

**WALLINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES**

**of the**

**Virtual TEAMS meeting of Full Council on the Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020 at 7p.m**

**PRESENT**

The Mayor, Councillor Lee Upcraft

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

Responsible Finance Officer: Michelle Taylor

Senior Officer in Attendance: Barbara Atkins (Minute Taker)

Officer: Tracey Collins

Mr Richard Prunier

Approximately 12 members of the public were present

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

The Mayor shared the protocol for the meeting.

**279. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from The Town Clerk (annual leave) and Councillor Sinkinson. Councillor Davies was not present.

**280. ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC**

Agenda Item 20 Recommendations from Committees -Tourism & Economic Committee meeting – 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020, Minute 244 refers.

Following a discussion with conflicting opinions as to whether this item should be heard in confidential and advice from the Mayor and Senior Officer that it should not, this was put to the vote with the following resolution made,

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

**RESOLVED: THAT** Council voted to take agenda item 20 Recommendations from Committees: Tourism & Economic Committee meeting – 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020 (Minute 244 refers) in confidential.

It was Proposed by the Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Hughes 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 23 – Confidential Minutes

Agenda 24 - Boathouse

#### **281. 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) Information for each Member was available at the meeting.

There were no declarations of interests.

#### **282. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – NOTIFIED AND IMPROMPTU (Total 15 Minutes)**

(i) **Liam O'Brien – Wallingford Radio** – Councillors had received paperwork from Mr Liam O'Brien who was requesting support from the Council and individual Councillors for Wallingford Radio for funding and a statement of support from the council, as well as any direct or indirect support going forward, towards an anticipated FM launch in September next year. Wallingford Radio's content is factual coverage and engagement with local businesses and the community. Currently the station operates over the internet and they hope their launch will be in time for BunkFest next year. Going forward although help with funding is now needed they wish to be self-sufficient in the future.

The Mayor stated that they would discuss the request at a future meeting and asked that Councillors get in touch with the radio station.

(ii) **Dennis Jackson – Request from Wallingford in Business to Place Stalls on The Market Place for Christmas Shopping on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December** – Mr Jackson reported that Wallingford in Business hoped to meet retail Christmas needs on the 6<sup>th</sup> December by having market stalls to compliment town businesses on the Market Place if the Council approved. There would be none of the usual attractions such as the donkey sanctuary and the Santa Run had been cancelled. In addition as they could not justify the expense of a road closure would it be possible to use the cobbled area between the Town Hall and the War Memorial? - Councillors discussed under Minute 298 below.

**Councillor Candidates – All candidates had confirmed their eligibility in accordance with section 79 of the Local Government Act 1972, to be a member of the council and that they are not disqualified, pursuant to s.80 of the same act to be a member of the council. They had all submitted written statements on why they wished to become a town councillor.**

(iii) **David Carpin** – Mr Carpin lives Woodcote and gave an overview of his business experience to those present at the meeting. Mr Carpin also outlined his interests.

The Mayor asked what his interest in planning was and he outlined that this included keeping the balance between building and green spaces.

(iv) **Tonja Fritz-Johnson** – Mrs Fritz-Johnson stated that she had lived in Wallingford since 1995 and that she was a local business sole trader. She had also worked for the police and could offer the Council some interesting key skills.

The Mayor asked what she was particularly concerned with and this included communications between the town council and Wallingford's residents.

(v) **Sue Hendrie** – Ms Hendrie stated that she was involved with various organisations and businesses and that she had assisted with the local neighbourhood plan. Her interests were planning, conservation and crime issues.

The Mayor asked about her time working on the Neighbourhood Plan and she stated that Wallingford was under immense pressure from developers and was being run by strategy and policy.

Councillor Lester asked where her planning strengths lay and Ms Hendrie stated that she had worked with English Heritage (Historic England) regarding listed buildings and assisted amongst others the MOD and NHS with planning issues.

vi) **George Newcombe** – Mr Newcombe gave an overview of his experience along with the fact that he had recently renovated a house in Wallingford. His partner is a teacher at Wallingford School and is a partner of Bidwells LLP. Mr Newcombe hopes to preserve, help and serve the community and stated that he would contribute enthusiasm and commitment to the Town Council.

Councillor Keats-Rohan asked about his business and he responded that it was development and his client base included landowners, pension funds, colleges and parish councils.

vii) **Nick Sandall** – Mr Sandall has lived in Wallingford for the last 18 months but has been in the area for 26 years. He is very proud of Wallingford and wants to give something back. His background experience includes: accounts, serving on village hall committees and he has sales experience.

Councillor Hughes asked Mr Sandall what his ideas were for a wider unique experience for Wallingford were, and Mr Sandall outlined them.

(viii) **Tony Stead** – Mr Stead stated that most of the Councillors knew him as he had served as a Councillor before. He had learnt that the Town Council produced a huge amount of paperwork and that while he had been working this had proved difficult to manage. He is now retired. Mr Stead is a Chairman of the Cholsey and Wallingford Preservation Society and he had worked hard to obtain a grant for them.

Councillor Cattermole asked what his ideas for the Town Council were. Mr Stead stated that the Town Council need to make more provisions for coach parties, advertise in their blue guide and encourage them to park at the Railway.

Councillor Lester thanked all the candidates stating that they all had good strengths and that those that were unsuccessful she urged to stand for the next election.

## **283. COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

(i) **County Councillor Pete Sudbury reported on the following:**

**Adoption of the Local Plan** – Councillor Sudbury gave an overview of the problems.

**Transport Plan** – South Oxfordshire had not entered a bid so there would be no money forthcoming.

**Railway** – Councillors Sudbury's discussion were ongoing to try to get the Wallingford to Cholsey commercial line reopened and there was commercial backing available for this.

**Traffic Speeding** – Councillor Sudbury has been contacted by several local residents regarding speeding in Goldsmith Lane and St Nicholas Road and he stated that he had agreed to pay for speed monitoring in these streets out of his grant.

**Lights/Speed on the Bypass** – Councillor Sudbury is assisting with Brightwell-cum-Sotwell's campaign regarding lighting. The current lower speed limit may become permanent however this may cause more traffic to go through Wallingford itself. Therefore Councillor Sudbury proposed that the speed limit in Wallingford is reduced to 20 miles an hour and he would like the town council's advice on how they would like him to proceed.

Councillor Cattermole stated that he believed that a 20 mile an hour speed limit was not enforceable by the police, Councillor Sudbury confirmed that he was correct. Councillor Sudbury reported that he was astounded that there was no valid traffic survey for Wallingford, particularly as air quality was poor, and he would try to persuade County to carry one out.

Councillor Cattermole also asked if a pedestrian crossing would be possible on the bypass between the entrances to the footpath. Councillor Sudbury stated it was worth exploring.

The Mayor thanked County Councillor Pete Sudbury.

(ii) **District Councillors Roberts had sent her apologies and Councillor Levy was not present.**

#### **284. VARIATION OF ORDER OF BUSINESS**

There was no variation in order of business other than that Agenda item 20 would be heard in confidential.

#### **285. MAYORS COMMUNICATIONS**

i) **Bernard Picken** a previous Town Clerk for Wallingford from 1987 to 1995, passed away at the beginning of August he was 90 years and one day old. The Mayor outlined how hard past and present Town Clerks work. The Mayor stated that we owed Mr Picken's family our gratitude and that the Town Council would send their condolences to the family.

ii) **New on-call fire-fighters** needed to join Wallingford Station.

The Mayor reported that there is currently a shortage of on-call firefighters at the station which is severely limiting their ability to respond to calls. An increasing amount of coverage is having to be provided by other stations. He asked all councillors to spread the word that the station is looking for new volunteers, and that perhaps the COVID-19 pandemic, with an increase in home working, might enable more opportunities for new on-call fire-fighters.

iii) **Neighbourhood Plan** – The Mayor reported that the Inspector wanted to speak with the Steering Group because of the impact of the Local Plan on the Neighbourhood Plan and also the impact of the Covid-19 restrictions were likely to have on the referendum. This talk would probably take place within the next couple of weeks.

iv) **Proposed Marina** – This application had, as reported by Councillor Whelan, been rejected.

v) **Litter Pick** – The Mayor thanked all those that had helped. At the event The Mayor presented Mark Brett with an engrossment in recognition of his community work. The

engrossment should have been presented at the Mayor's dinner but this was cancelled due to Covid-19.

#### **286. MINUTES**

To sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 2020 as set out on pages 88 - 100 of the Minute Book.

Councillor Whelan asked for Minute 193 to be corrected as she has abstained from voting.

#### **RESOLUTION REQUIRED.**

It was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Lester and

**RESOLVED: THAT** following the above correction the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 2020 as set out on pages 88 - 100 of the Minute Book, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **287. TO ADOPT THE FOLLOWING MINUTES**

To adopt the minutes of the following committee meeting held in 2020, copies previously signed as a correct record and circulated to Councillors:

Parks, Gardens, allotments and Open Spaces	13.07.20	Pages 60 - 66
Tourism and Economic Development	8.06.20	27 - 32
Planning	27.07.20	75 - 81
Planning	17.08.20	102 - 110

It was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Kidley and

**RESOLVED: THAT** the minutes of committee meetings held in 2020 as listed above, copies previously signed as a correct record and circulated to Councillors, be adopted by Full Council.

#### **288. TO CO-OPT TO THE VACANT COUNCILLOR SEAT**

Councillors had all received copies of the prospective candidates' papers and a voting slip email. Councillors sent their voting slips in to the Senior Officer and the Responsible Finance Officer. Unfortunately the Senior Officer did not receive everyone's email and it was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor McGregor and

**RESOLVED: THAT** the count would be accepted on just the Responsible Finance Officer's (Accounts) email copies.

The Responsible Finance Officer sent the details of the winning candidate to the Mayor.



Mr David Carpin won the vote but will be unable to take up office until the Town Clerk returns from annual leave when he may then sign his Declaration of Office with her.

**289. 8a CASTLE STREET**

i) **Town Council Office Move** - The Trustees of the Bull Croft Trust have resolved to award the lease of the property to the Town Council for the sum of £17,000 per annum, (independently accessed). Councillors considered the relocation of the offices under the terms and as the Town Council had documented meetings councillors were confident that this had been completely transparent. It was Proposed by the Mayor, Seconded by Councillor McGregor and

**RESOLVED: THAT** the Town Council offices are relocated to 8a Castle Street.

ii) **Lease** – Councillors considered if the Council required an official lease. It was Proposed by The Mayor, seconded by Councillor Dolton and

**RESOLVED: THAT** the Town Council do not require a formal lease.

iii) **Costs of Office Move** - To approve the associated costs for the office move, but not limited to: the moving of the 2 safes at a cost of £795 and the costs of moving the technical/computer equipment and the installation of a counter.

The Senior Officer reported that the Town Council's technical support company would charge £75 per hour and the work should take no longer than a day. In addition the installation of a counter would cost £1,875.

Following a discussion it was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Kidley and

**RESOLVED: THAT** the Town Clerk oversee the cost of the office, and be authorised to spend up to a maximum of £5,000 for this purpose as she considers is required.

**290. AGATHA CHRISTIE STATUE**

(i) **Fund Raising** - Councillor Beatty reported that the Agatha Christie Wallingford Statue fund raising launch was ready they just needed to finalise the banking details. Councillor Beatty also reported that the sculpture knows of a possible £35,000 fund source. Councillor Holford thanked Councillor Beatty for all his work.

(ii) **Maquette** – Councillors considered where the maquette of the Agatha Christie should be kept. Councillor Beatty suggested that it could be kept in the museum on a permanent loan basis and Councillor Keats-Rohan reported that the museum would be delighted as they had a dedicated Agatha Christie exhibition area. Councillor Beatty advised he is in the process of preparing posters for the Town Information Centre, (TIC), to display

regarding the fund raising. The Mayor suggested that until the museum reopens the maquette could be displayed in the TIC.

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

**RESOLVED: THAT** the maquette be given to Wallingford Museum on a permanent loan basis and THAT until the museum reopens following covid-19 the maquette is displayed in the Town Information Centre.

**Here Councillor Wilder left the meeting**

#### **291. THE MOORINGS**

i) **Update on the resumption of the mooring's collections** - The Responsible Finance Officer's income and expenditure spreadsheet was sent out in advance of the meeting. The Responsible Finance Officer reported that since she had produced the last set of figures there had been an increase of £3,000. The estimates had forecast income at £13,000 but due to Covid-19 it was just up to £8,000.

ii) **The River <sup>Side</sup> Users Working Party** to ask Council to overturn the resolution to engage with a third party for the collection and enforcement of the mooring fees. Councillor Whelan hoped that everyone had seen her report in advance of the meeting. Councillor Whelan proposed that the mooring collection remained in-house however the River <sup>Side</sup> Users Working Party believed that the collection should be made at sunset as many boaters had already left the moorings in the morning when the collector made the rounds. The Senior Officer advised that the Town Clerk had stated that any change in staff contracts need to go through the Personnel Committee and that any changes needed would have to be agreed with the staff member.

Correction.

Correction.

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

**RESOLVED: THAT** the collection of moorings remained in house for now and that that the change in collection time be requested via the Personnel committee.

#### **292. THE MOORINGS – ENGAGEMENT WITH DISTRICT ENFORCEMENT**

The Property Manager at South Oxfordshire District Council has confirmed approval to engage with a third-party contractor for the collection and enforcement of the mooring fees. No amendment to the policy is required.

If appropriate,

i) Council to consider and approve the design of signage, subject to Agenda item 14ii), Minute 599 of 17<sup>th</sup> February refers.

This item does not now need to be discussed due to Minute 291 above.



- ii) Council to consider when the contract with District Enforcement should commence if appropriate.

This item does not now need to be fully discussed due to Minute 291 above.

- iii) Council to consider whether the summer season should be extended.

Councillor Whelan stated that she believed the summer season should continue until the end of October because we often have an Indian summer and there is a school half term towards the end of the month. Councillors discussed and it was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Cattermole and

**RESOLVED: THAT** the summer season be extended until the end of October providing that staff are agreeable and that the signage at the moorings can be changed in time.

- iv) Council to consider how cash will be collected and the process of ensuring that payment in cash by boaters can be determined to avoid enforcement, (the majority of boaters still pay in cash).

The Responsible Finance Officer reported that the vast majority of the moorings payments were still by cash, just £300 had been by card payment. Councillors agreed that non cash payment should be encouraged and that it should be explored to allow signage to have a QR sign and a link for non-cash payment or similar.

**Action:** The Responsible Finance Officer to look in to the options for non-cash payment (other than by card reader) and report back with the proposal.

### **293. INSTALLATION OF A LITTER BIN ON ST JOHNS GREEN**

A request has been made by the residents to install a litter bin on St Johns Green. SODC have advised that they no longer place any bins nor empty them on land that they do not own. Council to consider the installation of a bin and approve to take on responsibility for an outside contractor to empty the bin. Councillor Kidley reported that at the Town Clerk's and Senior Officer's request he had looked at whether a bin could be installed on the green. Councillor Kidley had discussions with the residents and a site had been chosen. The Senior Officer reported that the District Council, had following the Town Council's request, reported that the cost of this and emptying would be down to the Town Council as it was on their land. If a bin were to be installed the cost was likely to be in the region of £300 to £800 for a bin and emptying could cost £3.00 per week which will increase to £6.00 per bin next April.

The Senior Officer reported that an alternative was that the District Council had agreed to change the small hanging bin by the bus stop for a large pavement one. Councillors discussed and it was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Lester and

**RESOLVED: THAT** The District Council's proposal of a larger bin by the bus stop is accepted and the situation is monitored.

## **294. POLICIES**

i) **Play Area Inspection's Policy** –Councillors received and considered the adoption of a policy to formalise the interim inspections of the play areas in the Bull Croft. It was clarified by Councillor McGregor that this was an in house policy to make inspections quicker and more robust. ROSPA will still do an annual inspection. Councillors discussed and it was Proposed by Councillor McGregor, Seconded by Councillor Dolton and

**RESOLVED: THAT** the Play Area Inspection's Policy be adopted.

ii) To consider an amendment to the Logo policy to allow for the use of the Coat of Arms for the new website. Policy sent out in advance of the meeting.

**Councillor Lester was unable to contribute to this discussion due to technical problems**

Councillors discussed and It was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Keats-Rohan and

**RESOLVED: THAT** Wallingford Town Council proposes in principle that the Coat of Arms logo may be used on the Website but that contact is made with the College of Arts to check that the current logo is compatible and that Council must approve the chosen format and confirm that they approve its use on a preview of the website.

## **295. NATIONAL PAY AWARD**

The National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) has agreed the new pay scales for 2020-21 to be implemented from 1 April 2020. An increase of 2.75%. (3% was included in the estimates for this year). Staff with less than 5 years' service will also receive 1 extra day's holiday.

**The Mayor gave an overview of the above which Councilors noted.**

## **296. HISTORIC ASSET WORKING PARTY UPDATE**

Councillor Keats-Rohan stated that the grant applications had been submitted but that it was a 6 month process however she may hear about one of them by the end of this month.

## **297. DECISION TO SUPPORT PUBLIC REQUESTS FOR SPEED MONITORING IN WALLINGFORD**

The Mayor has been contacted by members of the public to ask if the Town Council will support the County Council's installation of speed monitoring devices at problem locations in town which will then support part of evidence gathering for later applications to reduce speed limits in some streets.

The Mayor stated that Councillors had heard from County Councillor Pete Sudbury's recommendations and proposals for speed monitoring cameras in Wallingford and stated that

he would like to hear from residents if there are any other areas which need monitoring. Councillor Sudbury had also asked the Town Council about bringing in a 20 mile an hour speed limit. Councillors discussed and it was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Keats-Rohan and

**RESOLVED: THAT** Wallingford Town Council asks residents which areas may need speed monitoring cameras and that 20 mile speed options in Wallingford are investigated.

**Action:** Future agenda item when all information is received.

**298. REQUEST FROM WALLINGFORD IN BUSINESS TO PLACE STALLS ON THE MARKET PLACE FOR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING ON SUNDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER**

Councillors discussed the above request and Mr Jackson's presentation in Minute 282 above. The cobbled area would require a road closure but Feather's Yard could be investigated. Councillor Beauchamp reported that part of Feathers Yard up to the bollards was KP Stationers land and the rest was believed to be the District Council's responsibility. It was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Holford and

**RESOLVED: THAT** Wallingford Town Council supports Wallingford in Business proposal to place stalls on the Market Place for Christmas shopping on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December providing that Wallingford in Business comply with Government Covid-19 guidance and have a risk assessment and insurance. In respect of the use of the cobbled area a road closure would need to be in place.

**Members of the public were asked to leave the meeting**

Confidential Minutes on Page 140