

**WALLINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES**

of the

Personnel Committee Meeting held remotely by TEAMS on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2020

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**P R E S E N T**

Councillors Dolton, Keats-Rohan, Kidley, and Whelan

The Town Clerk, Mrs Paula Lopez

**171. TO ADVISE THOSE IN ATTENDANCE OF THE PROTOCOL FOR THE MEETING**

The Chair Councillor Kidley talked through the protocol for the meeting.

**172. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from the Mayor. It was noted that Councillor McGregor has resigned from this committee.

**173. ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC**

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

**RESOLVED:**

**THAT** in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items and that the papers relating to these items remain confidential on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public's interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted:-

**Agenda Item 10 – Staffing**

**Agenda Item 11 – Confidential Minutes of 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020 pages 257 to 258 of the minute book.**

#### **174. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

A Councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in our Council's Standing Orders code of Conduct (Item 13) in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under code of conduct and his right to participate and vote on the matter (guidelines are available at the meeting and all Councillors have received a copy prior to the meeting).

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **175. VARIANCE OF ORDER OF BUSINESS**

None

#### **176. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - NOTIFIED AND IMPROMPTU (15 MINUTES IN TOTAL)**

There were no members of the public present

#### **177. MINUTES**

To sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Personnel meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020 as set out on pages 254 to 256 of the Minute Book, copy previously circulated to members, copy attached to the minute book. Confidential Minutes to be approved under confidential items.

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

#### **RESOLVED:**

**THAT the Minutes of the Personnel meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020 as set out on pages 254 to 256 of the Minute Book, copy previously circulated to members, copy attached to the minute book, be signed as a correct record.**

#### **178. HEALTH & SAFETY**

The Town Clerk reported that an audit was due by Ellis Whittam but this had been delayed by COVID-19 and she was waiting another date when it was safe to arrange. Our part time officer will review Health & Safety before this audit, currently her attention has been diverted to COVID-19 risk assessments and sourcing PPE where necessary.

#### **179. COVID-19 RESPONSE**

i) **General** - It has been very hard for the staff during this lockdown period, we have been busier than ever and it has been a massive learning curve. Business continuity had to be addressed first and foremost making sure staff were safe as well as being able to function as a Council. The staff have worked long hours tirelessly to keep things going. More on this during the staffing.

ii)**Reopening of the Town Information Centre (TIC)** -The TIC reopened on 28<sup>th</sup> July, with it being a very small area we had to ensure that staff and visitors were safe. Processes put in place include 'in one way out another' which involved installing a ramp because of the steps, this had its own problems making sure the ramp did not move or get stolen. We had to address the leaflets, source a screen, PPE, take into account OALC and liaising with them along with the cleaner. More on this in the staff section. Risk assessments in place. A few teething problems but the card machine has been a great addition.

ii)**Town Hall weddings** - Again with the Town Hall this had to be assessed and marked out for social distancing, we have delayed the annual clean of the floor due to the social distancing stickers, the needs of registrars had to be complied with along with all the necessary risk assessments both for us and the registrars. Those who had booked weddings had to be contacted and in some cases some bookings were cancelled but where it was possible to hold the type of service the couple wanted, the service was discussed in respect of the format of the event, what they could expect and what was expected of them to comply with government guidelines. An app for wedding track and trace has been sourced which will go on a new iPad, this allows the staff to register those attending. More in the staffing section.

ii)**Manning of the Town Council Offices** - We took some difficult criticism 2 months into the lockdown regarding the phones which was uncomfortable given how hard everyone was working. I decided early on that to transfer the phones to any one staff member was unfair and unworkable so I arranged for a member of staff to go in once a day to pick up answerphone messages which worked well, we actually got very few phone calls and no complaints. For the last few weeks one or other staff member has gone in most days for most of the day and I have now made this more formal from 17<sup>th</sup> August. We have a rota where at least one person will be in the office every day. The part time member of staff will work a full day when it is her turn, reducing her hours to compensate on another day. Given that it is a very small office we don't feel it is safe for all of us to be in at once not least because of the kitchen and toilet use. We will keep the door locked and anyone from the public needing to visit for whatever reason will be asked to ring the bell and we will attend the door. This is to save the continual sanitising of handrails etc. Again, risk assessments in place for the return of staff.

**The Chair asked that thanks be recorded to all members of staff for their hard work in such difficult times. This was reiterated by all members of the Personnel Committee.**

**CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES ON PAGE 85**