



Town Clerk: Miss Joy Norris MSc ACIS

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## **Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held remotely on Thursday 24 September 2020 commencing at 19:00 hrs**

### **Present**

**Chair:** Councillor K Haslett

**Councillors:** E Andrews, J Buczkowski, M Dale, G Guest, J Johns, J Lockhead, M Rowe and M Smith.

### **In attendance**

**Officers:** J Norris (Town Clerk) M Weston (Deputy Town Clerk)

1X member of the press attended the meeting

4 X members of the public attended the meeting

### **96. Mayor's Announcements**

The following announcement was made

Due to the current COVID19 restrictions forbidding the organisation of events that encourage mass gatherings, the marking of both Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday this year will be significantly different to usual. Specifically, it is looking increasingly unlikely that there will be any organised gathering at the War Memorial to mark the 2 minutes of silence or lay wreathes. There is ongoing discussion between the council Officers, the churches and the Royal British Legion to arrange a Service of Remembrance that is both fitting and COVID safe. Further details will be announced when available."

### **97. Apologies For Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dietrich and Knight

### **98. Declarations of Interests**

The following declarations of interest were made:

- Cllr Haslett declared a personal interest in Agenda No 13 Parking Restrictions New Street, Cullompton as lives in New Street
- Cllr Haslett declared a personal interest in Agenda No 16 First Notification for the Removal of Payphone Service as lives in New Street which is close to the phone kiosk and has used it in the past

## 99. **Public Participation**

This agenda item enables members of the public to raise matters which are relevant to Cullompton.

### **Speaker 1-**

1. The Speaker made a suggestion that the housekeeping message is displayed on-screen at the start of the meeting
2. Regarding the publication of Councillor phone numbers - why does the Town Council hide phone numbers, the public have a right to speak to their elected representative.
3. Not only should apologies be given at the start of the meeting but the reasons for the apology should be given and approved

The Chair responded that the information provided at the start of a meeting would also need to be read out even if it was displayed on a screen at the start of the meeting because not everyone present at the meeting is using a screen

The Town Clerk explained that the reason for an apology does not need to be recorded, though legislation requires that if it is going to be a long-term or persistent absence then the prior approval of Council is required before the absence reaches six months, if such approval is not given and the Councillor does not attend a meeting for six months then the Councillor automatically loses their seat; it is therefore not a legal requirement nor necessary to record the reason for an apology on every occasion, but if there is going to be a long term absence then an agenda item to approve the reason for absence stops the Councillor falling foul of the six month rule.

Cllr Buczkowski responded that he thought it may be useful if people in the waiting room could see the housekeeping information; He also thought it would be useful to clarify the position regarding apologies as when he was chairing a meeting it was his practice to vote to accept the reason and there should be a consistent approach across the Council to avoid any confusion. The Town Clerk cited the relevant legislation regarding apologies as the Local Government Act 1972 S85 which refers to persistent absence.

### **Speaker 2**

1. There is an item on the agenda regarding Casual vacancies, in the past there has been an issue regarding voting – how will that be dealt with?
2. Agenda No 11 list of payments, there are a lot of invoices for Labdons but it doesn't say which projects the items are for
3. Agenda No 18, No 19 High Street, Martin Smith should have declared an interest as he is part of the Town Team

Cllr Buczkowski responded that the Policy Review Working Group is working on a co-options policy based upon advice from the Monitoring Officer and national best practice which it is hoped will be in place before there are any co-options vote and that policy includes voting procedures; there has been confusion about voting for co-options in the past and that should all be addressed by having an agreed policy.

Payments will be addressed when get to agenda item

19:16hrs Cllr Smith declared a personal interest in Agenda No 18, No 19 High Street, Cullompton

### **Speaker 3**

Nearly 3 weeks ago Cllr Smith contacted a PCSO re anti social parking in the main street – has there been a reply?

Cllr Smith responded that he did speak to a PCSO but the police have no jurisdiction over on-street parking it is a matter for Mid Devon District Council

**100. Minutes**

- (i) The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 August 2020 were considered as a correct record (Supporting Paper A to the Agenda)
- (ii) The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2020 as a correct record (Supporting Paper B to the Agenda)

**RESOLVED**

- (i) That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 August 2020 be confirmed as a correct record
- (ii) That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

**101. Action List**

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

**102. Motions submitted in Accordance with Standing Order No 9**

The following proposal submitted by Councillor Guest was considered

- a) That on all public domain documents only councillors official emails are provided unless a councillor specifically requests otherwise.
- b) That councillors private phone numbers can be shared with other town councillors and these can be obtained from the clerk and provided on a specific councillors only contact list.

**RESOLVED** that each Councillor is asked to complete a form confirming their contact details and stating the permission level for distribution

**103. Casual Vacancies**

An update on the casual vacancies was given to the meeting. (Supporting Paper D to the Agenda)

**104. Recommendations and Referrals from the Policy, Finance and Personnel Committee**

Consideration was given to recommendations from the Policy Finance and Personnel Committee meetings held on 13 August 2020 and 10 September 2020. (Supporting Paper E to the Agenda)  
The PFP Chair gave the background to the Committee's recommendations from both meetings.

**RESOLVED**

- (i) that the Community Wellbeing Committee Terms of Reference are amended to include *"that any request for funding – grant or otherwise - for work on the LEAT should go to the Community Wellbeing Committee for them to determine as they hold the budget regarding the Leat."*
- (ii) that the Climate Change Working Group is dissolved
- (iii) that £2,500 is vired from the elections contingency budget to public conveniences and £2,500 is vired from the elections contingency budget to play areas in order to assist with meeting the additional running costs associated, in part, with the COVID-19 situation.
- (iv) that the Town Council puts into place a reserves and contingency policy."

**105 2020/2021 Budget. Half-year Review**

To review the 2020/2021 Budget. (Supporting Paper F to the Agenda)

**RESOLVED** to consideration of this agenda item until the next Town Council meeting

**106 Payments for Authorisation**

The accounts due for payment were examined. (Supporting Paper G to the Agenda)

**RESOLVED** that the payments totalling £32223.58 gross and the Direct Debits and Standing Authorisation items of £29,125.46 gross as detailed on Supporting Paper G to the agenda be approved

**107 Parking, St George's View**

This matter was brought to the Council's attention as a public participation item at the Town Council meeting held on 27 August 2020 and the Mayor requested it be put on the agenda for a future meeting. The email received from the resident raising the matter was provided to Councillors as Supporting Paper H to the Agenda.

**RESOLVED**

- (i) write to the resident to confirm the matter has been discussed by Council and explain what the Town Council done to ease the on-road parking situation by making St Andrews car park free overnight parking
- (ii) Contact McCarthy & Stone and Mid Devon District Council regarding compliance with the construction management plan

**108 Parking Restrictions, New Street, Cullompton**

Consideration was given to an email from the Neighbourhood Highway Officer regarding a request for footpath alterations or parking restrictions at the junction of New Street and Shortlands Lane.

(Supporting Paper I to the Agenda)

**RESOLVED** (20:50hrs) to suspend Standing Orders so that a member of the public with knowledge of the situation can speak

It seems that Councillors have misunderstood the highways report that as presented to the Town Council about 8 years ago.

The member of the public said that about 10 years ago there was a detailed report regarding From Tiverton Road into Shortlands Lane the first half of it is a private accommodation road and the other half going down to the top of New Street is a bridleway which the County Council have said categorically they will not tarmac, they will not put a footpath all the way through, they will not adopt it.

**RESOLVED** to ask Devon County Council to research alternative solutions to double yellow lines such as access through Shortlands Lane to New Street from Tiverton Road.

**109** (20:58hrs) **RESOLVED** that the duration of the meeting is extended until 21:15hrs

**110 Disabled badge Holder Parking, Knightswood, Cullompton**

Consideration was given to the Town Council's response to Devon County Council regarding a proposal to revoke Disabled Badge Holders At Any Time on a specified length of Knightswood. (Supporting Paper J )

**RESOLVED if not getting rid of it and just changing the time support**

- 111 Public Consultation of the Updated Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Devon**  
Consideration was given to the Town Council's response to Devon County Council with regard to the Updated Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Devon.

**RESOLVED** not to make a comment on the strategy as our area hasn't been designated as high risk and any future development application must include flood mitigation

- 112** (21:15hrs) **RESOLVED** that the duration of the meeting is extended until 21:30hrs

- 113 First Notification for the Removal of Payphone Service**  
Consideration was given to the Town Council's response to Mid Devon District Council with regard to removal of the public payphone service of the public telephone box near the Community Health Centre, Exeter Hill, Cullompton. (Supporting Paper L to the Agenda)

**RESOLVED** to object to the removal of the public pay phone service (location stated as Community Health Centre (which has not been there for many years) Exeter Hill, Cullompton, as no usage figures have been provided and the location of the phonebox is near to accommodation occupied by older people.

- 114 Members Questions**  
There were no Members' questions.

- 115 No 19 High Street, Cullompton**  
To receive an update and any new information and take any associated decisions regarding No 19 High Street, Cullompton.

Cllr Smith provided an oral update as a written paper had not been prepared. In February the Town Council voted to make an offer and then lease it back to a Community Interest Company (CIC) to develop for new business units. The new information is that contracts have not been signed and Mid Devon District Council would look at another proposal. Cllrs Smith and Lochhead have met with a member of the public willing to put up £60,000 to buy the freehold and lease it back to CIC in the same way as the Town Council was going to. Would the Town Council give support to such a proposal that is to support a CIC but with a private investor putting up the money so that it takes the risk away from the Town Council?

The purpose of asking is to see if the Town Council would still approve of the site for business developments and encourage such use.

During discussion governance concerns were raised

**RESOLVED** that this matter is referred to the Monitoring Officer who is provided with a recording of the meeting and asked for their opinion on what should be done

The voting was as follows:

In Favour: E Andrews, J Buczkowski, M Dale, J Johns, J Lockhead, M Rowe, M Smith, K Haslett

Against: G Guest

Abstentions: None

The meeting closed at 21:41 hrs

AGREED