

# 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 – DRAFT

In accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 this meeting was held virtually.

Minutes of the proceedings of the **CIVIC COMMITTEE** meeting held on this day online at a **Virtual Meeting, Wokingham** from 19:30 to 21:09pm.

## **PRESENT**

Chairman: Cllr D G Lee

Councillors: A Box (Vice-Chairman), J McGhee-Sumner, R Bishop-Firth, T Lloyd and P Lucey

## **IN ATTENDANCE**

Civic Officer

Cllr Tony Lack (Mayor)

David Dunham (Mayor's Attendant and Macebearer)

## **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)**

Apologies were received from Cllr L Forbes and Cllr D King.

## **MEMBERS' INTERESTS (Agenda Item 2)**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC (Agenda Item 3)**

No questions were received prior to the meeting.

## **CIVIC COMMITTEE MINUTES (Agenda Item 4)**

It was proposed by Cllr D Lee and seconded by Cllr A Box and it was

**RESOLVED  
30179**

that the Minutes of the Civic Committee meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020 (pages 16084 to 16088 be received as a true and correct record and that they be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

## **MONITORING REPORT (Agenda Item 5)**

The Monitoring Report dated 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2020 was received and noted.

### **a) Honorary Stave refurbishment**

A supplier has been chosen to refurbish the two acorns and produce two new ones. However, the Civic Officer has not asked them to proceed yet as Civic is awaiting a decision from F&P about the budget due to this year's uncertainty.

### **b) Civic Award pin**

Civic is awaiting a decision from F&P about the budget before progressing any further although it is hoped that this money will be available to use.

### **c) Museum Accreditation**

CHAIRMANS INITIALS \_\_\_\_\_



Plans for Open Days have been paused due to the current health situation. Civic is awaiting a decision from F&P about the budget due to this year's uncertainty.

**d) Addition of name on war memorial**

A company has been chosen to do the work but as WTC had been limiting individuals coming into the building, this is yet to be completed but a date is now booked in the diary for the work to be undertaken.

**e) Investigate installing a plaque and a trough outside the Town Hall**

See agenda item 8.

**f) To recognise and thank the groups and organisations who have supported the community through the covid 19 pandemic and ideas should be discussed at a later date and explored further.**

It is not currently possible to progress this until updated government guidance allows. See agenda item 13 for budget request.

**COMMITTEE'S BUDGET (Agenda Item 6)**

A report on the Committee's expenditure to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020 was received and noted.

**HERITAGE OPEN DAYS ONLINE (Agenda Item 7)**

The Civic Officer updated the Committee about posts that had been created for social media across the ten days for Heritage Open Days all relating to the Hidden Nature theme. These included posts about historical items in the Town Hall, local walks, identifying trees and the mosaics. A competition was created, and WTC received 13 entries and a winner was chosen at random by the Town Mayor. The prize was £50 to spend in our town and the winner chose one of our Independent retailers. A photograph has been arranged for them to be presented with this outside the shop with the Mayor.

The Civic Officer shared that whilst the created activity was a suitable alternative this year, the people it reached on social media was a bit disappointing and it would have been helpful if it could have been shared more.

**PLAQUE AND TROUGH TO MARK THE PRESENCE OF THE TOWN HALL MEMORIAL (Agenda Item 8)**

The committee members received and considered the Civic Officer's report to consider installing a plaque and a trough outside the Town Hall to mark the presence of the internal Town Memorial to help raise its awareness. The trough could offer a location for residents to place small wooden crosses in as an alternative to the Field of Remembrance at this time of year and could contain other suitable plants for the remainder of the year.

Members thanked Cllr Lloyd for creating some visual images for the committee to consider which they found very helpful.

The following options were reviewed:

CHAIRMANS INITIALS \_\_\_\_\_



- a) Option A – a plaque on the external wall and a free-standing trough below it.
- b) Option B – a free-standing trough with a raised back on which an inscription could be added.

The Committee liked the simplicity of having a plaque on the wall only and it was questioned if a trough is required.

It was suggested that WTC should gauge the reaction to a temporary structure this year, consult widely and then the committee can review the idea of a trough again next year, depending on views and comments received. The views of the Wokingham Society and the local Royal British Legion should be sought about having a plaque only and they should be asked if they would like to offer any input about a more permanent solution for crosses to be placed.

The following was also discussed and important to note:

- a) People care strongly about Remembrance matters and careful thought needs to be given so that the right solution is found.
- b) Whatever is decided upon to have in place longer term needs to be of a high quality.
- c) If it is decided not to have a permanent structure in place longer term but one that is brought outside for the Remembrance period only, consideration needs to be given to the storage of this for the remainder of the year.

The Civic Officer should seek views from other parties, as noted above, before submitting a proposal to WBC.

**ACTION: Civic Officer**

#### **FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE AND POPPY COLLECTING (Agenda Item 9)**

The committee members received and considered the Civic Officer's report and noted the changes being made for the Poppy Appeal this year.

Members considered different options for a Field of Remembrance this year as WTC received some negative comments in 2019.

Cllr Lack offered a suggestion to create a alternative structure along the lines of a votive stand in which crosses could be placed. The Committee was in full support of this idea and Cllrs particularly liked that this might make it easier for residents to place their crosses in as it would be at a better height for them.

Cllr Lack agreed that he would support the Committee in building an alternative structure but emphasised that this would only be a temporary feature to last until such time we have a permanent solution.

The members thanked Cllr Lack for his support with this.

**ACTION: Civic Officer**

CHAIRMANS INITIALS \_\_\_\_\_



### **REMEMBRANCE 2020 (Agenda Item 10)**

The committee members received and discussed the Civic Officer's report outlining a revised programme for Remembrance activities this year, due to the government restrictions in place.

The committee were in support of all the following recommendations made by the Civic Officer:

- a) A small Church service for up to 70 invited guests who would make their own way to the Church as there would be no parade this year.
- b) A two minute silence on Sunday 8 November at 11am
- c) A two minute silence on Wednesday 11 November at 11am
- d) An option for people to lay wreaths/crosses at the war memorial in the annexe, via a pre-booking system.

It was mentioned that publicity should try and amplify the message that a lot of careful thought is being put into what can be achieved for our town as WTC fully recognises how important this time of year is to our residents.

If livestream options can be achieved, this will support the message 'Remember from home' for our residents.

**ACTION: Civic Officer**

### **CIVIC AWARD CRITERIA FOR 2021-2022 (Agenda Item 11)**

The committee members received and considered the Civic Officer's report with a suggestion, made by one of the Councillors, to consider changing the criteria to support the Council's four principles; distinctiveness, inclusivity, sustainability and service.

Some members expressed their views that the awards do not seem to attract a wide range of different types of people, e.g. ages, background, types of voluntary activity etc.

Members considered whether publicity reaches sufficient people for them to be aware and it was discussed how this could be improved.

The Civic Officer explained that we market to all residents (usually in the Wokingham Word but this year it was via our WTC newsletter), via the WTC website, WTC social media, all schools, Churches, the Wokingham Paper, and numerous organisations. It was suggested to ensure we are inclusive, there may be some additional groups we could share this with. Cllr Lloyd volunteered to share some contacts that had been highlighted at a recent A&C meeting for the Civic Officer to use for similar reasons.

The Civic Officer also stated that if social media posts on this matter could be shared by more people, this has the potential to reach a wider audience.

CHAIRMANS INITIALS \_\_\_\_\_



Councillors recognised that they need to support the Civic Officer in actively raising this across all groups.

In the report, the Civic Officer noted that if members feel changes are required to the criteria, suggestions and further details for this could be given and shared with the Civic Officer to collate, present and review at a subsequent meeting. Cllr R Bishop-Firth offered to contact the Civic Officer with initial ideas.

**ACTION: Civic Officer and Councillors**

**CIVIC AWARD SELECTION COMMITTEE (Agenda Item 12)**

- a) It was agreed that Cllr Julian McGhee-Sumner will join the Chairman and Vice-Chairman at the Civic Award selection meeting on Wednesday 9 December at 10.00am to scrutinise the nominations received.
- b) It was noted that this meeting may need to take place virtually.

**ACTION: Civic Officer**

Cllr A Box left the meeting.

**COMMITTEE'S BUDGET 2021-2022 (Agenda Item 13)**

The committee members considered whether any additional funding is required for 2021-2022:

It was proposed by Cllr D G Lee and seconded by Cllr Bishop-Firth, and it was to

**RECOMMEND  
30180**

to F&P that the following should be requested for 2021-2022:

- a) £5000 to cover costs for a Portland Stone plaque but it is hoped that costs would be substantially less than this. As a decision has not been made about a permanent feature for crosses to be placed in, e.g. a trough additional money for this will not be requested at this current time.
- b) £1000 to replenish stock of civic awards
- c) Up to £10,000 should the Council wish to mark the occasion of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in February 2022. If the Council agrees that this is something that should be considered, then the civic committee could come back with some ideas on what could be implemented.
- d) An increase of additional £1000 to the civic receptions budget line to offer some budget for an event to recognise and thank groups and organisations who have supported the community through Covid. The Civic Officer was asked to start developing some ideas for the committee to consider and to make a list of the people who should be included.
- e) IF F&P do not approve the spend of two new acorns for the honorary staves for this financial year, the civic award pins and the museum accreditation, civic would like to request this money again for next year.

No request was made for additional money for the Council's newsletter although the Chairman asked the Civic Officer to make enquiries about whether or not the paper we have used this year is PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) certified.

CHAIRMANS INITIALS \_\_\_\_\_



**ACTION: Civic Officer**

**COMMITTEE INFORMATION (Agenda Item 14)**

- c) No information was raised by members.
- d) No information was identified for marketing.

**CHAIRMANS SIGNATURE** \_\_\_\_\_

CHAIRMANS INITIALS \_\_\_\_\_

