

Minutes of the Council Meeting Held Remotely on Monday 12 April 2021

Present Councillor S Abbott (Chairman)
Councillors P Anstey, H Belcher, L Bray, A Brown, A Crockford, T Ellis,
N Farmer, R Hopkinson, M Jackson, D Jarman, L Jefferson, S Moysey,
G Sanders and M Wakeman

In Attendance Mrs M Jones (Head of Finance and Administration)
D Martin (Chief Executive)

A minute's silence was observed in respect of HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh who sadly passed away on 9 April 2021.

189/20 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillors R LeVar, A White and C Woodward.

190/20 Public Question Time and Petitions

There were none.

191/20 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

192/20 Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 8 March 2021

Resolved

That the Minutes be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

193/20 Matters Arising from the above Minutes

There were no matters arising.

194/20 Policing and Community Safety

No report had been received from the policing team.

195/20 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman thanked Councillors who were not standing for re-election for their support to the Town Council, officers and each other for the past four years.

The Chairman attended a WALPA meeting on 17 March. A further meeting would take place on 22 April.

The Chairman attended a Neighbourhood Plan Delivery and Monitoring Working Group meeting on 8 April.

196/20 Correspondence

- i) Members' Information Sheets Nos. 490 to 492 were noted.
- ii) Late correspondence – there was none.

197/20 Reports from Council Representatives Appointed to Outside Bodies

Councillor A White sent a report that she had attended a recent Twinning Association meeting and reported that the visit to Jargeau planned for September had been postponed until 2022.

Councillor A White sent a report that she had attended a Walking Festival meeting and reported ticket sales were going well with 125 bookings made so far.

Councillor P Anstey had attended the Potley and Pockeridge Community Association AGM. The Brunel Shed was still operating from the hall and doing well.

Councillor R Hopkinson reported that the refugee family that Corsham sponsors were moving away from Corsham to a larger family home. Due to the pandemic the family had not been able to integrate quite as they had hoped within the community. Corsham Sponsors Refugees would continue to support the family for two years.

198/20 Minutes of the Property and Amenities Committee Meeting held on 10 March 2021

Resolved

That the Minutes be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

199/20 Matters Arising from the above Minutes

There were no matters arising.

200/20 Minutes of the Council (Planning) Meeting held on 17 March 2021

Resolved

That the Minutes be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

201/20 Matters Arising from the above Minutes

There were no matters arising.

202/20 Minutes of the Community Services Committee Meeting held on 24 March 2021

Resolved

That the Minutes be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

203/20 Matters Arising from the above Minutes

There were no matters arising.

204/20 Minutes of the Council (Planning) Meeting held on 7 April 2021

Resolved

That the Minutes be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

205/20 Matters Arising from the above Minutes

There were no matters arising.

206/20 Revised Calendar of Meetings for 2021/22

Due to the usual timing of the election count being amended, and the need for additional time for new and returning Councillors to sign their Declarations of Acceptance of Office in a Covid-secure way, the Annual Council Meeting had been postponed from 10 to 17 May 2021. Consequently, the Council (Planning) Meeting had been postponed from 12 May to 19 May and Community Services Committee from 19 May to 16 June 2021. The revised Calendar of Meetings had been sent to Councillors.

Resolved

That the date changes to the Annual Council Meeting and further meetings be approved.

207/20 General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Update (*Various Minutes*)

Further to previous meetings, the Town Council's GDPR Consultant and Data Protection Officer (i-West) had carried out its third annual audit of the Town Council's progress on GDPR and produced a Data Protection Compliance Report. The audit covered six areas, including the follow-up from the previous year. The Executive Summary Stated: 'For Town and Parish Councils, compliance with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 should be considered as a journey. A robust and effective approach to privacy and security would add value, can become a business enabler, and would give your consumers (residents, staff, applicants, contractors) comfort that their personal data is handled safely and appropriately. **The Town Council is in a very good position with compliance** – Corsham Town Council demonstrated a very good level of data protection compliance in all areas and should be commended for the efforts made to meet the DPO's previous recommendations. The main areas for Corsham Town Council to focus on now are to ensure that they build upon the existing training by establishing a baseline standard'.

Officers had produced a new GDPR Action Plan to address recommendations within the report.

208/20 Meetings Update and Scheme of Delegation

As legislation stood, certain Council meetings must return to being held face-to-face after 7 May 2021 (although this was being legally challenged). A letter from MHCLG explained the government's position on Council meetings. The Chief Executive explained the arrangements for holding the Annual Council Meeting, and possibly other Council and Committee meetings, in the Town Hall. A risk assessment set out the Covid safety precautions that would be put in place. Remote meetings were still encouraged wherever possible and legal.

MHCLG's letter explained that the use of existing powers could be used to delegate decision making to key individuals such as the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service). This worked very effectively during the initial months of the pandemic. Town and Parish Councils cannot delegate decisions to individual Councillors, but it was common to delegate to officers in consultation with one or more Councillors. In effect, this meant the system of informal online Council and Committee meetings which had been put in place last summer, could resume.

The current Scheme of Delegation had been circulated, and it was recommended that this be endorsed, with the treatment of remote meeting as an urgent matter, until the legislation was updated or clarified. Face-to-face meetings would only take place when legally required, for example, approving the Annual Governance and Accountability Return or when Covid restrictions were eased further.

Resolved

That the Scheme of Delegation be endorsed and that face-to-face meetings be held for the Annual Council Meeting and when legally required to do so. This would be reviewed and updated at regular intervals.

209/20 Local Elections

The Council considered matters which may arise from the Local Elections on 6 May 2021. The Statement of Persons Nominated had been published and was available at the meeting.

- i) Quorum and Co-options – A minimum of seven councillors were required in order to have a quorum, which would then be able to fill any vacancies through co-option. If necessary, this would will be discussed in more detail at the Annual Council Meeting on 17 May. There were 13 candidates so the Council would be quorate following the elections. Seven co-options would be required.
- ii) General Power of Competence – To be able to use the General Power of Competence, at least two thirds (14no.) of Town Councillors must hold office as a result of being elected as opposed to being co-opted. Provided this limit was reached, the Town Council must, at its Annual Council Meeting, resolve to declare that it meets the relevant criteria for eligibility. The criteria included

relevant qualifications and training for the Chief Executive. Unfortunately, with 13 candidates, this criterion could not be met.

- iii) Local Council Award Scheme (Quality Gold) – In order to be able to reapply for Quality Gold or Quality Level under the LCAS, which expired in November 2019, at least two-thirds of the Town Councillors must hold office as a result of being elected as opposed to being co-opted. Other criteria apply. For the Foundation Level Award, there was no lower limit for the number of Councillors who are elected. With 13 candidates, this criterion for Quality or Quality Gold level could not be met. The Council could consider applying for Foundation level at a later date.
- iv) Declarations of Acceptance of Office – To participate in Council meetings and vote, Councillors must sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office. This must be done before, or at, the first Council meeting unless the Council permits it to be before, or at, a later meeting fixed by the Council. Due to Covid requirements, the intention was to arrange these signings at the Town Hall by appointment prior to the first Council meeting after the election. All successful candidates would be contacted to arrange this. Failure to sign the Declaration would result in the seat being declared vacant and a casual vacancy arising. In case signing could not be arranged before the first Council meeting, it was recommended that the Town Council permit the signing and proper witnessing of Declarations of Acceptance of Office up to, or at, the Council meeting on 14 June 2021.

Resolved

That the Town Council permits the signing and proper witnessing of Declarations of Acceptance of Office up to, or at, the Council meeting on 14 June 2021.

210/20 Strategic Plan Update (*Minute 145/20 and others*) – The latest report for 2020/21 was considered.

The Strategic Plan update was noted.

211/20 Issues for Corsham Area Board Consideration (*Various minutes*)

Further to previous meetings, this regular agenda item asked the Town Council to identify issues for Area Board consideration. No new issues were raised.

212/20 Covid-19 Emergency Update, Recovery Plan

The Chief Executive updated the Council on the following:

- The Town Centre Recovery Plan had been reviewed and updated.
- The public would be able to come into the Town Hall on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10am and 12 noon for enquiries only.
- More staff would be back in the office, working in a Covid secure way and in line with an updated Risk Assessment, from late April.
- There had been no update from Wiltshire Council due to the pending Elections.

The update was noted.

213/20 Authorisation of cheques and payments

Salaries & Payments - CTC Staff	£19,433.50	
Wiltshire Pension Fund - Pension Contribution for April 2021	£6,283.46	
HMRC - Tax & NI for April	£6,779.19	
Methuen Hall Trust - Half Yearly Grant	£10,907.50	
Methuen Hall Trust - Hire of Council Chamber for Office Space	£250.00	
Wiltshire Council Non-domestic Rates - Ladbrook Lane Cemetery	£232.04	
WALC - Annual Subscription	£1,761.56	
Pear Technology - Technical Support and Ward Wall Map	£516.00	
Enterprise Flex-E-Rent - Hire of Work Vehicle	£717.44	
SRD Portable Appliance Testing - Electrical Equipment Testing	£131.25	
Great West Way - Advertising in Travel Magazine	£432.00	
Eventbrite - 'Planning for the Future' Webinar x 1 Delegate	£38.93	
Cheque		
Petty Cash - December to March	£206.17	7775
SSE - Skate Park Electricity	£134.60	7776
Charge Card		
Zoro UK - Toilet Paper Dispenser for Public Conveniences	£28.99	
123 Registration - Corsham Railway Station Domain Renewal	£19.19	
ICO - GDPR/Data Protection Renewal	£60.00	
HM Land Registry - Register/Title Plans for Land Safeguarding for Railway Station	£51.00	
GS Products - Chain Links for Rope Swing at Springfield	£51.73	
Wickes - Grass Seed	£16.95	
Curry's - 2 x Lenovo LCD Monitors	£179.98	
Sub total	£48,231.48	
Cheques / Internet Banking Paid Outside of Meeting		
There were none		
Payments Made by Direct Debit/Standing Order		
West Mercia Energy - Public Conveniences Electricity	£38.89	
West Mercia Energy - Guide Hut Electricity	£87.30	
SGW Payroll - Monthly Payroll Processing	£48.96	
Hills Waste - Waste Collections and Skip Exchange at Cemetery	£461.54	
		No invoice received
Excalibur (Bridge Solutions) - Monthly IT Support		
UK Fuels - Fuel for Work Vehicles	£211.88	
Vodafone - One Net Business Telephone/Mobile Charges	£526.96	
Viking - Stationery and Stamps	£340.01	
Peninsula - Employment Services	£390.04	
Wiltshire Council - Non-domestic Rates - Arnold House	£923.15	
Wiltshire Council - Non-domestic Rates - Public Conveniences	£87.28	
SSE - CCTV Electricity	£13.77	
SUB TOTAL	£3,129.78	
TOTAL	<u>£51,361.26</u>	

Resolved

That the cheques and transfers be authorised for payment.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm and closed at 9.10pm. There was one member of the public present at the start of the meeting and none at the end.

CHAIRMAN

DATE