

PADSTOW TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council meeting held remotely on Tuesday 30 June 2020 at 7.30 pm

Present: C Watson-Smyth (Chairman), A P Flide (Vice-Chairman), R Buscombe, M Evans, K Freeman, R Higman, J O'Keefe, M Rickard, H M Saunders, Mrs A E Symons, D N Vivian and Mrs T Walter

In Attendance: Mrs K Pemberton (Town Clerk), Mrs N Barnes (Financial Responsible Officer), Mrs S Daly (Support Officer and Minute Taker) and 13 members of the public (4 part)

2020/1 To receive apologies for absence and announcements:

- i) Apologies: There were no apologies for absence.
- ii) Announcements: The Chairman thanked all for attending the first Virtual meeting of the full Council. The Chairman and the Vice-Chairman called for a vote of thanks to the Town Council staff for their work during this difficult time.

2020/2 Declarations of Interest:

- Councillors Mrs T Walter and C Watson-Smyth declared an interest in agenda item 24 Lease/Tenant Issues.
- Councillor M Rickard declared an interest in agenda item 17 b) iv) Request from Padstow Social Club.

2020/3 Dispensations: There were no dispensations.

2020/4 Public Participation:

Agenda Item 18: 1 member of the public addressed the Council regarding agenda Item 18 Reopening of Towns. Points included:

- They had spoken to and received messages from residents concerned about the reopening of the town. They considered people were looking to Padstow Town Council (PTC) to take control alongside the Harbour Commissioner (PHC) and show visitors what is expected;
- Acknowledged that many businesses were tourist based but did not want local residents to feel "shut out" of the town centre;
- Query was raised as to whether Padstow had a considered plan, similar to St Ives together with the TIC to cover matters such as restricted times for access, 1 way systems, ensuring queues do not block the road and social distancing markings;
- Concern was expressed regarding "bottle-necks" such as Hill Steps and the Lawns Car Park steps and whether there was a need for either a one-way system or their closure, and concerns regarding cash machine queuing and for the area outside Trespass;
- It was suggested that PTC work with PHC to implement a one-way system;
- A frames should be removed;

- Query was raised as to whether PTC had conducted a survey of businesses to establish their capacities and where people will be able to wait;
- Felt that PTC and PHC should form some sort of outside services scheme to organise who will be dealing with the various areas such as the bandstand railings and seating;
- Suggested that closing the park and ride would limit numbers;
- Query was raised as to how the queue for the ferry would be dealt with as its capacity would be greatly reduced.

Cornwall Councillor's Report: Cornwall Councillor Buscombe noted that he had spent much of the previous 2-3 weeks assisting businesses in accessing funding and support. He noted that he had experienced some success in assisting some who had previously been turned down. Councillor Buscombe urged people to ask any business who may need assistance to get in touch with him. It was noted that he would speak on other matters of interest at the relevant agenda item.

Police Report: Inspector Regie Butler-Card attended the meeting and addressed Council with the following points:

- Inspector Butler-Card introduced himself having recently taken over the role for the Bodmin, Wadebridge and Padstow area whilst his predecessor had taken a role specific to the COVID-19 response. He was expected to remain in post until September/October;
- Council noted the police report for the period 24/2/20 to 27/6/20. It was noted that the report indicated a significant increase in anti-social behaviour however the increase was related to COVID-19 breaches e.g reports of second homeowners which were recorded as anti-social behaviour;
- It was his intention to get to know the areas needs and concerns;
- With regard to the weekend of 4 July, Inspector Butler-Card would be patrolling, 2 extra officers would be out during the evening and late shift. Extra resources could also be called upon if required.

2020/5 **Standing Orders: RESOLVED** to adopt the supplementary Standing Orders to meet statutory requirements for the holding of remote meetings as previously approved by way of the Emergency Scheme of Delegation.

2020/6 **Minutes Tuesday 24 March 2020: RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 24 March 2020 be signed as a true record.

2020/7 **Clerks Report:** The Clerk provided a verbal report on the following items:

Toilets: The Railway Toilets had now been open for some time, opening times would be extended from July.

The Cory and North Quay toilet refurbishment would hopefully be completed soon, still outstanding were the doors. The Town Clerk had undertaken a cursory Risk Assessment and considered that potentially the disabled toilet and family toilet could be opened when ready but that adequate social distancing would not be achievable in the other units.

Skate Park: This was now open, limited to 3 persons maximum to ensure appropriate distancing and relevant signage was in place.

Lawns Car Park: It was noted that the project was now complete, with capacity increased by 20 spaces and improvements made to the entrance.

- 2020/8 Committees/Working Group Meetings:**
RESOLVED to adopt the minutes and approve recommendations (if any) for the meetings of the
i) Leisure, Tourism and Open Spaces Committee held on 3 March 2020; and
ii) Staffing Committee held remotely on 23 June 2020
- 2020/9 Emergency Scheme of Delegation Decisions: RESOLVED** to note the decisions made via the Emergency Scheme of Delegation as detailed in the "to follow" agenda papers pages 1-7 having been previously circulated and read.
- 2020/10 Finance: Monthly Accounts and Payments June 2020:**
a) The monthly finance report was received and noted for information. Income was considerably lower than the budget due to car park takings and rent payments being down.
b) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the accounts outstanding June (b) of £12,466.45, standing orders/direct debits (regular payments of the same amount) of £2,043.42 and direct debits of £758.47
c) Car park takings were noted. The Responsible Financial Officer advised that the additional spaces from the Lawns Car Park redevelopment were expected to generate c.£26,000 per annum in due course. It was hoped that car park takings for July, August and September would be much improved.
d) Expenditure Review Report: Members gave consideration to the report which had been drafted by the RFO and Town Clerk in light of the financial impact upon the Council due to COVID-19. It was **RESOLVED** i) to approve the recommendations in the Expenditure Review April – June 2020 as outlined in the agenda report; and ii) Note the savings/best value that has been achieved throughout the year as detailed in pages 16 to 18 of the agenda report.
Councillor M Saunders abstained from voting and requested this be recorded.
e) **RESOLVED** to approve the closure of the 32 day notice deposit account.
- 2020/11 Internal Control:** Council gave consideration to this matter and **RESOLVED** to approve the effectiveness of the system of Internal Control.

2020/12 Financial Statements: The RFO referred members to the Financial Statements in the agenda pages. It was noted that there was no material impact on the 2019/20 accounts from COVID-19 but that the accounts for 2020-21 would be affected. **RESOLVED** to approve the Financial Statements for the year ended 31.3.2020.

2020/13 Budget to Actual Variance Report: The Budget to Actual Variance Report 1.4.2019 – 31.3.2020 as detailed on agenda pages 34 to 36 was noted. The RFO outlined that the Budget to Actual overview for the year 2019/20 was good with income greater than the budget. Overall spending had risen but fluctuations in staffing had seen savings. At the end of the year, before COVID-19, the financial situation had been good.

2020/14 Internal Audit Report: Members gave consideration to the report. The RFO noted the auditor had no issues concerning control. She addressed the auditor's comment in respect of adequate reserves, noting the impact of lockdown measures meant the moving of Earmarked Reserves had not been put to the March Full Council meeting as intended. Council were asked to give consideration to moving the earmarked reserves now.

RESOLVED i) to note the Internal Audit Report from Hudson Accounting LTD for the Year ended 31 March 2020; and ii) to approve the transfer of Council's Earmarked Funds to the General Fund.

2020/15 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 Section 1: Following consideration of the annual governance statement it was **RESOLVED** to i) respond with "yes" to all the Assertions in Section 1; ii) in Assertion 8 to include the statement "the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic does not materially affect the Accounting Statement for 2019/20 but that there will be a financial impact in 2020/21 and dealing with that is underway"; and FURTHER on the basis of i) and ii) it was **RESOLVED** to approve Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 and that these be signed by the Chairman and the Town Clerk.

2020/16 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 Section 2 Accounting Statements: Following consideration of the accounting statements it was **RESOLVED** to approve Section 2 – Accounting statements 2019/20 for Padstow Town Council in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 and that they be signed by the Chairman.

2020/17 Correspondence:

a) Correspondence for information was noted.

b) (i) Cornwall Council (CC) – Recycling Bins: Members gave consideration to CC's offer to transfer ownership of its recycling banks in Padstow to the Town Council following CC's decision to withdraw the provision. Generally, it was thought that this was an unnecessary additional expense at this time. Cornwall Councillor Buscombe further added that he had been

approached on many occasions by residents reporting the bins misuse by commercial organisations. It was **RESOLVED** not to take on the provision of recycling bins in the Link Road car park when Cornwall Council end the service.

(ii) CC – Street Trading Consent Consultation, Padstow: Members expressed concerns over public health and safety and the highway regarding the street trading application in respect of “Mealz Street Kitchen”. Comments included concern that the area was often used by resting lorry drivers, concern that the location by the highway was unsuitable for alcohol consumption, unclear where customers would consume food offerings safely and concern that additional eatery not required. **RESOLVED** not to support the application for street trading consent in the layby on the A389 going into Padstow due to Health and Safety concerns and potential danger on the highway.

(iii) CC- PSPO Consultation and engagement: **RESOLVED** not to object to the approach proposed by CC in respect of dog control Public Space Protection Orders when they expire in October 2020, being to renew as existing and defer consultation to next year due to the current COVID-19 pandemic impeding an effective review and consultation this year.

(iv) Request from Padstow Social Club: **Councillor M Rickard left the virtual meeting.**

Members gave consideration to this request and it was **RESOLVED** to approve the request from Padstow Social Club for 4 tables to be placed on the grass by the tennis courts to help maximise space due to COVID-19 on the basis that: i) relevant risk assessments and PLI are received to the satisfaction of Council’s Health and Safety advisor and Insurer; ii) that the area is kept clean and tidy from rubbish and litter and that this be the responsibility of the Social Club; iii) approval be granted for one month (from the 4 July 2020 to 8 August 2020) to be reviewed; and iv) any issues of anti-social behaviour then this permission may be withdrawn.

Councillor M Rickard returned to the virtual meeting.

2020/18 Reopening of Towns: There was much discussion on this item. Cornwall Councillor Buscombe made the following points:

- As a CC Councillor, PTC Councillor and Padstonian, Councillor Buscombe was sympathetic to the concerns of residents but felt that no one knew what the town would be “up against” prior to the weekend of 4 July and considered any action needed to be fluid and flexible;
- Big issue was who has legal power to enforce? A lot was guidance or advice. Advised he had sat in on a meeting concerning Bournemouth, having significantly greater finances and resources Bournemouth adopted measures such as having staff out to direct people and signage in place, but these went on to be ignored [in respect of beach over-crowding];

- Not in favour of “knee-jerk” reaction, noted that Bodmin TC had reacted quickly with a road closure but that this had gone on to receive much criticism;
- Noted that PTC was small in comparison to St Ives and Penzance who had greater financial resources available, further Padstow did not have an effective Chamber of Commerce to speak for businesses;
- PTC had no power or resources and Councillor Buscombe felt it best to wait and see what was needed before reacting.

The Chairman made the following points:

- Supportive of Councillor Buscombe’s approach;
- Stressed that Padstow Town Council does not have any powers to instruct or enforce social distancing/reducing or stopping people coming into our town;
- Proposed to wait and see but that himself as Chairman, Cornwall Councillor Buscombe, the Town Clerk, a PATA representative and Padstow Harbour Commissioners keep in touch and work together with CC transport Team on potential areas for improvement;
- Noted lack of Chamber of Commerce made matters difficult, he had been approached by separate businesses with opposing views;
- Concerned that we all personally have to take responsibility.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Inspector Butler-Card made the following points:

- Padstow were not alone, many communities shared the same concerns. Exmouth and Plymouth had seen similar issues to Bournemouth;
- Regarding legislation, most of what had come out around COVID-19 was guidance and not legislation meaning very little can be enforced. For example, second homes and overnight stays had been part of legislation and could be enforced whereas facemasks were guidance. For matters of guidance, the best tool was to explain and educate;
- Most of the legislation introduced from 4 July was around licensing. Officers would be accompanying CC Licensing Officers to visit areas over the weekend;
- Main issue he foresaw was influx of visitors and the need for shops to enforce social distancing and the potential for increase in traffic, particularly at supermarkets. Traffic was something which the police could try to act upon.
- It was noted that there was also legislation for “dispersal notices” which could be issued at gatherings and a force support group was available for deployment in the area should this be an issue locally. Preferred approach would be for the local officers to shut down gatherings in a low-key manner, but support was available to disperse if needed.
- Considered the approach being proposed was well considered.

Comments from other members included:

- It would be nice to see people give each other space and be non-confrontational and considerate;

- Concern over queuing for Tesco given reduced capacity due to social distancing, suggestion of local's hour to ease this;
- Pedestrianising the town not thought helpful, more suitable would be signage directing traffic via Duke Street and Church Street;
- Traffic flow exercise undertaken 10-12 years ago, if enacted wouldn't see the issues today. Should be looked at again in the near future.

Members discussed the proposal from the Chairman and considered it a good way to enable the Council to move more fluidly and react quickly to any issues which arrive from the re-opening of the town centre rather than going through Full Council or a Committee. Consideration was also given to the proposals for hand sanitiser units around the town and an information leaflet. It was not felt an information leaflet would not be of much benefit as guidance was well publicised. Members attention was also drawn to the agenda report which outlined which measures had been taken, such as signage.

RESOLVED to i) wait to assess issues arising from the re-opening of businesses in the town centre until after the 4 July; ii) to delegate to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman responsibility for monitoring the fluid situation, consulting with relevant authorities to implement any measures considered necessary as they occur, keeping Councillors updated as appropriate; and ii) to approve the placement of hand sanitiser units within the town.

2020/19 Future Meeting Dates And Start Times: Consideration was given to holding monthly meetings of the Full Council and Planning Committee with the Staffing Committee meeting as required. It was noted that meetings of the FGP, HRT and LTOS Committees could also be called as required but that be only if necessary, idea being these committee matters could be taken through Full Council at this time. Consideration was also given to a member's suggestion that during this time, meetings be held at the earlier time of 6.30pm.

RESOVLED to i) agree the revised meeting schedule for 2020-21 as detailed on agenda page 53 with the Emergency Scheme of Delegation to be used between meetings, if necessary; and ii) whilst undertaking virtual meetings, the start time for both Full Council and Committee meetings be moved to 6.30pm and Standing Orders be amended to reflect this.

2020/20 The Chairman and Vice-Chairman thanked all members of the public for attending the first virtual meeting of the Full Council. The Vice-Chairman expressed a hope that communities would emerge from the current pandemic in a better place than they had entered. He urged all to encourage a tolerance for each other during the present circumstances.

It was RESOLVED to exclude the press and public due to the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted and the virtual meeting room was locked.

2020/21 Confidential Minutes Tuesday 25 February 2020: RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 25 February 2020 be signed as a true record.

2020/22 Committee/Working Group Meetings: RESOLVED to adopt the confidential minutes and approve recommendations (if any) for the meetings of the
i) Leisure, Tourism and Open Spaces Committee held on 3 March 2020; and
ii) Staffing Committee held remotely on 23 June 2020.

2020/23 Expenditure Review Report: See confidential minutes.

2020/24 Lease/Tenant Issues and Legal/Insurance Updates: See confidential minutes.

Meeting closed at 9.49 pm