



**Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on 24 January 2023 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, East Street, Wareham at 7.00pm.**

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

**Officers present:** N Gray, Town Clerk and RFO, Dr G Pettifer, Deputy Clerk

**543. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr D Cleaton.

**544. Declarations of interest**

Cllr Critchley declared an ordinary interest in item 11 as the Chair of Wareham Joint Burial Board.

**545. Public participation time**

There were three members of the public present.

**546. Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting**

Cllr K Green noted that minute no.488 incorrectly referred to him as Cllr G Green.

Cllr Ezzard requested the addition "although important to the Town Council" to minute no.495.

It was **RESOLVED** that subject to the above amendments the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 13 December 2022 were approved would be signed by the Mayor following the meeting.

**547. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.**

There were no matters arising.

**548. Reports by Dorset Councillors and representatives on outside bodies**

The report from Cllr Ezzard was noted and the provision of another warm space for the community was shared with Members.

Cllr Critchley asked Cllr Ezzard if there was any news on the tendering process which had commenced in respect of the housing at the proposed Hub site as he would very much like to report back to the next Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Cllr Ezzard said she had not heard anything and would report back at the next meeting.

Cllr Cotton noted there were community events and warm spaces being provided at Carey Hall as well.

**549. Payments for outstanding creditors**

The Town Clerk presented a list of payments for approval.

Cllr Goodinge asked what the payment to Aston Rose was for, the Clerk confirmed it was the quarterly rent for the Depot in Sandford Lane.

It was **Resolved** that payments in the sum of **£13,742.18** be approved.

**550. To receive such communications as the Town Mayor may wish to place before the Council**

There were no communications placed before Council.

**551. Reports from committees and sub-groups**

The minutes of the following meetings were **NOTED**:

- a) Amenities Committee – 11 January 2023 (draft)
- b) Personnel Committee – 25 October 2022
- c) Planning and Transport Committee – Planning and Transport Committee – 7 December 2022 (draft)
- d) Policy, Resources and Finance – 10 January 2023 (draft)

Cllr Goodinge asked if there was any news in respect of the Street Cleaner appointment. Cllr Budd noted the matter was in hand.

**552. Budget and Precept Setting 2023/24 Financial Year**

Cllr Critchley presented the proposal to members noting the low precept increase had been well received by the Committee, and given the current cost of living crisis, it was hoped that the balance of very small increase versus the needs of the Council budget would be beneficial to all.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept and approve the proposed budget for the 2023/24 financial year, as recommended by the Policy, Resources & Finance Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept and approve the proposed precept of £495,945.00 for the 2023/24 financial year, as recommended by the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee.

Cllr Critchley thanked the Clerk for producing a coherent and comprehensive budget which kept increases to a minimum.

**553. Conniger Lane Car Park**

Members discussed the proposal to take the lease with Wareham Joint Burial Committee for Conniger Lane Car Park. The finer detail of the workings of the use and income would be discussed at a later date.

It was **RESOLVED** to enter into a lease with Wareham Joint Burial Committee for Conniger Lane car park.

**554. Tourist Information Centre**

A discussion took place regarding the provision of tourism information in Wareham. Members noted the need to revise the signage in the Town to reflect the new arrangement.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk liaise with the Town Clerk in Swanage to see if there could be a joint arrangement entered into in respect of producing a double-sided tourism map.

It was **RESOLVED** to continue the arrangement with Not Just Sundaes Community Café.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of a fixed electronic device for providing information to the public, and £30 per month contribution to Not Just Sundaes Community Cafe to cover utility costs for hosting the service.

**555. Co-option**

The Clerk presented the report noting the previous policy was non-compliant, and therefore a revised compliant policy was required. Members discussed the content and noted the process to be followed.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the proposed Co-option Policy and Procedure.

It was **RESOLVE** that Wareham Town Council declare a casual vacancy.

**556. Update on Play Areas**

Cllr V Green provided a verbal report on the progress of the playgrounds at Carey, Drax, Northmoor, and the Recreation Ground, which was noted. She gave her thanks to everyone who had been involved in the successful installations at Carey and Drax, which was already proving popular, and looked forward to the imminent opening of Northmoor and Recreation Ground following the snagging to be completed.

Cllr V Green also noted there would be an official opening on Saturday 25 March 2023, for which she hoped the Mayor would attend.

**557. Any other items the Mayor deems urgent**

The Mayor noted the need to hold an extraordinary Council meeting which he would be calling and this would be held on Tuesday 31 January 2023 at 7pm.

**558. Date of next meeting**

It was noted that the next ordinary meeting of the Town Council was scheduled to be held on **Tuesday 7 March 2023 at 7pm.**

Mayor..... Date.....