



## **Minutes of an Extraordinary meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2019 at 7.00pm in the Town Hall, High Street, Stonehouse**

### **Present:**

**Councillors:** Neil Gibbs Chairman, Gwen Atkinson, Leigh Binns, Carol Kambites, Deborah Curtis, Tim Jackson, John Parker, Kevin Parsons, Sally Pickering, Jennie Smith, Pam Swain, David Thorpe, Theresa Watt

**In Attendance:** County Cllr Lesley Williams, District Councillors Gary Powell and Mattie Ross and 5 Members of the Public.

### **Public Questions**

Gary Powell asked the Council to consider ensuring that the meeting space is retained within the Town Hall when negotiating the lease with GCC Library Services. The Chairman advised that the Council will be ensuring that the Hall will be lettable when not in Library use. Mr Powell also asked if rental was being paid for use of the space. The Chairman explained that a lease agreement is being drawn up which is likely to be "pepper corn rental" with an equitable split, in respect utility and other upkeep costs.

#### **TC2246 To receive apologies**

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Michael Davis.

#### **TC2247 To receive declarations of interest**

Cllr Sally Pickering declared an interest in Agenda Item TC2256.

#### **TC2248 To approve the minutes of the full Town Council meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chairman.

#### **TC2249 To receive the RFO's report including the bank reconciliation for July 2019**

The Council received the RFO's report and monthly bank reconciliation.

Concerns were raised about a possible overspend on some of the budget headings. The RFO reported that it would be advisable to undertake a review in the Autumn to ensure there are sufficient funds available to meet the needs under the respective budget headings and confirmed there is sufficient general reserves available to top up where necessary.

**TC2250 To approve payments in accordance with the budget to date as listed**

The Council approved the accounts for payment as presented by the RFO.

**TC2251 To consider recommendation regarding the appointment of a Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer and to agree and confirm appointment.**

The Chairman detailed the selection process and reported that an offer of appointment has been made, but at this stage the offer has not yet been formally accepted.

**TC2252 To approve a recommendation for diversion of Stonehouse Footpath 2 through Oldends Lane Recreation Field due to the closure of a level crossing.**

The Council agreed to support the footpath diversion option A as presented. The Council also asked that as part of the diversion, a new footpath is installed in Oldends Lane; so pedestrians aren't forced to cross this busy road twice.

**TC2253 To consider an application for a grant of £499 for churchyard maintenance from St Cyr's Church.**

The Council agreed to make a grant of £499.00 towards the churchyard maintenance and ask that the Church consider biodiversity methods.

**TC2254 To appoint member to Communications Working Group.**

The Council agreed that Cllr Carol Kambites would be appointed to the Communications Working Group.

**TC2255 To agree Terms of reference for Canal Rejuvenation Working Group**

The Council agreed to the Terms of Reference for the Canal Rejuvenation Group.

**TC2256 To comment on planning application:**

**19/1418/OUT - Land at M5 Junction 13 West of Stonehouse, Eastington**

Development comprises of a 5000-capacity football stadium and other ancillary uses (use Class D2); one full-sized grass pitch and one full-sized all-weather pitch and a goal practice area (use class D2); car parking for cars and coaches and highway improvements to A419 including a signalised site junction and combined cycle/footway. All matters reserved save for access.

**Cllr Sally Pickering declared an interest in this agenda item and took no part in the discussions.**

The Council agreed to Support this application with the following comments:

There is concern about the impact of increased traffic related to this development. The Council would like the developers to ensure better rail links in the area and would like the reopening of the Bristol Road Station, Stonehouse to be part of any approvals. Finally, the Council would like the developers to consider a detailed plan for improving the cycle routes in the local environment.

***Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960***

***The Council will by resolution exclude the public from the following items as due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted publicity of the item would be prejudicial to the public interest.***

The Council resolved that the public are excluded from the confidential element of the meeting.

**TC2257 To consider a recommendation to leave the Local Government Pension Scheme. (LGPS)**

The Council having received a detailed report regarding leaving the LGPS on appointment of the new Town Clerk agreed to withdraw its membership of the LGPS and offer/continue to offer a NEST pension scheme to all its employees.

**TC2258 To consider a recommendation to increase the employer's contribution to the NEST pension scheme for all employees.**

The Council agreed to increase its NEST Employer's contribution to 10%, effective on 1 September 2019.

**TC2259 To consider and agree proposed terms of lease of Town Hall premises to GCC Libraries and approve signing of lease.**

Mr Richard Lacey the Project Manager presented a detailed report to the Council, the Council discussed in length the report and advice given by Mr Lacey and agreed in principle to moving forward with the lease, the Council wished to ensure that the lease includes reasonable funding from both parties in regards to capital repairs and ongoing contributions. The Council also want to ensure that the Council's Officers have state of the art information technology and to utilise the old post office counter if possible.

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.32 PM.**