

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ONLINE USING ZOOM, ON MONDAY 03 AUGUST 2020, AT 7.30 P.M.**

Councillors present: Councillor Major J Sibbald (Town Mayor)
Councillors A Crawford, A Duveen, A Gilhome,
J Goodman, J T Hannaby (part), E L Johnson,
A C Menzies, P O'Leary (part), I L Sheldon,
and C H Wills-Wright.

Others present: One member of the public

Clerk: W P Falkenau.
Deputy Clerk: S Sanders

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors IR Cameron, A Dunford,
J Goodman and C Walters.

Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

None.

Minutes of the Council meeting held on 22 June 2020

The minutes were approved.

20. Statements and questions from the public

Councillor O'Leary joined the meeting

The Clerk read the following statement received from Alderman Hutchinson:

"I query the accuracy of the PM&F minutes of the 2nd July 2020.

I would like to draw the full Town Council's attention to a failure by PM&F committee Chairman Councillor Crawford to organise the publication of the sub- committee minutes in time for interested members of the public to determine whether they should give notice that they would like to speak at the PM&F meeting. At the last PM&F meeting held on July 2nd the S106 sub-committee minutes were not published until lunch time on the day of the meeting whereas notice of the wish to speak by a member of the public is required by the prior Thursday.

I attended the meeting and as it progressed it became clear to me that I had information which would be of relevance to the committee members. I raised my hand to indicate a wish to comment but was ignored by the Chairman.

When the meeting came out of confidential session the Mayor informed me that the meeting was about to close. I then intervened and said could. I comment. Major Sibbald said go ahead and I started to explain. Major Sibbald then informed me that the conversation was being recorded and I said I was happy with that and so proceeded with my remarks. The meeting was then officially closed. This intervention was not recorded in the minutes. I therefore believe the minutes to be incomplete.

I would further request that committee minutes be published in a timely manner so as to facilitate participation by the members of the public. If this cannot be achieved I would suggest that the Chairman of the meeting should invite comments by the public at a suitable time."

The Clerk commented that at the point Alderman Hutchinson spoke with the Mayor, the PM&F meeting had already been closed and, even if it hadn't been, would have been inquorate and deemed closed. Any comments made by Alderman Hutchinson could therefore not be recorded in the minutes. The Clerk went on to state that there is no obligation for the minutes to be available prior to the meeting to which they relate, the obligation lies with the publication of an agenda detailing any business to be conducted at the meeting.

Councillor Hannaby joined the meeting.

Councillor Crawford commented that he was unable to see that Alderman Hutchinson had asked to speak because he was not hosting the meeting. It was agreed that it was desirable that the minutes of meeting be published sooner, but the Clerk commented, that in order to achieve this, consideration might need to be given to spacing the meetings out, to allow more time for minutes to be prepared.

21. Matters arising from the Council meeting held on 22 June 2020.

None.

22. Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 22 June and 13 July 2020.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald
SECONDED BY Councillor Sheldon
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted.

23. Minutes of the Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting held on 6 July 2020

9. a) Changing Place facility in the Town Centre

This was to be raised at a meeting with District Council's Property Officer on the 5 August.
Action: Clerk

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Hannaby
SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes, as amended, be adopted

24. Minutes of the Promotion, Communications and Events Committee meeting held on 27 July 2020.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Wills-Wright
SECONDED BY Councillor O'Leary
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted.

25. Minutes of the Policy, Management and Finance Committee meeting held on 20 July 2020

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Hannaby
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted.

26. To consider reports from the 2019/20 Internal Audit Review.

The reports were considered and it was noted that no significant issues has been raised. These were to be referred to the Policy, Management and Finance Committee, and Staffing Sub-committee for further consideration.
Action: Clerk

- 27. To consider and approve for signing the Balance Sheet and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020, including consideration of allocation of project reserves.**

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Hannaby

SECONDED BY Councillor Sheldon

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Balance Sheet and Accounts for the year end 31 March 2020 be approved and signed. **Action: Mayor/Clerk**

- 28. To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20**

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford

SECONDED BY Councillor Wills-Wright

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 be approved. The Mayor and Clerk were to sign. **Action: Mayor/Clerk**

- 29. To approve the Accounting Statements 2019/20**

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford

SECONDED BY Councillor Duveen

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Accounting Statements 2019/20 be approved. The Mayor and Clerk were to sign. **Action: Mayor/Clerk**

- 30. District and County Councillors' reports.**

District Council

The District Council had been involved in a number of discussions regarding how and when leisure centres can open safely. A consultation had also taken place regarding possible changes to charges across District Council owned car parks. The public were now able to participate in online meetings.

County Council

There had recently been a HOSC meeting, but no progress had been made regarding the reopening of the Wantage Community Hospital. The timescale for the CCG to report back had been postponed from September to January 2021. A report on Civil Parking Enforcement had been prepared and will be considered by the District and County Councils in September. A letter has been sent to the Deputy Police Commissioner on 2 June to seek support for District and Parish Councils to contribute towards the funding of a PCSO to carry out parking enforcement. No response had been received. The Clerk agreed to contact the Deputy Police Commissioner to seek a response. **Action: Clerk**

The number of Covid-19 related deaths in Oxfordshire care homes was mentioned. These were currently 50% higher than in any other county. The reopening of Grove Station had been put forward for funding.

- 31. Town Mayor's communications.**

The Town Mayor's communications were available to view on the Town Council's Website.

Confidential item

32. Update regarding the part pedestrianisation of the Market Place.

A suggested scheme to extend pedestrianisation in the Market Place had been referred to the County Council on 21 July with a request for advice on the feasibility. The request had been acknowledged but no advice had been received so far. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact Paul Fermer of the County Council to seek a response.

Action: Clerk

The Town Mayor, Councillor Hannaby and the Clerk had met three of the traders from the Market Place western end on 29 July. The traders had concerns about the detrimental effect of customers being unable to park close to their premises. They proposed an arrangement whereby vehicles were to be permitted access to the pedestrianised area on the northern side of the closed area for deliveries. It was unclear how this would work with the taxis. There had been some discussion about accessibility for deliveries and collections.

The Clerk had also met Fr Wells to discuss arrangements for funerals. This was currently not a problem because of the Covid-19 restrictions.

A questionnaire was being drafted as part of a consultation process relating to the pedestrianisation proposals. It was hoped to proceed with this before the next meeting cycle.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Sibbald
SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson

IT WAS RESOLVED that delegated authority be given to the Mayor and Committee Chairmen, in consultation with the Clerk, to approve the form of the questionnaire.

A letter was being drafted to go to the District Council, expressing concern regarding the utilisation of the "Reopening the High Street Safely Fund"

There had been some incidents involving the barriers between Barclays and Green and Co being moved. It was agreed to request that the CCTV camera by Barclays monitor this.

Action: Clerk

The meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

WPF/KS