



Ashburton Town Council

**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 23 JANUARY 2019 AT 7.30PM IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE TOWN HALL**

Present: Cllrs Baker, Brewer, Vogel, Ashford, Daw, Irens, Giles and Dennis

In attendance: The clerk and deputy clerk. Six members of the public.

001/19GP Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Slater (work commitment), Cllrs Distin and Nutley (previous engagement) and Cllr Parker-Khan (annual leave). Acceptance of the apologies was proposed by Cllr Baker and seconded by Cllr Irens. All in favour.

002/19GP Public comments/statements. The public may speak for a maximum of 10 minutes on items on the agenda or items that may be considered for a future agenda at the chairman's discretion.

Three members of the public wished to speak:

1. The resident wished to speak on a proposal to close Whistley Hill. She believed it would cause a lot of problems with congestion in the town. Better signage would help as it is a dangerous slip road and cars do enter too fast. Also, cars parking on the double yellow lines could cause a collision when cars are going too fast. She had lived there for 56 years and never had a problem using the slip road to enter the A38.
2. The resident had moved to Whistley Hill recently. She said she had been naïve thinking it would be safe as she had looked at the position of the school and the 30mph limit and had thought it would be safe to have children there. Just after Christmas a car drove into her house coming off the A38 at 60mph. The pavements are narrow. She had written to the MP and Highways. Highways had explained that this is not top priority and that financial implications come into it. She said that it needs problem solving and understood that the junction could not be shut but felt it could be made safer as there was a fatality waiting to happen. Everyone has a responsibility to look after the children in the community. It is a 30mph limit, most schools have 20mph. Also, the signage cannot be seen from the A38, the slip road is too short and cars are taking the bend, downhill, very fast.
3. The resident said that someone who had bought a house in Whistley Hill should have checked this out beforehand. He had lived in St Lawrence Lane 30 to 40 years without a problem. The traffic in St Lawrence Lane is horrendous. If Whistley Hill junction is shut, there will be a lot of lorries coming down St

Lawrence Lane that cannot physically get down there. He agreed it needed to be made safer but under no circumstances should it be closed unless there is an alternative route in, which could be done from Pear Tree. This had been offered to the town and Highways but when the Chuley Road Masterplan was going on it was decided it was not viable. Once the new housing is at Brewery Meadow problems will be worse while they are doing building work. The traffic speed is a problem. There should be speed cameras as cars are going passed a lot faster than 70mph.

003/19GP Declarations of interest. To receive any declarations of interest on items on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest.

004/19GP Minutes of the previous meeting of 28 November 2018

These were signed by the chairman as a true record.

005/19GP Matters arising from the previous minutes of 28 November 2018

The clerk had one matter arising- 091/18GP Community awards. The clerk handed out a suggested form for with four categories. The idea being to get more people to nominate members of the community. The awards would need more publicity. Councillors would take the forms away and it was proposed by Cllr Baker that this be discussed at the next Full Council meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Ashford. All in favour.

Recommend: Clerk to place on next Full Council agenda.

006/19GP Carbon neutral – declare an emergency – discuss (Cllr Irens)

The clerk had circulated a document produced by Totnes Town Council, which states:

Full Council notes:

I. Humans have already caused irreversible climate change, the impacts of which are being felt around the world. Global temperatures have already increased by 1 degree Celsius from pre- industrial levels. Atmospheric CO₂ levels are above 400 parts per million (ppm). This far exceeds the 350 ppm deemed to be a safe level for humanity; In order to reduce the chance of runaway Global Warming and limit the effects of Climate Breakdown, it is imperative that we as a species reduce our CO₂eq (carbon equivalent) emissions from their current 6.5 tonnes per person per year to less than 2 tonnes as soon as possible

Individuals cannot be expected to make this reduction on their own. Society needs to change its laws, taxation, infrastructure, etc., to make low carbon living easier and the new norm;

Carbon emissions result from both production and consumption;

Totnes Town Council has already shown foresight and leadership when it comes to addressing the issue of climate change when back in 2009 we signed up to become a

Transition Town Council, a clear recognition of the need to respond to Climate Change and we have since recognised this in our strategies, actions plans and decisions such as having declared a Frack Free Zone, supporting energy efficiency and renewable energy measures, etc;

Unfortunately, our current plans and actions are not enough. The world is on track to overshoot the Paris Agreement's 1.5 degrees Celsius limit before 2050;

The IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius, published last month, describes the enormous harm that a 2 degrees Celsius rise is likely to cause compared to a 1.5 degrees Celsius, and told us that limiting Global Warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society, the private sector, indigenous peoples and local communities;

Local Councils around the world are responding by declaring a 'Climate Emergency' and committing resources to address this emergency .

Full Council believes that:

1. All governments (national, regional and local) have a duty to limit the negative impacts of Climate Breakdown, and local governments that recognize this should not wait for their national governments to change their policies. It is important for the residents of Totnes and the UK that town, cities and counties commit to carbon neutrality as quickly as possible
2. Towns, Cities and Local Authorities at all tiers are uniquely placed to lead the world in reducing carbon emissions; they are well placed to help decarbonize villages and more remote areas as they have closer links with their residents.
3. As Totnes is renowned in the UK and around the world for social and environmental innovation, we have a particular duty and opportunity to be a leader on addressing Climate Breakdown ;

The consequences of global temperature rising above 1.5 degrees Celsius are so severe that preventing this from happening must be humanity's number one priority; and,

Bold climate action can deliver economic benefits in terms of new jobs, economic savings and market opportunities, as well as improved personal, social and environmental well-being for people, locally and worldwide.

Cllr Irens had been asked by a member of the public to look into Ashburton Town Council also adopting this. Cllr Irens stated that with David Attenborough's comments at the UN, it is vital that the town council, at least, put an intention forward and from that intention the town council can ask Teignbridge District Council, Devon County, Westminster etc to consider increasing their aim towards carbon neutral by 2030. She believed that the town council just change some of the wording, ie not South Hams. Cllr

Irens stated that is her proposal. As in the plastic-free idea, people on the street do have a voice. People feel they have nothing they can do but Cllr Irens said that through approaching councils, we can demand a change. It is only an intention but it will make a difference as plastic-free has nationally. This will encourage government to lean on big business more.

Councillors discussed in detail. Cllr Brewer felt anything the town council can do collectively is good.

The clerk stated that the one thing that worried him about this is the carbon neutral as he did not know what sort of carbon footprint someone like Glendinnings has.

Cllr Irens stated that it is only an intention. Cllr Vogel wondered what effect this will have on the business community as there had not been an audit of the town. He felt such a proposal would come following an audit of what is happening and there is no reference in the document to an audit. I think we need to think about this first.

Cllr Irens reiterated that it is an intention. A member of the public talked about putting electric pick ups and that garages will have to supply electric pick ups by 2030 so there are lots of different things that will be happening. She felt that as a town council it could be reworded if necessary.

Cllr Vogel stated that there are things happening in the town and the council needs to know what is happening first because the town may be ahead of that statement.

Cllr Vogel said you need an audit to know if this is too weak or if the town is ahead of the game and it needs to be stronger. He felt it is quite bland. Plastic-free are already looking at how Lloyds deliver plastic bags and shops are talking about various items. He felt some group in the town should be looking into this and do an audit. What are we doing? What are we doing well? What's about to happen that we could facilitate? So if it was electric charging points, for example, there is an economic development that says actually that is really good, are we looking at that? What else is included in this that we can look at and say. How can we make a difference? What are we doing and what are we intending to do ourselves. There are other initiatives going on. Delivery lorries coming through town, smaller vehicles rather than larger vehicles. So I do think we need to first of all talk through, or a working party needs to look at it, to know what we are doing to say we agree or not. Therefore, anyone who is bringing this forward needs to consider a working party to look into this.

Cllr Irens said she understands what Cllr Vogel is saying but still felt that this should be put forward a statement to back up all the initiatives that are happening not to say we thought of it first. This is just to back up the initiatives, to back up and to send a message out to residents and members of the councils that this is what could possibly happen.

Cllr Vogel felt that it then needs a preamble to that effect.

Cllr Baker stated that further work be done either as a working group or as the GP Committee and contact the town team, plastic-free Ashburton etc. and ask what they are doing.

Cllr Ashford felt that this could come into current or future employers and it is all about a balance. Does it help with sustaining the economy of the town so there is a balance with it. Cllr Irens said there is not a balance as the climate is in peril. Cllr Ashford said we do not have that much here considering globally and we do have some and they are very important employers. We still need people employing people in this town.

Cllr Irens reiterated that it is a letter of intention, it has nothing to do with saying that we have to get rid of Glendinnings, far from it, and we need Glendinnings. We have to send a message, we have to wake up to the bigger issues that we are facing.

Cllr Baker suggested that this be taken to Full Council. Cllr Vogel said that if there is a preamble circulated, it would be more appropriate to bring back to the next GP meeting so the council can structure it to the needs of the town and our needs are different to other towns. We can speak to people who are in plastic-free, town team and all those areas where charging points might be coming to the town etc. This document needs to show are intention but with the best interests of the town in mind.

Cllr Brewer felt there is a difference in being part of a local or global campaign. There is an expression, Think Globally Act Locally. I think all we are doing is quite simply adding a voice or wanting to add a voice to the millions of others who are saying the same. We are doing it as a group that is organised opposed to a number of individuals.

Cllr Baker stated that Cllr Irens proposes that the document is reworded/reworked so it is Ashburton's and then send to various people as the council's view. Cllr Baker asked if there is a seconder. Cllr Vogel stated that the committee does need to see the rewording at GP as Full Council is not the appropriate place for these sort of discussions.

The clerk and Cllr Irens would look at rewording the document, circulate to councillors and bring to the next GP meeting for discussion.

007/19GP St Lawrence Lane and Whistley Hill – traffic discussion

The clerk stated that an email had been received from a resident, and presented at the last full council meeting, to close Whistley Hill. Highways had informed him that there had been no serious accidents within the last five years. Highways England has the junction on its radar as a dangerous junction but there is no viable alternative and needs to remain open for heavy goods vehicles.

Councillors discussed in detail and suggestions made included:

- Traffic wardens are requested to patrol more regularly.
- Parents be reminded that they can park free in the car park at dropping off and picking up times for the primary school.

- The Teignbridge Highways and Traffic Orders Committee may be able to look into the safety of this junction.
- A survey should be done of the area.
- Better signage on the A38.
- Reducing the speed limit to 50mph between Linhay Junction and Pear Tree. This is something that is done at other known dangerous junctions.
- Better lighting along Whistley Hill and the A38.
- Request that delivery lorries and HGVs do not deliver during school drop off and pick up times. That this is set as a planning condition on any new planning, which would be enforceable as a material condition.

It was proposed by Cllr Baker that the clerk write to Highways England, Devon County Council, Teignbridge District Council, Mel Stride MP, Tony Watson at TDC, Community Strategy Group. The letter should request that they look at the issues raised regarding Whistley Hill and what safety measures can be put in place. This was seconded by Cllr Irens. All in favour.

Recommend: Clerk to write as requested above.

Councillors stated that illegal parking in St Lawrence Lane is still a problem.

008/19GP Pocket parks funding - discussion

The clerk stated an email had been received and some councillors had replied regarding Cleder Place and the Recreation Ground. However, the document refers to ground not being used and he felt that it would be better if this was forwarded to the Community Land Trust as they could action better than the council.

Cllr Vogel and Cllr Daw felt that a piece of land at Higher Roborough would be ideal for this. However, we would have to have submitted with TDC's approval, together with a full set of working and finance by 25 January. The clerk stated that there hasn't been enough time to do anything.

Cllr Vogel said that there must be money left and proposed that the clerk write to Mel Stride MP, as Treasury Minister, asking for the deadline to be changed as there had not been enough time. This was seconded by Cllr Daw. All in favour.

Recommend: Clerk to write to Mel Stride MP

009/19GP Energy efficiency - discussion (Cllr Baker)

Cllr Baker requested that the town council look at installing solar panels and a closed loop heating pump in the river. She requested that a professional be asked to look at the possibility of this. The clerk was also in discussion with DNP if they would allow panels on the town hall. The clerk would ask someone to look at heat pumps. If DNP comes back and says they would allow solar panels, the clerk would also look into this.

Clerk to look at appointing energy consultant

010/19GP Correspondence

- i. Access to recreation ground for carnival fete. The clerk had been in touch with Grove Homes, who are developing the Tuckers site, giving them details of when access would be required for Carnival. They had said that access will be available.

Cllr Vogel left the meeting at 8.30pm.

011/19GP Matters raised by councillors for information only or possible inclusion on a future agenda.

- Cllr Irens stated that no vehicle access signs are required at the Tuckers/Rendells end of Church Path.
- Cllr Dennis requested that river cleaning at Great Bridge be put on the next GP agenda.
- Cllr Brewer asked for an item to be included on a future agenda. Resurfacing of Mill Meadow and Ashburn Close and maps out that are available to the public to point out that there are pot holes, because there is no Ashburn Close on the map according to Devon Highways. White lines in Ashburn Close, where there is junctions to not park. Every day if a fire engine had to get down Ashburn Close it would not get through as the white lines need repainting. People park on them because they don't know they are there.
- Cllr Brewer photographed the drain flooding outside the newsagents. He sent it to Highways. This is due to a blocked drain. Three or four years ago Cllr Dennis had suggested that they be replaced with ones that could be unscrewed, lifted, cleaned out and screwed in again.
- Cllr Brewer said that the town diary brought up eons ago, there was going to be a way forward but he hasn't seen anything done about that.
- Cllr Daw said the town bus came down Roborough Lane and where it joins Roborough Terrace. He had to help the bus get through as the parking is a nightmare. The clerk said that this would need double yellow lines.
- Cllr Baker said that Cllr Barker had said that the drains could not be cleared in Roborough Lane as cars were parked over them. She had looked and they were in the middle of the road so asked that Cllr Barker be contacted.

There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting at 8.35pm.

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CHAIRMAN