

MINUTES
of the Full Council meeting held remotely via Zoom
on 14th September 2020 at 6pm

Present: Cllrs P Aldridge (Chair), K Brennan, A Rudge, H Davis, S Raywood, M Sztymiak, J Raywood, C Cody, H Bowman, C Danter, K Powell, A Carter

In attendance: D Hill (Town Clerk), J King (Assistant Town Clerk) and 3 members of the public

20/21 - 067 To receive apologies for absence
Apologies were received from Cllr Smith.

20/21 - 068 To receive declarations of interest
Cllrs Aldridge & Brennan declared an interest in the grant application from Tewkesbury in Bloom.
Cllrs Danter & Brennan declared an interest in the grant application from Tewkesbury Christmas Lights.

20/21 - 069 To consider requests for dispensation
None requested.

20/21 - 070 To receive written questions from member of the public
No questions have been received.

20/21 - 071 Public participation
It was noted that a member of the public had circulated comments regarding the Financial Regulations to all Councillors, but had not included the Town Clerk.

A member of the public raised questions regarding the proposed financial regulations, particularly in the areas of :

- The suspension of financial regulations
- The limits for Committee authorisations
- The scrutinization of accounts

20/21 - 072 To note the Mayor's announcements

- There will be no Mop Fair due to Covid-19 restrictions
- The Mayor apologised if his comments at the last Full Council meeting were misinterpreted.
- The Town Council is looking at ways for Tewkesbury to mark Remembrance, keeping within the Covid-19 regulations. Full details to be circulated as soon as they are available.

20/21 - 073 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th July 2020
It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13th July 2020
Proposed by Cllr Danter, seconded by Cllr J Raywood.

- 20/21 - 074 To note the following Committee Minutes:**
Environment & Amenities – 30th June & 22nd July 2020
Planning – 10th & 24th June, 15th & 29th July 2020
Severn Ham – 25th June 2020
Staffing – 15th June & 6th July 2020
Buildings & Moorings – 3rd & 22nd June, 22nd July 2020

The above minutes were noted.

- 20/21 - 075 Matters arising from the Minutes – for information only**
19/20-115 GCC Report – Flood defence spending – ongoing
19/20-187 Air Pollution – Deferred to a future meeting
20/21-046 Vacancies on Planning Committee – will include in co-option meeting
20/21-054 Safer opening of High Streets – Town Clerk to circulate link – complete
20/21-054 Spring Gardens Toilets – E&A to discuss vandalism – complete
20/21-056 Freedom of Information request – Cllr Szymiak requested details - complete
20/21-058 Accounting in budget report – RBS advised this is correct - complete
20/21-058 Impact of Covid-19 on Town Hall & Watson Hall income – Agenda item at next Finance Committee meeting - ongoing
20/21-059 Petition NALC re: use of gender neutral pronouns – can raise it with NALC, can also raise on October for GAPTC AGM - ongoing
20/21-061 Insurance details – Cllr Szymiak requested details - complete

A Cllr asked if there was any update regarding the Safer High Street and the bollards. TTRP have met and there is more investigative work underway.

Action: Cllr Cody to circulate the information from the last TTRP meeting.

A Cllr asked if the Planning Committee can co-opt without Full Council agreeing the Planning Committee adopting. **Action:** Town Clerk to investigate.

- 20/21 - 076 To receive the budget report for July 2020**

The budget report was received.

There is a shortfall in income for the Town Hall. The Watson Hall has received a grant from the Borough Council which covers more of the loss in income. What will look different is the bar costs, as the costs had been set for increased usage and this had not happened. However, there has not been as much spent on stock, although there has been more wastage due to lockdown.

A Cllr requested information regarding general and earmarked reserves. The Town Clerk advised that this was provided in the June Full Council papers but was happy to circulate again. **Action:** Town Clerk to circulate reserves.

- 20/21 - 077 To receive the Q1 bank reconciliation**

The bank reconciliation was received.

- 20/21 - 078 To appoint a Councillor to join the Staffing Committee**

It was RESOLVED to appoint Cllr Brennan to join the Staffing Committee. Proposed by Cllr Bowman, seconded by Cllr Davis.

Cllrs noted the need to review the Committee and Working Groups once the co-option process is complete, as Standing Orders state that all Councillors should belong to at least one Committee.

20/21 - 079 To review and agree the response to the NALC consultation regarding the changes to the current planning system

Cllr J Raywood set out the proposed response to the NALC consultation. This is the first of a series of three white papers aimed at changing the planning systems and improving the data that is held about land by the Land Registry. This consultation focuses on housing needs for particular areas. When applied to the number of housing required in the Tewkesbury Borough area – it increases the number from 400 houses to over 1000. The consultation looks at establishing the extent of the housing need and also permission in principle to major developments, this would put the Town Council under enormous time pressures and size thresholds. The next two white papers will look at more general approaches in planning system – delegating land for growth areas and protect areas. Floodplain issues will be addressed in the second white paper and there needs to be some duty to co-operate and collaborate across County and Borough boundaries, as well as within the catchment areas of rivers. These responses are due in by 23rd September.

A number of Councillors met with Laurence Robertson MP on Tuesday 8th September and he was very interested in Councillors comments and perceptions of this paper. The Mayor and other Councillors thanked the Planning Committee for their thorough responses and efforts in preparing this response.

A Cllr asked if we need to prepare for what might happen under unitary authorities. Cllr J Raywood advised that it was probably too soon, as the details are not known.

It was RESOLVED to agree the response to the NALC consultation regarding changes to the current planning system.
Proposed by Cllr J Raywood, seconded by Cllr Cody.

20/21 - 080 To review and agree updated Financial Regulations

Cllrs discussed the proposed changes to the financial regulations.

It was RESOLVED to refer the financial regulations back to the Finance Committee to prepare a final document to present to Full Council.
Proposed by Cllr Aldridge, seconded by Cllr Sztymiak.

It was noted that an Extraordinary Finance Meeting may be required.

20/21 - 081 To review and agree grant applications

The Council reviewed the two grant applications. It was requested that the available amount left to allocate is provided each time applications are submitted.

Cllrs Brennan & Aldridge left the meeting, Cllr J Raywood took the Chair.

Cllrs Brennan & Aldridge rejoined the meeting.

It was RESOLVED to extend the meeting by fifteen minutes.
Proposed by Cllr Rudge, seconded by Cllr Bowman.

Cllrs Brennan & Aldridge left the meeting. Cllrs requested that next year more information is provided from Tewkesbury in Bloom about the sponsorship arrangements and general costs.

It was RESOLVED to award £1680 to Tewkesbury in Bloom, with the request that the Town Council logo remains on the planters for two years.
Proposed by Cllr Rudge, seconded by Cllr Davies.

Cllrs Brennan & Aldridge rejoined the meeting. Cllr Aldridge took the Chair.

It was RESOLVED to extend the meeting by a further fifteen minutes.
Proposed by Cllr Cody, seconded by Cllr Brennan.

Cllrs Brennan & Danter left the meeting.

It was RESOLVED to award £1800 to Tewkesbury Christmas Lights.
Proposed by Cllr Sztymiak, seconded by Cllr Powell.

Cllrs Brennan & Danter rejoined the meeting.

20/21 - 082 To approve the payments list

It was RESOLVED to approve the payments list totaling £1974.40.
Proposed by Cllr Powell, seconded by Cllr Bowman.

20/21 - 083 To receive an update from the Climate Change Working Group

Cllr Cody provided an update on the actions of the Climate Change Working Group covering areas such as recycling, water and energy usage, active travel and plastic free community. More details are provided on the Town Council website page <https://teiwkesburvtowncouncil.gov.uk/climate-change-action/>

Any other ideas and questions are welcome.

Action: Cllr Cody will circulate further details to all Councillors.

20/21 - 084 To consider a proposal from Cllr Bowman that the Town Council declares support for the Local Electricity Bill

Cllr Bowman advised that this is not a proposal that means the Town Council starts an electricity company, but it would allow any local provider to set up and sell electricity to local people. At present a licence costing £1-2 million is required, making it financially untenable for a small plant. The Local Electricity Bill has great potential to unlock community electricity. It would give future Town Councillors options, but doesn't commit the Town Council to anything.

The Local Electricity Bill had a first reading on 10th June and the second is due on 29th Jan 2021. It has cross party support and if enough support is received, the Government may adopt the bill, which gives it a better chance of success.

It was RESOLVED that the Town Council declares support for the Local Electricity Bill.
Proposed by Cllr Bowman, seconded by Cllr Cody.

20/21 - 085 Correspondence

No correspondence received.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.58 pm.

Signature of Chairman upon approval of the minutes 12th October 2020