

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA
HELD ON 14th JANUARY 2021

This meeting was held remotely in accordance with the provisions of the Coronavirus Regulations 2020

PRESENT: Councillors Susan Rasmussen (Chairman), Janet Alty, Navdeep Atwal, Alan Boad, Sarah Boad, David Brunson, Will Bryce, Mubarik Chowdry, Judith Clarke, Bill Gifford, Jennifer McAllister, Louisa Radice, Susan Rasmussen, Amanda Stevens and Nick Wilkins.

Stephen Marks (Town Clerk)

There were no members of the public present.

66. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Amy Evans.

67. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations were made:-

Cllr S Boad – declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of Warwickshire County Council in relation to item number 8 - Street Trees

Cllr Gifford declared non-pecuniary interests as a member of Warwickshire County Council and Warwick District Council.

68. PUBLIC FORUM

Professor Wyn Grant addressed the meeting in the capacity of chair of Friends of All Saints Parish Church Leamington. He noted that the group would like to identify new trustees and potentially a new chairperson and sought the assistance of Town Councillors in raising this issue through their networks.

It was noted that All Saints Parish Church was a wonderful building and contributed much to the local community.

Action: Town Clerk to circulate information to be provided by Professor Grant to all Town Councillors for their consideration and sharing with networks as appropriate.

69. COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FORUM

Cllr S Boad reported on the following:

A new lateral flow Covid testing centre had been established in Pound Lane, Lillington. Covid tests are available for people who don't have symptoms. Have done approx. 5000 tests thus far. The public can just turn up but are encouraged to book ahead.

Current pedestrianisation of the parade. Temporary changes were made in June to assist with social distancing. At the time it was not anticipated that Covid restrictions would be required for so long.

The current view of WCC is to leave the current arrangements in situ for the time being before a further more formal review, likely to be at the end of February.

It was noted that there was not an intention to make any of the arrangements permanent, without first undertaking a proper consultation with stakeholders.

A number of comments were made, particularly in regards to ensuring accessibility of the parade to those with mobility issues, including the potential for bus access to the parade to be considered and in relation to air quality implications of the current arrangements for surrounding streets.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Council is happy for the current arrangements on the Parade to stay as they are for now, but welcomes the indication that there will be a more formal review of the arrangements by WCC and looks forward to having more structured input into that review.

Cllr Gifford reported on the following Warwick District Council Matters:
WDC will be removing the local 'bring' recycling centres in the coming weeks. This was related to the new joint waste / recycling service with Stratford District Council.

70. EXTERNAL AUDITOR REPORT / ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN

The Town Council considered report No. 5

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Council noted the outcome of the external review of the Council's Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended March 2020.

71. REVENUE BUDGET 2021/22

The Town Council considered report No. 6 relating to the development of a budget for 2021/22.

Cllr S Boad proposed the recommendations as printed in the report. This was seconded by Cllr A Boad.

RESOLVED

That the recommended budget for 2021/22, as set out in report 6 is approved.

That the revenue budget for the Council for the financial year 2021/22 is £414,266

That Warwick District Council is advised that the total budget requirement to be met from the precept is £412,266

72. IT & COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

The Town Council considered report No. 7

Cllr S Boad proposed the recommendations as printed, seconded by Cllr J Alty.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Council notes the issues raised in the report regarding IT & Communications arrangements and infrastructure.
- ii) That the Council approves the purchase of IT & Communications equipment (2 x laptop computers, 2 x mobile phones and associated peripherals) from underspends within the current year's budget.

73. STREET TREES

The Town Council considered report No. 8

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Council note the update provided in relation to street trees in the town.
- ii) That the Council allocates a further £2,500 for street tree planting in the current financial year.
- iii) That the Cultural & Community Committee continues to liaise with WCC's Forestry service to clarify and refine the processes relating to street tree maintenance and planning.

74. MINUTES OF COUNCIL AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES

- (i) Planning Committee

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning Committee held on 5th November, 26th November and 17th December. (Reports Nos 9a, 9b and 9c) are received.

- (ii) Cultural and Community Committee

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cultural and Community Committee held on 2nd November 2020 (Report No 9d) are received.

- (iii) Policy and Resources Committee

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meetings of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 19th November and 16th December 2020 (Report Nos 9e and 9f) are received.

(iv) **Council**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 12th November 2020 (Report No 9h) are confirmed as a correct record.

75. ACCOUNTS

RESOLVED:

That the schedule of invoices arising for payment since the last meeting be approved.

76. SUMMARY OF PAYMENTS

RESOLVED:

That the summary of payments during October and November is noted.

77. FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND

The Town Council considered report number 12, including the request from Warwick District Council for a representative to engage with the Future High Streets Fund programme and any related governance arrangements.

Cllr Boulton nominated Cllr Clarke. This was seconded by Cllr Alty.

Cllr McAllister nominated Cllr Radice. This was seconded by Cllr Gifford. Cllr Radice indicated she did not wish to be considered.

RESOLVED:

That Cllr Clarke be the nominated Town Council representative in relation to the Future High Streets Fund programme.

78. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

SB proposed and NW seconded that the Council pass the resolution identified.

RESOLVED:

“That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted (confidential staffing matters), it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded from the Meeting and they are instructed to withdraw”.

79. UPDATE FROM STAFFING COMMITTEE

The chair of the staffing committee updated the Council on current staffing matters. The Staffing Committee meets on 27th January and a report will be brought to a future Council meeting.

The meeting closed at 19:16