



APPROVED MINUTES OF CASTLE CARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

held on Monday 21st September 2020

DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS, THIS MEETING WAS HELD USING ZOOM.

Present: Judi Morison (Chair), Philippa Biddlecombe, Stephen Biddlecombe, Margaret Bebbington, Julian de Bosdari, Bob Gilbey, Kenneth Gray, Pek Peppin, Sally Snook, Penny Steiner and Rob Worth.

Also present: Deputy Town Clerk Claire Craner-Buckley, County Councillor Mike Lewis and District Councillor Kevin Messenger.

Clerk: Zöe Godden

There were no members of the public present at the start of the meeting.

The meeting started at 19:00.

2020

TC55 Apologies for absence

No apologies had been received.

TC56 Declarations of personal or pecuniary interest (these must be declared BEFORE the agenda items concerned are discussed. Persons with a declared pecuniary interest must leave the meeting room when these are discussed)

There were no declarations of interest.

TC57 To approve the minutes of the Town Council Meetings held on Monday 17th and 26th August 2020 to be signed by the Chair at a later time.

It was noted that voting on item TC54 b) at the meeting on 26th August had not been unanimous. The Clerk was instructed to correct this and to add the following to item TC54 b):

Pek Peppin and Philippa Biddlecombe expressed concern that if someone wanted to apply for both roles as one job, splitting the role could make it impossible to do that. It was noted that one person could apply for both roles without any problem.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed to approve both sets of minutes subject to the amendments detailed above. Nine votes for; one abstention.

19:10 – District Councillor Kevin Messenger joined the meeting.

TC58 Community Safety and Security update

Judi Morison reported that there had been several reports of vandalism and young people loitering. Kevin Messenger said that he had cleared up broken glass from the path near the library and expressed concern at the lack of Police presence locally. Judi Morison suggested asking the Police to organise a Police and Communities Together (PACT) meeting. Such a meeting had been held in 2018 but had not been repeated. It was **agreed** that Judi should ask for a follow up PACT meeting.

Action 200921/1: Judi Morison

There were further reports of possible drug dealing and underage motorcyclists in the town. Penny Steiner noted that several of the Fairfield consultation questionnaires returned made reference to anti-social behaviour and vandalism in the town generally.

TC59 To receive any reports/updates:

- a) **Mike Lewis (County Councillor)** had distributed the latest update on CV-19 data before the meeting. Mike reported that there had been an increase in CV-19 infections across Somerset and advised that town and parish councils could set a good example to residents by ensuring staff and councillors wore face coverings as required. Mike noted that the Government was due to make an announcement regarding changes to restrictions.
Mike reported that a recent Audit Committee meeting at SCC had revealed that the County's financial position was in better shape than it had been for some time. Finally, Mike reported that a response from ministers on the issue of duelling the A303 was expected in November.
- b) **Kevin Messenger (District Councillor)** reported that SSDC would be offering free trees again this year.
- c) To receive an update the Dimmer Liaison Group – Sally Snook said that Dimmer had not supplied very much information but everything that had been received would be put onto the website. Sally said it was unlikely that a meeting would take place anytime soon. Mike Lewis said that the Avonmouth site was fully operational and that Viridor had been taken over by an American investment company.
- d) Update on Key Objectives/Projects – No updates to report.
- e) To review action points from previous meetings – **Noted.**

TC60 Chairs' Report:

- a) To note the upcoming availability of a detailed consultation exercise regarding One Somerset.

Noted. Any councillor wishing to attend any of the meetings would need to forward their email address as instructed in the letter from SCC.

TC61 Environmental Matters

- a) To consider supporting a joint initiative with Bruton and Wincanton Town Councils to apply to the Somerset County Council Climate Change Emergency £1m Fund for up to £75,000 to support a green energy initiative with the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) in Bristol. The project aims to employ two Retrofit Co-ordinators to attract Green Homes Grant funding for upgrading homes in the three towns and surrounding areas. The CSE would support the co-ordinators and train local companies to undertake the work.

The Deputy Town Clerk explained that the project aimed to employ two people to advise residents on ways to make their homes more energy efficient and signpost them to organisations that could install installation, double glazing and efficient water heating systems. There was some general discussion about the pros and cons of the scheme. Councillors felt it was unfortunate that developers were not obliged to include energy efficiency measures in new homes.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the Town Council supported the project in principal but needed more information on how the co-ordinators might operate and on how any financial contribution from the Town Council would be spent. Eight votes for; two abstentions.

Action 200921/2: Deputy Town Clerk

- b) To consider supporting the Somerset Wildlife Trust and Somerset Carbon Action Network to apply to the Somerset County Council Climate Change Emergency £1m Fund for up to £75,000 to support their initiative to pay for two posts : a Somerset Climate and Nature Networkers Coordinator and a Somerset Local Nature Partnership Manager, to aim to start to address the biodiversity loss crisis in Somerset.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Town Council supports this initiative.

- c) To consider supporting a joint initiative with Bruton and Wincanton Town Councils to bring the Solar Streets initiative to Castle Cary. This has worked to bring more solar pv panels to homes successfully in Frome. Bruton Town Council approved moving forward with this in their town and to invite Castle Cary and Wincanton to joint this initiative in early September. It is supported by Bruton One Planet.org.

Sally Snook suggested that all the streets in the new developments could be encouraged to get involved in this project.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Town Council supports this initiative.

- d) To consider supporting Carymoor Environmental Center's bid to the Big Green Recovery fund.

Sally Snook pointed out that cyclists should not be encouraged to use Dimmer Lane because the number of HGVs using that road would cause a danger to cyclists. Pek Peppin said that Carymoor Drove should not be tarmacked because it is an ancient path.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Town Council supports this initiative.

Committees Reports, Recommendations & Progress on Major Projects

TC61 Planning Committee & Neighbourhood Plan

- a) To hear an update on recently considered planning applications.

Pek Peppin told councillors that there had been only one planning application to consider at the previous Planning Committee meeting. This application (20/01932/S73) related to the planned road through the development site to link Torbay Road and Station Road. The Planning Committee had recommended refusal of the application.

TC62 Properties, Infrastructure, Pither Project & Fairfield-updates

- a) To hear an update on works to Millbrook Toilets.

Bob Gilbey reported that plaster boarding had been installed in the ladies and gents ends of the building. The ladies end had been skimmed. All plaster work would be completed by the end of the week. After this, the walls and ceilings could be painted. Rob Worth was in the process of obtaining a third quote for new windows. Judi Morison thanked Stephen Biddlecombe, Bob Gilbey, Nick Weeks and the Caretaker for their work.

- b) Fairfield – To consider a request from the Friends of Fairfield group to install an additional rail to the perimeter fence at a cost to the Town Council of no more that £500 (to be shared with Ansford Parish Council), with the installation work being completed by the Friends of Fairfield volunteers.

Penny Steiner reported that Ansford Parish Council had agreed that their preferred supplier was Mole Valley Farmers and that they would pay one third of the costs of the materials required.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to accept the price for materials from Mole Valley Farmers.

Judi Morison asked the Council to record its thanks for the Friends of Fairfield volunteers for offering to carry out the installation of the additional rail.

- c) To consider any action to take in relation to the delay in installing the extension to the path at Fairfield.

Councillors agreed that it was unlikely that a quote from another contractor could be obtained in time for the work to take place before the spring. It was noted that the agreed contractor (GJS) had installed all of the paths at Fairfield and that they had submitted the most competitive quote for the extension. It was **agreed** to wait for GJS to carry out the work in the spring.

TC63 Marketing & Communication

- a) To hear a report on the Tuesday Market.

Penny Steiner reported that the market had been operating successfully and that positive feedback had been received on the recent live music performance. Penny thanked the Market Manager and councillors who had helped with running the market.

- b) To hear a report on the new design of the newsletter.

Penny Steiner reported that positive comments had been received regarding the new design and noted that trade listings would be included in the next edition of the newsletter. Penny went on to say that the typesetter, who had been working on the newsletter for many years, had decided to retire. It was **agreed** that Judi Morison would write a letter of thanks to her and send flowers.

Action200921/3: Judi Morison

- c) To hear an update on the project to redesign the tourist leaflet.

Penny Steiner reported that, at the last Marketing and Communications Committee meeting, it had been agreed that three councillors would work with two Information Point volunteers to redesign the tourist leaflet. Penny and Philippa Biddlecombe had volunteered, so one more councillor was needed to work on the project. Margaret Bebbington said she would help. Penny said that the project could be funded from earmarked reserves, advertising revenue and the SSDC tourism grant.

- d) To hear an update on the Big Christmas event, including the road closure.

Penny Steiner reported that the chief marshal had dropped out and that the required road closure would now have to be paid for. Penny also said that she was nervous about managing social distancing at the event. As a result, the Big Christmas group would be considering whether the event should go ahead. Penny would report back to a future meeting.

20:27 – County Councillor Mike Lewis left the meeting.

TC64 Finance and Management

- a) To note new salary rates for all Local Government staff and an increase in annual leave entitlement from 21 to 22 days for staff with fewer than five years continuous local government service and to agree to adopt these.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to adopt the new salary rates and annual leave entitlement.

- b) To consider purchasing the 44 chairs currently located in the Dance Studio of the Market House for the sum of £660.00.

Councillors felt that the chairs were not suitable for the kind of events held by the Council.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed not to purchase the chairs.

Action 200921/3: Town Clerk

- c) To note the budget setting and precept schedule for the 2021-22 budget.

Noted.

- d) To note the budget comparison report to August 2020.

Noted.

- e) To approve the cash book and bank reconciliation for the current account for August 2020, for the deposit account for the period from April to June 2020, for the two Scottish Widows accounts to June 2020 and for the Triodos account to 1st July 2020.

All bank reconciliations had been checked by Kenneth Gray before the meeting and found to be correct.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the cash book and bank reconciliation for the current account for August 2020, for the deposit account for the period from April to June 2020, for the two Scottish Widows accounts to June 2020 and for the Triodos account to 1st July 2020.

- f) To approve the cashbook and bank reconciliation for the Donald Pither Trust for August 2020.

The bank reconciliation had been checked by Kenneth Gray before the meeting and found to be correct.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the cashbook and bank reconciliation for the Donald Pither Trust for August 2020.

- a) To approve the September 2020 payment schedule for the Town Council and the Donald Pither Trust and to nominate Councillors to verify and authorise payments.

The Clerk reported that payment number 0149 related to a fine from HMRC for the late submission of payroll information and that she had deducted this from her salary as it had been her fault that the submission was late. It was **agreed** that the Clerk should not have deducted this amount from her salary and she was instructed to repay this amount via the following month's salary.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve all payments; it was further unanimously agreed that that Philippa Biddlecombe would verify the payments and that Judi Morison would authorise the payments after verification. The Town Clerk would email copies of all invoices to Philippa and Judi.

TC65 Exclusion of Press and Public

To consider exemption of press and public for remainder of meeting under Public Bodies Admissions To Meetings Act 1960, Section 1 (2) on the grounds that discussion of the following business is likely to disclose confidential information relating to the engagement of an employee and is likely to disclose confidential information

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to exclude the press and public for the remainder of the meeting.

20:48 – District Councillor Kevin Messenger left the meeting.

It was **agreed** to take item TC67 at this point in the meeting.

TC67 Dance Studio Licence

To note the current status of the Dance Studio licence and agree any action to be taken.

Councillors discussed the issues at length and agreed how they wished to proceed.

21:15 – Rob Worth left the meeting

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to instruct the Clerk to write to Mr Parsons to explain the Council's position and how it wished to proceed with his use of the Dance Studio.

21:25 – The Clerk left the meeting and the Deputy Town Clerk took the minutes for the remainder of the meeting.

TC66 Recruitment

To consider the recommendations of the recruitment panel regarding the successful candidates for the Town Clerk Finance Clerk and Marketing Administrator posts and to agree which candidates to employ.

PROPOSAL: Penny Steiner proposed that Mandy Bloom is taken on as the Marketing and Communications Administrator. Philippa Biddlecombe seconded this.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the resolution as presented.

PROPOSAL: Judi Morison proposed that Standing Orders no 7 and 10.14 were suspended to enable the Town Clerk and RFO posts to be filled by one candidate. This was seconded by Pek Peppin.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the resolution as presented.

PROPOSAL: Margaret Bebbington proposed that the Council take on one Full Time Town Clerk. This was seconded by Julian de Bosdari.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the resolution as presented.

PROPOSAL: Sally Snook proposed that Lisa Davis be offered the role of Town Clerk for Castle Cary Town Council and Pek Peppin seconded this.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the resolution as presented.

Members of the Council are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of its functions, that "No member of the public, job applicant, elected member or employee shall receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, sexual orientation, marital status or disability"

The next meeting of the Town Council will be held on Monday 19th October 2020 at 7:00pm. Any items for inclusion on the agenda should be forwarded to the Town Clerk by Thursday 8th October 2020.

Approved as a correct record.....19th October 2020