

Waltham Parish Council

EST. 1894

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Minutes of the virtual Parish Council Meeting held on 6th October 2020 using Zoom technology

Present: Parish Councillors: John Barry (Chair), Sue Browne, Ben Grillet and Carolyn Lawrence
County Councillor Michael Northey and City Councillor: Robert Thomas
Parish Clerk: Tony McCord.

There were no members of the public present.

Meeting commenced at: 19.35. The Chairman gave a warm welcome to attendees.

20/21.025. To receive and approve apologies for absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Robinson and approved.

20/21.026. To receive declarations of any Disclosable Pecuniary interests or Other significant Interest:

The previously agreed dispensation applies to Item 20/21.d).

20/21.027. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 1st September 2020:

The minutes were formally approved and electronically signed by the Chairman.

20/21.028. Matters arising from previous minutes not covered by the agenda:

- a) *Item 20/21.010:* A Member expressed further concerns that building work was continuing at Dene Meadows, Duckpit Road. Cllr Robert Thomas had offered to follow this up with the Planning Department, had not yet been able to do so but would bring forward as a priority.
- b) A planning application had been received after Agenda publication. It was agreed to consider application CA/20/02108 and it was **Resolved** to raise no objections. **Action: Clerk**
- c) Council had received a Review of the City Council's Planning Call-in arrangements. In considering a draft response Members agreed with the content and **Resolved** that this be sent to the Governance Committee for its meeting on 7th October. **Action: Clerk**

20/21.029. Public Session: To receive questions and comments from the public:

No comments or questions were received.

20/21.030. Reports from County and City Councillors:

- a) **County Cllr Michael Northey** had presented a written report and gave a summary as follows:
 - : Record numbers of Flu vaccines are being made available and Kent residents are encouraged to get vaccinated. Research suggests that people infected with both Flu and the Coronavirus are more at risk of serious illness and death. More information available at www.nhs.uk/flu.
 - : Michael is now Vice Chairman of KCC.
 - : 95% of KCC staff are now working from home.
 - : More road resurfacing is being done because crews have had better access to quieter roads.

: KCC is short of money as a consequence of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

b) City Cllr Robert Thomas presented his report, summarised as follows:

: Robert is now a member of the Audit Committee.

: It looks as though the City Council Forum structure is to be dismantled, including the Rural Forum at which parish councils could express views on matters relating to their communities.

: City Council expenditure has been frozen as a result of Covid-19 financial pressures.

: The debate about the future of Concurrent Functions Funding continues amid concerns about the impact this will have on the Precept and the issue about double taxation in rural parishes.

20/21.031. Financial Matters:

a) To note the Parish Councils financial position:

Three reports had been distributed prior to the meeting – a year to date Cash Book showing receipts and payments; a statement showing expenditure against budget; and a report showing income and expenses by category. All reconcile with bank statements and demonstrate a healthy financial position with a balance of £13,437.76

It was unanimously **Resolved** to approve the reports.

It was pointed out that distribution of reports in Zip files could lead to confusion regarding which report was the most current. It was **Resolved** that supporting documents should be dated and have the agenda item displayed.

Action: Clerk/RFO

b) St Bartholemew's Churchyard Maintenance Grant:

A detailed report from the Clerk/RFO had been previously circulated. This covered the historical background to grant provision; provided information about other councils approaches on the issue; gave a resume of the Legislative aspects and national experts views; and suggested points for Member consideration.

Members expressed the view that as the current policy may not be lawful alternative approaches should be explored including the provision of Capital Grants if requested, using Councils General Power of Competence. It was **Resolved** that parishioners should be consulted via the website and the village magazine before a final decision is reached.

Action: Chairman and Clerk

Council business was temporarily suspended at this point whilst transferring to a new Zoom session.

c) To authorise payments:

The Clerk/RFO presented a payments schedule for Member consideration:

September Payments Schedule.

Transaction Number	Invoice Date	Payee	Payment Summary	Net Amount	VAT	Gross Amount
20/21-11	03/10/2020	A.S.McCord	1 months Salary; Home Allowance; IONOS web hosting	£218.40	£0.60	£219.00
Total				£218.40	£0.60	£219.00

It was **Resolved** to approve the schedule and the payment was authorised in accordance with Councils Financial Instructions.

Action: Clerk/RFO

d) Draft Budget proposal for 2021/22:

Members considered a first draft of a budget for the next financial year. It was noted that some small savings could be made including cancellation of the Scribe accounting system, instead using free **Excel** based software. It was **Resolved** to cancel the Scribe subscription.

Members also noted that a final decision on the future of Concurrent Functions Funding (which up to now has paid circa £2K a year towards the maintenance of the playing field) may not be forthcoming from the City Council until late November. It was **Resolved** to undertake further work on budget proposals for the November meeting and to have a meeting on 1st December to make final decisions on the budget and to set the Precept demand.

Action: Clerk/RFO

20/21.032. Capital Spending 2020/21:

Members considered briefing notes on possible replacement of notice boards and the options for siting. It was recognised that replacement with new boards would cost between £844 each for aluminium models and £1,350 for those constructed in oak. A majority view was that the boards should be sited inside the bus shelter to increase longevity, providing adequate lighting was available.

It was **Resolved** to seek the views of parishioners on the available options and to bring the subject forward for a final decision.

Action: Chairman/Clerk

20/21.033. Any Other Matters for information only.

A Member expressed concerns about the dilapidated condition of an agricultural property adjoining Kake Street and asked what Powers the parish council had to intervene. It was noted that a similar problem existed with a Church Lane property. The Clerk offered to investigate the legislative position and report back at a later meeting.

Action: Clerk

The business having been concluded the meeting closed at 8.55 pm

20/21.034. Date of next virtual meeting: Tuesday 3rd November 2020 commencing at 7.30 pm.

Approved at 3rd November meeting

Minute 20/21.037



Chairman.