

# Church Stretton Town Council

## MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE CHRISTINE HARVEY ROOM, SILVESTER HORNE INSTITUTE ON TUESDAY 17<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2020 at 7.00 p.m.

**Those present:** *Councillors:* Cllr S Baker, Cllr C Carson, Cllr L Chapman, Cllr H Luff, Cllr M Walker, Cllr B Welch.  
*Officers:* Mr. C. Maclean (Locum Town Clerk), Miss B. Clarke (Responsible Financial Officer), T. Morris (PA)  
*Unitary Councillors:*  
*Members of the Public:* 0

### 19.123 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr L Antill, Cllr M Braid, Cllr N Carter, Cllr H Claytonsmith, Cllr R Hickman Cllr M Morris and Cllr D Wilks, Mr. M. Turner (Amenities and Services Officer (ASO)) and Mr. D. Chetwood (Town Clerk)

### 19.124 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 26<sup>th</sup> June 2012). **NONE**

### 19.125 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None

### 19.126 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES taken at the Town Council Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020 had been circulated. Proposed by Cllr Chapman, seconded by Cllr Carson and

**RESOLVED (unanimously) to confirm and adopt the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020 as correct, and these were duly signed by the Chairman as a true record.**

The Locum Town Clerk (LTC) had prepared a paper, about conducting council business during the Coronavirus crisis.

1. To note that it is lawful for the Clerk/Locum Clerk to spend against specific items in the Parish Council's budget i.e. for contractors, hall hire, Clerk's and Council employees' salaries, all of which having been identified in the budget when setting the Precept, any such payments to be reported to the Council at the next ordinary meeting. Such payments will be prior agreed with Chair and Vice Chair.
2. To approve a provision of delegated powers to the Clerk/Locum Clerk to spend up to a limited amount of £5,000 and to authorise urgent work, when unforeseen circumstances occur. Such payments will be prior agreed with Chair and Vice Chair.
3. Delegated powers are given to the Clerk/Locum Clerk to respond to planning applications. Such responses will factor in feedback from Councillors. Councillors are still able to submit their own personal comments.
4. Agreement to delegate the postponement of upcoming meetings of the (i) Council; (ii) Amenities, Finance & General Purposes Committee; (iii) Economic Development Committee and: (iv) Planning Committee should this be required. Any decision will be made with the agreement of the Chair and Vice Chair.
5. Agreement to receive and act upon Government advice in relation to the holding of the Annual Meeting of the Parish scheduled to meet on 14 April 2020 (noting such meetings must be held before 1 June) and the Annual Meeting of the Town Council scheduled to meet on 12 May 2020

(noting such meeting must be held in May), thereby giving delegated powers to the Clerk/Locum Clerk to make necessary re-arrangements for these meetings in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair.

The limits currently established within the Council's Financial Regulations will be suspended for the period of time that the delegated powers are required.

After a brief discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Baker, seconded by Cllr Chapman and

**RESOLVED (unanimously) to delegate the powers listed in 1 to 5 above to the Clerk/Locum Clerk during the continued crisis and until the next Council meeting.**

#### 19.127 FINANCIAL MATTERS

##### a) Internal Audit Report

The RFO reported that the VAT Audit Report is still to be signed off. When this is available the two Audit Reports will be presented to Councillors. NOTED

##### b) Update on Full Payment List for Financial Year

The Auditor had asked that the full payment list be brought to Councillors for approval at the end of the financial year. The RFO advised that a list of all payments covering the full year is being compiled and will be presented.

Cllr Walker commented on the lack of a statement for the Town Council. The LTC advised that the required controls were being reviewed and to be made ready for the next meeting.

7.30pm The RFO gave her apologies and left the meeting.

##### c) Orders for Payment

Two invoices from Nobridge Ltd. for work on the Bowling Green and Croquet Lawn were presented for authorisation. Due to an inconsistency in the invoicing, the combined invoices have been reduced from £6360.00 by £1536.00 to a new total of £4824.00.

Cllr Baker questioned why the company had been used and whether more local companies might have been used. The LTC advised that a tendering process should have been followed but that he would check with the Amenities & Services Officer (ASO).

It was proposed by Cllr Chapman, seconded by Cllr Luff and

**RESOLVED (5 in favour, 1 abstain) to authorise payment to Nobridge of £4,824.00**

#### 19.128 CSTC ANNUAL ASSEMBLY PROGRAMME

A proposed programme had been circulated. Any queries should be emailed to Cllr Welch. NOTED

#### 19.129 SMARTWATER

A report had been circulated detailing a proposal to part-fund a household Smartwater scheme. This should be put on hold in light of the current environment. NOTED

#### 19.130 CLIMATE ACTION

A report by Cllr Antill which had been presented to the EDC meeting and recommended to be brought forward to the Council meeting was noted. It was agreed that discussion on this should be deferred until Cllr Antill is able to be present.

#### 19.131 EMPLOYMENT LAW, HR AND HEALTH AND SAFETY SUPPORT

The contract with Ellis Whittam, who supplied both HR and Health and Safety Support has been terminated following the expiry of the current cover period. The LTC advised that the Council were going to market to source new providers and proposals would be presented at a future meeting. To cover the interim period, the LTC advised that an HR Consultant has been identified and is available to provide ad-hoc advice. An independent Health and Safety Adviser has been identified and arrangements are being made for a review of the Council's policies and procedures to be undertaken.

#### 19.132 HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY UPDATE REPORT

A report had been circulated. NOTED

### 19.133 **MARKETING REPORT**

A report had been circulated but Cllr Welch reported that the leaflet swap planned for 30<sup>th</sup> March has been cancelled. NOTED

### 19.134 **UNITARY AND PARISH WARD ISSUES**

#### a) **Report from Unitary Councillors**

Cllr Chapman reported on Shropshire Council's actions and precautions following the Coronavirus outbreak. Testing of increased numbers of Shropshire Council employees working from home proving successful and more meetings being held virtually rather than in person.

Information and developments are being provided via the Shropshire Council Newsroom website.

#### b) **Parish Ward Issues**

None reported.

#### c) **Road Closures/Works**

None reported.

#### d) **Highways Improvement Plan and 2020/2021 Capital Programme**

Shropshire Council Highways Improvement Plan and 2020/2021 Capital Programme had been circulated. NOTED

### 19.135 **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS/COUNCILLORS**

#### a) **Planning Conservation and Heritage Committee**

##### i) **To Receive the Minutes of Meeting Dated 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

The minutes of the Planning Conservation and Heritage Committee Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020 had been circulated. Proposed by Cllr Welch, seconded by Cllr Walker and

**RESOLVED (unanimously) to receive the Minutes of the Planning, Conservation and Heritage Committee meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and to confirm and adopt the resolutions and recommendations contained therein.**

#### b) **Economic Development Committee**

##### i) **To Receive the Minutes of Meeting Dated 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

The minutes of the Economic Development Committee Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 had been circulated. Proposed by Cllr Welch, seconded by Cllr Walker and

**RESOLVED (unanimously) to receive the Minutes of the Economic Development Committee meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and to confirm and adopt the resolutions and recommendations contained therein.**

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

##### i) **SALC Working Party Feedback**

A report on the SALC Working Party Meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February had been circulated. NOTED

#### d) **Community Led Plan**

Work progressing and reports from the Working Groups now being received.

### 19.136 **YOUTH SERVICES/YOUTH CLUB UPDATE**

Cllr Welch reported that the Youth Club will normally meet on Thursdays in the Mayfair Centre but in summer may utilise the Russells Meadow Pavilion at a rate to be agreed.

### 19.137 **FEES AND CHARGES**

The LTC reported that he was not in a position to submit a report and proposals due to the inability to complete the review across all assets. In light of this, the LTC advised that he and the ASO recommended holding fees at their current level for the next year which would allow time for a complete review to be undertaken in advance of the next budget discussions. It was proposed by

Cllr Welch, seconded by Cllr Walker and

**RESOLVED (unanimously) to leave fees as they stand for the next financial year.**

#### 19.138 **CORRESPONDENCE**

An enquiry had been received questioning whether the Charities Market would take place which is normally in June. In light of the current situation no definitive response can be provided and this is to be held under review.

#### 19.139 **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

##### **a) *Dates of next meetings:***

*i) Annual Assembly: 14<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm*

*ii) Planning Committee: 21<sup>st</sup> April at 6pm*

*iii) Amenities, Finance and General Purposes: 21<sup>st</sup> April at 7pm*

These meetings taking place are subject to the guidance to be received from the Government and the National Association of Local Councils.

#### 19.140 **CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

Proposed by Cllr Welch, seconded by Cllr Chapman and

**Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 S1(2), it is RESOLVED (unanimously) that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is in the public interest that the public and press are excluded from these items.**

##### a) Outdoor Team – Staffing Review

Discussion took place over the most appropriate arrangements to accommodate the public use of the Council's assets and how these can be covered by the team members. In the absence of the ASO at the meeting it was agreed to defer a decision until a future meeting.

Proposed by Cllr Chapman, seconded by Cllr Luff and

**RESOLVED (unanimously) to defer a decision to a future meeting.**

##### b) Staff Matters

The ASO had submitted a report about activities and assets operation during Coronavirus.

##### i) Football and Cricket

Proposed by Cllr Chapman, seconded by Cllr Luff and

**RESOLVED (5 in favour, 1 abstain) to talk to the Clubs to get their views.**

##### ii) Planting and Planters

Proposed by Cllr Chapman, seconded by Cllr Luff and

**RESOLVED (unanimously) to continue as normal with planting bedding plants in the Park and populating the planters around the town.**

##### iii) Maintaining Public Spaces

Proposed by Cllr Luff, seconded by Cllr Chapman and

**RESOLVED (unanimously) to continue the normal regime until such time as Government Guidance prevents it.**

##### iv) Public Toilets

Proposed by Cllr Chapman, seconded by Cllr Welch and

**RESOLVED (unanimously) that the public toilets should be kept open and a notice should be put up to say when they were last cleaned.**

##### v) Silvester Horne Institute

Proposed by Cllr Walker, seconded by Cllr Welch and

**RESOLVED (unanimously) to keep the SHI open subject to Government advice.**

c) Streamlining of Meetings and Cabinet Terms of Reference

This item to be deferred.

d) Preparation for Annual Meeting and Draft Councillor Self-Nomination Form

This item to be deferred.

e) COVID Update.

Cllr Welch advised Councillors of the key points arising from an emergency planning meeting held at the Mayfair Centre which he and the LTC attended on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Further update weekly conference call meetings are scheduled.

8.25 pm

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