

THE HARPENDEN SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday 16 November 2020 at 7.00 p.m. by Zoom video conference
MINUTES

1. **Present (by video)**

Phil Waters (PhW), Harry Downie (HD), Alan Jackson (AJ), Ron Taylor (RT), Hester Gabbutt (HG), Chris Armitage (CA), Alan Bunting (AB,) John Davis (JD), Paul Gardiner (PG), Karl Wingfield (KW) and Bob Fletcher (RF).

2. **Apologies for absence**

These were received from Penny Ayres (PA), Alan Falconer (AF), John Lowe (JL), John Harris (JH) and Tim Riley (TR).

3. **Past Meeting Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting on 21 September 2020, previously circulated, were approved as a true record.

4. **Matters Arising from Minutes**

(a) None.

5. **Treasurer's Report**

(a) The accounts up to October 2020 had been previously circulated. HD reported that the Society's finances are sound.

6. **Secretary's Items.**

(a) RF reported that the online AGM was now planned for the 3 December. Over 40 voting forms had already been returned.

7. **Chairman's Items.**

(a) PhW reported that the Society had responded to the latest Luton Airport expansion consultation and thanked KW for his help with this submission.

(b) PhW has drafted a paper on the future of the Society with special emphasis on its possible role of being a central forum for other more specialised societies in the town. AB agreed to work on the paper to make it shorter and to possibly produce versions tailored for each society it will be sent to.

Action AB

(c) A list of the societies being targeted will be produced and a priority order produced. **Action PhW, AJ, RF**

(d) A discussion took place on the state of the rejected Local Plan. JD noted that the 5th November 2020 Herts Advertiser/SADC report on the delay said it may be 4 years before any major development obtained planning permission and maybe 2 further years before anything is built. It also appears that the housing requirement numbers are being looked at again in central government. This will have an impact on the next version of the Local Plan.

(e) It was agreed that the new planning changes with more houses now seemingly being planned for the Midlands and the North could be the subject of a future public meeting once these are re-started. The proposal to form a unitary authority in Hertfordshire also could be the subject of a public meeting.

8. **Membership Secretary's Items**

(a) JD suggested that the Society explores putting an advert for new members in the Herts Advertiser. The issue was raised about what the circulation of the Herts Advertiser is now and whether such an advert would be value for money. It was agreed to reserve £250 for such an advert. RT to investigate whether we should proceed with this. **Action RT**

(b) A new recruitment leaflet is being planned for early next year. RT and HG are working on this.

9. **Newsletter Editor's Items**

- (a) The Winter newsletter is being planned to be issued in late January.

10. **Publicity Officer's Items**

- (a) Report circulated to committee members.
- (b) RT reported that the writing competition for local schoolchildren had now been accepted by all four secondary schools in the town. This was confirmed by CA.

11. **Awards.**

- (a) A brief discussion took place about the objective to include people who have provided a significant contribution to life in the Town in the annual awards, It was agreed that we would enquire if the Town Council recognises any outstanding contributions by Harpenden residents when the next meeting between the Society and the Town Council takes place as the Society should not be duplicating or competing with the activities of the Town Council.

12. **Working Group Reports**

- (a) **Community Safety:** The Community Safety report has been circulated by PG.
- (b) **Environment:** The Environment Report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting. KW will contact Neil MacArthur of Harpenden Sky, who is a new member, to discuss areas of common interest as it is believed that the Society should be aware of, and take into account, both Ladacan's and Harpenden Sky's views about airport noise pollution.
- (c) **Transport:** The Transport report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting
- (d) **Education:** CA gave a brief report on how the schools were coping with the Covid challenges. The writing competition has got the support of the four schools
- (e) **Health & Social Welfare:** Nothing to report.
- (f) **Built Environment:** Nothing to report
- (g) **Economic Activity:** The Economic Activity report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.
- (h) **Arts, Leisure, Entertainment (ALE):** AJ reported that a Zoom meeting about the Public Halls site took place on Tuesday 29th September. AF also took part. AJ reported that although SADC broadly accepted the views about the re-development of the site that came out of the charrette process the planners now seem to be changing the plans. It is now being proposed that there will be no commercial usage on the ground floor and the proposed building frontage of this important site is uninspiring. Also, no underground car park is now being proposed which means that the site will add to the town centre parking problems. However, the planning application has not yet been submitted. It was also mentioned that Mencap are still interested in the site or possibly part of the site.
- (i) **Sports:** Nothing to report.

13. **AOB**

- (a) None.

14. **Dates of the next meetings:**

Committee Meeting dates: 18 Jan 2021, 15 March 2021

Public Meetings: non currently scheduled

15. **The meeting closed at 9:15 p.m.**