

MINUTES of an extra-ordinary meeting of WILTON TOWN COUNCIL held in the COUNCIL CHAMBERS, KINGSBURY SQUARE, WILTON on MONDAY 23rd March 2020 at 7.00pm

Present Cllr Ivan Seviour – Mayor of Wilton
Cllr Charlotte Blackman
Cllr Pauline Church
Cllr Crossley
Cllr Peter Edge
Cllr Glyde
Cllr Phil Matthews

In Attendance Mr Steve Milton, *Town Clerk*.

Community Engagement session

Larissa Tonkin addressed the meeting in respect of the matter set out under minute 234/19 below. She outlined the work undertaken by the Wilton COVID-19 Support Volunteers over the preceding two weeks. She explained the strain this was putting on a small number of volunteers, some of whom had been forced to self-isolate. The arrangement of using personal mobile phones to take calls from vulnerable and self-isolating individuals was putting individual volunteers under considerable pressure. She asked if the Council could now mobilise its resources to support the volunteers in this time of mounting crisis.

Cllr Matthews – said that the grass in the cemetery was now long and needed cutting.

Councillor Pauline Church – Wiltshire Council Update

Councillor Church outlined the measures taken by Wiltshire Council to tackle the COVID-19 crisis. She urged the Council to now step up and lead the local response. She considered that Wilton Town Council was well behind the curve compared to other Councils in Wiltshire. She described arrangements put in place in Devizes as an example.

Cllr Matthews – asked what plans Wiltshire Council had to support businesses. Cllr Church responded explaining measures the Council was taking in the light of emerging Government advice.

AGENDA

Cllr Seviour in the chair

229/19 Apologies

Cllr Batchelder apologised for his absence – self-isolating due to COVID-19
Cllr Kinsey apologised for his absence due to a prior engagement
Cllr Johnston apologised for her absence – self-isolating due to COVID-19
Cllr Taylor apologised for her absence owing to a prior commitment

Resolved: to accept these apologies and the reasons for them

230/19 Community Engagement

COVID-19 – The Mayor explained that this matter would be discussed fully later on the agenda.
Cemetery Grass – the Clerk reported that Idverde – the Council's ground maintenance contractors - were working as normal in the Town and that he would request grass cutting in the cemetery.

231/19 Mayor's Updates

There were no events to report.

232/19 Councillor Alan Crossley

The Council welcomed Alan to his first meeting of the Council following the by-election on 12th

March. The results of the election were noted as follows:

- CROSSLEY, Alan 244 Votes
- FORBES, Claire 182 Votes
- LATTIMORE, Michael Thomas 179 Votes

The Mayor reported that Alan had signed the Acceptance of Office and is now officially a member of the Council. He would fill the vacancies on the Policy and Resources Committee and Staffing Committee until the positions are next reviewed.

233/19 Matters referred from Environment and Amenities Committee

The Council considered the following matters referred from the meeting held on 17th March.

(a) *Volunteering*

The Council noted that many of the Council's activities involved working in partnership with community groups and volunteers. The Council wants to ensure that volunteers are valued, supported, protected from harm and that activities are organised safely. The Council has agreed to assume formal responsibility for organising and insuring the activities of the Wilton Wombles, PlantFEST, Wilton Wildlife Group and Wilton Community Emergency Volunteers. And, in order to support volunteer activities (including work on COVID-19) and to protect the Council, it was:

RESOLVED: that, subject to annual review, the Council adopts [the Volunteering Policy](#) drafted by the Town Clerk.

(b) *Christmas Lights*

The Committee reconsidered the provision of additional funds to support the lights event. In particular, to fund the use of a contractor to install and remove marquees for the food and entertainment stalls. The total additional funding requested was £2,200 (exc. VAT) The budget for the Christmas Lights event in 2020/21 was set at £8,500 and expenditure on the lights in 2019/20 was £6,525, the remaining funding supports the event and ancillary costs. In year, there was also a one-off deferred payment to the contractors that resulted in a budget overspend. This is unlikely to be repeated, so assuming the lighting costs are no more than £7,000 this leaves £1,500 for the event, so the additional funding that would need to be allocated is £700 – this would enable the marquees to be hired for food and entertainment and cover the other annual costs.

RESOLVED: that the additional £700 be allocated from reserves.

234/19 Responding to the Covid-19 Epidemic 7.30pm

The Council considered [the Town Clerk's report](#). The Clerk reported that since drafting the report he had met with representatives from the Wilton COVID-19 volunteer group to discuss how the Council might support the work they were doing. He explained that if the Council decided to partner with or sponsor the group then it would assume all responsibility and liability involved – financial, safeguarding and risks. He further explained that, until such time as the Government lifted the prohibition of public gatherings, further meetings of the Council would have to be postponed. In order for the Council to continue to function effectively, the Council considered the delegation of powers to the Clerk as set out in the [draft High Consequence Infectious Disease Policy](#).

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the [High Consequence Infectious Disease Policy](#) and consequent delegation arrangements be adopted and put into immediate effect upon the conclusion of the meeting.
- (2) That arrangements relating to council facilities and events is noted and kept under review to ensure the Council is in-step with Government guidance.
- (3) That £10,000 be earmarked as an emergency fund to support the COVID-19 response, this to be drawn down if required following consultation with Councillors.
- (4) That Wilton Town Council thanks the COVID-19 volunteer group for the work they have done and, from here forward, it is included as a group for which the Council assumes responsibility in accordance [with the volunteering policy](#) and that the Clerk work alongside the volunteers to put in place new and robust arrangements as soon as possible – this to include the immediate recruitment of more volunteers.

235/19 Planning Application

The Council considered the following planning application and to make recommendations to Wiltshire Council as appropriate:

- (a) [20/01229/FUL](#): Construction of a detached oak framed garage - The Chantry, South Street, Wilton

RESOLVED: to raise no objection

236/19 To close the meeting

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.55pm

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.