

WIMBORNE MINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of an **EXTRAORDINARY MEETING** of the **TOWN COUNCIL** via video link held on **FRIDAY, 18 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 C L Butter
Cllr C A Chedgy
Cllr L C Hinks
Cllr M J Hopkins
Cllr D J March
Cllr W J Richmond
Cllr A E Roberts
Cllr F Shirley
Cllr M R Tidd
Cllr S Wheeler

OFFICERS PRESENT VIA VIDEO LINK

Town Clerk
Assistant Town Clerk

337 **PUBLIC SECTOR BODIES (WEBSITES AND MOBILE APPLICATIONS) (NO. 2) ACCESSIBILITY REGULATIONS 2018 (Min 208 – 07.02.20)**

The Town Clerk submitted a report, 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.

The Council was asked to approve the appointment of an alternative contractor to redesign the Town Council's website in order to comply with these Regulations.

RESOLVED that Aubergine be contracted to redesign the Town Council's website based on the proposal and costs included in the report.

338 **REDCOTTS RECREATION GROUND - REQUEST FOR LICENCE**

The Town Clerk submitted the text of an email received from the occupants of 11 Westfield Close, 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.

Extraordinary Town Council – 18 December 2020

In the email, the occupants asked the Council to consider allowing them to install a gate in their boundary hedge to enable them to have access directly from the rear of their property into Redcotts Recreation Ground,

In 2012, their neighbour had been granted a licence by the Town Council for a similar arrangement for which a fee of £50 per annum was charged.

RESOLVED that the application be approved subject to the following conditions:

- a) the licence to be on the same terms to that enjoyed by the applicants' neighbour, such licence to be signed by the applicants before work commences;**
- b) the gate shall be the same size, material and style as the applicants' neighbour's gate and the exact design and position of the gate within the boundary hedge shall be approved in writing by the Town Clerk before work commences;**
- c) work to install the gate shall be carried out at a time of year which will not harm any wildlife which might be living in the hedge e.g., nesting birds;**
- d) the applicants to provide some suitable alternative planting within their garden to replace the wildlife habitat lost by the removal of part of the boundary hedge necessitated by this installation.**

The meeting closed at 10.28 am.

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

WIMBORNE MINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Date: 18 December 2020

Reference: Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council – Item 2 –
PUBLIC SECTOR BODIES (WEBSITES AND MOBILE APPLICATIONS) (NO. 2) ACCESSIBILITY REGULATIONS 2018

Author: Town Clerk

On 7 February 2020, the Personnel, Policy and Strategy Committee recommended to Council that £1700 be set aside to fund the cost of a new website which would meet the Council's obligations under the 2018 Regulations. This recommendation was subsequently adopted by the Town Council.

For ease of reference a copy of the report submitted to the Personnel, Policy and Strategy Committee is attached as **Appendix 1**.

At the time, the Assistant Town Clerk was not fully conversant with the requirements of the Regulations but has since received further training and advice from DAPTC and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

For a variety of reasons not the least of which was the pandemic, no progress was made in designing a new website and following her training, the Assistant Town Clerk and I concluded that it was unfair to expect Rejuvenate IT to be able to design a new website which would fully comply with the 2018 Regulations. Website design to ensure compliance with this new legislation requires a separate set of skills to IT providers. No costs have been incurred for this project.

The training sessions made it clear that the best way forward was for the Council to engage specialist website designers as other local councils have done.

A proposal has therefore been sought from Aubergine, a firm which specialises in the design of websites and as their proposal is confidential information has been circulated separately to all Members. Aubergine is the provider recommended by the SLCC.

Examples of Aubergine's work can be seen by clicking on the following links to websites:

[Beverley Town Council website](#)

[Leighton – Linslade Town Council website](#)

Timescales

Aubergine has advised that the project would be completed within 5-6 weeks of the start date.

Costings

	Year 1 Costs	Year 2 onwards
One-Off Set Up	£975	£0
Annual SSL Protected hosting and basic support (4 hours annually)	£50 *last quarter*	£199
Transfer of website content to new website. <i>*estimated cost of content transfer including all relevant webpages, links and documents + 5 years of AGAR/finance documents*</i>	£350	£0
Sub-Total	£1375	£199
Ongoing Compliance Monitoring: Quarterly WCAG compliance scan & reports	£75 *last quarter*	£299
Total	£1450	£498

Wimborne Minster Town Council currently pays £180 per annum to Rejuvenate IT to host the Council's current website. This charge would no longer apply.

The Town Council also currently pays every two years for domain name (.gov.uk) registration.

Officer Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Town Council approves the proposal.

Personnel, Policy & Strategy Committee

Date: 7 February 2020

Reference: Item 5 – Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2)
Accessibility Regulations 2018

Author: Assistant Town Clerk

1. Overview of the Legislation

New regulations came into force for public sector bodies on 23 September 2018. The regulations require public sector bodies to make their website or mobile app more accessible by making it ‘perceivable, operable, understandable and robust’.

The 2018 regulations build on existing obligations to people who have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 (or the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in Northern Ireland). These state that all UK service providers must consider ‘reasonable adjustments’ for disabled people.

In order to be compliant with this legislation, the Council’s website (and where appropriate, mobile app) must:

- meet the international Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (known as WCAG 2.1 AA) accessibility standard; and
- publish an accessibility statement that explains how accessible your website or app is.

The guidelines and principles explain how to make digital services, websites and apps accessible to everyone, including users with impairments to their:

- vision – such as severely sight impaired (blind), sight impaired (partially sighted) or colour-blind people
- hearing – such as people who are deaf or hard of hearing
- mobility – such as those who find it difficult to use a mouse or keyboard
- thinking and understanding – such as people with dyslexia, autism or learning difficulties

Legislation requires the emphasis to be on the principles, not technology. For example, the need to think about the different ways that people interact with content. Users might:

- use a keyboard instead of a mouse
- change browser settings to make content easier to read
- use a screen reader to ‘read’ (speak) content out loud
- use a screen magnifier to enlarge part or all of a screen
- use voice commands to navigate a website

The principles apply to all aspects of the Council’s digital service (including code, content and interactions).

2. Disproportionate Burden

The legislation allows for some organisations to not fully meet all the accessibility standards if they consider the impact of fully meeting the requirements too much for the organisation to reasonably cope with. The 2018 regulations call this a ‘disproportionate burden’ e.g. the Council might judge that the benefits of making some things accessible would not justify the impact on the organisation. In that case, the Council would claim it would not be reasonable for it to make those

things accessible because it is a disproportionate burden. Should the Council wish to declare that making particular things accessible is a disproportionate burden, certain legal processes and assessments must be followed. When undertaking the assessment, lack of time or knowledge will not be considered. Similarly, attempting to argue that making things accessible is a disproportionate burden because it is not a council priority will not be accepted as a reasonable claim.

3. Timeframes

Most existing websites that were published before 23 September 2018 need to comply with the 2018 regulations by 23 September 2020.

It is your Officers' understanding that if it were to create a new website, compliance must be immediate on the 'go-live' date.

4. Wimborne Minster Town Council's Current Site and Known Issues

The Town Council's original website was built in the noughties and maintained for free until 2011. In 2016, the Council outsourced the maintenance of the website to a new provider and it was modernised as required at that time.

A further review was undertaken in 2019, and a decision to change provider and outsource the Council's ICT service provision including the website was approved and a contract awarded to Rejuvenate IT. In the past couple of months, staff have noticed reduced functionality of the website. Rejuvenate IT was asked to complete a review of the website and provide their observations. These are as follows:

The current site is built on Wordpress. Various theme and plugins have been utilised but with a lot of custom coding. Due to this, Rejuvenate IT is currently unable to update the website and its plugins as this will wipe the custom changes, resulting in most of the websites features being inaccessible. This also means that they are unable to make the site accessible to comply with the new regulations.

As the website has not been updated it is susceptible to security risk, this could result in people getting into the site as the security patches cannot be applied.

The site also holds a lot of content and Rejuvenate IT has suggested a more simplified content to improve the user experience.

5. Future Options

Rejuvenate IT would recommend keeping the site on the Wordpress platform as the staff are already trained and know how to use it. However, they have recommended a site refresh to ensure all security patches and updates can be applied in future, which would also make the site easier to navigate and give it a more modern feel. This will allow the use of accessibility plugins to comply with the new legislation.

Option 1 – Do Nothing

This is not a feasible option given the need to comply with new legislation coming into force by September 2020.

Option 2 – Wimborne Minster Town Council work with Rejuvenate IT

Rejuvenate IT will develop the site and ensure all features are working before training and handing back over to WMTC to move across the relevant site content.

This would cost approximately £1,000.

Option 3 – Rejuvenate IT complete refresh of the Council’s website

Rejuvenate will develop the site, ensure all features are operational and move content on to the new site. Some input from WMTC staff will be required to advise on which content is still current and relevant.

This would cost approximately £1,700.

6. Conclusion

It is recommended that the website be updated, and the use of custom coding is minimised. This will ensure seamless installation of future site and plugin updates as well as security patches.

7. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Option 2 be adopted and the cost be met from the IT upgrade grant from East Dorset District Council.

WIMBORNE MINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Item 3: Redcotts Recreation Ground - Request for Licence

Meeting date: 18 December 2020

Extract of email:

'Following our telephone conversation today we would like to apply for a license to access Redcotts Park by installing a private gate from our garden.

We understand our immediate neighbour already has an agreement in place.

We would install and maintain the gate at our expense and would propose to place the gate in the left-hand corner of our rear boundary which would directly access the park outside of the grass tennis courts perimeter.

The reason for our request is that we have a dog and access from our garden into the park would be much appreciated.

Please forward our request to the Recreation and Leisure Committee to be considered at their next meeting.

In the meantime, should you require any further information please let us know.

We look forward to hearing from you.'