

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA
HELD ON 04th March 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, Julija Boulton, David Brunson, Will Bryce, Mubarik Chowdry, Judith Clarke, Bill Gifford, Jennifer McAllister, Louisa Radice, Amanda Stevens and Nick Wilkins.

Stephen Marks (Town Clerk)

Several members of the public were also in attendance for part of the meeting.

The Chair noted the sad death of Mota Singh, former Town Councillor and Mayor of Leamington Spa. A minute's silence was held in tribute.

80. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

81. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations were made:-

Cllr A Boad – declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 4 Town Centre Projects, as a District Councillor

Cllr S Boad – declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of Warwickshire County Council in relation to item number 10 Local Transport Plan Consultation.

Cllr Gifford declared non-pecuniary interests as a member of Warwickshire County Council (item 10) and Warwick District Council (item 4).

82. PUBLIC FORUM

Brian Austin introduced himself and spoke in the capacity of a volunteer / community champion for the Climate Coalition. He noted the organisation's 'The Time is Now' campaign and the associated declaration and requested that the Town Council consider signing the declaration.

Annabel Precious – spoke about her proposal for a 'school street' at Milverton School. 'School streets' are an initiative that involves temporary restrictions on motorised traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times, with the aim of achieving a safer, healthier and more pleasant environment.

Resolved that the Town Council indicate its support for the further consideration of the creation of a 'school street' at Milverton School.

Romy Rawlings gave a short presentation on place shaping and how the design of public spaces can help achieve a range of community outcomes, enabling social interaction, facilitating active travel and improving the visitor experience.

83. TOWN CENTRE PROJECTS

Cllr Andrew Day, leader of Warwick District Council presented an overview of a wide range of projects and programmes of work that were in progress / being developed, which would have a significant impact on the future of the town. It was specifically noted that a significant funding award from the government's Future High Streets Fund was pending and final confirmation is anticipated later in March.

Cllr Day noted that WDC was keen to work closely with the Town Council on these projects / programmes.

The Council thanked Cllr Day for his presentation.

Resolved:

- i) That the Town Council receives and notes the update from Warwick District Council on various Town Centre projects and programmes.
- ii) That Cllr Rasmussen be the Town Council representative on the Creative Quarter Partnership Board.

It was noted that consideration would need to be given to the role of Town Council representatives on external / partnership bodies and a suitable protocol agreed in this regards. Consideration would also need to be given to ensuring regular updates are provided to the Council (or relevant committees) from its representatives on external bodies.

84. COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FORUM

Cllr S Boad noted that:

-Warwickshire County Council (WCC) had set its budget for 2021/22.

-A meeting had been arranged on Tuesday 9th March regarding the future of Parade. It was suggested that this be included on the agenda for Policy & Resources Committee.

-WCC has launched a 'green shoots fund'. Organisations including Town & Parish Councils are eligible to bid. It was agreed this should be considered by Policy & Resources Committee. WALC has other funding that could be match funding.

Cllr A Boad noted that:

-Warwick District Council was continuing to progress arrangements that could lead to a merger with Stratford District Council. They were working together on a joint Local Plan for both districts.

Cllr Gifford noted that:

-WDC are removing 'bring' recycling centres. It was noted that remaining recycling centres should be publicised.

85. RISK REVIEW

The Town Council considered report No. 6.

It was noted that the risk assessment methodology could in the future more clearly identify and distinguish between the likelihood and severity/consequence of the individual risks.

Resolved that the methodology for review of the risks faced by the Council and the measures for controlling them set out at Appendix 1 is approved.

86. NOMINATION / APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR FOR 2021/22

The Town Council considered report No. 7.

The Council discussed the disruption of the current year due to the Covid Pandemic and the suggestion that the existing Mayor and Deputy Mayor remain in those roles for the 2021/22. It was noted that the nature of the Mayoral role should be better reflected in the Council's standing orders when these were reviewed.

Resolved that

- i) The current Mayor and Deputy Mayor be nominated to continue in those roles for a further year – 2021/22.
- ii) That a Liberal Democrat Councillor be nominated for the role of Deputy Mayor for the 2022/23 year.

87. MEETING ARRANGEMENTS AND CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2021/22

The Town Council considered report No. 8 which identified a number of issues regarding future meetings and proposed some dates.

It was noted that the proposed date of 22nd April 2021 for the Annual Parish Assembly meeting clashed with the Town Council's planning committee. The planning committee could be rearranged.

It was suggested that Policy & Resources Committee consider whether the communications working group should remain a working group or become a sub-committee.

Resolved:

- i) That the Town Council note the current situation regarding meeting arrangements, in particular the situation regarding legislation allowing remote / virtual meetings.
- ii) That the Annual meeting of the Town Council takes place on Tuesday 4th May 2021.
- iii) That the Annual Parish Assembly meeting be convened on 22nd April 2021.
- iv) That the Calendar of meetings provided at Appendix 1 be adopted in principle for the 2021/22 year, but that this be reviewed should it become necessary, for example due to changing Covid situation and requirements regarding meeting management.

88. AUTOMATED PAYMENTS

The Town Council considered report No. 9.

Resolved: That the regular payments identified in Table 1 be approved for payment by automated means, such as Direct Debit.

89. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN CONSULTATION

The Town Council considered report No.10 regarding the Local Transport Plan It was noted that this was an early part of the process and that at this stage the consultation just considered a number of key themes.

Resolved that the key themes identified for the Local Transport Plan are supported.

90. CASUAL VACANCY

The Town Council considered a report regarding the resignation of Cllr Amy Evans which has resulted in the creation of a casual vacancy.

Resolved:

- i) That the resignation of Cllr Amy Evans and the resulting casual vacancy are noted.
- ii) That, in the event that an election is not required, the Town Clerk initiate the process to advertise the casual vacancy, in order that the Town Council can consider the co-option of a Councillor to fill the vacancy.

91. MINUTES OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(i) Planning Committee

Resolved that the Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning Committee held on 7th Jan and 28th Jan 2021 (Reports Nos 12a and 12b) are received.

(ii) Cultural and Community Committee

Resolved that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cultural and Community Committee held on 11th January 2021 (Report No 12c) are received.

(iii) Policy and Resources Committee

Resolved that the Minutes of the Meetings of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 04th February 2021 (Report No 12d) are received.

(iv) Council

It was noted that some of the numbering of the minutes needed correcting. Subject to the numbering being corrected, it was:

Resolved that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 14th January 2021 (Report No 12e) are confirmed as a correct record.

92. ACCOUNTS

The Town Council considered a schedule of payments.

Resolved that the schedule of payments be approved.

93. SUMMARY OF PAYMENTS

The Town Council considered a list of payments made in December and January.

Resolved that the payments made in December and January are noted.

Cllr McAllister noted a payment relating to the recent training session provided by WALC on the topic of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and highly recommended it.

Action Town Clerk to investigate costs of bespoke training sessions for Leamington Spa Town Councillors.

94. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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”.

The Town Clerk also left the meeting at this point

95. CONFIDENTIAL REPORT FROM STAFFING COMMITTEE

The Town Council considered report No 16.

Resolved:

- i) That the Council notes the activities of the Staffing Committee in considering the probationary period of the new Town Clerk
- ii) That the successful completion of the Town Clerk's probationary period be noted.
- iii) That the appointment to the post of Town Clerk be confirmed, and the Town Clerk advised of this formally in writing.

Table 1 – Payments to be made by Automated Means

Payment / service	Current provider / recipient	Current frequency
Salaries	Staff	Monthly
Member allowances	Members	Quarterly
Tax & NI	HMRC	Monthly
Pension contributions	Warwickshire Pension Fund	Monthly
Town Hall offices - rent	Warwick District Council	Quarterly
Town Hall Offices -service charges	Warwick District Council	Quarterly
Business Rates – Town Hall Office	Warwick District Council	Monthly
Business Rates – Mayor’s Parlour	Warwick District Council	Monthly
Broadband	Entanet International / CityFibre	Monthly
Web / email hosting	In Touch CRM	Quarterly
Telephone	BT	Quarterly
Mobile Phone contracts	TescoMobile	Monthly
Garage Rental	Warwick District Council	Monthly
Mayoral Car – Lease Charges	Toyota & Lexus Fleet Services	Monthly
Fuel (for mayoral car)	All Star Business Solutions	Ad hoc
Payroll Processing service	SD Worx	Monthly
Banking Charges	HSBC	Monthly
Software charges / subscriptions	Okapi Technology (Spa Computers)	Monthly
Printing / copier charges	Midshire Business Systems	Quarterly