the employee's case for his /her grievance/appeal and to confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case.
 - the Council will give employees reasonable notice of the date of the grievance/appeal meetings. Employees and their companions must make all reasonable efforts to attend. If the companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within five working days of the original meeting date unless it is unreasonable not to propose a later date
 - any changes to specified time limits must be agreed by the employee and the Council
 - an employee has the right to appeal against the decision about his/her grievance. The appeal decision is final

- information about an employee's grievance will be restricted to those involved in the grievance process. A record of the reason for the grievance, its outcome and action taken is confidential to the employee. The employee's grievance records will be held by the Council in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- audio or video recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the grievance procedure are prohibited, unless agreed by all affected parties as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition
- if an employee who is already subject to a disciplinary process raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after completion of the disciplinary procedure
- if a grievance is not upheld, no disciplinary action will be taken against an employee if he/she raised the grievance in good faith
- the Council may consider mediation at any stage of the grievance procedure where appropriate, (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process which requires the consent of affected parties
- Employees can use all stages of the grievance procedure If the complaint is not a code of conduct complaint about a councillor. Employees can use the informal stage of the council's grievance procedure (paragraph 4) to deal with all grievance issues, including a complaint about a councillor Employees cannot use the formal stages of the council's grievance procedure for a code of conduct complaint about a councillor. If the complaint about the councillor is not resolved at the informal stage, the employee can contact the monitoring officer of Cannock Chase Council who will inform the employee whether or not the complaint can be dealt with under the code of conduct. If it does not concern the code of conduct, the employee can make a formal complaint under the council's grievance procedure (see paragraph 5)
- If the grievance is a code of conduct complaint against a councillor, the employee cannot proceed with it beyond the informal stage of the council's grievance procedure. However, whatever the complaint, the council has a duty of care to its employees. It must take all reasonable steps to ensure employees have a safe working environment, for example by undertaking risk assessments, by ensuring staff and councillors are properly trained and by protecting staff from bullying, harassment and all forms of discrimination
- If an employee considers that the grievance concerns his or her safety within the working environment, whether or not it also concerns a complaint against a councillor, the employee should raise these safety concerns with his or her line manager at the informal stage of the grievance procedure. The council will consider whether it should take further action in this matter in accordance with any of its employment policies (for example its health and safety policy or its dignity at work policy) and in accordance with the code of conduct regime

Informal grievance procedure

4. The Council and its employees benefit if grievances are resolved informally and as quickly as possible. As soon as a problem arises, the employee should raise it with his/her manager to see if an informal solution is possible. Both should try to resolve the matter at this stage. If the employee does not want to discuss the grievance with his/her manager (for example, because it concerns the manager), the employee should contact the Chairman of the Council or, if appropriate, another member of the Council. If the employee's complaint is about a councillor, it may be appropriate to involve that councillor at the informal stage. This will require both the employee's and the councillor's consent.

Formal grievance procedure

5. If it is not possible to resolve the grievance informally and the employee's complaint is not one that should be dealt with as a code of conduct complaint (see above), the employee may submit a formal grievance. It should be submitted in writing to the Chairman of the Council.
6. The Council will appoint a panel of three members to hear the grievance. The panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the panel.

Investigation

7. If the panel decides that it is appropriate, (e.g. if the grievance is complex), it may appoint an investigator to carry out an investigation before the grievance meeting to establish the facts of the case. The investigation may include interviews (e.g. the employee submitting the grievance, other employees, councillors or members of the public).
8. The investigator will summarise their findings (usually within an investigation report) and present their findings to the panel.

Notification

9. Within 10 working days of the Council receiving the employee's grievance (this may be longer if there is an investigation), the employee will normally be asked, in writing, to attend a grievance meeting. The written notification will include the following:
 - the names of its Chairman and other members
 - the date, time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the meeting which will normally be within 25 working days of when the Council received the grievance

- the employee's right to be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official
- a copy of the Council's grievance policy
- confirmation that, if necessary, witnesses may attend (or submit witness statements) on the employee's behalf and that the employee should provide the names of his/her witnesses as soon as possible before the meeting
- confirmation that the employee will provide the Council with any supporting evidence in advance of the meeting, usually with at least two days' notice
- findings of the investigation if there has been an investigation
- an invitation for the employee to request any adjustments to be made for the hearing (for example where a person has a health condition).

The grievance meeting

10. At the grievance meeting:

- the Chairman will introduce the members of the panel to the employee
- the employee (or companion) will set out the grievance and present the evidence
- the Chairman will ask the employee questions about the information presented and will want to understand what action he/she wants the Council to take
- any member of the panel and the employee (or the companion) may question any witness
- the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up the case
- a grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be investigated by the panel.

11. The Chairman will provide the employee with the panel's decision, in writing, usually within five working days of the meeting. The letter will notify the employee of the action, if any, that the Council will take and of the employee's right to appeal.

The appeal

12. If an employee decides that his/her grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved by the panel, he/she may submit a written appeal to the Council. An appeal must be received by the Council within five working days of the employee receiving the panel's decision and must specify the grounds of appeal.

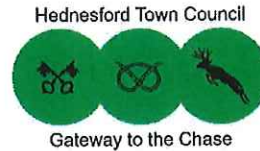
13. Appeals may be raised on a number of grounds, e.g.:

- a failure by the Council to follow its grievance policy
- the decision was not supported by the evidence
- the action proposed by the panel was inadequate/inappropriate
- new evidence has come to light since the grievance meeting.

14. The appeal will be heard by a panel of three members who have not previously been involved in the case. There may be insufficient members of the staffing committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of three Council members who may include members of the staffing committee. The appeal panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members.
15. The employee will be notified, in writing, usually within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The meeting will normally take place within 25 working days of the Council's receipt of the appeal. The employee will be advised that he/she may be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.
16. At the appeal meeting, the Chairman will:
 - introduce the panel members to the employee
 - explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the decision of the original panel
 - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
17. The employee (or companion) will be asked to explain the grounds of appeal.
18. The Chairman will inform the employee that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, within five working days of the appeal meeting.
19. The appeal panel may decide to uphold the decision of the original panel or substitute its own decision.
20. The decision of the appeal panel is final.

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Dr Rashmi Shukla,
Regional Director
Public Health England
Midlands and East of England Regional Office
1st Floor
5 St Philip's Place
Birmingham
B3 2PW

20 January 2020

Dear Dr Shukla

Poplars Landfill Site - Cannock

We are writing to you on behalf of our residents who are extremely concerned about the operation of the Poplars Landfill Site, Cannock

Over the years many fears have been raised about the landfill site, but things have come to a head recently with malodours emanating from the site adversely affecting areas of Bridgtown, Heath Hayes, Wimblebury, Norton Canes and Hednesford all within the Cannock Chase District but a situation which will also affect residents in neighbouring parishes in the South Staffordshire District area

This has resulted in very many complaints and questions raised regarding:

The role of the Staffordshire County Council in granting planning permissions for the land fill site

The effectiveness of the Environment Agency in monitoring the operation of the site

The day to day management of the site by the operator (Biffa) and the apparent lack of contingency arrangements the company appears to have in place to deal with similar problems that have arisen at some of their other sites

The potential negative impact on the value of property and on businesses operating or proposing to locate in the area

The possible detrimental effects to health and well-being of residents and workers as a result of breathing in over a long period the malodours emanating from the site

A public meeting was hosted by Hednesford Town Council on 7 January and was attended by worried residents who were provided with written statements from Biffa, the Environment

Agency and local MP, Amanda Milling regarding the current situation and the measures being taken to mitigate the problem

Whilst it was accepted that action was being taken, the overriding and considerable anxiety expressed by residents was whether or not the release of odours was having a detrimental impact on health now and in the future

In this respect our four Councils are calling not only for the remedial action to address the current situation to be expedited but in addition for an independent inquiry into the operation of the site including the role of the Environment Agency and focussing in particular on the effect on public health now and potentially in the future

Your comments and response to the above would be most appreciated

Please reply c/o Hednesford Town Council, Pye Green Community Centre, Bradbury Lane, Hednesford WS12 4EP

Yours sincerely

Cllr Alson Smith
Chairman Bridgtown Parish Council

Cllr Martyn Buttery
Chairman Heath Hayes and Wimblebury Parish Council

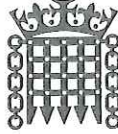
Cllr Paul Woodhead
Chairman Hednesford Town Council

Cllr John Preece
Chairman Norton Canes Parish Council

Copies to:

Environment Agency
Director of Public Health for Staffordshire
Amanda Milling MP
Biffa
Chief Executive Staffordshire County Council
Managing Director Cannock Chase Council

AMANDA MILLING MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr Peter Harrison
Town Clerk
Hednesford Town Council
Pye Green Community Centre
Bradbury Lane
Hednesford
Staffordshire
WS12 4EP

Ref: JM/CW/202001/50

20 January 2020

Dear Mr Harrison,

Thank you for contacting me to let me know that the Council have passed a motion about local, clean energy.

Community energy is a key part of clean growth, showing what can happen when groups of people come together to de-carbonise energy in local areas, while also investing in these places to bring other economic, or social, benefits.

I acknowledge the importance of a route to market for small-scale low-carbon generation for communities. Last year, the Government launched the Smart Export Guarantee (SEG), which will ensure that small-scale low-carbon generators are paid for the power they export to the grid. The SEG provides space for innovative market solutions to come forward and supports the uptake of flexible technologies such as batteries, reinforcing the Government's smart energy agenda.

I am assured that eligible community projects will be able to benefit from the SEG. The Government is also continuing to consider what measures it could take to support the efforts of communities that wish to invest in low-carbon community energy.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda Milling'.

Amanda Milling MP

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Council Meeting 11 February 2020 – List of Planning Applications

20/019	Extensions etc. – 7 Lower Road	No Objection
20/014	Improvements/enlargement of extension – 24 Wood Lane	No Objection
20/010	Increase height at rear fence panel to 2.8m to provide privacy to neighbouring occupiers from the lift (CH/20/003) – 15 Wesley Place	No Objection
20/008	Erection of extension – 3 Cobden Close	No Objection
20/003	Development: Installation of step lift to provide access to property - 15 Wesley Place	No Objection
20/001	Change of use from garage annex to 1 bed dwelling - 46 Uxbridge Street	No Objection – Application withdrawn 3/2/20
19/441	Proposed new build garage and annex and new fence line on boundary - 7 Bedford Place	No Objection
19/422	<p>MAJOR APPLICATION* Outline application for residential development - Upto 80 dwellings, open space landscaping, access (all other matters reserved) - ADDITIONAL PLAN RECEIVED</p> <p>Location: Land west of Pye Green Road, Cannock (Area E)</p>	<p>The Town Council is pleased to see the range of dwellings proposed (including affordable housing) and their design layout and proximity to the new Poppyfields School</p> <p>There is still concern about the impact on local infrastructure. In particular highways and the need to improve the attractiveness of walking, cycling and public transport e.g. by provision of bus shelters and safe pedestrian access to them</p> <p>Recent and current residential and other developments on adjacent and nearby sites has resulted in considerable disruption, inconvenience and nuisance to residents in the vicinity</p> <p>The Town Council is aware that the Planning Authority is likely to impose conditions to regulate the operation of the site during construction and would expect that these will be enforced rigidly. For example ensuring that local roads are kept clear of mud</p>

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Dear Customer

**Broadway Post Office®
50 Broadway, Hednesford, Cannock, WS12 4HP**

As you may be aware the above Post Office closed last year due to reasons beyond our control.

Since then we have been exploring our options for restoring a Post Office service to our customers in the area. The vacancy in this area of Cannock has been advertised on our website and a member of the field team has also personally visited the area, but so far we have received no interest or formal applications for the position.

Unfortunately, we have been unable to identify a suitable solution and I'm therefore writing to you and other local representatives to advise you that as there have been no suitable opportunities to re-establish a service, this branch will remain closed.

We would of course consider any appropriate options if there are any significant changes in the area in the future. However due to the length of time the branch has been closed, we would need to satisfy ourselves that any new opportunity would be sustainable for both the Post Office and the operator. If you have any suggestions please contact the National Consultation Team as detailed overleaf.

It would be helpful if you could share this information with any local groups or organisations that you know within the community or in your organisation.

We're carrying out this notification in line with our Principles of Community Engagement. A copy is available at the end of this letter.

We regret that we have been unable to restore a service locally and have provided details at the end of this letter of alternative branches in the area, which we hope our customers will continue to use.

Yours faithfully

Scott Lacey

**Scott Lacey
Area Network Change Manager**

How to contact us:

comments@postoffice.co.uk
FREEPOST Your Comments
postofficeviews.co.uk

Post Office Limited is committed to protecting your privacy. Information about how we do this can be found on our website at [postoffice.co.uk/privacy](https://www.postoffice.co.uk/privacy)

To get this information in a different format, for example, in larger print, audio or braille call 03457 22 33 44 or Textphone 03457 22 33 55.

Alternative access to Post Office services:

- **Chadsmoor Post Office**, 207 – 209 Cannock Road, Cannock, WS11 5DD
- **Huntington Post Office**, Stafford Road, Huntington, Cannock, WS12 4NU

Principles of Community Engagement on changes to the Post Office network

We are committed to engaging and supporting our customers and their representatives as we make changes to the Post Office network. The following Principles will be adopted when communicating about changes to your local Post Office branch.

We will **Notify** - where we are informing customers of changes around:

- Opening hours
- Temporary closure¹/ temporary service interruption
- Re-opening of a temporarily closed branch in the same site
- Opening a new branch unrelated to a previous closure
- Location used by a Mobile Post Office within a community

We will display a poster in branch (or nearby if appropriate) to notify customers of the above changes, providing four weeks' notice. Where four weeks' notice is not possible, we will provide notice as soon as we are able to. For temporary closures we will include details of the nearest alternative Post Offices and our customer helpline/textphone.

We will **Engage** - where we are seeking feedback on a decision that has been made on:

- Re-opening of a temporarily closed branch in a new location (where the branch has been closed for more than three months)
- Franchising of a Directly Managed branch in its existing site

While the decision to proceed will have already been made, we will welcome suggestions about specific aspects of the change such as access arrangements and the internal layout. We will provide four weeks' notice or, where extenuating circumstances prevent this, we will provide as much notice as possible.

During this period we will display a poster in branch and provide information online. We will contact locally elected representatives², the Consumer Advocacy Bodies and selected charities³, providing clear information on any changes to services or access arrangements at the branch. We will ask locally elected representatives to share information with other key community outlets (such as notice boards, local charities, magazines, GP surgeries etc.). We will publish the outcome of the engagement online and in branch, providing a summary of key issues raised with a clear response to each and any changes made to our original plans.

We will **Consult** - where we are seeking feedback on proposals prior to a decision being made on the:

- Permanent closure of a Post Office branch⁴
- Permanent relocation of a Post Office branch (including the franchising of a Directly Managed branch to a new site)

We will carry out a six-week⁵ local public consultation, informing customers, locally elected representatives, Consumer Advocacy Bodies and selected charities of the proposal. This information will also be made available online and for a Directly Managed branch a press release will be issued to local media. We will ask locally elected representatives to share information with other key community outlets (such as notice boards, local charities, magazines, GP surgeries etc.).

The consultation will ask specific questions on areas where we would like feedback on access to Post Office services and will confirm when the change will happen if the decision is made to proceed. We will provide clear information on any changes to services as well as access to and into the new branch.

We welcome all feedback with the following factors being taken into account in making our decision, which we expect to make within four weeks of the close of consultation:

- Customer access to, into and inside the new or alternative branch/branches with particular regard to vulnerable consumers
- Any local community issues which could be affected by or affect the proposal

At the end of the consultation process we will write to locally elected representatives, Consumer Advocacy Bodies and respondents to the consultation (where practical) to confirm our decision and provide a summary of key issues raised with a clear response to each. This information will be made available online and in branch (where possible).

These Principles have been agreed with Citizens Advice, Citizens Advice Scotland and the General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland; the independent statutory consumer watchdogs.

What to do if you feel these Principles haven't been followed:

Please get in touch so we can investigate your complaint. We'll explain in our reply whether we believe we have followed our Principles of Community Engagement and will provide you with the contact details for the relevant consumer watchdog (Citizens Advice, Citizens Advice Scotland or the Consumer Council for Northern Ireland) if you're not satisfied with our response. The watchdog will independently assess whether we have followed the Principles of Community Engagement process (rather than the decision itself) and recommend any actions with respect to the complaint.

postofficeviews.co.uk
comments@postoffice.co.uk
FREEPOST Your Comments
Call: 03457 22 33 44
Textphone: 03457 22 33 55

¹We will provide an update to locally elected representatives if the status of the temporarily closed branch has not changed after 12 months.

² Locally elected representatives include but are not restricted to the Member of Parliament, Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly, or Northern Ireland Assembly, Local Authority Chief Executive, Ward Councillors, Parish or Community Council.

³ Selected charities are local Citizens Advice, Age UK, Northern Ireland's Disability Action and Northern Ireland's Rural Community Network. All parties referred to in 2 and 3 above are encouraged to share all information with local groups and organisations who they believe have an active interest in changes to their local Post Office.

⁴ There may be a small number of cases where due to circumstances outside our control we have no option other than to permanently close a branch in a particular location. In these cases the consultation will seek feedback on alternative Post Office service provision in the area.

⁵ If the consultation includes more than four weeks in July in Scotland and Northern Ireland or more than four weeks in August in England and Wales we will extend the period by one calendar week. We will not start any local public consultation during the two-week period which includes the Christmas and New Year bank holidays.

Hednesford Town Council
Lloyds TSB Bank Reconciliation 31/01/20

Bank Balance per Statement

LESS O/S cheques

Bank Balance per Statement Unity Trust Bank	£	12,179.52
Instant Savings	£	130,665.96

LESS O/S cheques

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Cash Book bank balance at 31.01.20	£	142,845.48
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Cash Book Balance	£	142,845.48
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2 Year Long Term Savings	£	51,504.91
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125 Day Savings	£	50,686.66
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Total Cash Balances	£	245,037.05
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Reserves B/F	£	164,191.33
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Receipts	£	236,940.53
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	£	401,131.86
--	---	------------

Less: Expenditure	£	156,094.81
-------------------	---	------------

TOTAL	£	245,037.05
-------	---	------------

Signed:

Dated:

**Hednesford Town Council
Lloyds TSB Bank Reconciliation 31/12/19**

Bank Balance per Statement

LESS O/S cheques

Bank Balance per Statement Unity Trust Bank	£	22,970.53
Instant Savings	£	130,535.45

LESS O/S cheques

Cash Book bank balance at 31.12.19

£ 153,505.98

Cash Book Balance

£ 153,505.98

2 Year Long Term Savings

£ 50,944.52

125 Day Savings

£ 50,635.05

Total Cash Balances

£ 255,085.55

Reserves B/F

£ 164,191.33

Receipts

£ 229,875.44

£ 394,066.77

Less: Expenditure

£ 138,981.22

TOTAL

£ 255,085.55

Signed:

Dated:

Hednesford Town Council - Receipts 19-20

Date	Source	Type	TOTAL	Precipt	Sales of Assets	VAT Recovered	Interest Received	Fundraising Income	Project Sponsorship	Miscellaneous	Community Infrastructure Levy	PGCC Meeting Rooms	PGCC Function Room Lettings	PGCC Bar/Notes Takings
27/12/2019	Nationwide Interest		£ 51.61				51.61							Interest
31/12/2019	Nationwide Interest		£ 560.39				560.39							Interest
31/12/2019	Instant Access Account		£ 130.51				130.51							Regular Hire - Karate
02/01/2020	EHMAA		£ 223.20											Regular Hire - Karate
06/01/2020	Cannock Chase Council		£ 100.00											Polling Station
07/01/2020	EDA Limited		£ 153.60											Regular Hire - Zumba
10/01/2020	Flintshire County Council		£ 33.00											Meeting Room Hire
10/01/2020	E. Hurne/Dall		£ 33.79											Councillor Clothing
13/01/2020	Mr & Mrs Small		£ 67.20											Regular Hire - Sequence Dance
	Chase Bereavement		£ 180.40											Regular Hire - Councilling
	Mrs Denny		£ 134.40											Regular Hire - Tuesday Dance
	Hil Payne/ster		£ 105.60											Monthly Hire - Diabetes
13/01/2020	Showcase Crewing		£ 64.00											First Aid Training
13/01/2020	KM Evans		£ 210.00											Children's Party
14/01/2020	Slimming World		£ 48.00											Children's Party
	N. Blythe/way		£ 48.00											Children's Party
15/01/2020	West Chadsnoor Family		£ 128.00											Children's Party
16/01/2020	R. Frince		£ 48.00											Children's Party
20/01/2020	Mr & Mrs Keay		£ 345.60											Regular Hire - Stardust Training
	Walsall College		£ 192.50											Children's Party
21/01/2020	T.J Rathbone		£ 48.00											Children's Party
24/01/2020	CVJ Walkin		£ 80.00											Regular Hire - Slimming World
29/01/2020	Mrs R Ward		£ 216.00											Regular Hire - Chasin Tails
29/01/2020	Mr Taylor		£ 200.00											Private Party
	Geanna Denny		£ 48.00											Regular Hire - Tuesday Dance
29/01/2020	D. L Denny		£ 134.40											Regular Hire - Ladies Social
31/01/2020	Pye Green Ladies Club		£ 105.60											VAT Recovered
	HMI Revenue & Customs		£ 2,850.09											Diabetes Care
	HMI Paymaster		£ 105.60											Regular Hire - Sequence Dance
	Mr & Mrs Small		£ 89.60											Regular Hire - Saturday Slimming World
31/01/2020	RM Ridgeway		£ 262.50											
	Month Total		£ 7,065.09	£ -	£ -	£ 2,850.09	£ 742.51	£ -	£ -	£ 33.79	£ -	£ 727.00	£ 2,711.70	£ -

Friends of Hednesford

Minutes of meeting held on
Wednesday 30th October 2019 at
Hednesford Ex-Servicemen's Club

Present:

Sharon Jagger (Chair)
Margaret Fitch
Deb Burnett
Sandra Wright
Mark Walker
Shaun Middleton
Ruth Heslop

June Sheasby
Keith Fitch
Olly Kingston
Graham Wright
Sarah Walker
Paul Woodhead
Robert Plumb

Mary Wynne
Susan Schofield
Robin Kingston
Dot Farish
Linda O'Brien
Janet Bolton

Apologies:

Susan Fisher-Meddings
Liz Williams

Bryan Jones
Phil Bradley

Phil Hewitt

The meeting commenced with an interesting and informative presentation from Tony Lyons a First Responder based in Rugeley. Tony explained about how they were based locally and when on call worked in co-operation with the Ambulance Service often arriving at incidents first.

Minutes from meeting held 2nd October 2019.

The minutes were approved with any matters arising dealt with during the meeting.

FoH Logo

SS circulated a selection of photos of local buildings and other locations thought suitable for use as part of a FoH logo. After some discussion it was decided to carry forward any decision to the next meeting to allow for some artwork to be produced.

Rail Licences

SJ confirmed she had contacted both Network Rail and West Midland Trains and revoked licences to work at the station. In addition a group from FoH had removed all items belonging to FoH from the container situated at the station and placed them in safe storage elsewhere in the town.

Miners Memorial

DB & GW confirmed the lectern needed a further 2 protective layers before completion. Also the bookcase had arrived at the library for the books donated about the local area. A sorting and logging system for the books is being devised and it was agreed FoH would finance plastic covers to protect the books.

An exhibition is due to run at the library from Mid-December to Mid-January following which the library will be re-organised.

Remembrance Sunday

RP from the Hednesford Branch of the Royal British Legion gave an update on what is happening on Sunday 10th and Monday 11th November. Also confirmed a road closure would be in effect on the Sunday but not on the Monday.

SS confirmed the dates for decorating the town for this event and confirmed they would be removed on Monday 18th November.

DB mentioned the local Scout group had generously donated the poppy displays they had used the previous year.

Christmas Lights and the switch on event.

SM explained he was part of a group looking at improving the Christmas lights in Hednesford, hopefully adding something extra each year. As a starter they are considering, time permitting, to put Christmas trees and reindeer in front of the hedges that are in front of the wall between the town centre gardens and Wetherspoon's. Hopefully these would be lit using solar power. The plan is this would fit in with the work dressing the town by FoH.

SS Confirmed the town will be dressed by FoH on Monday 2nd December in readiness for the Christmas Lights switch on event taking place on Friday 6th December.

FoH will have a two stalls, one selling craft items and one featuring a small tombola. Further details will be announced at the next meeting.

HiP Projects

PW confirmed the artisan market will go ahead on Saturday 30th November at the request of the traders. This will be the last market this year with the next one scheduled for March 2020. The traders are also setting up a market website and will be more involved in the organisation of the markets.

The Heritage Lottery fund bid linked to various bids around the town is progressing. A draft has been submitted and the more detailed main bid is now being worked on.

Plans to restart the Hednesford Town Lottery are being finalised and should be announced shortly.

Plans to enter the 2020 Best Kept Village Competition are being discussed and should be announced early in the New Year.

Any other business.

The next FoH litter pick will take place on Sunday 17th November with the meeting point being by the library at 10am.

Due to the difficulty some members have in hearing speakers during our meetings due to noise from other parts of the venue it was decided other venues should be checked out and considered for meetings in 2020.

Next FoH meeting:

Monday 25th November 2019. (Subsequently cancelled due to illness)

Venue: The Soldiers, Hednesford Ex-Servicemen's Club, Anglesey Street, Hednesford

Commencing: 6.30 pm.

Keith Fitch

9th November 2019.