



Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on 7 March 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, B Dean, B Ezzard, H Goodinge, Z Gover, K Green, V Green, M Humphries, S Kemp, L Kirk,

Officers present: N Gray, Town Clerk & RFO, Gale Pettifer, Deputy Clerk

625. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Critchley and Cllr Cleaton for personal reasons.

626. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

627. Public participation time

There were two members of the public present.

A member of the public gave a short presentation about full-fibre Broadband being rolled out by their company across the Purbecks.

628. Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Town Council held on 31 January 2023 were approved and signed by the Mayor.

629. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

There were no matters arising.

630. Reports by Dorset Councillors and representatives on outside bodies

The report from Cllr Ezzard was **NOTED**.

631. Payments for outstanding creditors

The Town Clerk presented a list of payments for approval.

It was **RESOLVED** that payments in the sum of £35652.87 be approved.

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

There were no communications placed before Council.

633. Reports from committees and sub-groups

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

- a) Amenities Committee – 22/02/2023 (Draft)

- b) Personnel Committee – 17/01/2023 and 31/01/2023 (Draft)
- c) Planning and Transport Committee – 18/01/2023 and 08/02/2023 (Draft)
- d) Policy, Resources and Finance – 14/0/2023 (Draft)

Cllr Goodinge asked for additional information regarding Tower Chimes, as contained in the Minutes of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee. The Clerk informed the Council that a meeting had been arranged with the publisher, Lewis-Fry Publications Ltd, and a further report would be returning to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee for consideration.

Cllr Goodinge asked for additional information regarding the installation of CCTV, as contained in the Minutes of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee. The Clerk informed the Council that quotes were being obtained, and a budget identified. A further report would be presented to Council. Cllr Ezzard noted the desire to have a CCTV camera at the Rec to assist with the unsociable behaviour and vandalism taking place.

Cllr Goodinge asked why the payroll facility was being outsourced. The Clerk explained that the new arrangement would be compliant with Financial Regulations and other auditing requirements, unlike the current system which left Council open to Fraud.

634. UK Bride Subscription

Members discussed the report noting their disappointment that previous staff had been able to tie the Council into such an arrangement.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the demand for payment to the sum of £2,398.80 inclusive of VAT, from Whitespace Publishers, trading as UKBride.

Cllr Goodinge asked for unequivocal assurance from the Clerk that no member of staff be able to commit the Council to such a financial burden without official authorisation in future. The Clerk informed Council that, with new staff in place, rigorous financial procedures being implemented, and access being granted to Councillors to view the accounts live, there would be greater financial probity and transparency of procedures, which would mitigate such risks.

635. Mayor/Deputy Mayor Elect nominations for the 2023/2024 Municipal Year

Cllr Gover proposed Cllr Turner as Mayor Elect for the 2023/24 Municipal Year, and Cllr Cotton second the motion.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to nominate Cllr Turner as Mayor Elect for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Cllr Gover proposed Cllr Cotton as Deputy Mayor Elect for the 2023/24 Municipal Year, and Cllr Turner seconded the motion.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to nominate Cllr Cotton as Deputy Mayor Elect for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Cllr Budd asked for a Point of Order and requested that Cllr Goodinge and Cllr Kirk be asked to formally withdraw from the order of succession, as Mayor Elect and

Deputy Mayor Elect respectively. Cllr Goodinge and Cllr Kirk both cited prior commitments that would prevent their accepting the civic honour.

636. Clerk's Update

The Clerk noted the report would be a standing item on Council's agenda going forward to provide members with information as to what work is being carried out by the office, and at what stage work is at in respect of resolutions made by Council. The update was welcomed by Councillors.

Cllr Ezzard commended the Clerk on her informative feedback, and the officers for their work.

Cllr Russell asked a question about the purchase of new park benches within the town and Cllr Budd drew attention to the Wareham Town Council's Policy on Street Furniture.

637. Any other items the Mayor deems urgent

There were no other items.

638. Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Town Council was scheduled to be held on Tuesday 18 April 2023 at 7.00pm.

639. To Resolve to exclude members of the press and public

It was **RESOLVED** that under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the nature of the business to be transacted

640. Update on Asbestos matter - verbal

The Clerk provided a verbal report on Health & Safety matters regarding asbestos.

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