



Yeovil Town Council

Town House
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Mayor : Cllr E Potts-Jones
Town Clerk : Amanda Card *CPFA, PSLCC, BA (Hons), BSc (Open)*
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Minutes of the virtual meeting (informal) of Yeovil Town Council held on Tuesday 5th April 2022 at 7.30pm held by video-conference using Zoom meeting software.

Present: Cllrs E Potts-Jones (Chairman and Mayor); N Gage; K Gill; D Gubbins; E Hopkins; G Hunting; A Kendall; T Ledlie; M Lock; P Lock; T Lock; J Lowery; S Lowery; G Oakes; D Recardo; J Snell; A Soughton and R Spinner.

In Attendance: A Card (Town Clerk); Rev J Pearce (Mayor's Chaplain); Rachael Whaites (Countryside Manager); Kristy Davies (Countryside Ranger) and Ed Chilcott (Community Heritage Officer).

There was no members of the public and one member of the press present.

Public Comment

Rachael Whaites (Countryside Manager); Kristy Davies (Countryside Ranger) and Edd Chilcott (Community Heritage Officer) from Yeovil Country Park to give an update on the work of Yeovil Country Park.

An update was given on the what the Country Ranger team had been doing such as scrub management, invasive species control, organising events, graffiti removal, wildflower meadow manage, wildlife surveys, hedge laying, tree planting and manging the volunteers. During lockdown activities and events were delivered online, at the end of 2021, more events were able to be delivered in person such as the Halloween Trail and the Play Day scheme. They are looking at activities and events at the Country Park for 2022 such as hedge laying and the Spring Trail. The Friends of Yeovil Country Park has also been active and able to give financial assistance to the work of the Country Park and assist the rangers in delivering the larger public events.

Work had been carried out in conjunction with the Yeovil Rivers Community Trust to improve habitats.

The rangers have also been working with external groups to provide support, activities and events.

Yeovil Country Park had been awarded Pride in Parks – 5 Star Award, the Green Flag Award and were also part of the In Bloom initiative.

The Community Heritage Officer spoke of engagement with groups including local primary schools to provide outdoor education and forest school sessions. They have also secured a Green Grant from South West Museums Development Trust which will allow a project "Giving Dodham a Hand" which will involve the South Somerset Heritage Centre, Yeovil Rivers Community Trust as well as other groups.

Councillors thanked the Yeovil Country Park team for their presentation. The slides and report will be circulated.

8:03pm Rachael Whaites (Countryside Manager); Kristy Davies (Countryside Ranger) and Edd Chilcott (Community Heritage Officer) left and did not return

Rev J Pearce (Mayor's Chaplain) proceeded to give prayers.

Cllr D Gubbins wished to present an emergency motion to make a £5,000 grant towards the DEC appeal for Ukraine. The Clerk stated that as the item was not on the agenda and that there was no power to make decisions in informal/virtual meetings that a decision would not be able to be made. However, a discussion could be used as consultation, and a decision would have to be made using urgent decision powers in accordance with Standing Orders.

A question was asked regarding Purdah, to which The Clerk responded that Council would need to be very careful that they do not make any decisions which could be perceived as trying to generate votes for any upcoming elections. She also stated that Council would need to be very careful that they were not being political, and that Council would need to decide whether this is a political motion. All but one supported making a £5,000 grant towards the DEC appeal to Ukraine. If this is to progress, this would now need to follow the urgent decision-making protocol or at a future meeting of the Town Council. *The Clerk is seeking advice as to when the appropriate time would be to progress this.*

The Town Clerk suggested purchasing and flying the Ukraine Flag.

8:17 pm - The meeting commenced.

10/223 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO CONSIDER THE REASONS GIVEN

Council to receive apologies for absence and consider the reasons given. *LGA 1972 s85(1)*

Apologies were received from: Cllrs W Read (conflicting engagement); and R Stickland (work commitment).

RESOLVED: to accept the apologies with the reasons given.

10/224 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e). (NB this does not preclude any later declarations).

There were no declarations at this time.

10/225 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members to confirm as a correct record the minutes of the previous Town Council Meeting held on 1st February 2022.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the previous Town Council Meeting held on 1st February 2022 and that they be signed as a correct record at the next appropriate opportunity.

10/226 MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S RECENT AND FORTHCOMING ENGAGEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

RESOLVED: to note the Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's recent and forthcoming appointments and engagements.

10/227 CORRESPONDANCE

There was no correspondence.

10/228 REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES AND OTHER MEETINGS

Planning Committee – 14th February 2022 and 14th March 2022

Presented by Cllr Gordon Hunting. In the February meeting there was seven planning applications and one tree preservation order, all were supported but two with conditions. At the March meeting there were eleven planning applications and one tree preservation order, all were supported, four with conditions. There were no questions.

Promotions and Activities Committee – 8th March 2022

The meeting was cancelled due to not being quorate.

Grounds and General Maintenance Committee – 7th March 2022

Presented by Cllr Royston Spinner. There were reports from the Locality Officer at South Somerset District Council regarding the skateparks; play areas and "School's out" programme. There were discussions about how the wood from a dead cedar tree at Sidney Gardens could be used. There were no questions.

Buildings and Civic Matters Committee – 15th March 2022

The meeting was cancelled due to lack of business to discuss.

Policy, Resources and Finance Committee – 29th March 2022

Presented by Cllr Graham Oakes. The Committee deferred three grant applications to the next meeting. They also agreed to continue with holding meetings as they are currently with a review date in 4 months. There were no questions.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the above Committee be noted together with any resolutions and recommendations contained therein but to be ratified at a future meeting of the Town Council.

10/229 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from representatives on outside bodies.

10/230 FORWARD PLAN

The Clerk stated that as meetings are to continue in their current format, it would still be necessary to hold The Annual Town Meeting and the Annual Meeting of the Town Council face to face, as there would be some important decisions that would need to be made (legislation will only permit these decisions to be made at in-person meetings). It was suggested that the Mayor Making procedures continue at the Baptist Church but that the invites be kept to a minimum and there would be no buffet after. The Reconvened meeting would need to take place at Westlands Entertainment Venue, but it was only available on Wednesday 25th May 2022 (instead of the Scheduled Tuesday 24th May 2022). This would mean that Planning Committee meeting would need to be moved to Monday 30th May 2022.

RESOLVED: to approve the forward plan with the above-mentioned changes.

Public Comment

Cllr D Recardo announced that he would not be standing for the Town Council elections. He has served the Council for 20 years and thanked Officers and Councillors and wished everyone good luck for the future.

The Mayor of Yeovil wished everyone good fortune on their onward journey whether with the Town Council or not.

Cllr G Oakes thanked the Officers on behalf of all the Councillors for their work over the past few years, particularly over the last 2 years and that all the staff had worked very hard to keep the Council functioning during very difficult times.

The meeting closed at 8:30pm.

Signed:

Date: