

**Joining the Meeting online**

Cllr Ivan Seviour – Mayor of Wilton  
Cllr Andy Kinsey – Deputy Mayor of Wilton  
Cllr Trevor Batchelder  
Cllr Charlotte Blackman  
Cllr Pauline Church  
Cllr Alan Crossley  
Cllr Peter Edge  
Cllr Paula Johnston  
Cllr Phil Matthews  
Cllr Teresa Taylor

**In Attendance** Mr Steve Milton, *Town Clerk*, and Mr Hugh Abel, *Minute Secretary*.

**Also Present** Jason Barnes, Barrington Smythe, Ben & Anne Marie, Bryan, Audrey Capon, Clare Churchill, Yvonne Crossley, John C, Elizabeth, Lee Glyde, Hannah, Richard Hayes, Tom Hedges, Jason, Emma O, Steve Taylor, Larissa Tonkin & Corinne Whiloch,

*Cllr Seviour in the Chair*

Upon the commencement of the meeting, *Cllr Johnston* made the following personal statement:-

"I have chosen to make a statement as I have no real confidence of being truly heard once the meeting is fully underway.

My overriding concern is that this Town Council operates, legally and effectively according to the law of the land and our own set of rules/Standing Orders. I want to help make Wilton a better place to live, work and visit. THAT IS IT. No underlying agenda. I remain extremely concerned about the way the Town Council is currently operating. This Town Council is now not properly constituted and any decisions that it makes are open to legal challenge.

If, you hold, as we did, the Annual Meeting of the Town Council, it is a legal requirement that a Chair/Mayor is elected. This is not my opinion. This is the law. We held the Annual Meeting of the Town Council on 26th May 2020 and we did not elect a Mayor. I challenged at the time the blocking of the election which was achieved through a motion put to the meeting by the Mayor. The motion asserted that the Town Council should proceed with Mayor Making/Election of a Chair. This motion was not seconded (see minutes that have been accepted and approved) .

All motions have to be seconded before proceeding to a vote. (See Standing Order 1 (2)). Yet the Clerk allowed the motion AND a vote was taken. The vote was tied and the Mayor abstained (on his own motion), the motion fell and the election was blocked. I challenged this again via a Point of Order at the next meeting. Scant consideration was given to my point and it was dismissed.

I have suggested that the Town Council seeks external expert advice to enable us to get back on track ASAP. This suggestion has not been acted upon. Quite a lot of my correspondence is routinely ignored, so I shouldn't really be surprised. The unwillingness of the Town Council to seek advice or of officers to act upon advice received is as astonishing and it is baffling.

Democracy remains effectively stalled in Wilton.

A Mayoral election ASAP can fix this situation. Mistakes that we, as a Town Council, have made can be acknowledged and we can move on.

As a Town Council it is our duty to act lawfully, allocate funds wisely and to protect and enhance the assets of the Town that belong not to us but to the people of Wilton.

As a Councillor it is my duty to scrutinise, challenge and ensure accountability.

For doing that I have now been officially accused of bullying and harassment by the Town Clerk.

I have received no support from the Mayor despite being verbally attacked by the Clerk during the last meeting of the Town Council.

The meeting was being recorded but now it seems that that recording does not exist. The people of Wilton deserve better than this. They are not interested in us squabbling among ourselves. Households in Wilton fund this Town Council. In this financial year Wilton Town Council will receive £243k . There is a separate £142k available right now to spend on recreational activities. The Town Council needs to get on with spending this money. However we cannot and should not do this until we are properly constituted. To that end a Mayoral Election should take place ASAP. Finally, I would just like to confirm that this is not about me becoming Deputy Mayor, I doubt very much that I would get a positive result from any internal Council election. This is about getting it right for Wilton.~

NOTE: These views are not endorsed by Wilton Town Council.

*Cllr Seviour* – said that he was disappointed that the statement had been made as he has full confidence in the Clerk. He has given the Town Council sound advice and I am confident that what we did was not illegal.

*Cllr Edge* – said that he thought there was one fundamental flaw in in Cllr Johnston’s statement. She said that the Mayor’s proposal wasn’t seconded. The Chairman doesn’t have to have a seconder so his proposal was valid.

*Cllr Batchelder* – said we have been round this process a number of times now and I have total faith in our Clerk. We are very fortunate in have such an experienced officer to assist us, and most of us really do appreciate what he does to support us and the community and without any hesitation at all I support the action that was taken and have every belief in his competence and honesty.

## **MEETING of WILTON TOWN COUNCIL**

*Cllr Seviour in the Chair*

### **Community Engagement session**

*Jason Barnes* – Observed that at the Wilton Town Council meeting held in July via zoom he had seen the Town Clerk’s behaviour towards Cllr Johnston where he had shouted at Cllr Johnston and his body language overall was intimidating. He had observed that Cllr Johnston did not raise her voice or become aggressive in response. He said he also called into question the way that the Mayor dealt with the situation suggesting that it called into question his impartiality and objective approach in what should have been a fair and equal manner.

He asked how a formal complaint raised by a member of the public would it be investigated impartially and objectively? Given the points raised by Cllr Johnston what is to stop Wilton Town Council from going ahead with its Annual Town Meeting and Mayor Making as soon as possible. He also asked if the Town Council could attempt to find some common ground by reference an external body to help with arbitration.

*Cllr Edge* – read out an email he had received from a Wilton resident:-

I note with some concern that one of your councillors has recently published bank account totals for Wilton Parish Council on a local chat group. Whilst the financial affairs of the Council should be open to scrutiny I feel that these figures published in this way has the potential for the public to react with demands to spend money and lower precept etcetera. This method of publishing figures is questionable to say the least. Can you raise my concerns at the next meeting please.

*Steve Taylor* – told the meeting that he felt that the only way Wilton Council could proceed would be to bring in an outside agency to find out what exactly is going on with Wilton Town Council to look at the situation with a fresh pair of eyes.

*Corinne Whilock* – I concur with the other two speakers. I understand that there have been allegations of bullying but it actually appears that the bullying is in the opposite direction.

*John Cutland* – as the Council is contemplating buying a Speed Indicator Device (SID) could the Community Speed Watch group be consulted please.

*Lee Glyde* – asked if the Council could make good and repair the astro-carpet of the cricket wicket. Could there also be a cordon put around the wicket to stop cyclists and others damaging it. He asked if the costs of repair might be covered by insurance. He has also supplied quotes for the work to take place.

*Cllr Taylor* – told the meeting that she had had a couple of concerns raised by residents of Castle Keep about the wild flower patches. They have access from the rear of their properties and don't want to lose this facility.

*Cllr Batchelder* – said that a one metre strip had been left behind his property and a similar space could be left behind these other properties.

*Cllr Edge* – said that he was sure this could be agreed.

*Cllr Taylor* – said that it was only needed in order to service the residents' bins and give access for maintenance. The residents in question have parking at the front of their properties and don't need vehicular access at the rear.

*Cllr Matthews* – told the meeting that Pastor Greening has left the Baptist chapel to take up a post in Dorset. He asked if the Mayor could send Revd Green a letter of thanks for all he had done in Wilton.

*Cllr Kinsey* – asked if a meeting of the Christmas tree committee could be convened to make plans for this coming Christmas. If there is to be a winter lockdown then it would be good to erect the lights on the tree and in the market place, probably in October to avoid potential problems later.

#### **Councillor Pauline Church gave her report to the Town Council**

- *Wilton Parkway* – no further updates but by way of a reminder, We are now waiting for the next stage Wilton is presently at GRP2. Our local MP and John Glenn is very supportive.
- *Outstanding works at Redrow* – several outstanding section 278 works requiring completion and she has managed to enlist a Wiltshire Council project manager to take strategic oversight with Redrow estate over all service areas so we can now expect some movement.
- *Riperian ditch in Water Ditchhampton* – now that drainage works on the A36 have been done, this is the next project to be undertaken. A meeting of Wilton Flood Group will be set up and Danny Everett will be asked to advise.
- *Flooding and Drainage works at Four Corners* – this has been successfully completed but further work is still needed because the outflow carries right on to the river Wylde at Quidhampton across the Wilton Estate.
- *Weeds on A36 from Park Wall junction to A30/A36 roundabout* – Wiltshire Council have at last agreed to tidy this up.
- *Speeding on the Avenue* – still waiting for metro count data and the purchase of the SID itself. She agreed with John Cutland about consulting with the Community Speed Watch group.
- *Traffic Lights at Four Corners* – During the recent drainage works, electrical ducting was also put in place to allow for re-siting the traffic lights away from the pinch point. As this might not be universally popular, she has asked for Highways to conduct a study and consultation.
- *Covid 19 Business Grants* – the last opportunity to access Wiltshire Council business grants will be 24th August.
- *Covid 19 Lockdowns* – The handover from the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) to the Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) Wiltshire Council (WC) has created a local outbreak management plan and the responsibility for managing any future outbreak falls to WC.
- *Pedestrian Streets in Salisbury* – there is an online survey to gather people's views on the plans for Salisbury's streets which will close on 13th August and she urged people to contribute to it.

### **Questions for Cllr Church**

*Cllr Edge* – asked about the manhole cover outside the Coop which has been in need of repair for more than six months.

*Cllr Church* – said she had alerted the Highways team but contractors have been seconded elsewhere but she would follow it up.

*Cllr Matthews* – alerted Cllr Church to the fact there seemed to be a lack of communication between some Wiltshire council departments. In particular, he cited the example of the Alabare centre at Old Sarum and difficulties contacting the transport team about taking disabled people there.

*Cllr Church* – said she would talk to the passenger transport team to make sure that there are people manning the phones.

## **AGENDA**

### **63/20 Apologies**

None were offered

### **64/20 Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on July 7th 2020**

Resolved: that the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on July 7th 2020 be approved as a correct record with the following amendment and signed by the Chairman. (prop Cllr Johnston, sec Cllr Kinsey – nem con)

Cllr Church – told the meeting that she was very supportive of the Town Clerk and appreciated all that he does for the Town Council. At the same time she completely supported Cllr Johnston's position. So she sought advice from a fellow Wiltshire Councillor as she felt that as the agenda and minutes were published on the Town Council's headed paper as an AGM, she would have expected the election of a Chair and Vice Chair to have occurred. The deputy Monitoring Officer gave advice (to the clerk) that said if he was advising the Town Council (which he wasn't in this case as this was informal advice) he would have been likely to recommend that the Council does look at securing a date to hold a meeting when these decisions can be made reasonably quickly to remove any ambiguity. I recognise that formal advice wasn't requested by the Town Council but I sought informal advice to take the Council forward and to make sure that got an AGM in place as quickly as possible so that we can re-run the elections of Mayor and Deputy Mayor as soon as possible.

Cllr Church – said she did not believe it to be an abuse of her position but had sought informal advice in order to help this council move forward.

### **65/20 Declarations of Interest**

- a. None were offered. – Cllr Kinsey declared pecuniary interest in planning application 20/04461/LBC: Replace Front Window - 4 Kingsbury Square and withdrew from the meeting while that matter was considered.
- b. Dispensation requests – none had been submitted

**Resolved:** to note

### **66/20 Mayor's Updates**

Cllr Seivour told the meeting that he had presented a cheque to Wilton School for £2,800 raised by the Mayor's Appeal. The money will be put towards the outdoor play area which, it is hoped, will be completed by the end of the summer holidays. He has written a letter in support of an application for a Queen's Award for Sally Lefroy who has been a volunteer at Riding for the Disabled for some 60 years.

## **67/20 Community Engagement**

- *SID* – the Clerk reported that research is proceeding about the best model to buy.
- *Cricket wicket* – will see if a cordon can be erected and meanwhile will explore the possibilities of re-carpeting the wicket. It was suggested that R2 money might be available. Cllr Batcheder also raised the possibility of upgrading the practice nets.
- *Castle Keep* – the Mayor asked the Town Clerk to follow this up. Cllr Edge reminded the meeting that there was no legal right of way for the residents and access had only been provided as a concession by the town council.
- *Pastor Green* – the Mayor asked for Revd Green's present address and agreed to write a letter of thanks and appreciation for his support for the community.
- *Christmas Tree meeting* – there are a number of issues surrounding Christmas lights including timing and safety aspects as well as tree surgery to the Christmas tree.
- *Mediation* – it was suggested that any mediation concerning recent difficulties be carried out impartially and that the council seeks out experts to give advice. Cllr Edge recommended that we take advice from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) of which, Wilton Town Council is a member.

## **68/20 Wilton Shopping Village**

Tom Hedges MRICS, Strategic Development Director, Eagle One Ltd

Presented the meeting with a report and update on Wilton Shopping Village including plans for the future.

He outlined proposed developments and changes to the site as well as dealing with the opportunities and constraints posed by the site and the aspirations of the management.

*Cllr Church* – asked what was the timeline for establishing the Village's strategic objectives.

*Tom Hedges* – said it was difficult in the current circumstances to predict. The Edinburgh Woollen Mill will be pulling out on 6th August and that unit will then be demolished, probably starting later in August. We are anxious to get on with the changes and hope to complete this planned work within the coming year.

*Cllr Crossley* – asked about any plans for connections with the town itself.

*Tom Hedges* – the existing access via Churchill Court is rough and ready and needs developing into a safe and accessible pedestrian route suitable for wheelchairs etc. We will also re-surface the car park. There is a fire exit to Northleigh Terrace which it might be possible to develop but as yet no plans exist.

*Cllr Seviour left the meeting*

*Cllr Kinsey in the Chair*

## **69/20 Council Vacancy**

Following the resignation of Councillor Lee Glyde, a vacancy now exists on the Council. In accordance with proper practice, Wiltshire Council's Returning Officer will be notified of the vacancy. Due to COVID-19, there are currently no elections taking place in Wiltshire, so the Council will be guided by the Returning Officer's advice.

The process is that the Returning Officer will prepare advertise the vacancy. If ten Wilton electors write in requesting an election then it will go to an election at a time to be determined by the returning officer which might be significantly delayed because of the Covid situation. If ten people do not request an election then the Town Council will be in a position to co-opt a Member to serve.

*Cllr Kinsey* – asked what should be done about the complaints in Lee Glyde's resignation letter.

*Town Clerk* – said he had not seen the letter but if there were any complaints about officers then it should be dealt with by the Town Council. If there were complaints about Members then it should be dealt with by the monitoring officer. He asked if any correspondence could be forwarded to him so that he could advise the Town Council on the right course of action.

*Cllr Kinsey* – expressed the Council's thanks to Lee Glyde for his service to the Town Council.

## **70/20 Resumption of Committee Meetings and Mayor Making**

### *Committee Meetings to Resume*

As the Council has gained experience of using online meeting technology, it is considered that committee meetings may resume using the ZOOM software for the time being. It is proposed that the committee cycle resumes from the next scheduled meeting:-

- (a) 22nd September - Policy & Resources Committee
- (b) 20th October - Environment & Amenities Committee

It was suggested that the Annual Meeting and Mayor Making take place before these committee meetings. The Clerk advised that the Council's motion to defer Mayor making for the time being was an extant motion. This could however be rescinded at any time if the Town Council wishes

There are currently vacancies on both committees.

*Cllr Seviour returned to the meeting*

*Cllr Seviour in the chair*

After considerable discussion it was agreed to proceed with Annual Meeting and Mayor Making on Tuesday 1st September.

**Resolved :** to hold the Annual Meeting and Mayor Making on Tuesday 1st September. (*prop Cllr Seviour – nem con*)

In preparation for Mayor Making, the Council was asked to confirm the nominations already received:-

**Mayor:** Cllr Kinsey and Cllr Seviour

The Chairman called for nominations for Cllr Kinsey – prop by Cllr Johnston, sec by Cllr Batchelder. Cllr Seviour told the meeting that he was no longer willing to stand for election as Mayor for health reasons and withdrew his nomination.

He called for any other nominations. None were forthcoming.

**The Mayor declared Cllr Kinsey duly nominated.**

**Deputy Mayor:** Councillor Johnston

The Chairman called for nominations for Cllr Johnston – prop Cllr Kinsey, sec Cllr Taylor. He called for any other nominations. Cllr Blackman – prop Cllr Matthews, sec Cllr Edge.

He asked Members to vote for their preferred candidate for the position of Deputy Mayor

Cllr Johnston – 4 votes

Cllr Blackman – 5 votes

**The Mayor declared Cllr Blackman duly nominated.**

#### **71/20 South Street Milk Dispenser**

A retrospective application for planning permission has been submitted by Nunton Dairy for the milk dispenser in South Street Car Park. Following discussion with Wiltshire Council Planning Department, it has been suggested that the shed may need to be set back from the curtilage to reduce its impact on the Grade II listed Michael Herbert Hall. Members are asked to agree to the relocation of the structure and to the potential loss of 2 parking spaces. If members are content with this proposal it is recommended that the matter is delegated to the Town Clerk to agree the final position, should this prove necessary. However, it would be possible to make the space currently occupied by the Milk Dispenser so there would only be the loss of one parking space.

**Resolved:** to accept in principle the moving of the milk dispenser within South Street car park.

#### **72/20 Gwendoline Courtney 1911 - 1996**

A request has been received for the erection of a blue plaque to commemorate local author Gwen Courtney. After discussion it was agreed that a review of plaques in Wilton take place since there were several others worthy of commemoration as well.

#### **73/20 Consultation on Updated National Model Code of Conduct:**

Eighteen months after the Committee on Standards in Public Life reported to the Prime Minister on improving ethical standards in local government, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Local Government Association (LGA) are consulting on an updated national model code of conduct for all tiers of local government. NALC has welcomed the new code but considers it needs real 'teeth' in terms of sanctions available in cases of a serious breach. NALC has requested the Council's view on the new code.

The Clerk told Members that the new code is better and stronger than its predecessor.

**Resolved:** to support

#### **74/20 Managing the Council's Money**

As reported at the last meeting, work pressures created by the COVID 19 response have resulted in a backlog of accountancy work for staff.

The Clerk explained that reconciliation of the receipts is now almost complete. Some comes by cheque, some comes in cash and some comes by bank transfer. Some customers are paying two or three invoices at once whilst others are paying. Cllr Crossley has been going through the payments and can attest to how difficult it has been to reconcile all these elements and of course, unless we can reconcile it is difficult to move forward but we will get there.

*Cllr Kinsey* – asked if there was likely to be a deficit.

*The Clerk* – said it was likely there would be a deficit but re-invoicing was proceeding.

*Cllr Crossley* – told the meeting that, so far, Wilton Town Council has paid out £6,900 and, to date, £5,000 has been received so there is still £1,900 to collect.

*Cllr Church* – reminded the meeting Cllr Batchelder had offered his time to help

*Cllr Batchelder* – affirmed that he was willing to help.

It was to accept the Town Clerk's explanation about the situation regarding the accounts

#### **75/20 Motions Received**

The following motions have been received (presented in the order they were received).

Proposer: Councillor Matthews:

*"That this Council places on record its support for the Town Clerk and its thanks to the Town Clerk and an Assistant Clerk for all their extra work during the present pandemic situation"*

Seconder: Cllr Batchelder

**Resolved** to support

Proposer: Councillor Johnston:

*"Wilton Town Council seeks as a matter of urgency expert advice from The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) regarding the validity of The Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on 7th July 2020"*

Cllr Johnston withdrew her motion because of the earlier decision to hold the Annual Town meeting and Mayor Making of 1st September.

Proposer: Councillor Matthews:

*"That this Council supports the campaign for the Government to reimburse the Wiltshire Air Ambulance for the cost of equipment it lost during the Novichok emergency in Salisbury."*

Seconder: Cllr Edge.

**Resolved** : to support

## **76/20 Planning Applications Received**

*Cllr Kinsey left the meeting*

To consider the following planning applications

(a) **20/06346/TCA**: Fell 2 x Conifer Trees - Pembroke Arms Hotel .

It was noted that clarification was needed as there were three trees in that location

**Resolved** : to support subject to satisfactory clarification

(b) **20/06275/TCA**: Fell a Eucalyptus Tree - Wilton House

**Resolved** : to support

(c) **20/04461/LBC**: Replace Front Window - 4 Kingsbury Square

**Resolved** : to support

(d) **20/05323/FUL**: Proposed single storey side extension - 22 Shaftesbury Road

**Resolved** : to support subject to clear indications of size and position

*Cllr Kinsey rejoined the meeting*

**77/20 Date of Next Meeting** To note that the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 1st September at 7.00pm – meeting format to be confirmed.

## **78/20 Notification of a complaint by a member of staff under the Council's Dignity at Work Policy**

a confidential paper will be circulated by the Mayor to members of the Council for consideration. The paper sets out the process for hearing the complaint and seeks to establish a three member panel to take the matter forward. Members and officers named in the report will be requested to withdraw from the meeting during the consideration of this matter.

**79/20 Exclusion of Press and Public** In accordance with Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 S1 (2), to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 78/20 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of confidential matters prejudicial to the public interest.

**Resolved:** that Press and Public be excluded from the meeting as well as Cllr Johnston and the Town Clerk

## **CONFIDENTIAL SESSION**

After discussion it was agreed that a panel composed of Cllrs Batchelder, Blackman, Kinsey & Seviour meet to consider how best to seek advice and mediation for issues raised during the meeting.

## **80/20 To close the meeting**

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.36pm



**Equality Statement**

In the exercise of their responsibilities, Wilton Town Councillors have committed to uphold the Code of Conduct and to have full regard of the following in decision making:

- Equal Opportunities (age, race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability)
- Data Protection(GDPR)
- Health & Safety
- Human Rights.