

Whitchurch Town Council

Civic Centre
Whitchurch
SY13 1AX



High Street
Shropshire
tel. 01948 665761

website: www.whitchurchcouncil.uk

email: clerk@whitchurchcouncil.uk

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of a meeting of Whitchurch Town Council held on
Thursday 21st January 2021, commencing at 7:15pm

Held online via Zoom due to Coronavirus Government Guidance

PRESENT:

Cllrs: L Broders, A Chesters, B Duffy, C Gregory-Peake, S Hamlyn, A Hall, M Haynes, J Martin, W McDonnell, S. Radford, J Sinnott

IN ATTENDANCE:

Zoë Dean – Acting Town Clerk
Gillian Bailey – Locum Support Officer
Cllr G Dakin – Shropshire Council
Harry Wright – Whitchurch Herald
5 members of the public

In line with the Council's meeting recording policy, the chair advised that this meeting was being recorded. The chair asked if anyone was recording the meeting. Cllr Hall requested permission to record.

154. Apologies

The following apologies were received:

Cllr Snell - unwell
Cllr Shepherd - work commitment
Cllr Cooper - work commitment

It was proposed by Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Hall and **WTC/158/2021 RESOLVED** to move items 170 and 173 to follow item 162.

155. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Duffy declared an interest in item 174 as a trustee of Whitchurch Heritage Centre Museum and Archive.

156. Mayor's Announcements

There were no Mayor's announcements.

157. Minutes.

- a) After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Chesters, it was **WTC/159/2021 RESOLVED** to accept and sign the minutes from the full council meeting held on 21st of December 2020 as an accurate record of that meeting.

b) After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Chesters it was **WTC/160/2021 RESOLVED** to accept and sign the minutes from the full council meeting held on 7th of January 2021 as an accurate record of that meeting.

158. Public Participation

After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Broders, it was **WTC/161/2021 RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders for the purpose of public participation.

Nick Saxby: report from Shropshire Climate Change action group has been submitted to the Acting Town Clerk. It would be helpful if Councillors could review the report and make any comment.

Mr T Stonall (SJT) – expressed his thanks to the community for their support. He outlined the ways in which funding has been used to ensure the safety of students. The additional costs are not recoverable from the DfE. Any support the Town Council is able to give would be appreciated.

159. Update from Local Policing Team

The following report was received from the local policing team.

- There have been 3 traffic accidents one was fatal.
- Regular mobile patrols are taking place.
- Reports of car handles being tried.
- 10 tickets issued for breaches of COVID-19 regulations.
- Reports of anti-social behaviour & speeding along Bridgewater Street & Tarporley road.
- Reports of fires being set in Jubilee Park.
- Advise given on buying online.

160. Shropshire Councillors Report

Cllr Dakin gave the following report:

- Budget setting will take place on 25th February 2021. It is expected there will be an increase of between 3 and 5%, 2% of this will be allocated to social services.
 - A 10-year census will be taking place on the 21st of March: online and by post.
 - Shropshire CCG are considering using the Civic Centre for COVID-19 vaccinations there should be a decision by mid-February.
- There were no questions for Cllr Dakin.

It was proposed by Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Haynes and **WTC/162/2021 RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

161. Accounts

Following a proposal by Cllr Chesters seconded by Cllr Duffy it was **WTC/163/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the Month 9 accounts as presented.

161. Correspondence

- a) Council has received a letter from a resident regarding speeding at Sedgeford and Doddington, requesting a 20 mile an hour limit. The chair advised that this these concerns will be discussed in item 170.

- b) Council has received a letter from Sir John Talbots School summarising additional expenditure totalling £17,678 required to put COVID secure arrangements in place.

Following a proposal from Cllr Duffy seconded by Cllr Hamlyn it was **WTC/164/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the correspondence as received.

162. Minutes from Committees

Following a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, it was **WTC/165/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Finance Committee held on 10th December 2020.

163. Cllr Resignation

The Chair thanked Harvey Vasey for his hard work. He will be missed.

Following a proposal by Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Chesters,

It was **WTC/166/2021 RESOLVED** to accept Cllr Vasey's resignation.

Shropshire Council has been notified of the vacancy.

164. Appointment of Members to Committees and Working Groups

- a) There were no nominations for the Parks and Public Realm committee.
- b) Following nomination by Cllr Hamlyn, seconded by Cllr McDonnell, It was **WTC/167/2021 RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Broders to the vacancy on the Cultural and Civic Centre Committee.
- c) Following nomination by Cllr McDonnell, seconded by Cllr Broders, it was **WTC/168/2021 RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Haynes to the Centre North East working group.

166. Reports from Outside Bodies

There were no reports from outside bodies.

167. Interim Internal Audit

Cllr Chesters noted that the internal audit report has been considered by the Finance Committee. Some action on items raised have already been taken. Work needs to be undertaken on risk assessments.

Following a proposal by Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Duffy,

It was **WTC/169/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the interim internal audit report.

168. Budget 2021/2022

Cllr Chesters thanked Zoë Dean and Alison Proctor for their hard work on producing documents for the council to consider.

Cllr Hall requested that consideration be given to a budget of £5,000 for grants to local groups who may be struggling to re-establish themselves after the COVID-19 lockdown.

Cllr Chesters stated that this proposal should have been raised earlier in the extensive process the Council had undertaken in setting the budget.

Cllr Duffy suggested that the future council could consider this proposal and, if agreed, allocate a budget from the Harry Richards Fund.

It was proposed by Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn and **WTC/170/2021 RESOLVED** to set the budget for Whitchurch Town Council for the year 2021/2022 at £531,101.

There was one abstention.

169. Precept 2021/2022

Members received a detailed report with three options for the council to consider.

Following a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, it was **WTC/171/2021 RESOLVED** to set the precept for Whitchurch Town Council for the year 202/2022 at £504,254.

170. Highways Issues

During discussion members made the following points:

- Danger of speeds along Sedgeford
- Consideration to be given to 'rumble strips'.
- These issues have been raised with highways in the past.
- The speed limit should be reduced to 20 mph and VAR installed.

Following a proposal from Cllr Broders, seconded by Cllr Duffy, it was **WTC/172/2021 RESOLVED** to write to Shropshire Council Highways to request speed restrictions along Sedgeford.

171. Project Update

Councillors received a written report on outstanding projects (a brief summary is provided below).

1. **Centre North East** – the lease cannot be signed until suitable insurance in place, due to the location, need for refurbishment and as the building is empty this is proving complex. Work is continuing to establish costs for key works.
 - Members raised concerns over they proposed roofing works and felt that a guarantee or indemnity for these works should be sought.
 - Cllr Sinnott queried if, even though the labour will be supplied at no cost, the entire works for the roof should be subject to three quotes and not just the materials.
 - Members requested a risk assessment.
2. **Grounds Maintenance Contract** – the process is now complete. Solicitors have been instructed to draw up a contract based on the tender.
3. **Civic Centre**
 - Freehold – a quote had been obtained for replacement of the stantions supporting the rear walkway. Negotiations are being undertaken.
 - Bar / Lounge refurbishment – initial designs will be considered by Cllrs at the Culture and Civic Centre committee meeting 4.2.21.
4. **Play Areas** – a report will be prepared for the Parks and Public Realm Committee to be consider on 4.2.21.
5. **Outstanding Projects**
 - a. Whitchurch Country Park
 - b. Sherry Mill Hill Car Park
 - c. Youth Services

Following a proposal by Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Broders, it was **WTC/173/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the report.

172. Motion 29 – Cllr Sinnott

Cllr Sinnott expressed his concerns regarding the practicalities of recruitment and handover during the COVID-19 lockdown.

It was proposed by Cllr Sinnott, seconded by Cllr Chesters that the recruitment of the “Proper Officer” be delayed until such time as the agreed recruitment process can be followed.

The motion was debated. There were three votes for the motion and seven votes against the motion, with one abstention, therefore motion 29 was not carried.

173. Request for Funding

A request for financial support for additional expenditure by the school to create an outdoor for COVID-19 measures has been received from Sir John Talbot’s School.

Cllr Sinnott suggested that Whitchurch Town Council could purchase some benches to be loaned to the school, which could then be placed in the public realm when no longer required. It was confirmed by Mr Stonall that outdoor seating had already been purchased and the school were hoping for a grant to mitigate some of the costs already made. The Acting Town Clerk confirmed that there was a balance of £778.00 in the COVID-19 emergency fund.

Following a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Duffy,

It was **WTC/174/2021 RESOLVED** to donate £778 to Sir John Talbot’s School to support them with additional costs, ensuring the safety of their students during the pandemic.

173. Heritage Centre

The Acting Town Clerk advised that this was an old resolution which needed attention.

Members queried if the agreement not to demand an annual rent could affect the charitable status of Whitchurch heritage centre museum and archive. The Acting Town Clerk was asked to review the legal situation.

175. Confidential Business

Following a proposal by Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Broders,

It was **WTC/175/2021 RESOLVED** that 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. The Acting Town Clerk confirmed that the recording had stopped.

176. Confidential Meeting Notes

Following a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn,

It was **WTC/176/2021 RESOLVED** to approve the confidential meeting notes from the Full Council meeting held on 17th December 2020.

There being no further information the meeting closed at 21:12

Signed

Date