

# Whitchurch Town Council

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## FULL COUNCIL MEETING

### MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 18<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2020

Held online via Zoom due to Coronavirus Government Guidance

#### PRESENT

Cllrs: H. Vasey, B. Duffy, J. Sinnott, L. Broders, S. Radford, A. Hall, A. Chesters, S. Hamlyn, J. Martin

#### NOT PRESENT

Cllr: Mike Barker

#### IN ATTENDANCE

Shropshire Councillor Gerald Dakin

Nicola Young – Town Clerk

Zoe Dean – Assistant Town Clerk/Town Centre Manager

Harry Wright – Journalist, Whitchurch Herald

In line with the Council's Meeting Recording Policy, the Chairman asked if anyone was recording the meeting, no declarations were made.

#### 1. Zoom Protocol.

After a proposal by Cllr Hamlyn, seconded by Cllr Vasey, it was **WTC/01/2021 RESOLVED** to unanimously accept the Zoom Protocol as presented and to run all virtual Council meetings according to this Protocol.

#### 2. Apologies

Cllr Rose-Mary Snell – self isolating

Cllr Terry O'Neill – illness

Cllr Shepherd – bereavement

Cllr Gregory-Peake – work commitment

#### 3. Declarations of Interest None received.

#### 4. Mayor's Announcements

Thanks to Councillors for joining the meeting via Zoom.

- **Communications Policy** - Reminder Councillors of requirements of WTC Marketing & Communications Policy with regards to statements and opinions posted on social media. To ensure that these are not derogatory, include a disclaimer stating that opinions are their own and don't necessarily representative the Council's opinions and it is wrong to make derogatory, insulting, defamatory or libellous commentary about Councillors or employees.
- **Living with Lockdown** – a project will be run with Whitchurch Museum & Archives to collect photographs of residents, their activities and artwork, etc, completed

during 2020 COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. All digital photographs can be sent to [info@whitchurchcouncil.uk](mailto:info@whitchurchcouncil.uk).

## 5. Minutes

Council noted the Agenda was incorrect regarding the format of the meetings, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020 was held as a formal meeting in the Civic Centre and 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020 meeting was held via a telephone conference call.

After a proposal from Cllr Hamlyn, seconded by Cllr Radford, it was **WTC/02/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the minutes from the meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020 as an accurate record of that meeting and duly signed by the Chairman.

After a proposal from Cllr Martin, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, it was **WTC/03/0221 RESOLVED** to accept the minutes from the meeting 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020, held via telephone conference call, as an accurate record of that meeting and the Chairman duly signed them.

## 6. Public

After a proposal from Cllr Vasey, seconded by Cllr Broders, it was **WTC/04/2021 RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to allow any members of the public to address the meeting.

## 7. Update from Local Policing Team

Whitchurch Safer Neighbourhood Team were unable to be present at a virtual meeting. The Town Clerk informed the meeting that they had been dealing with ASB on Deermoss Meadow.

## 8. Shropshire Councillor's Report

Shropshire Councillor Gerald Dakin reported to the meeting that Shropshire Council will debate on whether their staff should remain working at home for the foreseeable future, even when lockdown ends.

After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Vasey, it was **WTC/05/2021 RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

## 9. Accounts

After a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Martin, it was **WTC/06/2021 RESOLVED** to accept 2019-2020 Month 12 accounts, and 2020-2021 Months 1 & 2 accounts altogether, noting funds available as £521,109.

## 10. Minutes from Committees

- a. After a proposal from Cllr Radford, seconded by Cllr Vasey, it was **WTC/07/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Parks & Public Realm Committee meeting held on 6th February 2020.
- b. After a proposal from Cllr Martin, seconded by Cllr Duffy, it was **WTC/08/2020 RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Whitchurch JANE Cemetery meeting held on 4th March 2020.
- c. After a proposal from Cllr Vasey, seconded by Cllr Duffy, it was **WTC/09/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Culture & Civic Centre Committee meeting held on 5th March 2020.
- d. After a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Martin, it was **WTC/10/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 12th March 2020.

## 11. Elect Members to Committees

- a. Parks & Public Realm Committee – 4 spaces – After a nomination from Cllr Martin, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, it was **WTC/11/2021 RESOLVED** that Cllr Christian Gregory-Peake be voted onto the Parks & Public Realm Committee.
- b. Culture & Civic Centre Committee – 2 spaces:
  - i. After a nomination from Cllr Hall, seconded by Cllr Chesters, it was **WTC/12/2021 RESOLVED** that Cllr Sinnott's name was put forward to be a member of the Culture & Civic Centre Committee and received **2 votes**, with an abstention from Cllr Vasey.
  - ii. After a nomination from Cllr Martin, seconded by Cllr Duffy, it was **WTC/13/2021 RESOLVED** that Cllr Snell's name was put forward to be a member of the Culture & Civic Centre Committee and received **4 votes**, with an abstention from Cllr Vasey.
  - iii. After a nomination from Cllr Hamlyn, seconded by Cllr Martin, it was **WTC/14/2021 RESOLVED** that Cllr Gregory-Peake's name was put forward to be a member of the Culture & Civic Centre Committee and received **5 votes**, with an abstention from Cllr Vasey.

It was duly noted that Cllrs Snell and Gregory-Peake were voted as members of the Culture & Civic Centre Committee filling the two vacancies, having received the most number of votes.

- c. Heritage Committee – one space.  
After a nomination from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Broders, it was **WTC/15/2021 RESOLVED** that Cllr Hamlyn's name was put forward to be a member of the Heritage Committee. Following no other nominations, it was duly noted that Cllr Hamlyn was voted to become a member of the Heritage Committee.
- d. Whitchurch Cemetery JANE – one vacancy – no nominations were put forward.
- e. Planning Committee – one vacancy – no nominations were put forward.

## 12. Meeting Calendar

After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, it was **WTC/16/2021 RESOLVED** To agree and accept the 2020-2021 Whitchurch Town Council Meeting Calendar.

## 13. Motion 24 – Cllr Shepherd – deferred to the next meeting.

## 14. Motion 25 – Cllr Sinnott

The Town Clerk is to amend the Terms of Reference for Working Parties as put forward by Cllr Sinnott and redistribute to Councillors.

## 15. Whitchurch Against Pointless Plastic

After a proposal by Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Martin, it was **WTC/17/2021 RESOLVED** to sign a Declaration by Our House organisation which promote Whitchurch Against Pointless Plastic and nominate Councillor Hamlyn as Whitchurch Town Council representative to attend twice yearly meetings.

## 16. Civic Centre & Public Toilets Re-opening

- After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, it was **WTC/18/2021 RESOLVED** to confirm that the play areas remain closed in line with Government guidance.

- After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, it was **WTC/19/2021 RESOLVED** to trial a re-opening of White Lion Meadow toilets following the Clerk's meeting with Healthmatic.
- After a proposal from Cllr Hamlyn, seconded by Cllr Broders, it was **WTC/20/2021 RESOLVED** to agree that staff return to work on a staggered timetable starting on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and that, pending any change in Government guidance, the Civic Centre will open to the public on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July, with the safety measures in place as described in the report.
- After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Chesters, it was **WTC/21/2021 RESOLVED** that:
  - Council agree that regular hirers only use downstairs rooms until the Government has further lifted handwashing and hand sanitising measures, as no control can be put in place to limit the amount of people touching the handrail up the stairs.
  - Council approve that all room hire fees remain the same as regular hirers were paying in their original rooms.

Council agree to the measures being put in place above subject to Government guidance and any changes made or reintroduction of lockdown.

#### **17. Civic Centre Freehold**

After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Vasey, it was **WTC/22/2021 RESOLVED** to agree the Civic Centre Freehold Transfer draft Heads of Terms with tracked changes made by Whitchurch Town Council and make amendments to paragraph 6 and put all comments in square brackets.

#### **18. Community Hub Service Level Agreement**

After a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, it was **WTC/23/2021 RESOLVED** to agree the additional wording for the Community Hub SLA with Shropshire Council Customer Services Department, noting that the agreement will be for 5 years with a 3 year review of the annual payment and agreement.

#### **19. Council Insurance**

After a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Sinnott, it was **WTC/24/2021 RESOLVED** to ratify the decision to spend £5,237.25 to renew the Council's insurance with Zurich.

#### **20. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS**

- a. After a proposal by Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Chesters, it was **WTC/25/2021 RESOLVED** to set up a working group to review the tender document, working group members will be Cllrs Radford, Martin and Sinnott, to meet as soon as possible and bring back a finalised tender document to the July Council meeting.
- b. After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, it was **FULL/26/2021 RESOLVED** to extend both grounds maintenance contracts with Nobridge and Limetrees Landscape and Nursery Ltd to the end of October 2020.

#### **21. Freedom of Information (FOI)**

Council were informed that there has been a series of FOIs from one individual which have been dealt with in a timely manner

**22. Confidential**

After a proposal by Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn it was **WTC/27/2021 RESOLVED** that under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded for the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure of private and confidential information or staff matters.

**23. Confidential Minute**

After a proposal by Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, it was **WTC/28/2021 RESOLVED** to ratify the a confidential minute from Extraordinary Council meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and the decisions made.

**24. Complaint**

After a proposal by Cllr Hamlyn, seconded by Cllr Sinnott, it was **WTC/29/2021 RESOLVED** that an independent review is swiftly undertaken into the grounds maintenance contracts, both cemetery and parks, with 2 objectives:

- a. For Cllrs to learn how WTC arrived at this point with a £100k contract, what were the obstacles and issues that led to a complete failure of contract delivery within time and to propose measures to ensure this cannot happen again.
- b. To determine if there are staff performance issues that need addressing and how this will be accomplished.

Council requested that the former Locum Clerk, the Internal Auditor and DCK Accounting Ltd be approached to ask to provide quotes for the work.

**Meeting closed at 9.25pm**

**Chairman** .....

**Date** .....