

WALLINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

of the

**Virtual TEAMS meeting of an Extraordinary Meeting Full Council on the Monday 14th
December 2020 at 7p.m**

PRESENT

Councillors Beatty, Beauchamp, Cattermole, Dolton, Harris, Holford, Hughes, Keats-Rohan,
Kidley, Lester, McGregor, Sinkinson, Whelan and Wilder.

The Town Clerk, Mrs Paula Lopez
Responsible Finance Officer: Michelle Taylor
Senior Officer in Attendance: Barbara Atkins (Minute Taker)
Officer: Tracey Collins
Members of the Public and District Councillor Roberts

**480. THE TOWN CLERK TO ADVISE THOSE IN ATTENDANCE OF THE PROTOCOL FOR THE MEETING
AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Town Clerk reported on the Protocol for the meeting and advised that she had not received any apologies.

The Meeting was disrupted for 20 minutes due to technical difficulties and the fact that several people who wished to listen to the meeting and/or report under public participation were unable to log on

Meeting resumed at 7.20pm

481. CHAIRMAN RESIGNATION

The Town Clerk reported that The Mayor, Councillor Lee Upcraft resigned from office on the 8th December 2020. Noted by Councillors

482. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE REMAINDER OF THIS MUNICIPAL YEAR

Members discussed the options and both Councillor Harris and Beatty did not accept their nominations for the role of Chairman.

It was Proposed by Councillor Beatty, Seconded by Councillor Whelan and

RESOLVED: THAT Councillor Rob McGregor be Chairman of Wallingford Town Council for the remainder of the 2020/2021 Municipal Year.

It was Proposed by Councillor McGregor, Seconded by Councillor Dolton and

RESOLVED: THAT Councillor Mick Kidley be Vice Chairman of Wallingford Town Council for the remainder of the 2020/2021 Municipal Year.

The Town Clerk invited Cllr McGregor to Chair the meeting.

483. TO CONSIDER IF THERE IS A NEED FOR THE CHAIRMAN TO BE MAYOR

Councillors considered if there was a need for the elected Chairman to be Mayor for the remainder of this Municipal Year in the current times.

Following a discussion Councillors concluded there was no need for a Mayor to be appointed during current times and that they would discuss the role of Chairman/Mayor further early next year.

It was Proposed by Councillor Lester, Seconded by Councillor Dolton and

RESOLVED: THAT for the remainder of the 2020/2021 Municipal Year that just a Chairman and Vice-Chairman are required for the Town Council.

484. MAYOR'S CIVIC DINNER

The Senior Officer reported that there was no need to make a decision on this now but that the Mayor's Dinner in March 2020 had been cancelled at the last minute due to Covid and that the caterers were holding a large deposit of £2,240.62. A date has been booked for the 2nd May 2021 and if Council could consider if they wish to go ahead with a scaled down event. It is possible that the caterers may not agree to keep holding the deposit indefinitely and therefore the Town Council could potentially lose the money. The estimates for 2021/2022 include a line for the Mayor's Civic Dinner but Council need to bear in mind that this falls in the same Municipal year as when a new Mayor is likely to hold his dinner so affectively there could be 2 dinners in one Municipal Year.

Councillors are aware that the cost of the civic dinners are recharged to most of those who attend such as Councillors, partners, District and County Councillors and other Mayors with some places going to guests as a thank you for their services to Wallingford. The recharge does not cover caterer's costs such as equipment or service.

The original tentative plans for the dinner on the 2nd May 2021 had been to hold it in the Castle Gardens but this would have involved additional costs such as marquees, etc. Councillors may now wish to consider holding a scaled back event in the Town Hall but numbers would be dependent on the Covid situation.

The Senior Officer was asked how much the dinner following recharges cost but this figure was not to hand.

Councillors to consider the options. Deferred until the New Year.

485. ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC

There were no admissions for the public.

486. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of Interest.

487. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – NOTIFIED AND IMPROMPTU (Total 15 Minutes)

3 members of the public spoke about their concerns with regards to the Council:

Points of concern were:

- Maintenance of the Town Hall
- Lack of communication, Newsletter not updated on the Website
- Regal still being unoccupied
- General staffing levels
- Councillors should consider if they are delivering if not they should resign
- Website could be better on key areas such as the Regal, minutes not uploaded quickly enough to the Website, more information regarding the new website on the old website.

Some Councillors supported the public's views while some suggested that during these difficult times a little more patience and understanding may be required. One Councillor reminded the public that there are currently 2 vacancies on the Council that need filling.

District Councillors Roberts report (see attached for full report) covered changes in planning law, the 5 year land supply and the fact that she had voted against adopting the South Oxfordshire Local Plan (many councillors had abstained). District Councillor Roberts advised that Wallingford would have a greater number of houses particularly on Site E and that Wallingford did not have the Infrastructure in place for all the extra houses. Councillor Keats-Rohan stated that Wallingford's emerging Neighbourhood Plan would be the only protection (Referendum now scheduled for May 2021)

District Councillor Roberts advised that she is now an independent Councillor.

488. MINUTES

Correction: Councillor Keats-Rohan reported that Minute 462 needed correcting the word **not** needed to be inserted 'County Councillor Sudbury also reported that although there was CIL money available for a Zebra Crossing by Lidl it was **not** nearly enough'.

It was Proposed by Councillor Lester, Seconded by Councillor Keats-Rohan and

RESOLVED: THAT following the above correction the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council meeting held on the 7th December 2020 all pages to be included as there are no outstanding confidential items, be signed as a correct record.

489. PRECEPT

Following adoption of the draft estimates at the last Council meeting Councillors to confirm the Precept on South Oxfordshire District Council in the sum of £498,714.00 for the 2021/2022 financial year. The Responsible Finance Officer reported that this was a 13.67% increase on the Precept and she asked Councillors to adopt the draft estimates.

Councillors discussed and it was Proposed by Councillor Harris, Seconded by Councillor Lester and

RESOLVED: THAT Wallingford Town Council Precepts on South Oxfordshire District Council in the sum £498,714.00 for the 2021/2022 of financial year.

Carried: 11 for, 3 against.

490. TO CONSIDER WHETHER THERE SHOULD BE AN OFFICIAL COUNCIL RESPONSE ON THE DECISIONS MADE AT COUNCIL ON 7TH DECEMBER AND IF SO WHAT THAT RESPONSE SHOULD BE AND WHERE IT SHOULD BE SENT

The Chairman, Councillor McGregor suggested deferring this agenda item until January however, the Town Clerk advised that the Town Council needed to officially respond with the Precept amount by the 12th January and that the next Council meeting was on the 11th January. A short explanation of the Precept amount needs to be sent at the same time as the precept request.

The Responsible Finance Officer stated that Councillor Harris had put forward a draft sentence and it was agreed that once the Responsible Finance Officer had added in the figures the proposed return would be sent to all Councillors before it is submitted.

The Chairman Councillor McGregor thanked everyone

2018 Hours – Meeting Closed