

Church Stretton Town Council

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE CHRISTINE HARVEY ROOM, SILVESTER HORNE INSTITUTE ON TUESDAY 14th JANUARY 2020 at 7.00 p.m.

Those present: *Councillors:* Cllr L Antill, Cllr M Braid, Cllr S Baker, Cllr C Carson, Cllr L Chapman, Cllr H Claytonsmith, Cllr H Luff, Cllr R Hickman, Cllr M Morris, Cllr M Walker, Cllr B Welch and Cllr D Wilks.
Officers: Mr. C. Maclean (Locum Town Clerk), Miss B. Clarke (RFO), T. Morris (PA)
Unitary Councillors:
Members of the Public: 2

19.88 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Mr. D. Chetwood (Town Clerk) and Cllr D. Evans

19.89 DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

To declare any disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed at the meeting and which is not included in the register of interests (in accordance with the new code of Conduct adopted by Church Stretton Town Council on 26th June 2012). **NONE**

19.90 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A resident asked about the road closure which is to take place at the end of the month in High Street. Cllr Chapman will ask for more details and inform the Town Clerk.

The resident noted the absence of the Shropshire Council representative at the Community Advice Surgery. Cllr Chapman apologised to the resident. Cllr Welch and Sgt. Pindoria had been in attendance.

7.10 1 member of the public left.

19.91 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES taken at the Town Council Meeting held on 10th December 2019

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 10th December 2019 had been circulated. Cllr Claytonsmith asked that Minute 19.77(iii) should be amended to read “that a 211 notice is submitted for the removal of the trees as the trees are suffering from stress and the spruce gall aphid”. Cllr Wilks pointed out a typing error in 19.87, spelling of Chris Maclean.

Proposed by Cllr Claytonsmith, seconded by Cllr Walker and

RESOLVED (unanimously) to confirm and adopt, with the above amendments, the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 10th December 2019 as correct, and these were duly signed by the Chairman as a true record.

19.92 FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Finance Report

The RFO had circulated a report showing the effects of a 0% increase and a 2% increase on the precept.

i) Precept Requirement for 2020/2021

A long discussion took place during which it was agreed that the At Risk Services Reserve, developed when a transfer of liability to fund from Shropshire Council appeared imminent should not be increased in the absence of any indication from Shropshire Council that any such transfer, other than in Youth Services, had been given in advance of setting the precept. There was agreement on minimising any increase. The debate centred on whether an increase to accommodate inflation should, or should not, be added.

It was proposed by Cllr Welch, seconded by Cllr Walker and a vote was taken. 6 in favour, 6 against a 2% precept increase.

It was proposed by Cllr Chapman, seconded by Cllr Luff and a vote was taken. 6 in favour, 6 against

a 0% precept increase.

A further vote was taken. Cllrs Welch, Claytonsmith, Carson, Walker, Antill and Baker voted in favour of a 2% increase, Cllrs Hickman, Luff, Braid, Chapman, Morris and Wilks voted for a 0% increase.

Cllr Welch, as Chairman, had the deciding vote so it was

RESOLVED (6 in favour, 6 against) to implement a 2% precept increase for 2020/2021.

ii) New Spending Limits for Purchases

The RFO reported on new spending limits for purchases for staff and for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Proposed by Cllr Chapman, seconded by Cllr Morris and

RESOLVED (unanimously) to implement the new spending limits proposed by the RFO.

iii) Banking and New Debit Cards

The RFO reported on new proposed banking and debit card arrangements. The level of limits applicable to the Council employees requires further consideration and it was **AGREED** that, following discussions with the new bankers, the RFO would consider the proposed arrangements with Cllr Chapman and report back to the next Council meeting.

b) Charities/Audits

Subject to clarification on the treatment of VAT, the Charities accounts were considered to be in good order.

c) Budget for 2020/2021

A budget for 2020/2021 had been circulated. The RFO explained the budget expenditure but time will be set aside at the next Council Meeting to clarify the budget elements. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Walker, seconded by Cllr Claytonsmith and

RESOLVED (11 in favour, 1 abstain) that the budget proposed for the financial year 2020/2021 be agreed.

19.93 VERIFICATION OF ONGOING OWNERSHIP OF RUSSELL'S MEADOW

Up to 2007 Russell's Meadow had been valued at a nominal amount when it was subsequently valued at the open market rate. Questions have arisen over the ownership and valuation and clarification is required on those points for the Council. The RFO is to draft a brief, send this to three solicitors and come back to Council with costings for the work involved. It was proposed by Cllr Welch, seconded by Cllr Claytonsmith and

RESOLVED (11 in favour, 1 abstain) to seek quotes from three solicitors to investigate and clarify the ownership of Russell's Meadow.

8.15 1 member of the public left.

19.94 REORGANISATION OF CHARITIES

Consideration is being given to merging the Sandford Avenue Recreation Park Charity and the Brooksbury Charity to create simpler structures and efficiencies. It was agreed that this should not be progressed until the ownership and status of Russell's Meadow has been clarified.

19.95 FUTURE OF CHURCHSTRETTON.CO.UK WEBSITE

A report had been circulated and after a short discussion it was proposed by Cllr Hickman, seconded by Cllr Carson and

RESOLVED (11 in favour, 1 abstain) that the Council welcomes the Expression of Interest from the Church Stretton Tourism Steering Group and will enter into discussion with the CIC Directors to wind up or transfer the administration of the current website with a proposed break clause. This will be with a view to allowing the Steering Group to make use of the domain name from 1st June 2020, with a five year break clause, subject to the Council being satisfied that the SCATG is a properly constituted body. This body will need to have a viable management plan so as to be financially self-sustaining. It will need to be willing to allow Council representation on the management of the website, as appropriate, to ensure that the new website continues to satisfy its

“benefit to the community”. In order to assist the development of the new website, the Council will discuss with the CIC Directors the possibility of donating any outstanding money in the website account to the new body.

19.96 **COMMUNITY ADVICE SURGERY – 7th JANUARY 2020**

Clr Welch reported that the first meeting had been held, with encouraging resident attendance. Residents want to understand the responsibilities for services as between the Town Council and Shropshire Council. Cllr Chapman reported that this information is available on the Shropshire Council website and he will take steps to publicise this availability. Cllr. Welch will take similar steps in relation to Town Council services, including Focus and Community Messaging. Cllr Claytonsmith enquired whether other Councillors would be attending these meetings and Cllr Welch expressed his welcome and desire for other councillors to be involved. Discussion was also held on the timing of the meeting but 2pm has been agreed for the trial period.

19.97 **DISTRIBUTION OF MINUTES AND REPORTS**

Clr Welch had circulated a proposal to ensure more prompt provision of Committee and Council minutes to Councillors following review and approval by the relevant Chairperson. It was proposed by Cllr Welch, seconded by Cllr Wilks and

RESOLVED (unanimously) to add to Standing Orders that minutes of Committee and Council meetings be drafted and approved by the relevant chairperson within 72 hours and these draft minutes will be circulated by email to Councillors within 7 days of the original meeting.

19.98 **UPDATE ON ELECTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR FOR THE NORTH WARD**

A by-election has been called for 6th February with two candidates standing.

19.99 **UNITARY AND PARISH WARD ISSUES**

a) Report from Unitary Councillors

Nothing to report.

Clr Claytonsmith asked if Cllr Chapman would be able to find out how many second homes and empty houses there are in Church Stretton.

Clr Chapman was asked about damage to verges in Watling Street South. This to be discussed with the Amenities and Services Officer.

b) Parish Ward Issues

None raised.

c) Road Closures/Works

i) Road Closure: B5477 Ludlow Road, (High Street to A49 junction) Church Stretton. 23rd March 2020 to 17th April 2020. Carriageway repairs. Weekday closures only.

Works Promoter: **Kier on behalf of Shropshire Council.** Enforcement pattern for B5477 Ludlow Road, Church Stretton Closure: Monday - Friday 09:30 - 16:00

ii) Road Closure: (27/01/2019) ORDER NUMBER: LB9141201/000012267631A - OUTSIDE NUMBER 69, HIGH STREET, CHURCH STRETTON, SY6 6BY. Works will commence from 09:00hrs approx. on a 3 Day Duration.

19.100 **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS/COUNCILLORS**

a) Planning Conservation and Heritage Committee

i) To Receive the Minutes of Meeting Dated 11th December 2019

The minutes of the Planning Conservation and Heritage Meeting held on 11th December 2019 had been circulated. Proposed by Cllr Hickman, seconded by Cllr Wilks and

RESOLVED (unanimously) to receive the Minutes of the Planning, Conservation and Heritage meeting held on 11th December 2019 and to confirm and adopt the resolutions and recommendations contained therein.

b) Vacancies for Reps on Other Bodies

- i. Proposed by Cllr Welch, seconded by Cllr Walker and

RESOLVED (unanimously) that Cllr Carson be appointed rep on Consolidated Charities for an initial temporary period of six months.

- ii. Proposed by Cllr Morris, seconded by Cllr Claytonsmith and

RESOLVED (unanimously) that Cllr Luff be appointed PTA rep for Church Stretton School for an initial temporary period of six months.

c) **Updates from Representatives on Other Bodies**

Cllr. Welch suggested that Councillor representatives should feed back to the Council at least once a year.

d) **Community Led Plan**

Cllr Claytonsmith reported that the CLP questionnaire had gone out.

19.101 **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

a) *Dates of next meetings:*

- i) Economic Development Committee: 21st January at 7pm*
- ii) Planning Committee: 21st January at 6pm*
- iii) Amenities, Finance & General Purposes Committee: 4th February at 7pm*
- iv) Councillors' Meeting: 11th February at 7pm*
- v) Council Meeting: 18th February at 7pm*

8.59pm

19.102 **CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

- a) It has been agreed that the RFO would work two, instead of three, days a week throughout January to accommodate time off in lieu..
- b) Cllr Welch had been to see the Town Clerk and gave an update.

..... 9.15 pm