

**CYNGOR TREF CONWY TOWN COUNCIL
THE GUILDHALL, CONWY.
MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 8th JUNE 2020**

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

**In Attendance: Natasha Flint, Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Jane Leivers, Assistant to the Town Clerk
Janet Finch-Saunders MS**

Apologies: None

Declarations of Interest:

Agenda Item 19 – Funding Request from Deganwy Sea Cadets During COVID-19 Pandemic – Cllrs S Cotton and V Macdonald are Committee Members.

251. Minute Silence for Councillor Bill Chapman.

A minute's silence was observed as a mark of respect for Councillor Bill Chapman who had recently died.

252. Welcome to Mrs Jane Leivers

The Chair welcomed Mrs Jane Leivers to the meeting. Mrs Leivers will be working as Assistant to the Town Clerk during the Deputy Town Clerk's maternity leave.

253. Janet Finch-Saunders MS

The Chair welcomed Mrs Janet Finch-Saunders MS to the meeting. Mrs Finch-Saunders began by thanking the Town Council for its efforts in supporting the community during this time. She explained that she had initially expected there to be a united approach between the four nations to dealing with the pandemic. This had not been the case and although it was correct for each nation to develop its own approach this had led to confusion when regulations differed between the four countries. She provided updated figures on the numbers of tests, positive cases and deaths up to 6th June 2020 and confirmed that testing had yet to be carried out in care homes. Mrs Finch-Saunders had raised her concerns within the Welsh Parliament and with the Health Board regarding the issue of testing and monitoring, as well as the discharge of hospital patients to care homes without having been tested, and the low levels of contact tracing. The field hospitals had not been required yet but the possibility of a second wave of the pandemic toward winter had to be kept in mind. The financial impact of the pandemic on local authorities and voluntary organisations had been enormous and many local authorities were facing deficits despite the availability of a Government Hardship Fund. Members were informed that primary schools would reopen from 29th June to 27th July 2020 albeit with reduced numbers and Further Education facilities would be reopening from 15th July 2020 for limited numbers. The First Minister had indicated that it was not expected that the tourism sector would be reopening this summer. Mrs Finch-Saunders expressed her severe concerns regarding this and its impact on employment and the local economy, given that tourism was the largest employment sector in the area. She also indicated that the local authority may have to repay funds it had already received in terms of business rates, etc. Mrs Finch-Saunders referred to the postponement of elections during the pandemic and confirmed that she had supported a motion for this order to be annulled because of the importance of councils having a full mandate, particularly at this time. In other areas Mrs Finch-Saunders confirmed that following the death of George Floyd, and the ensuing protests, she was supportive of the growing demand that black history be taught in all schools.

Mrs Finch-Saunders then responded to questions from Members:

Members asked when second homeowners would be permitted to revisit their holiday homes in the area. Mrs Finch-Saunders acknowledged the difficulty with this situation given the different regulations in operation in England and Wales. She suggested that if a visit was made by the owner they should ensure that they abided by the Welsh Government's regulations when in Wales.

Members raised the issue of Ysbyty Efnys at Venue Cymru and its impact on the Sailing Club and the theatre. The concern was that these facilities may not be able to reopen until next spring. Mrs Finch-Saunders stated the hospital had not yet been used but if there was a second wave this could be much worse and so for now the hospital had to remain in place. She did not know if Venue Cymru and Ysbyty Efnys could operate alongside each other and expressed her worry that the theatre may never reopen. A number of businesses were beginning to reopen, and she was fighting to get outdoor attractions reopened first.

Members referred to the Welsh Mountain Zoo and Chester Zoo, both of which were suffering severe financial difficulties, and urged Mrs Finch-Saunders to do all she could to keep them open.

Members voiced concerns regarding the different regulations between countries and suggested that it may be better in this particular situation if the UK Government took back control for the whole of the UK. Mrs Finch-Saunders stated that the Welsh Government had been granted extra powers in 2011 and suggested that it was not feasible to only have devolution when it was convenient.

Members urged Mrs Finch-Saunders to push for the reopening of local shops. Mrs Finch-Saunders agreed and confirmed that the next announcement regarding this would be made on 18th July 2020.

Concerns were raised regarding the feasibility of the tracing app for those whose devices did not support it or who did not have access to the app meaning they were nervous about going out, Mrs Finch-Saunders confirmed that she was not aware that this was a problem but agreed that it was a valid point.

Members asked if there were proposals to improve the levels of social care as well as provide care workers with better pay and conditions. Mrs French Saunders confirmed that care workers had been awarded a tax-free grant of £500 and that the First Minister was being pressed to improve terms and conditions and training for care workers and to give them more recognition.

Members urged Mrs Finch-Saunders to support applications for funding support in the tourism sector and referred to a number of organisations who had not received any grant support. She also asked about the Welsh Government's guidance relating to the wearing of masks in public. With regard to the wearing of masks Mrs Finch-Saunders confirmed that this was obligatory on public transport in England and the Welsh Government endorsed this approach although it was not currently part of the COVID-19 Regulations yet. Regarding difficulties with applications for funding she stated that she was happy to look into individual cases and asked that anyone having difficulties could email her direct at janet.finch-saunders@senedd.wales. The Chair thanked Mrs Finch-Saunders for her attendance and participation in the meeting.

Mrs Finch-Saunders left the meeting at this point.

254. Minutes

- Minutes of the Virtual Special Meeting of the Council held on 18th May 2020.
RESOLVED that the minutes are ACCEPTED and APPROVED with the following amendment: Minute 250.
Cllr Barber-Bailey abstained from the vote due to technical issues.

255. Questions on the Minutes

None.

256. Report Back

None

257. Town Clerk's Report

Members received the Town Clerk's Report (Schedule A)

Item 5 – Supporting Tarian Cymru with PPE.

RESOLVED and APPROVED that the Town Clerk make contact with Tarian Cymru and enquire about the type of support it was seeking direct them to Conwy Town Councils grant application forms.

258. Planning

a) Planning Applications

Members considered and commented on the attached (Schedule B)

b) Planning Decisions Issued

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

c) Tree Preservation Order Application

Members had been advised of an appeal lodged against CCBC's decision to refuse consent in respect of Application 0/47095.

RESOLVED that, as the Town Council had not objected to the original application, no further action was required.

259. Zoom Risk Assessment

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Town Council was required to have a Risk Assessment in place for the use of Zoom for Council meetings. She confirmed that the risks of Zoombombing and limited meeting time of 40 minutes did not apply to the version of ZoomPro being used by the Town Council.

RESOLVED and APPROVED (subject to the removal of references to Zoombombing and meetings being limited to 40 minutes):

- Zoom Risk Assessment Policy 2020-21;
- Zoom Guide for Meeting Hosts Policy 2020-21

260. Return To Work Risk Assessment and Policy Documents

Members considered the Risk Assessment undertaken for Covid-19, Return to Work and Social Distancing, and the measures which would have to be implemented should two or more people be working at the Guildhall. The Town Clerk recommend that where staff can work from home that they should continue to work from home. A member requested that consideration for the environmental impact of the use of disposable cups, needs addressing and therefore should be taken off of the Return to Work Policy. Members suggested that staff provide their own refreshments.

RESOLVED and APPROVED:

- Conwy Town Council Return to Work Risk Assessment for Covid-19 Policy 2020-21;
- Conwy Town Council Social Distancing at Work Policy 2020-21.

261. Friends of St Agnes Road Cemetery Group

The Town Council received a request for permission to use the Town Council's logo on display boards to which the Town Council had made a contribution.

RESOLVED and APPROVED - Friends of St Agnes Road Cemetery Group be permitted to use the appropriate logo of Conwy Town Council to display on their noticeboard.

262. Attendance List

The Town Clerk presented to Members the Attendance List for publishing.

RESOLVED and APPROVED Attendance List for 2019/20.

263. Register of Interests

The Town Clerk asked Members to return their completed forms within the next seven days. Following a request from the Chair she agreed to send out printed copies and consider using an electronic version in future which could be completed and returned online.

RESOLVED and APPROVED that the Town Clerk send out electronic version for Members to complete.

264. Internal Audit Update

The Town Clerk reported that she had personally delivered the Internal Audit to JDH Auditors in Mold and would be collecting it on 11th June. As soon as the Internal Audit had been signed off she would commence work on the External Audit. In reply to a query regarding why a courier had not been used to deliver the Internal Audit the Town Clerk confirmed that personal delivery had been the most secure and efficient option. The Chair thanked the Town Clerk for all the work she had undertaken on the Internal Audit.

265. General Data Protection Regulations Policy

The Town Clerk informed Members that following an enquiry from a member of the public it had come to light that the Town Council did not have an up to date General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Policy. The Town Clerk had now put a GDPR Policy in place. However, the Town Clerk also advise the Members that it was extremely important that Conwy Town Council engage the services of a qualified Data Protection Officer (DPO) to ensure the Town Council is compliance with the GDPR Regulations.

The Members discussed the issue and there was general agreement that it was essential to pay for the services of a DPO.

RESOLVED and APPROVED that:

- GDPR Policy;
- the services of a Data Protection Officer (JDH Business Services Ltd) be engaged.

266. Memorial Plaques – Chapel Street, Conwy

Members received a request with regard to the upkeep of the Memorial Plaques in Chapel Street, Conwy.

Members agreed that the plaques and bench required repair and refurbishment.

Members felt that the responsibility for maintenance of the wall and ivy rested with the homeowner. .

RESOLVED and APPROVED that

- the Town Clerk contact the owner of the property (wall) to establish if an historic agreement was in place for Conwy Town Council to have permission for the memorial plaques to be located on the wall;
- the Town Clerk contact Lamberts to request that they clean the plaques;
- the Town Council restore the bench directly beneath the plaques.

Cllr Barber-Bailey abstained from the vote.

Cllrs Cotton and Macdonald left the meeting during the discussion of the following item.

267. Funding Request from Deganwy Sea Cadets During COVID-19 Pandemic

Members considered the above request from Deganwy Sea Cadets and were all in agreement that in principle they were keen to support the Sea Cadets. After some discussion It was agreed that it would be more appropriate for the Sea Cadets to make a formal application to the Grants Committee detailing the amount being applied for and how it would be used.

RESOLVED and APPROVED that the Town Clerk contact Deganwy Sea Cadets' requesting that they submit a formal grant application.

Cllrs Cotton and Macdonald returned to the meeting at this juncture.

268. Conwy Food Bank

Members were asked to consider making a donation of £1000 to Conwy Food Bank. Food banks were struggling to obtain adequate supplies at present because the supermarkets on which they relied were experiencing additional demands of their own. Other Town Councils in the area had been making donations to food banks from funds specifically set up to assist organisations suffering as a direct impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Members were generally supportive although it was felt that further clarification was required as to whether Conwy Food Bank actually required additional funds, how these would be used and who would benefit. It was established that Conwy Food Bank is based in Llandudno but had a distribution point on the Morfa and apart from one paid supervisor was staffed by volunteers. It was felt that if it required additional funding a proper application should be made to the Grants Committee.

RESOLVED and APPROVED that the Town Clerk contact Conwy Food Bank requesting that should they need additional funding at this time they submit a formal grant application.

269. Hanging Baskets 2020

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

270. Christmas 2020

- a) Tree Wise Men Quote (Schedules Li-Lii). The Town Clerk had received an amended quote although this was still more expensive than the previous year's, TWM had not been able to source any other suppliers;
- b) Small Christmas Trees for the Community – it was agreed that the Town Council wished to proceed with Small Trees for Christmas 2020 and the Town Clerk was asked to obtain a quote.
- c) Electrical Power Point Morfa Stores and Quote (Schedules Mi-Mii) – Members noted the quote received for the cost of relocating the power supply. After some discussion it was agreed that the tree and therefore the power supply should be relocated to a more appropriate location such as the nearby children's play area.

RESOLVED and APPROVED that:

- Tree Wise Men's quote is accepted;
- Town Council to proceed with Small Trees for Christmas 2020 and the Town Clerk was asked to obtain a quotes;
- an alternative site be identified for the Christmas tree at Conwy Morfa;
- that that Bebbington and Wilson disconnect the electric supply that is currently at Morfa Stores, Conwy Morfa.

Cllr Vaughan left the meeting at this juncture.

271. Open Doors 2020 – CCBC Brochure

The Town Clerk advised the Members that Conwy County Borough Council has decided to cancel the Open Doors event for 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions and safeguarding of the public.

272. Conwy Bus Shelter Repairs

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

273. Approval of Payments

RESOLVED and APPROVED that the following payments are approved:

- a) Rialtas – Year End Closedown 13.05.2020 Inv. No. 27999 = £560.00 +VAT
- b) BT – GH Telephone 01.05.20-31.07.20 Inv. No. Q084 XJ = £53.14 +VAT
- c) Michael's Civic Robes – Civic Regalia Inv. No. INV-MCR1737 = £5,181.50 + VAT
- d) Delwedd – Renewal of Service Agreement 2 Yrs. Inv. No. CONWYOCO 007 = £164.98 + VAT
- e) N Flint – Delivering (04.06.2020) & Collecting (11.06.2020) Audit Documentation to JHD in Wrexham 39.4 miles x 4 @.45p per mile = £70.92

274. List of Cheques

RESOLVED and APPROVED that the list of cheques 443 & 444 are approved for payment. (Schedules D & E)

275. Questions to Chair/Town Clerk

The Chair announced that the Town Council's AGM would take place on Monday, 3rd August 2020. The logistics of the AGM has yet to be decided.

276. Confidential Business:

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act) 1960 & 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 & public be temporarily excluded & instructed to withdraw.

277. Staff Committee

- Minutes of the Staff Committee Meeting held on 21st May 2020.
This item was deferred to the next meeting.

278. Questions on the Minutes

None.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 21:30pm