

Minutes of the meeting of Olney Town Council held via MS Teams Monday 4th May 2020 at 7.30pm

Present: Jeremy Rawlings, Deirdre Bethune, Stephen Clark, Paul Collins, Desmond Eley, Joanne Eley, Peter Geary, Graham Harrison, Malcolm Messenger, Dr Sally Pezaro, Colin Rodden, Chris Tennant.

In attendance: Andrea Vincent (Town Clerk), Sarah Kennedy (Deputy Town Clerk)

Public Forum:

- Chairman of The Colts Football Club has written a response to some correspondence between OTC and The Colts received in April 2020.

In previous correspondence The Colts stated that the Football season finished 2 months prematurely and is intending to reimburse some subscriptions to the parents from the saved expenditure. The Colts Football Club are asking for a reimbursement from OTC of 2/9 of the annual payment for pitch rental. The Colts Football Club pointed out that the Club is a not for profit sports club run solely by volunteers to provide football for over 360 boys and girls.

In a response to the above the Town Clerk said that OTC were not able to refund because OTC are continuing to maintain the pitches.

Resolved: Agenda item to go to Recs & Services for discussion. Town Clerk to respond to Chairman of The Colts Football Club informing him of this decision.

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr Debbie Whitworth (technical reasons)

2. Declarations of interests on items on the agenda

NB During the meeting if it becomes apparent that you have an interest in an item being discussed this must be declared immediately.

None

3. To approve the use of Microsoft Teams for Olney Town Council meeting

Resolved: Approved the use of electronic means for Council meetings. To be reviewed in July.

4. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd March 2020

Resolved: Approved

5. Agree Annual Meeting postponement

Resolved: To delay the Annual Meeting to May 2021

6. Discuss and agree a response to MK2050

Cllr Tennant has produced a document in response to the MK2050 Consultation. OTC thanked Cllr Tennant for his contribution in producing this response.

Cllr Tennant pointed out that the status of the MK2050 paper is only a strategy paper. It doesn't convey any development plan weight and doesn't put forward any firm planning policies that assist in development plan making.

It is a strategy paper that will guide a direction for the Council to then proceed into the formal planning policy making of the review of the local plan up to 2050.

Resolved: Paper to be distributed to neighboring Parishes for information. Paper to be submitted to MK Council before 22nd May 2020.

7. To discuss if Exclusive Rights of Burial and Memorials have a place on the agenda

Resolved: To no longer have Exclusive rights and memorials as an agenda item. Cllr Bethune voted against the proposal. The motion was carried.

8. To approve the Councillor Communications Policy

Resolved: Town Clerk will seek clarity on a number of items and to speak to the Monitoring Officer at MKC, Sharon Bridglalsingh to gain feedback. Policy to then be brought back to Council for approval.

9. To approve the Agenda and Minute Policy

Cllr Geary – clarify required around specific items that can and can't be included in the agenda.

Cllr D Eley – to amend the policy to ensure that it is stating the same as the Standing Order (e.g. Agenda Procedure – 'except in very exceptional circumstances' Standing Order refers to this as 'emergency')

Resolved: changes to be made to the policy before bringing it back to full council for approval

10. To approve the Admission to Public Meetings Policy

Cllr D Eley - To make a statement prior to the beginning of the meeting (before the Public Participation) stating 'if anybody is recording this meeting make it known'

Cllr J Eley – Anyone participating has the right not to be photographed or filmed.

Cllr Geary – Should the notification making participants aware of filming/recording be distributed to participants on a piece of paper prior to the meeting? Or as Cllr Clark suggests on a laminated piece of paper on the door when people enter the room?

Resolved: To announce a statement at the beginning of a meeting;
'For your information this meeting is being audio recorded to assist with the production of accurate minutes. No option for challenge'

If a meeting is videoed (i.e. current 'Teams' meetings) the following statement will be announced;

'For your information this meeting is being audio recorded and videoed to assist in the production of accurate minutes. You can turn off your video if you have any objection to being filmed and to assist with better connectivity of the meeting. You will still be audio recorded.'

11. To approve the Mayors Role Guidance

Cllr Bethune – remove ‘Mayors Charity’ paragraph? Or keep in for mayor’s discretion.

Cllr Collins – to include a Town Newsletter?

Cllr Pezaro – Wording change around ‘mayor’ or ‘mayoress’. Needs to be more inclusive.

Cllr Clark – Mayors charity. No specific charity to be mentioned. To be raised at future OTC meetings to discuss which charity the funds would go to.

Resolved: Changes to be made and brought back to full Council for approval.

12. To review the out-turn profit and loss account for the financial year ending March 2020

April 2019 – March 2020 reconciliation of accounts has not been completed yet, although we are in a position to complete this very soon.

Open spaces fuel costs have significantly reduced 2019/2020.

Concerns over the impact of Covid. Costs will need to be looked at thoroughly going forward.

Income reduced at The Olney Centre 2019/2020. Mainly due to a reduction in wedding ceremony’s taking place.

Cllr Geary/Cllr Harrison – contact Ben Everitt to apply for or see if there are any grants available for our local facilities.

Cllr Collins – ‘Retail, Leisure and Hospitality grant’ (a relief for business rate payers) for Business Rates relief. Local authority should be writing to local business. Should we contact to see if we are entitled to any cash? Depends on ratable value.

Resolved: Clerk to contact Duncan Wilkinson to discuss applying for a grant. Cllr Geary to also see if he can find out any additional information for The Clerk.

13. To receive the Town Clerks report

A thankyou from the Mayor to Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk for the work for the Council since the Covid 'lockdown'.

The Town Clerk expands on each point on the report for the benefit of the Council.

2 decisions to be put forward for the Council to decide upon;

HR Committee propose: 1) employment of a FT caretaker with ad hoc cleaning duties for an F/T post 2) Contract for cleaning and cover for the post of the caretaker to go out to tender.

Dickens of a Christmas – The Town Clerk has requested feedback from the Council as what we intend to do about Dickens 2020, taking into account the current climate with Covid.

Cllr Bethune – states that she would have liked to have been consulted about this issue before it was put on the Town Clerks report.

Cllr Bethune believes that we should not yet make a decision and hold off for a couple of months.

Frequency of Council meetings – normal meeting pattern considered (i.e. once a month) and decided upon.

Resolved: Town Clerk to start preparing documents (tender documents, adverts) for employment of a caretaker and cleaner.

Dickens of a Christmas 2020 will go onto the agenda for the next month's meeting for further discussion.

Council meetings to go ahead once a month unless there are very few items on the agenda.