



## **MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING** **HELD ON 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021.**

**PRESENT:** Councillors: Pam Kirkham (Mayor), Stuart Bostock (Deputy Mayor), Penny Butterill, David Greaves, Peter Groves, Andrew Martin, David Marren, Arthur Moran, Phil Staley, John Statham, Carole Thomas and Stephanie Wedgwood with Samantha Roberts the Town Clerk.

Also Present: One member of the press, PC Stonier and five members of the public.

### **134. PUBLIC FORUM**

#### 134.1 Representatives from the police.

PC Matt Stonier gave apologies for his absence to council meetings and provided a brief update on policing matters advising that during the lockdown crime figures had reduced as would be expected. The Police were keeping up with speed monitoring and enforcements. PC Stonier advised that he had been in correspondence with the Town Clerk relating to recent concerns from members of public and the lack of social distancing in the town centre. PC Stonier had increased the police presence in the town, engaging with the public. Following a question from Councillor Martin he advised that no enforcement had been carried out relating to social distancing, as the challenge is that a lot of what the public are doing is permitted, but the problem is that they are all doing it at the same time.

PC Stonier commented on the later agenda item on public benches and added his views based on his knowledge of similar issues in other towns. He suggested that should the town council decide to remove the benches then this would create an additional backlash from the public as had happened in other areas.

#### 134.2 Representations from members of the public.

A resident provided members with views of the skateboarding community, relating to the later agenda item on proposals for the Barony Skatepark. He advised that at present skateboarders in the town have to go further a field due to the lack of provision in the town. He suggested that a new skatepark would benefit all age groups and it is a safe and happy place for people to go. The Mayor thanked the resident for his comments and advised that they would be considered during discussion of the agenda item.

#### 134.3 There were no representations from the public on planning applications.

#### 134.4 There were no questions submitted in advance in writing.

**135. APOLOGIES:** There were apologies of absence from the Facilities Manager David Thomas

**ABSENT:** none

Councillor Arthur Moran joined the meeting at 6.40pm

### **136. DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

Councillors Peter Groves and Andrew Martin advised that the applicant for planning application 21/0721N was known to both councillors.

### **137. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**137.1 Resolved:** That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021 be confirmed as a correct record, approved, and signed by the Mayor.

**137.2 Resolved:** To receive and note the minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and accept and approve the recommendations contained within the minutes.

### **138. MAYOR'S REPORT**

The Mayor's reported that due to the lockdown she had not had the opportunity to attend any engagements.

### **139. PLANNING CONTROL**

Members considered the planning applications and supported the recommendations of the Clerk.

**Resolved:** It was resolved that the recommendations of the Clerk be approved, and the observations reported to Cheshire East.

### **140. TOWN COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETING DATES 2021/22**

Members considered the previously circulated draft schedule of meetings for the town council and committees for 2021/22. The Clerk advised members that she would seek to make one amendment to the proposed dates, with the Annual meeting of the town council changing from 20<sup>th</sup> May to 13<sup>th</sup> May. Councillor Groves expressed his apologies for the requested amendment.

The Clerk also advised members that at present the venue of the meetings are to be confirmed due to the current legislation in place allowing virtual meetings ending on 6 March 2021. The sector was awaiting clarification as to whether the legislation will be extended further allowing for the continued virtual meetings.

**Resolved:** It was resolved to approve the schedule of meetings for 2021/22

### **141. TOWN CENTRE BENCHES**

Members reviewed the effectiveness of the Town Council's decision to place signage around the town centre and on the benches. The Clerk advised members that due to delays in the

ordering of the signage whilst the signs had been placed around the town centre advising the public to respect social distancing, the signage had only just been placed on the benches. The Clerk advised members that the Town Council had little power to enforce social distancing as this power was with the Police.

Councillor Martin suggested that the comments from PC Stonier earlier had been very helpful and suggested that if the Town Council were to remove the benches it should have been done earlier and believed that the existing arrangement should now be sufficient.

Councillor Bostock suggested that the signage whilst it was displayed in the town centre, the signage should have been more conspicuous and larger in size.

Councillor Moran added that the Government instructions had been clear, and the public should be taking responsibility to adhere to the social distancing rules. He added that whilst the number of cases was reducing in Cheshire East it is important not to become complacent.

**Resolved:** It was resolved to retain the signage in the town and on the benches.

#### **142. LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME**

Members considered the previously circulated table of criteria required to apply for the Local Council Award accreditation. The Clerk provided members with the process for making the application and hoped to be able to recommend applying for accreditation within the next 4-5 months as most criteria, in the view of the Clerk are now met. The Clerk advised that she hopes to have the first annual report drafted for council consideration by May, which is one of the few criteria still not met.

**Resolved:** It was resolved to note the progress.

#### **143. BARONY PARK**

Councillor Moran provided members with a verbal update on the progress on plans for a new skatepark at The Barony. He advised that the initial plans have been developed with the expected costs of between £85-£90k. Councillor Moran informed members that there had been a successful Community Grant application by ANSA which would cover 90% of the costs, but the remaining 10% would need to be sourced. Councillor Moran informed members that once the design was complete then ANSA would commence a public consultation.

Councillor Statham asked about the timescale for the work and the scope available to change the plan following consultation. Councillor Moran confirmed he would seek answers to the questions from ANSA.

Councillor David Marren joined the meeting at 7.05pm

#### **144. BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORTS**

Councillor Moran informed members of the outcome of the recent Community Governance Review sub-committee meeting, where the working group has recommended amendments to the boundary of Nantwich to include new developments currently in Henhull and Edilston

together with a proposed increase of elected members from 12 to 15. Councillor Moran advised that the proposals would go out to public consultation and it is important that of Nantwich respond to the consultation.

Members discussed the suggestion from Councillor Moran that the increase of members to 15 could create a third ward with even representation of five members in three wards. Councillor Martin in response suggested it would be helpful if there was a clear boundary suggestion for three wards it would help Cheshire East during the consultation response.

Councillor Marren advised that Cheshire East had agreed its budget with the approval of member ward budgets of £4k per member which can be spent on highway matters.

#### **145. REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Councillor Moran updated members on the Luncheon Clubs lease at the Gables and confirmed that the club must vacate the building by the end of March 2021. Councillor Moran confirmed that the Luncheon Club had made an agreement at the Civic Hall from September 2021 to April 2023.

Councillor Wedgwood asked if the moving of the club to the Civic Hall will allow for a wider community to benefit from the club. Councillor Moran suggested it was hoped to extend the provision, but as the Club is a charity it had to be mindful of the conditions of the charity status.

#### **146. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Resolved:** It was resolved to exclude the Press and public pursuant to the Public Bodies Admission to meetings Act 1960 as personal and financial details of individuals are likely to be discussed.

#### **147. MARKET STREET TOILETS.**

Members considered additional proposals for the future provision of the public toilets service. Following comments and ideas from several members it was agreed that a working group would be established to work with the Clerk and bring forward holistic proposals for the future provision of public toilets in the town.

**Resolved:** It was resolved that Councillors David Greaves, Peter Groves, Stuart Bostock, John Statham, David Marren and Carole Thomas would work with the Clerk to develop proposals.

The meeting ended at 8.00pm

Signature of Chair :.....

Date :.....