

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ONLINE USING ZOOM, ON MONDAY 24 AUGUST 2020, AT 7.30 P.M.**

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

Clerk: W P Falkenau.
Deputy Clerk: S Sanders

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Goodman, C Walters and C H Wills-Wright.

Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

None.

Minutes of the Council meeting held on 3 August 2020

The minutes were approved.

33. Statements and questions from the public

None.

34. To consider further actions regarding Market Place pedestrianisation following the receipt of a response from Oxfordshire County Council concerning the suggested scheme put forward by the Town Council

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Sibbald
SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson
IT WAS RESOLVED that matters relating to the temporary pedestrianisation proposals should no longer be treated as a confidential item.

Councillor O'Leary joined the meeting.

The Town Council had submitted a scheme to the County Council (referred to as Option 10) for the temporary pedestrianisation of the main part of the Market Place and the northern end of Newbury Street, in accordance with the Government's Safer Spaces initiative, asking the County Council to comment on its feasibility. Rather than answering this, the County Council had come back with numerous questions.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson
IT WAS MOVED that the Town Council publishes the Option 10 plan on the Council's website, together with a full explanation of how this seeks to meet the new government guidelines to aid social distancing in commercial areas, and at the same time the Council consults with both residents and businesses about that plan and also that this should also include the stand alone option of closing the northern section of Newbury Street to vehicular traffic. The proposition was unanimously approved.

Councillor Hannaby joined the meeting.

It was also agreed that the consultation should also be publicised through social media and the press.

35. To consider a proposal to subscribe to Office 365

The Town Council staff currently used a range of different versions of Microsoft Office. These were either no longer supported, or due to be no longer supported. Data and system backups were conducted on an irregular basis. The Town Council had recently purchased a number of laptops for use by councillors for Town Council business. These currently did not have access to the Microsoft Office products. Emails were being migrated to wantagetowncouncil.gov.uk addresses. The Town Council was currently obliged to conduct all its meetings online. To respond to the above and bring all the Town Council's IT up to date, it made sense to subscribe to Office 365 for all council office staff and councillors. Tenders from prospective suppliers had been sought.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Sibbald
SECONDED BY Councillor Crawford

IT WAS RESOLVED to proceed with 22 subscriptions of Office 365 at a cost of £2,014, purchased from the supplier that had given the lowest quote in the tender process.

36. Town Mayor's communications.

A note detailing the Town Mayor's communications had been distributed.

The Town Mayor recorded thanks to Mr Falkenau for his service as Town Clerk for the past 21 years, the anniversary of his appointment being that day, and for the four years' service he had given prior to that.

The meeting closed at 7.53 p.m.

WPF
