

Whitchurch Town Council

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FULL COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 19th NOVEMBER 2020

Held online via Zoom due to Coronavirus Government Guidance

PRESENT

Cllrs: B. Duffy, A. Chesters, A. Cooper, C. Gregory-Peake, A. Hall, S. Hamlyn, M. Haynes, J. Martin, W. McDonnell, S. Radford, J. Sinnott, and H. Vasey.

IN ATTENDANCE

Gerald Dakin – Shropshire Councillor
Zoë Dean – Acting Town Clerk
Gillian Bailey – Locum Support Officer
Harry Wright – Journalist, Whitchurch Herald
12 x members of the public.

In line with the Council's Meeting Recording Policy, the Chairman asked if anyone was recording the meeting, Cllr Hall declared that he was recording the meeting.

113. Apologies

Cllr L. Broders – work commitment
Cllr R. Snell – technical difficulties
Cllr R. Shepherd – work commitment

114. Declarations of Interest

None received.

115. Mayor's Announcements

Cllr Duffy reminded members that the Town Council was entering into key budget time, which would be the main focus at upcoming committee meetings.
The Mayor attended Remembrance Sunday at the Cenotaph on 8th November 2020 and Remembrance Day outside St Alkmund's Church on 11th November 2020.

116. Minutes

After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Vasey,
It was **WTC/115/2021 RESOLVED** to accept and sign the minutes from the Full Council meeting held on 15th October 2020 as an accurate record of that meeting.

After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn,
It was **WTC/116/2021 RESOLVED** to accept and sign the minutes from the Extraordinary Full Council meeting held on 30th July 2020 as an accurate record of that meeting. An amendment was accepted to remove Cllr McDonnell from the attendees list, proposed by Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Vasey.

After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr McDonnell, It was **WTC/117/2021 RESOLVED** to accept and sign the minutes from the Extraordinary Full Council meeting held on 26th October 2020 as an accurate record of that meeting.

Cllr Sinnott proposed that item 127 was moved into Confidential along with item 131 which was of the same subject matter. The Acting Town Clerk informed Council that it was in the public interest to discuss item 126 in the open session. Cllr Hall seconded the proposal; a vote was taken with 9: For and 3: Against.

117. Public Participation

After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Gregory-Peake, It was **WTC/118/2021 RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to allow any members of the public to address the meeting.

A member of public spoke in support of item 129 – Shropshire Climate Action Partnership, noting that it would be a very positive step for the town through collaborations.

A second member of the public, and representative of Blackberry Fair, spoke about the need for positive action in order to fill the ‘cultural black hole’ caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Noting that Whitchurch is now on the cultural map and creativity and positive energy could carry this forward.

A third member of the public asked if the Town Council had received costings for the CNE repairs. The Locum Support Officer answered the question, noting that the works need to be scoped out in the region of £50,000 from CIL Neighbourhood to ensure best value for the town.

A fourth member of the public asked if councillors could use the ‘raised hand’ function on Zoom.

A fifth member of the public noted that they were delighted with the progress of CNE.

Cllr Hall brought forward a comment from a member of the public concerning CNE, and how the lease could be progressed without firm costings?

118. Update from Local Policing Team

None present. The Mayor requested that a future report was chased.

119. Shropshire Councillor’s Report

Cllr Dakin informed Council that Shropshire Council continued to meet virtually. Under Planning the AD Plant had been granted permission to use animal waste in its operation. The conditions put on by the Environmental Agency were very stringent, with a maximum amount of 29 tonnes per day, starting from 5 tonnes and increasing until the maximum amount is reached. A liaison committee will be formed to sort out any problems which may arise and will meet annually. This committee will also act as a forum for complaints.

After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr McDonnell, It was **WTC/119/2021 RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

120. Accounts

As Chairman of Finance, Cllr Chesters noted that to date income was down by £52,000 over 12 months. The unused budgets amounted to £19,000.

Cllr Hall asked questions relating to budgetary overspends in both legal fees and professional fees. The Chair assured Cllr Hall that he would be furnished with a written response.

Following a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Martin, It was **WTC/120/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the Month 7 Accounts.

121. Correspondence

Following a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Haynes, It was **WTC/121/2021 RESOLVED** to receive the letter regarding the Samuel Higginson Trust.

122. Minutes from Committees

- a. After a proposal from Cllr Hall, seconded by Cllr Haynes, It was **WTC/122/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Parks & Public Realm Committee meeting held on 1st October 2020.
- b. After a proposal from Cllr Vasey, seconded by Cllr Radford, It was **WTC/123/2020 RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Cultural & Civic Centre Committee meeting held on 1st October 2020.
- c. After a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Martin, It was **WTC/124/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 8th October 2020.
- d. After a proposal from Cllr Hamlyn, seconded by Cllr Shepherd, It was **WTC/125/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 8th October 2020.

123. Appointment of Members to Committees

Following a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Martin, It was **WTC/126/2021 RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr McDonnell to the Heritage Committee.

124. Appointment of Members to Outside Bodies

- a) Beechtree Community Centre Vacancy – Cllrs Cooper and McDonnell came forward. Cllr Hamlyn seconded Cllr McDonnell. No seconder for Cllr Cooper. It was **WTC/127/2021 RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr McDonnell. 8 votes for.
- b) Samuel Higginson Trust Vacancy – After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Chesters, it was **WTC/128/2021 RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Hamlyn to the Samuel Higginson Trust.

125. AGAR – Annual Return Year Ended 31st March 2020

Following a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Sinnott, It was **WTC/129/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the AGAR and note any “Except For” matters.

126. Financial Regulations

After a proposal from Cllr Chesters, seconded by Cllr Hamlyn, It was **WTC/130/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the updated Financial Regulations.

127. Centre North East

Thanks were offered to Cllrs Vasey & McDonnell and officers for their work on the project.

Cllr Broders joined the meeting at 20:10.

Members debated the Centre North East lease and leaking roof at length.

Cllr Chesters proposed that this item was discussed with the other alternative option in confidential, seconded by Cllr Sinnott. Cllr Sinnott asked for a polled vote.

For: Cllrs Sinnott, Hall, Chesters and Cooper (4)

Against: Cllrs Duffy, Martin, Hamlyn, Radford, Vasey, Haynes, Gregory-Peake, McDonnell and Broders (9).

The proposal was not carried.

- a) Following a proposal from Cllr Vasey, seconded by Cllr McDonnell, It was **WTC/131/2021 RESOLVED** to agree the lease for Centre North East as presented. 9 Cllrs in favour: Cllrs Duffy, Martin, Hamlyn, Radford, Vasey, Haynes, Gregory-Peake, McDonnell and Broders. 4 Cllrs against: Cllrs Sinnott, Hall, Chesters and Cooper. The vote was carried.
- b) It was noted that as this was not asset transfer, the lease could be signed off by a Shropshire Council Officer, due to the time constraint. The Locum Support Officer noted that quotes for the work would be received once a scope of works had been completed. Following a proposal by Cllr Vasey, seconded by Cllr Gregory-Peake, It was **WTC/132/2021 RESOLVED** to agree to a lease at will to allow any essential works to happen. 9 Cllrs in favour: Cllrs Duffy, Martin, Hamlyn, Radford, Vasey, Haynes, Gregory-Peake, McDonnell and Broders. 4 Cllrs against: Cllrs Sinnott, Hall, Chesters and Cooper. The vote was carried.
- c) It was noted that the management report had been seen but a specialist report was required. After a proposal from Cllr Vasey, seconded by Cllr Martin, It was **WTC/133/2021 RESOLVED** to agree that a refurbishment asbestos report is commissioned.

128. Youth Pod

Cllr Hall thanked Gillian Bailey for her hard work with this project. The youth shelter design was debated.

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

It was **WTC/134/2021 RESOLVED** to install a four-pod youth shelter and energy generating exercise bike.

The Locum Support Officer is to investigate whether down legs can be installed to make the seating more rigid.

129. Report on Youth Services

After a proposal from Cllr Hamlyn, seconded by Cllr McDonnell,

It was **WTC/135/2021 RESOLVED** to agree the report:

- Allocating £15,000 from the Harry Richards Fund – unspent from 2020/21 to enable SYA to continue to deliver services post 1st April 2021.
- To review existing youth service provision and prepare a brief for tender.
- Inclusion of youth service provision in the budget for financial year 2022/2023.

130. Shropshire Climate Action Partnership

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

It was **WTC/136/2021 RESOLVED** to engage with the Shropshire Climate Action Partnership.

131. Confidential Business

After a proposal from Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Chesters,
It was **WTC/137/2021 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.

Council confirmed that the recording has been switched off and asked for members to confirm that no-one was to enter the room for this section of the meeting.

132. Motion 28 – Cllr Sinnott

Cllr Sinnott’s motion was discussed.

Following a proposal from Cllr Hamlyn, seconded by Cllr Broders,
It was **WTC/138/2021 RESOLVED** to investigate the expansion of assets as outlined in Cllr Sinnott’s report.

133. Job Description

Cllr Hall proposed a skills audit of existing staff, prior to recruitment, before continuing to appoint future roles:

4 for, 8 against. Not carried.

Following a proposal from Cllr Hamlyn, seconded by Cllr Radford,
It was **WTC/139/2021 RESOLVED** to accept the job description. 4 abstentions.

The Mayor thanked the Personnel Committee for its work.

Meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Chairman

Date