



Town Clerk: Miss Joy Norris MSc ACG

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Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Thursday 24 June 2021 commencing at 19:00 hrs

Present

Chair: Councillor K Haslett

Councillors: M Beckwith, J Buczkowski, M Dale, R Dietrich, I Emmett, J Johns, M Smith and C Snow

In attendance

Note: Councillors attending by remote access are not able to participate nor vote in the meeting but may raise questions during the agenda item for Members' Questions

Councillor Andrews (by remote access)

Officers: J Norris (Town Clerk)

2 members of the public attended the meeting

1 member of the press attended the meeting

300. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor announced that on 17 June 2021 Justin Lochhead had resigned as a Councillor with immediate effect.

301. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Guest and Knight. It was also noted that Councillor Andrews was unable to attend the meeting in the Town Hall but was observing the meeting by remote access.

302. Declarations of Interests

The following Declaration of Interest was made at this point in the meeting:

- Councillor Buczkowski declared a personal interest in Agenda No 14(i) recommendations from the Policy, Finance and Personnel Committee regarding a grant to the Cullompton Community Association (CCA) as on the 23 June 2021 he became a Trustee of the CCA.

Note Cllr Emmett made a declaration at the start of discussion of Agenda item 14 – recommendations from the Policy, Finance and Personnel Committee

303. Public Participation

This agenda item allows members of the public present at the meeting to raise matters which are relevant to Cullompton.

The Mayor read out an email (text circulated with the Agenda as Supporting Paper A) that had been received from a member of the public regarding the lack of dropped kerbs in the Kingfisher Reach Estate making it difficult for people using wheelchairs or mobility scooters. The Mayor asked for an email reply to be sent to the correspondent and the matter to be referred to the appropriate Council.

The Mayor read out an email that had been received regarding 19 High Street:

"Thank you for info on 19 high street. I have spoken to Steve Reardon and he told me that you may be able to include this email in tomorrow's discussion at full council.

£60k would be much better spent on work that ACTUALLY needs doing around town, especially in cemetery

The 15% of any future rental to MDDC is a disgrace, I view it as a backhanded way of paying full asking price. AND there seems to be no time limit on this payment.

From my meeting of a year or so ago the leasee was to be given a period of grace BEFORE paying ground rent, I think of 2years.

It would in my view be a CRIMINAL act of negligence for this project to be approved especially if no due diligence has been taken, if it has, publish the findings please.

The town asthetic appearance is deteriorating rapidly and the decline could be arrested by channeling this money into maintenance,

Thank you"

Speaker 1

The Speaker started with a comment that the audio recording quality is the worst he had heard and also the Mayor is very quiet therefore the new microphones were not doing their job and an expert should be requested to sort out the system.

The Speaker then said that regarding 19 High Street he had previously asked for a public meeting for all members of the public to attend and interrogate the Council as to what they had been doing behind the scenes, what they intended to do with the purchase and to see the business plan, costings etc; he was now formally asking for a public meeting for this to be discussed.

The Chair responded that 19 High Street was on the Agenda for the meeting.

Speaker 2

The Speaker raised a number of matters.

The Speaker said that the Mayor's microphone was working on his audio but he could not see clearly who was present.

The Totally Locally organisation have their Fiver Fest on at the moment and they have an official website and Facebook page.

At the Autumn Festival vehicles parking in the main street cause traffic problems.

The No 19 website he had set up was to provide information that was in the public domain.

Interest rates are at a historically low level and there could be a problem if the site was bought and then more money had to be borrowed at a higher rate in the future.

The Mayor responded that the Autumn Fest was organised by a separate organisation to the Town Council and it is the organisers who need to be contacted regarding the parking issue

raised and as No 19 High Street is on the Agenda that should provide information about the current situation.

The Town Clerk read out the list of Councillors present to assist those using remote access to attend the meeting.

304. Appointment of Deputy Mayor

The appointment of a Deputy Mayor for the period until the 2022 Annual Meeting of the Town Council was considered.

RESOLVED that Councillor Johns be appointed as the Deputy Mayor for the remainder of the Civic Year.

305. Minutes

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the meeting held on 27th May 2021. (Supporting Paper B to the Agenda)

RESOLVED to confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 27th May 2021 as a correct record.

306. Action List

The Action List relating to the Town Council was received and reviewed. (Supporting Paper C to the Agenda)

307. Vote of Thanks

Consideration was given to recording a formal vote of thanks for the work of former Councillor Justin Lochhead.

RESOLVED to record a formal vote of thanks to Justin Lochhead for his work as a Town Councillor

308. Annual Governance Statement 2020/2021

Consideration was given to the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/2021 (Supporting Paper D to the Agenda)

RESOLVED that the Annual Governance Statement attached to these minutes as Appendix 1 is approved.

309. Accounting Statements 2020/21

Consideration was given to the Accounting Statements for 2020/21 (Supporting Paper E to the agenda)

A number of questions were asked regarding the information contained in the documents accompanying the accounting statements. The Town Clerk confirmed that the asset list has been update to reflect acquisitions and disposals made during 2020/2021 but physical checks had not been undertaken.

RESOLVED to approve the accounting statements for 2020/2021 attached as Appendix 2 to these minutes but note that the assets had not been physically checked during the year.

310. Regular Payments

The Town Council's Financial Regulations (No 5.6) permit Council to authorise payments which arise on a regular basis for the year. (Supporting Paper F to the Agenda)

RESOLVED to approve the list of Regular payments attached to these minutes as Appendix 3.

311. Payments for Authorisation:

To examine and agree the accounts due for payment. (Supporting Paper G to the Agenda)

RESOLVED that the invoices due for payment totalling £5,234.46 gross, the direct debits and standing authorisation items totalling £4,045.48 be approved.

312. Recommendations from the No 19 High Street Development Committee

Recommendations from the No 19 High Street Development Committee were considered. (Supporting Paper H to the Agenda)

Councillor Smith reported on the No 19 High Street Committee meeting held on 21 June and the Mayor read out an email from Mid Devon District Council's (MDDC) Corporate Manager for Property, Leisure and Climate Change explaining that MDDC do not own the site but is acting as a mortgagee.

A recorded vote was requested.

RESOLVED that the Town Council's most recent bid (November 2020) remains on the table for the current round of bids submitted to Mid Devon District Council.

Voting in favour: Councillors Beckwith, Buczkowski, Dale, Dietrich, Haslett Johns and Smith,

Voting against: Councillor Snow

Abstaining: Councillor Emmett

313. Recommendations from the Policy, Finance and Personnel Committee

Recommendations from the Policy, Finance and Personnel Committee were considered. (Supporting Paper I to the Agenda)

- Note:**
- (i) 20:09hrs Councillor Emmet declared a personal interest as a CCA Trustee.
 - (ii) Councillor Buczkowski had declared a personal interest in this agenda item at the start of the meeting under the Agenda item for Declarations of Interest.

Grants

RESOLVED-

- (i) that the grants policy and procedure is amended as follows:-
 - a) that grants are available "for groups, projects and events based in the parish"
 - b) that there will be 2 grant tranches each financial year, the timing to be determined by the Town Clerk but there will be at least a 2 month advertising period for each tranche and that the Scheme of Delegation is amended accordingly
- (ii) That the Policy, Finance and Personnel Committee is given delegated authority to determine all grant applications and that the Committee Terms of Reference / Scheme of Delegation are amended accordingly
- (iii) That the CCA are awarded a grant of £300.00 towards holding events in the fields for the wellbeing of residents after COVID including holding monthly walks, trials, identification sessions to introduce more [people] to the trees,

wildlife, flowers and birds using hand out material and occasionally local expert help.

- (iv) That consideration is given to making an annual grant to the CCA.

Exercise of Public Rights

RESOLVED that the following timetable is implemented for submission of the AGAR and the exercise of public rights:

- Week commencing 31 May Internal Audit takes place; AGAR to be signed by internal auditor
- 10 June 2021 AGAR considered by PFP Committee & recommendation made to Town Council
- 24 June AGAR considered by Town Council and signed by appropriate persons (Chairman and Clerk)
- 27 June AGAR and supporting papers submitted to the external auditor
- 28 June – 6 August is the 30 working day period for exercise of the public right of inspection (must include the first 10 working days in July).

Committee Structure

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Audit Sub-Committee becomes a full Committee known as the Governance Committee
- (ii) That the Terms of Reference for the Governance Committee are as attached to these Minutes as Appendix 4
- (iii) That the Chair of the Governance Committee should not also hold the position of Mayor or Chair or Vice-Chair of any other Town Council Committee
- (iv) That the Policy, Finance and Personnel Committee is renamed the Resources Committee

314. Recommendations from the Community Wellbeing Committee

Recommendations from the Community Wellbeing Committee were considered. (Supporting Paper J to the Agenda)

Christmas Lights 2021

RESOLVED to appoint Sparkex as the preferred contractor to supply and to install the 2021 Christmas Lights for Cullompton, at a cost of £11,390.00.

Allotments

RESOLVED

- (i) That the quotation of £2,850 for the clearance of plots 3 and 5 at Hayman's close is accepted
- (ii) That the value of the Town Hall improvements Ear Marked Reserve (EMR) is transferred to allotments for the purpose of allotment clearance and general maintenance.

315. Recommendations from the Cemetery and Town Hall Committee

There were no recommendations from the Cemetery & Town Hall Committee.

316. Recommendations from the Town Centre & Economic Development Committee

Recommendations from the Town Centre and Economic Development Committee were considered. (Supporting Paper L to the Agenda)

RESOLVED that with effect from 1 April 2021, market pitch fees or other ancillary charges will not be made for a period of 6 calendar months.

317. Committee Workplans – Budget Bids

Consideration was given to bids from Committees for funding to bring forward items on their 3 year workplans. (Supporting Paper M to the Agenda)

A budget to help fund repairs to The Leat could be borne in mind for future budget plan

318. Welcome Back fund – Delivery Partnership

Consideration was given to becoming a delivery partner with Mid Devon District Council for the Welcome Back Fund. (Supporting Paper N to the Agenda)

RESOLVED

- (i) that the principle of becoming a delivery partner for the Welcome Back fund is broadly supported but before a final decision is made more information is required regarding the nature and extent of the anticipated Town Council role
- (ii) that the additional information referred to in (i) above is reported to the next Town Council meeting so that a final decision can be made.

319. Committee Membership

The appointment of Town Councillors to the new Governance Committee was considered.

RESOLVED that Councillors Beckwith, Buczkowski, Dale, and Knight sit on the Governance Committee

320. Committee Chairs

(i) Policy, Finance and Personnel Committee

The election of a Chair for the Resources Committee (formerly the Policy, Finance and Personnel Committee)

RESOLVED Cllr Buczkowski be elected as Chair of the Resources Committee for the remainder of the Civic Year.

(ii) Governance Committee

To consider appointing a Chair of the Governance Committee

RESOLVED that the Governance Committee should elect the Committee Chair at their first meeting.

321. CCC Community Alliance

Consideration was given to joining the CCC Community Alliance. (Supporting Paper O to the Agenda)

RESOLVED that the Town Council joins the CCC Community Alliance.

322. Members Questions

This agenda item is to give Councillors an opportunity to ask questions which are relevant to the work of the Council

The following questions / matters were raised:

- How long is New Cut likely to remain closed? –The Chair, sought the agreement of Councillors to allow a member of the public to respond and the member of the public said they understood Western Power was doing emergency work which may take another week.
- The people mapping the utilities in the town centre have said that the lime trees are damaging the services and may need to be removed; these trees are covered by Tree Preservation Orders so it will be important that any work has the correct consents.
- Last night 3 long serving members of Cullompton Community Association stood down from their positions. It would be nice if their service to the charity could be recognised.
- Councillor Snow had asked for information which hadn't been provided; the Town Clerk responded that some of the information had been collected and should be sent to Cllr Snow the next day
- The Town Clerk reported that following the request for information about road closures to be made more accessible a link had been provided on the Town Council website to the Devon County Council website where there was a map showing details of all road closures etc. A request was made that any traffic information received in the Town Council office should still to be sent to Councillors.

323. Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED to exclude the public and press during consideration of:

- Agenda Item 25, recommendations from the Policy, Finance and Personnel Committee on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of its confidential nature (personal information).

20:59 hrs RESOLVED to extend the duration of the meeting until 21:05hrs.

324. Recommendations from the Policy, Finance and Personnel Committee

Consideration was given to recommendations from the Policy, Finance and Personnel Committee regarding 2020/2021 annual leave. (Supporting Paper P to the Agenda)

RESOLVED that the 2 members of the Outdoor Team who had been unable to take their full 2020/2021 annual leave entitlement are each paid for 7 days annual leave and they carry the balance of their entitlement forward to be taken in the 2021/2022 leave year.

The meeting closed at 21:01hrs