

**CYNGOR TREF CONWY TOWN COUNCIL
THE GUILDHALL, CONWY.
MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2020**

Present: Councillors E Leighton-Jones (Mayor), C Ryan (Deputy Mayor), S Barber-Bailey, S Cotton, M Craven, G Edwards, P Hart, T James, V Macdonald, M Priestley, C. Parry, H Roberts, J Rooney, J Vaughan, G Willetts

In Attendance: Natasha Flint, Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Jane Leivers, Assistant to the Town Clerk
Paul Gillbanks, Mayor's Secretary/Events Coordinator

Apologies: Councillor E Roberts

Declarations of Interest – Code of Local Government Conduct:

Agenda item 9a) Planning Applications (0/47511) – Cllr. M Priestley

The Mayor, Cllr. E Leighton-Jones took the Chair for Item 1:

1. Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED that Cllr. C Ryan (the Deputy Mayor) is appointed Chairman of the committee for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

2. Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED that Cllr. J Rooney is appointed Vice Chairman of the committee for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

3. Minutes

- Minutes of the virtual Special Meeting of the Council held on 20th July 2020
RESOLVED that the minutes are ACCEPTED and APPROVED.
- Minutes of the virtual Christmas Meeting of the Council held on 5th August 2020
Cllr. Hart pointed out that she and Cllr. James had tendered their apologies for the meeting, but these had not been recorded.
RESOLVED that, subject to the inclusion of apologies for absence from Cllrs. P Hart and T James, the minutes are ACCEPTED and APPROVED.

4. Questions on the Minutes

Minute 292 – Covid 19 Recovery – Supporting Town Centres – Outdoor Tables, Chairs and Seating Provision

In response to a query regarding the ownership of the outdoor furniture which had been purchased it was confirmed that the Town Council owned the furniture, having applied for funding. The furniture was insured through the Town Council's insurance and the Council also paid for cleaning and maintenance.

Minute 284 – Secunder for Vote of Thanks at Mayoral Inauguration (and other matters)

A Member observed that more than half those attending the AGM had not been wearing masks which was a matter for concern. During the discussion that followed it was noted that PPE had been provided but it was a personal choice as to whether to use it, particularly if individuals suffered from medical conditions, in which case social distancing had to be observed. It was agreed that given the difficulties involved in social distancing it would not be appropriate to hold further meetings at the Guildhall until all participants were willing or able to use PPE.

5. Report Back

There were no reports back.

6. Town Clerk's Report

Members received the Town Clerk's Report (Schedule A attached). It was noted that a number of Members have requested to undertake One Voice Wales training.

7. Planning

a) Planning Applications

Members considered and commented on the attached Schedule B. There was concern expressed that the consultation period for a number of important applications had already expired. This was because the Town Council had not been able to consider any applications since its meeting on 20th July 2020. CCBC had been made aware of this but had not responded.

b) Planning Decisions Issued

Members received a list of planning decisions issued by Conwy County Borough Council (Schedule C). The decisions were NOTED.

The following item was moved up the agenda because Cllr. Macdonald had to leave the meeting early.

8. Book Club – Cllr. V Macdonald

The Town Clerk reported that she had received a request from Cllr. Macdonald for the weekly meeting of the Book Club at the Guildhall to be resumed. The Town Clerk discussed the request with the two staff members as the Town Clerk initially had concerns about staff safety with regard to Covid-19, but on reflection felt that it would be possible to undertake the restarting of the book club safely and that the benefits to the participants would outweigh any potential risks. She explained that the Book Club was held on Thursday morning when there was only the Town Clerk in the Guildhall; it would be held in a separate room which was not currently in use by any other parties and would be cleaned the following day; participants would not be permitted to use the Guildhall kitchen; hand sanitiser and PPE would be provided, as well as cleaning materials in the toilets; the Guildhall held a track and trace register which would be completed in advance. The Town Clerk believed the risks of cross-contamination were minimal and was happy to support Cllr. Macdonald's request.

Cllr. Macdonald also spoke in support of her request. Cllr. Macdonald confirmed that the Book Club was part of the University of the Third Age (U3A) and she was required by U3A to undertake a risk assessment before returning to the Guildhall. There were generally five members in attendance, who would socially distance and would provide their own refreshments. Cllr. Macdonald would be happy to stay behind afterwards and clean the areas which had been used by the Book Club members. Members of the Book Club had in the past made a small donation at each meeting which over the course of a year had raised approximately £80 for the Mayor's Charity. In response to a question Cllr. Macdonald stated that it had not occurred to her to approach the Cultural Centre because the Book Club had previously used the Guildhall.

Cllr. Macdonald left the meeting at this point.

Members were very much in support of the Book Club being allowed to return to the Guildhall providing all health and safety measures were in place and strictly observed, in particular the guidance from the Welsh Government. However, there was a difference of opinion with regard to whether a charge should be made for use of the Guildhall. One Member felt that a proper charge should be imposed and shown as a revenue to the Guildhall. On being put to the vote this was not carried (Cllr. Barber-Bailey abstaining).

RESOLVED and APPROVED that the Book Club is permitted to meet at the Guildhall on a weekly basis, at no charge providing all health and safety measures were in place and strictly observed, in particular the guidance from the Welsh Government.

9. Cheque Signatories

a) Conwy Town Council Business Current Account

The Mayor, Cllr. E Leighton-Jones, has already been added to the list of signatories in 2015 and therefore remains on the list of signatories;

b) Conwy Town Council Notice Account

The Mayor, Cllr. E Leighton-Jones, has already been added to the list of signatories in 2015 and therefore remains on the list of signatories;

c) The Mayoral Donation Account

RESOLVED and APPROVED that the signatory for the Mayoral Donation Account is changed to the Mayor for the Municipal Year 2020/21, Cllr. E Leighton-Jones:

A discussion was also held regarding the continued use of cheques when it had previously been agreed that the Council should be moving toward electronic banking and other forms of bank transfer. The Town Clerk confirmed that she fully intended to instigate this, but she had been exceptionally busy over the last few months due to Covid-19. The Town Clerk gave an undertaking to have electronic banking for the Town Council in place by the end of the year.

10. Conwy Town Council Risk Assessment 2020/2021

RESOLVED and APPROVED Conwy Town Council Risk Assessment 2020/2021.

11. Standing Orders 2020/2021

The Chair drew attention to an amendment to the Standing Orders which had been approved by the Town Council at its meeting on 2nd March 2020 (Minute 95 refers). This was in Standing Order 5f and related to the office of Deputy Mayor.

A short debate followed regarding the clarity of the amendment and on being put to the vote it was agreed to maintain the current wording.

Members also discussed if it was correct to include 'Questions on the Minutes' as an agenda item. It was recognised that this item was not there to discuss the accuracy of the minutes, this being covered under 'Minutes', but opinion was divided as to whether it should appear on the agenda at all. It was noted that Standing Order 12b states that there shall be no discussion except in relation to accuracy. However, this item served as a vehicle for feedback on actions arising and undertaken from the minutes and one of the Members suggested that the agenda could be reworded in such a way as to reflect this. Members did not come to a conclusion on this issue.

RESOLVED and APPROVED Conwy Town Council Standing Orders 2020/2021.

12. Code of Conduct 2020/2021

Members had been sent an electronic version of the revised Code of Conduct. They were asked to read through it, then print out two copies of the declaration on the last page and sign both copies. One copy is for Members to keep and the other copy is to be placed on file at the Guildhall.

13. Financial Regulations 2020/2021

RESOLVED that the Conwy Town Council Financial Regulations 2020/2021 are APPROVED.

14. Conwy Town Council Committees 2020/2021

The Town Clerk advised the Members that none of the four committees – Finance, Civic, Staff, Guildhall, had plenary powers and all had to report back to the full Town Council. The Town Clerk advised that, for the remainder of this municipal year that all members of the Town Council should serve on all four committees in an effort to promote trust and transparency. A discussion within the Members took place and it was resolved that all Members of the Town Council be on both the Staff Committee and Finance Committee and in order

that these Committees have plenary powers, but that the Civic Committee and the Guildhall Committee remain unchanged with regard to the Membership and Terms of Reference.

a) Finance Committee

RESOLVED and APPROVED:

- i) That all members of the Town Council will also be members of the Finance Committee for 2020/21;
- ii) That the Finance Committee shall meet every quarter;
- iii) That the Town Clerk redrafts the terms of reference for the Finance Committee accordingly.

b) Civic Committee

RESOLVED and APPROVED:

- i) That the terms of reference and membership of the Civic Committee remain unchanged, i.e. past and present Mayors, the Deputy Mayor and one other Town Councillor who has not served as Mayor or Deputy Mayor;
- ii) The membership for 2020/2021 to be Cllrs. S Cotton, G Edwards, P Hart, E Leighton-Jones, V Macdonald, H Roberts, C Ryan;
- iii) Cllr. S Barber-Bailey to be the additional Town Councillor.

c) Staff Committee

RESOLVED and APPROVED:

- i) That all members of the Town Council will also be members of the Staff Committee for 2020/21;
- ii) That a 'staff appointments sub-committee' shall be convened as and when required for the purposes of recommending staff appointments to full Council;
- iii) That the Town Clerk redrafts the terms of reference for the Staff Committee accordingly.

d) Guildhall Committee

RESOLVED and APPROVED:

- i) That the terms of reference and membership of the Guildhall Committee remain unchanged;
- ii) The membership for 2020/2021 to be Cllrs. S Cotton, G Edwards, E Leighton-Jones, V Macdonald, H Roberts, J Rooney, C Ryan; G Willetts.

15. Approval of Payments

RESOLVED that the following payments are approved:

- a) R.A. Slater – Guildhall Windows and Bus Shelters 4 Weeks to 31.07.2020 - £170.00;
- b) Trilo-Byte Computer Services 3 x Microsoft 365 Licences – 01.08.20-31.07.21 - £864.00;
- c) Evenrock Ltd / Wrights GPX PPE 3 x Plastic Desk Screens - £580.00 plus VAT;
- d) Town Clerk Overtime for 20.07.2020 – 21.08.2020 = 16.65Hrs - £270.56;
- e) B2 Business Solutions (North Wales) Ltd – Copies 01.07.2020 to 03.08.2020 Mono & 750 Colour - £40.82 plus VAT;
- f) The Royal British Legion Wreath for VJ Day - £18.50;
- g) British Telecommunications plc – Guildhall Telephone 01.08.2020 to 31.10.2020 - £94.14 plus VAT;
- h) Opus Energy Ltd St Mary's Clock Electricity 04.06.2020 to 03.08.2020 - £11.11 plus VAT;
- i) MSI Alarms Ltd Intruder Alarm System - £68.00 plus VAT.

During the discussion on the above the amount of overtime accrued by the Town Clerk due to the absence of the Deputy Town Clerk and the impact of COVID-19 on working conditions was noted and Members agreed that the situation should be monitored in order that the Town Clerk's work/life balance is not detrimentally impacted upon.

16. List of Cheques

RESOLVED that the list of cheques 448, as tabled, is approved for payment (Schedule D).

17. Confidential Business

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act) 1960 and with Standing Order 65, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and instructed to withdraw.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 20:48