

WIMBORNE MINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of a MEETING of the TOWN COUNCIL via video link held on FRIDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2020 at 10.00 am

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA VIDEO LINK

Cllr S K Bartlett – Town Mayor & Chairman of the Council
Cllr K F Webb – Deputy Town Mayor & Vice-Chairman of the Council

Cllr D Burt
Cllr L C Hinks
Cllr M J Hopkins
Cllr D J March
Cllr W J Richmond
Cllr F Shirley
Cllr M R Tidd
Cllr S Wheeler

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Cllr C L Butter
Cllr C A Chedgy
Cllr A E Roberts

OFFICERS PRESENT VIA VIDEO LINK

Town Clerk
Administration Officer

323 **TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 25 SEPTEMBER 2020**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

324 **EXTRAORDINARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 23 OCTOBER 2020**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

325 **EXTRAORDINARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 20 NOVEMBER 2020**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Town Council – 4 December 2020

326 **CONFIRMATION OF PERSONNEL, POLICY & STRATEGY COMMITTEE HELD ON 9 OCTOBER 2020**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting be confirmed and adopted.

327 **CONFIRMATION OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 23 OCTOBER 2020**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting be confirmed and adopted

328 **CONFIRMATION OF RECREATION & LEISURE COMMITTEE HELD ON 6 NOVEMBER 2020**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting be confirmed and adopted.

329 **CONFIRMATION OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 NOVEMBER 2020**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting be confirmed and adopted.

330 **EXTERNAL AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS 2019/20**

The Town Clerk submitted the External Auditor's Certificate and opinion for the financial year ended 31 March 2020 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as **Appendix A** to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

It was pleasing to note that the External Auditor had no comment to make on the Council's accounts for 2019/20.

The Town Clerk reported that because of the pandemic, the audit process had been put back and as a result, because of the late August bank holiday, he had given only 29 working days instead of 30 working days for the public to exercise their rights in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The Annual Governance Statement for 2019/20 would be amended accordingly.

Members asked that the thanks of the Town Council be expressed to the Finance Administrator following the successful completion of the audit.

RESOLVED that the Certificate and comments of the External Auditor be noted.

**331 THE COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE –
STANDARDS MATTER 2: PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The Town Clerk submitted a suggested response to the survey issued by NALC regarding the public consultation on Standards in Public Life – Standards Matter 2, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as **Appendix B** to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk’s suggested response to the survey be approved for submission to NALC.

332 DORSET COUNCILLOR’S REPORT

Cllr S K Bartlett - see **Appendix C** to these Minutes.

333 TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES’ REPORTS

Wimborne BID – Cllr C A Chedgy – see **Appendix D** to these Minutes.

East Dorset Citizens Advice – Cllr C A Chedgy – see **Appendix D** to these Minutes.

Wimborne Cemetery Joint Management Committee – Cllr C A Chedgy - see **Appendix D** to these Minutes.

Allendale Centre – Cllr D J March - see **Appendix E** to these Minutes.

Town Mayor’s Report – Cllr S K Bartlett – see **Appendix F** to these Minutes.

The meeting closed at 10.25 am

SignedDate.....
Town Mayor and Chairman of the Council

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2019/20

In respect of **WIMBORNE MINSTER TOWN COUNCIL – DO0177**

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2020; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

2 External auditor report 2019/20

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

We note that the smaller authority did not comply with Regulation 15 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as amended by SI 2020/404 the Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 as it failed to make proper provision during the year 2020/21 for the exercise of public rights, since the period for the exercise of public rights was less than 30 consecutive working days in length. As a result, the smaller authority must answer 'No' to Assertion 4 of the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/21 and ensure that it makes proper provision for the exercise of public rights during 2021/22

3 External auditor certificate 2019/20

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2020.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

PKF Littlejohn LLP

Date

14/11/2020

* Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews for 2019/20 in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)

WIMBORNE MINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Date: 4 December 2020

Meeting of the Town Council – Item 10 - The Committee On Standards In Public Life – Standards Matter 2: Public Consultation

Town Clerk's suggested response to NALC's survey:

Question 1: Standards of Conduct in the UK

- A. How well do you think ethical standards - as enshrined by the Seven Principles of Public Life - are upheld in public life today?

The Town Council believes that ethical standards are generally upheld in public life today.

- B. Do you believe that there have there been any notable shifts in approaches or attitudes to ethical standards in public life in recent years?

Yes. Individuals are more aware of ethical standards and equality.

- C. What do you see as the most significant threats to ethical standards in public life today?

Improper use of social media and failure to deal properly with those that do not comply with them.

Question 2: The Seven Principles of Public Life

- A. Do the Seven Principles of Public Life accurately describe the appropriate ethical responsibilities for those in public roles, including both political and non-political office-holders?

Yes.

- B. Would you amend or replace any of the principles or their descriptors? If so, how?

No.

Question 3: The UK's arrangements for regulating standards

- A. Are you confident that the UK's arrangements for regulating ethical standards are robust and effective?

No they are not.

- B. Are there any areas of public life where regulation on issues of ethical standards is not strong enough?

Yes, the local government sector. With the abolition of the previous Standards regime e.g. Standards Board and lack of effective consequences for councillors who act contrary to the ethical standards expected..

Question 4: Best practice in standards regulation

- A. What makes an effective standards regulator?

Applying the rules consistently and effectively whilst being impartial.

- B. Do the UK's standards regulators have the right powers and remit to act effectively?

No.

- C. Should the independence of standards regulators be enhanced and protected, and if so, how?

Yes refer to the answer in 3B above where they need to have the right powers and remit to act effectively.

Question 5: Creating ethical cultures

- A. How can the Seven Principles best be embedded within a public sector organisation's working culture?

Adequate Codes of Conduct for Members and Staff in Local Government. Continual Programme of Training and Personal Development.

- B. What are the most significant obstacles to embedding high ethical standards in a public sector organisation?

The lack of effective consequences for improper conduct. Lack of effective role models. Political bias.

Dorset Council Report.

- 1) The Dorset Local Plan is shortly due to go out to public consultation and the views and feed back from the residents of Dorset and Parish and Town Councils will be sought.
- 2) After the notice of intent to increase car park charging in Lyme Regis and West Bay from £2.00 to £4.00 a day and to bring about Sunday charging and evening charging until 8.00pm, the Dorset Council Stage 1 proposal was brought before the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee before it goes to Cabinet for a decision to be determined. Phase 2 of the two-stage order will encompass a wide-ranging car park review that will involve all controlled and Council owned car parks that are administered by Dorset Council. This will have public consultation and will involve Parish and Town Councils also.
- 3) Dorset Council hosted a Budget Café for its members to have input into the shaping of the future budget for Dorset Council for 2020-2021 financial year. The financial officers are confident of producing a balanced budget for the coming financial year although the full implications of COVID-19 are not yet known other than it is recognised that the pandemic has had a serious detrimental effect on budget lines to date.

Cllr Shane Bartlett – 4 December 2020

Wimborne Cemetery Joint Management Committee

The Cemetery has set its budget for 21/22. The amount of the contributions being requested from the three constituent councils has not been increased this year.

The Committee voted unanimously to disapply parts of the recent Public Protection Order made by Dorset Council regarding dogs. In the Cemetery no dogs (apart from assistance dogs) are allowed and it was thought that having regulations about leads would confuse the situation. The cemetery already has its own enforcement powers under its regulations and Cemetery Law.

EDCA

It has been decided by the Boards that EDCA will merge with Purbeck CA. This will take place on 1st April 2021. There will now be an intense period of work to facilitate the merger.

BID

The new Business Plan for 2021-2026 is nearly finished and will be published shortly in readiness for the election.

The Small Business Saturday videos started being released on the 15th November. There are 22 and one is being released each day. The Christmas video will follow shortly. Do take a look. I've seen a short preview and it is very moving.

Cllr Chedgy
4 December 2020

ALLENDALE COMMUNITY CENTRE
MEETING THURSDAY 1 OCTOBER 2020

To raise more funds for the centre one can now join as an individual member as well as a group. It is hoped that individual members will also become volunteers at the centre as well.

It was agreed that it be continued that only members of the centre would be able to attend the AGM.

Since the reopening of the centre there has been a restructuring of staff and in future the "Wobble Room" would no longer have a designated person in there all the time as there was no necessity for this. Some of these volunteers had agreed to take on different roles.

It was agreed, that as it was financially unviable, that the room used by small children for play (Little Otters) would be turned into another room to let out for hire.

Funding has now been granted for the new roof with the work starting in January 2021 and finishing at the end of March 2021.

The centre is now fully open with the all necessary precautions/restrictions etc in place. Although there have been some cancellations of regular bookings there has also been a steady stream of new bookings.

Plans were in hand to restart the Lunch Club for the months of October, November and December.

Cllr Mrs Diann March

Wimborne Minster Town Council Representative

ALLENDALE COMMUNITY CENTRE
MEETING MONDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2020

A meeting was held before the second lockdown with regard to the Centre's use/closure during this period of time.

Whilst the Centre would be closed, it would stay open for the following:

NHJS Services:

Blood Donor sessions

Flu jabs

Social Counselling sessions

Continuation of the Wimborne Community Food Supply, providing free delivered meals and provisions for the most vulnerable in the community, including those self-isolating, the homeless and those experiencing financial hardship.

Cllr Mrs Diann March

Wimborne Minster Town Council Representative

Town Mayor and Chairman's Report.

- 1) I attended a Mayoral engagement earlier in November at the start of Mr Slocock's start of his fund-raising effort of walking 900 laps around The Minster in order to raise funds for the organ refurbishment fund. This Saturday I will attend to see the end of this fund-raising effort in the company of Mr Slocock, the Rector and the Bishop of Sherborne.
- 2) I, along with Cllr Butter, attended the DAPTC AGM in a virtual meeting. Voting on the various motions in accordance with the members wishes that had been established in a Town Council meeting prior to our attendance of the AGM.

There was some concern expressed by various Parish Councils about proposed changes to the constitution and that members had not had sight of the intended changes or been able to debate those changes. On being put to the floor the new constitution was voted to be accepted. On the increase to subscriptions vote, as we had not received prior notice to the increase and as I felt I had no mandate from the members to vote on the item, I abstained.

- 3) The Christmas lights have been installed around the Town and the Christmas tree with blue lights in homage to our NHS staff, blue light services, volunteers and key workers have been well received by the public. The lights, while being done on a reduced budget and with a new supplier, look the best they have for several years. Congratulations to the Town Council Officers for their hard work in organising this years lights and a special mention to the Administration Officer Shelagh Fuller for her suggestion of decking the tree out in blue lights and for taking the lead in organising the lights this year.

Cllr Shane Bartlett – 4 December 2020