

# 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020

**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 **TOWN COUNCIL** held virtually on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020 from 7.30pm to 8.58pm.

## **PRESENT:**

Chairman: Cllr T Lack (Mayor)

Cllrs: R Bishop-Firth, N Campbell-White, P Cunnington, P Dennis, L Forbes, N Fox, M Fumagalli, M Gee, S Gurney, D Hinton, P Hornsby, D King, D Lee, T Lloyd, P Lucey, M Malvern, K Malvern, J McGhee-Sumner, I Shepherd-Dubey, A Tebboth

## **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Jan Nowecki – Town Clerk

Nicky Harmsworth – Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)

Andy Croy

## **PRAYERS**

No prayers were given this evening

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

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs E Bishop and A Box

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

Cllr R Bishop- Firth declared a prejudicial interest because Michael Crag, Envoy associates, is a family friend.

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

No questions were received.

## **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING (Agenda Item 4)**

It was proposed by Cllr M Gee and seconded by Cllr N Fox and the following was

that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Council Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2020 (pages 16126 to 16129) be received as a true and correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman once Covid-19 restrictions were lifted.

**RESOLVED  
30195**

## **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS (Agenda Item 5)**

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



The Mayor advised that all Cllrs had been sent information about a cycle ride through the Town and urged everyone to respond direct and sign up if they were able to. The Mayor also encouraged Cllrs to make use of their social media presence with Wokingham residents and share/repost/retweet events that are happening within the Town and particularly those led by the WTC itself. He noted that applications were still open for the Civic Awards and it would be helpful if this was publicised as widely as possible.

The Mayor had recently seen Cllr L Forbes and had presented her with a photobook of her Mayoral year.

The Mayor's list of engagements dated 22<sup>nd</sup> July to 5<sup>th</sup> October were received and noted.

The Mayor drew attention to the Science for Schools Project which he had introduced and his visit to Rococo to present the prize from the Heritage Open Day Competition.

The Mayor thanked Officers who had quickly looked for alternatives to move events online which had proven to be successful.

### **PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (Agenda Item 6)**

Cllr I Shepherd-Dubey gave an update on planning meetings.

Cllr Gurney asked if the WBC speed limit review was still open and was advised that it was and other Cllrs gave information on where to locate the form on WBC's website.

Cllr K Malvern asked the Chairman the following question "Does the Chairman of P&T agree with the statement 'Wokingham Borough Council strongly believe the government should address the real issues, and not remove reasoned, positive planning judgements and democracy'. This statement is included in comments the Borough Council has produced for its White Paper response". Cllr Shepherd-Dubey replied that she did agree with the response.

Cllr Lee noted that street names had been discussed at the last meeting and, whilst he supported the recognition of this, asked if information could be shown on the street name (as happens in Hartley Whitney) to acknowledge the background history around the name. It was also suggested that significant street names could also be amalgamated into the Wokingham Musuem App.

**ACTION:TOWN CLERK**

It was proposed by Cllr I Shepherd-Dubey and seconded by Cllr A Tebboth and the following was

**RESOLVED  
30196**

that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Planning & Transportation Committee Meetings held on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2020 (pages 16105 to 16109), 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020 (pages 16135 to 16139) and 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020 (pages 16164 to 16168) be received.

A vote was taken and this was unanimous.

### **ARTS & CULTURE (Agenda Item 7)**

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



Cllr Gurney advised that the Science in School project and Book Festival had been held online and had been successful. She also noted that providing Covid restrictions allowed, the Pantomime would be held in Howard Palmer Gardens

It was proposed by Cllr S Gurney and seconded by Cllr P Cunnington and the following was

**RESOLVED  
30197**

that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Arts & Culture Committee Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 (pages 16140 to 16143) be received.

A vote was taken and this was unanimous.

#### **AMENITIES COMMITTEE (Agenda Item 8)**

Cllr Campbell-White highlighted a few items including the well-attended "Have Your Say" meeting organised by the police in Howard Palmer Gardens and that a contractor had been engaged to carry out the Courtyard roof repairs. A request was made for any Cllrs who see graffiti around the town to take a photograph and send details to Cllr T Lack who continues to provide an excellent removal service on behalf of the Council.

It was proposed by Cllr N Campbell-White and seconded by Cllr P Dennis and the following was

**RESOLVED  
30198**

that the Minutes of the proceedings of the three Amenities Committee Meetings held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020 (pages 16144 to 16147), be received.

A vote was taken and this was unanimous.

#### **CIVIC COMMITTEE (Agenda Item 9)**

Cllr Lee noted that final discussions on Remembrance activities were dependant on Covid restrictions and would be finalised nearer the time.

Cllr Lee advised that the Heritage Open Days had been held online and wanted to record his thanks to Civic Officer Nikki Payler who had posted some great information and again asked if Cllrs could share any social media posts to reach more residents. The Chairman also advised that Cllr T Lack had this year built an alternative temporary structure in place of the Field of Remembrance and the committee would welcome feedback from Cllrs.

It was proposed by Cllr D Lee and seconded by Cllr P Lucey and the following was

**RESOLVED  
30199**

that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Civic Committee Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 (pages 16148 to 16153) be received.

A vote was taken and this was unanimous.

#### **FINANCE & PERSONNEL (Agenda Item 10)**

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



Cllr Gee noted that negotiations on the new tenant for the Courtyard were being finalised and that funding had been agreed for repairs to the roof. Cllr Gee also gave feedback on the Council's financial position updating that a planned program for playpark refurbishment had been agreed in principal, subject to the yearly budgetary approval. Allotment rates would increase by 2% for the year November 2021 to October 2022 but all other charges would remain the same. She also noted that staff were now working from home where possible in line with the latest Covid advice. Cllr Forbes asked if wedding charges had been reduced owing to drop in numbers allowed but the RFO advised that ceremony charges remained the same as WTC were incurring more costs around additional staffing, cleaning and PPE. No receptions were currently able to be held.

It was proposed by Cllr M Gee and seconded by Cllr S Gurney and the following was

**RESOLVED  
30200**

that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Finance & Personnel Committee Meetings held on 11<sup>th</sup> August June 2020 (pages 16133 to 16134) and 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020 (pages 16154 – 16163) be received.

A vote was taken and this was unanimous.

#### **STRATEGY WORKING PARTY (Agenda Item 11)**

The notes of the proceedings of the Strategy Working Party Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2020 were received and noted.

The Sustainability Action Plan had been circulated and the Town Clerk advised that this was broadly following the model adopted by WBC with some other towns and parishes considering the same. Cllr Hornsby requested that the issue of congestion around schools with cars dropping off pupils be added to the plan. Cllr Gee thanked the Town Clerk and Officers for the comprehensive document and the work they had obviously put into it. Councillors were asked to review the document and pass item queries to the assigned Lead Officer or more complex issues to the Town Clerk.

It was proposed by Cllr I Shepherd-Dubey and seconded by Cllr D Hinton and it was

**RESOLVED  
30201**

that the Wokingham Town Council Sustainability Action plan be adopted.

The Inclusivity Policy Statement had been circulated.

It was proposed by Cllr I Shepherd-Dubey and seconded by Cllr S Gurney and it was

**RESOLVED  
30202**

that the Inclusivity Policy Statement be adopted.

#### **ANNUAL RETURN CONCLUSION OF AUDIT 2020 (Agenda Item 12)**

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



The External Auditors certificate and opinion regarding the completion of the annual return for the year ended 31 March 2020 was received and it was noted that the Auditors had advised that a wet signature had not been obtained by the RFO before the Virtual Full Council meeting. Cllr Gee advised that this appeared to be a contradiction in the regulations and offered thanks to the RFO for the successful audit especially as staff had to quickly revert to working from home during closedown of the accounts. Councillors also offered their full support to the RFO.

### **EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION (Agenda Item 13)**

A request for a representative to the Mayor's own Scouts was received – if any Cllr is interested, they were asked to contact the Town Clerk.

Representatives reports were received in relation to the following organisations:

- Citizen's Advice Wokingham
- Emmbrook Village Hall
- Wokingham Job Support Club

Cllr Gurney advised that she was a representative on the WBC Standards Committee and a review on the code of conduct was now being consulted upon. This was discussed and Cllrs felt that a formal response should be sent. An item would be placed on the November F&P Agenda and Cllr Gurney would provide a report to Cllrs to enable the response to be made.

### **MOTION 2 – EU CITIZENS (Agenda Item 14)**

The motion was moved by Cllr P Dennis that

Wokingham Town Council recognises that the contribution made to Wokingham Borough by EU residents enriches our community. At this time, when there is a lack of clarity over their rights, we must ensure that they receive complete and accurate information regarding their participation in the democratic process. This council will ensure that in all communications about the democratic process complete and accurate information is provided; informing EU residents about their rights and opportunities to participate in local democracy. This Council will formally request that Wokingham Borough Council and the local MP make a public commitment to this position.

Cllrs D Lee, D Hinton, I Shepherd-Dubey, P Hornsby and S Gurney gave comments of support to the motion.

The motion was seconded by Cllr M Fumagalli.

The Mayor asked for a vote on the motion, this was unanimous, and it was

**RESOLVED  
30203**

that the motion be carried.

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



The Town Clerk was requested to write to the Wokingham Borough Council and requested to ensure that WTC's website also provide accurate information on the process.

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

**CHAIRMAN**

DRAFT

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

