



Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on Wednesday 5 May 2021 via Zoom at 7.00pm.

Members Present: Councillors L Kirk (Mayor), K Green (Deputy Mayor), D Budd, D Cleaton, M Cotton, K Critchley, B Dean, B Ezzard, H Goodinge, Z Gover, V Green, M Humphries, S Kemp, M Russell, R Schofield, C Turner

Officers present: V Ricketts, Town Clerk

Prior to the start of the meeting a minute of silent reflection was held in memory of the life of Mrs Pam Papani, former Town Clerk from 2003-2005, who had recently passed away.

1. Election of the Town Mayor for 2021/2022

Resolved that Councillor Keith Green be elected to the office of Town Mayor for the 2021/2022 municipal year. Councillor Green duly signed the declaration of acceptance of office. Councillor Green addressed the Council expressing his thanks to the Members and staff of the Council. He announced that Councillor Vera Green would be the Mayoral Escort for the year. The Mayor announced that The Reverend Simon Cannon Everett would be the Mayor's Chaplain for the municipal year and further announced that the Mayoral charities for the 2021/2022 year would be Dorset Scouts and Guides.

The Reverend Simon Cannon Everett then led the Council in prayer.

2. Election of Deputy Mayor for 2021/2022

Resolved that Councillor Malcolm Russell be elected to the office of Deputy Town Mayor for the 2021/2022 municipal year. Members agreed for Councillor Russell to duly signed the declaration of acceptance of office in the presence of the Clerk.

3. Suspension of Standing Orders

The Clerk explained that, due to the nature of this virtual meeting, it was necessary to suspend Standing Orders 3.11 and 3.12, the Order of Mayor Making business.

Resolved that Standing Orders 3.11 and 3.12 be suspended.

4. Mayor 2020/2021 vote of thanks and response

Resolved that a formal vote of thanks be recorded to Councillor L Kirk for her services as Mayor during the past year.

Councillor Kirk responded and thanked the Council, her Chaplain The Reverend Canon Simon Everett, her Escort Councillor D Cleaton and her secretary for their support during an unprecedented year where, whilst she was unable to attend many events due to the pandemic, she had enjoyed her role and hoped one day to revisit it under better circumstances.

5. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Dorset Councillor R Holloway.

Initials.....

6. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

7. Public participation time

There were 3 members of the public present. The Town Clerk advised that she had received a written submission ahead of the meeting on the matter of the Swanage Paramedic Car. A member of the public spoke in support.

8. Suspension of Standing Orders

The Town Clerk advised that, due to the legislation to enable virtual meetings having expired, and the inability to meet face to face until social distancing measures are lifted, it was necessary to continue with the existing committee membership in order for delegations to take place. This would then be considered at the next Council meeting.

Resolved to suspend Standing Orders 8.6, 8.7(a) and 8.9(a) for the purpose of appointing membership to the Committees of the Council, with those Committees then electing their respective Chairmen at their first meetings.

9. Reports by Dorset Councillors and Representatives on Outside Bodies

A written report from Dorset Councillor R Holloway had been received and circulated to Members ahead of the meeting.

10. Internal Auditor's Report

The Town Clerk presented the Internal Auditors report and stated that all issues had been addressed to the auditor's satisfaction through the management response.

Resolved to receive and note the Internal Auditor's report and that the Policy Resources and Finance Committee be instructed to address any points within the report as necessary. Further resolved that the payments list for 24 March 2020 – 30 June 2020 be noted.

11. Re-appointment of the Council's Internal Auditor

Members considered reappointing the existing Internal Auditor for the current financial year. The Town Clerk advised that, if Members agreed to a longer appointment, it would be possible to achieve a saving of 2.5% on the yearly fees.

Resolved that Rosie Darkin-Miller be appointed as the Council's internal Auditor for a five-year period from the 2021-2026.

12. Annual Governance Statement 2020/2021

The Town Clerk submitted the Annual Governance Statement for the 2020/2021 financial year for approval.

Resolved that the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/2021 be approved for signing.

13. Accounting Statement 2020/2021

The Town Clerk, in her role as Responsible Financial Officer, submitted the Accounting Statement for the 2020/2021 financial year for approval.

Resolved that the Accounting Statement for 2020/2021 be approved for signing.

14. Period for the exercise of public rights

The Town Clerk submitted the Notice of Exercise of Public Rights for approval.

Initials.....

Resolved that period for the exercise of public rights for inspection of the financial accounts ended 31 March 2021 be set commencing Monday 14 June 2021 and ending on Friday 23 July 2021(as attached).

15. Corporate Plan 2021-2024 and Action Plan 2021-2022

Members considered the approval of the Corporate Plan 2021-2024 and Action Plan for 2021-2022 as recommended by Policy, Resources and Finance Committee at its meeting on 4 May 2021.

Resolved that the Corporate Plan 2021-2024 and Action Plan for 2021-2022 be approved and published.

16. Swanage Paramedic Car

The Council has been advised of the intention by South West Ambulance Services Trust to withdraw the Swanage paramedic car from service.

Resolved that “Wareham Town Council recognises that the retention of the Paramedic Car is vital for the area, and that its removal would be a threat to the lives of local people. The Council will make every effort to prevent the withdrawal of the Paramedic Car and will urgently contact the MP for South Dorset, the MP for Mid Dorset and North Poole, Dorset Council’s People and Health Scrutiny Committee, South West Ambulance Services Trust and Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group to secure its retention.”

Members requested that the Town Clerk provide updates on the on-going situation regarding the Paramedic Car and that it be publicised that the Council is supporting the retention of this valuable local asset.

17. Temporary Scheme of Delegation

Members considered a Temporary Scheme of Delegation which was required until such time as the Council can meet face to face, following the lifting of the Government’s lockdown measures, or such time as legislation allows for virtual meetings of the Council.

Resolved that the Temporary Scheme of Delegation (as attached to these minutes) be approved and that informal meetings of the Town Council take place fortnightly for information and discussion purposes.

18. Any other items the Mayor deems urgent

There were no matters of urgency.

19. Date of next meeting

It was noted that the date of the next meeting would be confirmed once the date for easing of the Government’s lockdown measures has been established.

Mayor.....

Date.....

Initials.....

WHAT SMALLER AUTHORITIES NEED TO DO TO ADVERTISE THE PERIOD DURING WHICH ELECTORS AND INTERESTED PERSONS MAY EXERCISE RIGHTS RELATING TO THE

Smaller authority name: _____ **Wareham Town Council** _____

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AND PUBLICATION OF UNAUDITED
ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 Sections 26 and 27
The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)**

NOTICE	NOTES
<p>1. Date of announcement 11 June 2021 _____(a)</p> <p>2. Each year the smaller authority’s Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) needs to be reviewed by an external auditor appointed by Smaller Authorities’ Audit Appointments Ltd. The unaudited AGAR has been published with this notice. As it has yet to be reviewed by the appointed auditor, it is subject to change as a result of that review.</p> <p>Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested. For the year ended 31 March 2021, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to:</p> <p>(b) The Town Clerk, Wareham Town Council, East Street, Wareham BH20 4NS</p> <p>commencing on (c) Monday 14 June 2021 _____</p> <p>and ending on (d) Friday 23 July 2021 _____</p> <p>3. Local government electors and their representatives also have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opportunity to question the appointed auditor about the accounting records; and • The right to make an objection which concerns a matter in respect of which the appointed auditor could either make a public interest report or apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful. Written notice of an objection must first be given to the auditor and a copy sent to the smaller authority. <p>The appointed auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose between the above dates only.</p> <p>4. The smaller authority’s AGAR is subject to review by the appointed auditor under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the NAO’s Code of Audit Practice 2015. The appointed auditor is:</p> <p>PKF Littlejohn LLP (Ref: SBA Team) 15 Westferry Circus Canary Wharf London E14 4HD sba@pkf-l.com</p> <p>5. This announcement is made by (e) Vanessa Ricketts FSLCC</p>	<p>(a) Insert date of placing of the notice which must be not less than 1 day before the date in (c) below</p> <p>(b) Insert name, position and address/telephone number/ email address, as appropriate, of the Clerk or other person to which any person may apply to inspect the accounts</p> <p>(c) Insert date, which must be at least 1 day after the date of announcement in (a) above and at least 30 working days before the date appointed in (d) below</p> <p>(d) The inspection period between (c) and (d) must be 30 working days inclusive and must include the first 10 working days of July.</p> <p>(e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice – this person must be the responsible financial officer for the smaller authority</p>

Initials.....

Temporary Scheme of Delegation Council 5 May 2021

The regulations that currently allow local authorities to hold meetings remotely until 06 May 2021 will not be extended by the Government, and so face-to-face meetings will need to resume from 07 May. However, social distancing requirements under the Government's current Covid 19 lockdown measures would prevent the Town Council from meeting in public.

The legislation has already been extended in Wales, so Parish and Town Councils there can continue to meet and make decisions virtually.

The Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO), Lawyers in Local Government (LLG) and Hertfordshire County Council have lodged a legal challenge in the High Court that seeks a continuation of local authority remote meetings beyond the 06 May 2021. The date for this challenge to be heard in the courts was 21 April with a decision expected by the end of the month.

There is also still much uncertainty around how legislation or COVID-19 risks and restrictions may change over the coming weeks and months.

Temporary Scheme of Delegation

1. Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides:
 - That a Council may delegate its powers (except those incapable of delegation) to a committee or an officer.
 - A Committee may delegate its powers to an officer.
2. Any delegation to a Committee or the Proper Officer shall be exercised in compliance with the Council's Standing Orders, any other policies or conditions imposed by the Council and within the law.
3. The Proper Officer may nominate another named Officer to carry out any powers and duties, which have been, delegated to that Officer.
5. In an emergency the Proper Officer is empowered to carry out any function of the Council
6. Where officers are contemplating any action under delegated powers, which is likely to have a significant impact in a particular area, they should also consult the Members, and must ensure that they obtain appropriate legal, financial and other specialist advice before action is taken.

Delegation to The Proper Officer

7. As a temporary measure, to allow for effective decision making whilst Covid-19 restrictions and considerations are in place, the Proper Officer may be empowered to take any and all decisions in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the relevant Committee or Full Council
8. This empowerment does not affect the delegations already in place via Standing Orders or Financial regulations.
9. Records will be kept demonstrating a clear trail (particularly around decision making in any form).
10. All decisions will be reported at the next available Full Council Meeting.

Initials.....

Full Council matters

11. The following items are reserved for Full Council decision only and cannot be delegated to an Officer.
- To appoint the Chairman and Vice-Chairman in May each year
 - To sign off the Governance Statement by 30 June each year
 - To set the Precept
 - To appoint the Head of Paid Service (Town Clerk)
 - To make byelaws
 - To borrow money
 - To consider any matter required by law to be considered by Council

Recommendation

- a) That Council approves the temporary delegation to the Proper Officer of the Council, for the period that the Council is unable to meet, due to the cessation of the legislation for virtual meetings and the Government's current lockdown measures.
- b) That this delegation will cease at the next lawful meeting of the Council called in accordance with LGA 1972 Sch12.

Initials.....