

## PADSTOW TOWN COUNCIL

### **Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 24 March 2020 at 7.30 pm Outside of the Council Offices, Station House, Station Road, Padstow**

**Present:** A P Flide (Vice Chairman and Chairman for the meeting), R Buscombe, M Evans, J O'Keefe and M Rickard

**In Attendance:** Mrs K Pemberton (Town Clerk and Minute Taker)

#### **2019/167 To receive apologies for absence and announcements:**

- i) Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Watson-Smyth (Chairman), K Freeman, R Higman, H M Saunders, Mrs A E Symons, D N Vivian and Mrs T Walter
- ii) The Vice-Chairman advised that Aspire Trust (Trust who run some schools) as an interim measure until the national scheme was up and running, would be providing parents with 5 days' worth of food vouchers valid for some supermarkets, including Tesco, equivalent of £2.30 a day for the most vulnerable. The Vice-Chairman considered this was very much welcomed as often a school meal was the only hot meal some children received. All members agreed.

**2019/168 Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest.

**2019/169 Dispensations:** There were no dispensations.

**2019/170 Public Participation:** There was no public participation.

**2019/171 Minutes Tuesday 25 February 2020 RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 25 February 2020 were a true record of the meeting and they were signed by the Chair.

#### **2019/172 Committees/Working Group Meetings:**

- a) Leisure, Tourism and Open Spaces Committee held on 3 March 2020 minutes were not available for the meeting and therefore would be considered at the next available meeting.
- b) **RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 10 March 2020.

**2019/173 Business Continuity:** Members gave consideration to the "to follow" agenda paper circulated and read prior to the meeting in respect of Business Continuity during the period of the pandemic Coronavirus.

Consideration was given to the advice received from the Cornwall Association of Local Councils (CALC) regarding adopting a broad delegation allowing Council to continue to operate outside of meetings until such time as the advice changes. A Member raised concern if there were to be an issue with the Town Clerk or the Chairman and Vice-Chairman what would happen? The Town Clerk outlined in the Council's Scheme of Delegation "in the absence of

the Town Clerk the RFO can exercise any functions delegated to the Town Clerk". Members considered that there should be a "backup" if there were an issue with the Chairman or Vice-Chairman and therefore changes to the recommendation were discussed and agreed, as follows:-

**RESOLVED** that the Council delegate authority to the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and/or Vice Chairman/Mayor and Deputy Mayor, or in either of their absences refer to the Chairman of Finance in the first instance, failing this another Committee Chairman, as appropriate, to take any actions necessary with associated expenditure to protect the interests of the community and ensure council business continuity during the period of the pandemic Coronavirus, informed by consultation with the members of the Council.

The tabled paper also outlined advice from CALC in respect of a mechanism for planning matters, during this time.

**RESOLVED** that during the period of the pandemic Coronavirus the Planning mechanism, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the "to follow" agenda report, be approved until such time as the advice may change but with the addition of "or delegated officer in her absence" after the word Clerk in paras i) [except "public comments to the Clerk in writing" ]

Members gave consideration to Business Continuity in respect of Council's finances and noted that Government had recently announced the extension of the audit period until 30 September 2020 [instead of before 30 June], giving more time for the completion of the audit process and approval at a public meeting. Further information on the public inspection timetable was awaited.

The report noted that the RFO considered that all was covered in the Council's Financial Regulations with the exception of making one amendment to the approval of the Accounts Outstanding during this time. Members made further comment that in light of the current situation that the list of bank signatories should be expanded.

**RESOLVED** that during the period of the pandemic Coronavirus Council agrees i) to the approval of the Accounts Outstanding by 2 Councillors who are bank signatories via email [instead of in person signatures], following email of the Accounts Outstanding to those Councillors, with the email approval being attached to the Accounts Outstanding; and ii) Councillors A Flide and M Rickard be added to the list of bank signatories.

Council noted that the RFO had written to all tenants, detailing that payment may be made over the next few months, rather than in advance as normally happens. This had been responded to favourably by the tenants who have responded. Comment was

made that Council's income was reliant on both rentals and car park income.

Paragraph 6.1 outlined response by the Council in support to the local community. At the moment the local SPAR shop was to come back to confirm availability of items to pull together Coronavirus packs for the most vulnerable. This was welcomed by Members. Comment was further made that it was preferred that any food bank support be made within our community rather than via Wadebridge Food Bank. The Town Clerk advised that Council funds could not be given to individuals, the RFO could offer advice on this further. Members felt it was best to see what transpired locally and if possible purchase food items to donate.

**RESOLVED THAT** the Community Events Budget be redirected to support the local community during this time, as per the discussion above.

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO NOTE** Appendix 2 to the report being a document on business continuity and actions so far in relation to the pandemic Coronavirus. The Town Clerk confirmed since the recent announcement things had stepped up and through consultation with the Chairman, public toilets were now closed, as well as the skate park and play facilities. Office staff were working from home, coming in at times to pick up work/check messages. The only other staff in were the maintenance team but simply doing weekly checks on sites, bin emptying and ensuring skate park and play areas still secured. Council was supportive of this and agreed it was at the right decision. The Town Clerk advised this would be reviewed in 3 weeks.

**2019/174 Future Meeting Dates And Annual Town Meeting:**

The report noted that the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman proposed that all meetings be cancelled until the end of May 2020 and the situation reviewed at that time. However, since that time things had moved on and therefore it was considered instead to cancel all meetings until further notice.

It was noted that Government was considering bringing forward legislation which would remove the requirement for members to be present at the Annual Meeting of the Council which must take place during May. The Town Clerk would update when more information was made available.

With regard to the Annual Meeting of Electors, it was noted that this must be held between 1 March and 1 June 2020. Therefore, there was more time for this to take place, further it was possible that the Government will extend the time period for this meeting to later in the year.

**RESOVLED** that i) all Council meetings, including the Annual Meeting of the Electors meeting (5 May), be cancelled until further notice; and ii) further advice be awaited in respect of the possibility of the Annual Meeting of the Electors being held later in the year.

**2019/175 RESOLUTION to exclude the press and public and confirm the confidential minutes:** As this meeting was held outside due to the Coronavirus situation, as confirmed possible by Cornwall Association of Local Councils, it was **RESOLVED** to defer consideration of the confidential minutes to the next available meeting.

Meeting closed at 7.38 pm