



DRAFT
Minutes of a (Virtual) meeting of the Town Council
held on Monday 19TH October 2020 at 7.00pm using
‘Microsoft Teams’

Present:

Councillors: (Chair) Neil Gibbs, (Vice Chair) Carol Kambites, Debbie Curtis, Michael Davis, John Parker, Kevin Parsons, Sally Pickering, Pam Swain and Theresa Watt

In Attendance: Carlos Novoth - Town Clerk; Ward Cllrs Mattie Ross and Chris Brine and, a Member of the public.

Attendees were reminded that the Proceedings of the meeting could be filmed, photographed or recorded.

- TC2479 To receive apologies**
Apologies were received from Cllrs David Thorpe and Tim Jackson.
- TC2480 To receive declarations of interest**
There were no declarations of interest
- TC2481 To approve the minutes of the Town Council held on 14th September 2020**
Council **ACCEPTED** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting; the minutes to be duly signed by the Chair at a later date.
- TC2482 To receive reports from Chair of Town Council and town councillors**
Cllr Kambites attended a meeting with the Cycle Group and GCC representative to discuss the issues relating to the A419 and Horse-trough roundabout. Also due to meet with Alan Bullock (GCC), a representative from the cycling advisory group and County Councillor Lesley Williams to consider further measures to improve road safety.

- TC2483 To receive reports from County and District Councillors**
Ward Cllr Mattie Ross mentioned the success of SDC's Heritage Lottery Funding, her attendance at the Canal Rejuvenation Meeting with Brendan Cleere (Director of Place at SDC).
Ward Cllr Gary Powell referenced funding for the missing mile of the canal.
Ward Cllr Chris Brine highlighted SDC's Leisure Review (SDC to contact Town and Parish council's on future service provision, there were problems with the leisure contractor), the Whitepaper on Housing and the licensing consultation on the use of plastic glasses. Also mentioned was the use of the old Lloyds Bank building for use as a café and youth activities.
County Cllr Lesley Williams is furthering her work to deal with the issues of the A419 and will continue to press for the use of CCTV on route. GCC recently passed a Motion to plant 2 trees for every person living in Gloucestershire.
Chair Neil Gibbs was glad that GCC now recognised the fundamental problems with the design and was pleased to see further detailed discussions taking place; this was followed by a comment suggesting that the filter lane should be closed until further work could be done to improve the safe use of the road.
- TC2484 To receive RFO's budget report including the bank reconciliation for the months July, August and September 2020**
The Clerk presented the budget report for the period up to 30th September 2020 (Actual Net Inc £189,055.77 and Exp £149,959.64) along with Bank reconciliations for July, August and September. Committee **NOTED** the reports
- TC2485 To approve payments in accordance with the budget to date as listed**
Council **APPROVED** Gross payments totalling £11,360.19
- TC2486 To discuss setting the Precept level for financial year 2021/22.**
There was general discussion on the issues that were felt important in setting next year's Council Precept; these included the need to recognise hardship faced by the community and the importance of supporting community groups to survive and be as effective as possible. It was recommended that a standstill budget was set.
- TC2487 To receive minutes of Business Committee held on 28th September 2020**
Council **NOTED** the minutes
- TC2488 To consider recommendations to approve and adopt:**
- a) **Council's Standing Orders**
Cllr Mike Davis provided an overview of the changes highlighting the cross referencing between the revised document and the Model Standing Orders

Council APPROVED the revised Standing Orders without amendment

b) Council's Grants Policy

Cllr Carol Kambites presented the revised Grants Policy highlighting the inclusion of a revenue budget in support of community organisations. Issues were raised concerning the clarity of 'Large' and 'Revenue' grants. Also clarity was needed on the length of period revenue grants were issued for.

Members agreed to withdraw the revised policy and undertake further work to resolve the raised issues

c) Council's Memorial Policy

Members agreed with the policy but with a suggestion that the council should preserve the right to decline a request depending on whether the person for which the memorial was for had made a significant positive contribution to the community. It was felt that this would be difficult to implement.

Council APPROVED the new Policy without amendment

TC2489 To receive minutes of Environment Committee held on 5th October 2020

Cllr Sally Pickering asked whether Berryfields were in the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Cllr Kambites confirmed that it was.

Council NOTED the minutes

TC2490 To receive an update from the 'Support Stonehouse' working group and consider its recommendations

Cllr Parker, as Chair of the Councils working group 'Support Stonehouse' believed there was a need for a mechanism for ensuring speedy council decisions on expenditure to help and support the most needy within the community. He accepted the need for fiscal security but felt that better access to the council's budget in times of need, was essential. The clerk highlighted that the council's budget was underspent at this time and that the Grants budget could be increased by £2,000 for this type of support.

Council APPROVED a virement of £2,000 to the Grants budgets for use by Support Stonehouse following either a council or committee (BC or EC) decision. Should a meeting not be scheduled in time for an urgent decision, the Clerk, with the Chair is to consider approving expenditure (Clause 4.5 Financial Regs) within the grant budget increase and report such to the next committee or council meeting.

TC2491 To consider changing the Council's acting solicitors

The Clerk confirmed that Laurence Lucas had recently left the council's Solicitors, 'Taintons' and was now working for another Cheltenham based company. The Clerk highlighted the work Mr Lucas

had completed for the council and that he had knowledge of work that needed to be done on the council's leases. He mentioned that his hourly rate had increased by £10, it would be worthwhile the council moving solicitors to ensure continuity and quality of legal advice.

Council RESOLVED to move solicitors to 'Sherbornes Solicitors Ltd' with immediate effect, as an interim measure.

TC2492 To consider arrangements for Remembrance Day

Cllr Neil Gibbs provided an overview of the arranged actions for the day - they will be very low key with no promotion. The Police have confirmed that they will not assist on the day. Cllr Leigh Bins confirmed that the Scouts will have a wreath for the memorial. Cllr Gibbs stated that he will make the final arrangements with David Thorpe.

TC2493 To consider the date of the next Town Council Meeting scheduled for Monday 16th November 2020