

VIRTUAL COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2020 – 6.00 p.m.

Minutes of a Virtual Ordinary Meeting of the Council held via. 'Zoom', on Wednesday, 24 June 2020 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor Wendy Hillary (Chairman) and

Councillors Eddy Adam, M. Ashcroft, Derek G Atkinson, Jim Atkinson, Kathy Beetham, P.J. Bergg, Bill Blenkinsopp, Mrs. D. Bowman, Arun M. Chandran, B.A. Clare, J.D. Clare, J. Clark, R.S. Fleming, George C. Gray, I. Gray, Mrs. S. Haigh, Dave Hardaker, Jed. Hillary, Kate Hopper, M. Iveson, Mrs. S.J. Iveson, Mrs. V. Raw, Ken Robson, Michael Stead and Sally Symons.

OFFICERS

Mr A Bailey (Town Clerk)
Mr. D. Austin (Finance Manager)
Mrs. C. Walton (Corporate and Policy Officer)
Miss C. Ryder (Senior Admin. Officer)

127. NOTICE OF MEETING

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

128. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs. M. Dalton, B. Hall and Mrs. I. Hewitson.

129. MEMBERS' DISPENSATION

No dispensation requests had been received.

130. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest submitted.

131. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Mr. Michael Parkin the Director of The County Public House in Aycliffe Village was present to introduce himself as the new owner and give a statement to members in regard to his application to site tables and chairs on the Village Green.

Mr. Parkin was fully aware of the past history of the use of the Village Green and was seeking to site the chairs and tables to allow his business to have more space to open with safe distancing during the Covid-19 over the Summer period.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Parkin for his information and stated that a full discussion would be undertaken by members at agenda item No. 12.

RESOLVED – that the information be noted and the matter would be considered further under agenda item No. 12.

132. MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Arun M Chandran, seconded by Councillor Bill Blenkinsopp and

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on the 11th March 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

133. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements from the Mayor and Town Clerk.

RESOLVED – that the information be received.

134. SUB COMMITTEE MINUTES

Planning Sub-Committee

It was proposed by Councillor Arun M. Chandran, seconded by Councillor J. Clark and

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) That the minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Planning Sub-Committee held on the 7 May 2020 be received, and
- (ii) That the said minutes be approved and adopted.

135. APPROVAL OF THE 2019/2020 ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The Finance Manager had submitted a report to put forward for approval the Annual Internal Audit Report for the 2019/2020 financial year.

RESOLVED – that the Annual Internal Audit Report for the 2019/2020 financial year be approved.

136. APPROVAL OF THE 2019/2020 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Corporate Management Team submitted a report requesting Members' approval of the Annual Governance Statement for the 2019/2020 financial year.

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the Annual Governance Statement in respect of the 2019/2020 financial year, as set out in Section 1 of the 2019/2020 Annual Governance and Accountability Return, be approved.
- (ii) That the Annual Governance Statement for the 2019/2020 financial year be signed off by the Town Clerk and the Chairman of the Council.

137. APPROVAL OF THE 2019/2020 ACCOUNTING STATEMENT

The Finance Manager submitted a report requesting Members' approval for the Council's Accounting Statements for the 2019/2020 financial year, as set out in Section 2 of the 2019/2020 Annual Return.

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) The the 2019/2020 Accounting Statements set out in Section 2 of the Annual Return be approved.
- (ii) That the supporting financial documents to be submitted to the external auditors with the Annual Return be agreed.
- (iii) That the Annual Return and supporting documents be sent to the external auditor on Thursday, 25th June, following approval at this meeting.
- (iv) That the unaudited Annual Governance and Accountability Return is published on the Council website on Friday, 26th June.
- (v) That the 30 day public inspection period in relation to the statement of accounts commences Monday 29th June and runs until Friday, 7th August.
- (vi) That notice of the publication of the accounts and the public inspection rights and period be advertised in the Newton News and on the Council website on Friday 26th June.
- (vii) That following the completion of the external audit by Mazars LLP, and receipt of the signed audit opinion and certificate, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return be published in accordance with the statutory framework.
- (viii) That the Council wished to record their thanks to the Town Clerk, Finance Manager and his staff for the report and excellent work carried out in completing the statement of accounts

138. AYCLIFFE VILLAGE GREEN – REQUEST TO USE A SECTION AS A BEER GARDEN

The Town Clerk submitted a report to bring the Council's attention to a request by the operators of The County Public House, in Aycliffe Village, to use a section of the Village Green immediately to the front of that establishment as a beer garden.

The report gave members background information on previous historical issues and previous requests for the use of the Village Green with regards to inappropriate use, encroachment, damage and misuse.

A lengthy discussion took place during which members gave their views and asked questions on the possibility of the County being allowed to use a part of the Village Green.

A number of proposals were being suggested which culminated in the following proposals being proposed by Councillor J.D. Clare and seconded by Councillor Jim Atkinson:-

“That the Council look to offer a short term licence for tables and chairs to be situated on the Village Green for a period up to the end of October 2020 to assist The County Public House during the Covid-19 situation

That the Council agrees to pay any costs incurred with the cost of the licence and it be noted that this would not be seen as a precedent for any future applications”.

Members took a vote on the proposal which was approved.

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the Council enter into a licence with The County Public House to allow them to use a part of the Village Green to site tables and chairs during the Covid-19 situation.
- (ii) That the licence be granted for a period up to the end of October 2020.
- (iii) That the Council would pay for the costs of the licence.
- (iv) That it be noted that this would not be seen as a precedent for any future applications for the use of the Village Green.

CHAIRMAN.