



Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

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Chairman: Cllr Paul Gilson | **Vice Chairman:** Cllr Andrew Wilkins

Town Clerk: Helen Symmons PSLCC



MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD REMOTELY TUESDAY 19th JANUARY 2021

Present: Cllrs: Mark Bromfield, David Bowry, Vinice Cowell, Doug Cracknell, Keith Evans, Anita Forde, Paul Gilson, Alan Hart, Jill Healey, Damian O'Boyle, Vivien Rosier, Emma Smith, Mike Wells and Andy Wilkins

Also in attendance: Helen Symmons (Town Clerk) and two members of the public

MINUTES

The meeting opened at 7.32 pm

54. CHAIRMAN'S VIRTUAL MEETING PROTOCOL ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman read the protocol and Councillors introduced themselves. The Chairman reminded Councillors of the Code of Conduct and read all the Nolan Principles.

55. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Mulroney

56. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Cllrs Evans declared a non-pecuniary interest as Southend Borough Councillors.

57. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING 10TH NOVEMBER 2020

The minutes of the meeting 10th November 2020 were agreed and will be signed by the Chairman at the next possible physical meeting of Council.

58. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

The Town Clerk read an email from the Manchester Drive Allotment Society Committee in relation to Agenda item 17.

59. REQUEST FROM CLLR BROMFIELD TO INSPECT MDAS TOILETS

The Chairman brought forward agenda item 17 and the matter was discussed fully. Following a proposal (Cllr Wilkins, seconded Cllr Wells) Council **RESOLVED** that Cllrs Bromfield and Cowell will attend and inspect the reasonable adjustments made to the existing toilet building to check it complies with the Equality Act 2010 and thus as a minimum to have disabled access to the building and the toilet (Minute 54 Council July 2017). The inspection is to be carried out when suitable in the current pandemic and in a responsible manner with a report submitted to Council thereafter.

60. SOUTHEND BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllr Evans in his capacity as a Southend Borough Councillor highlighted some current matters in the Borough. Following a query from Cllr Cracknell with regard to the pedestrian bridge at Chalkwell

Station and its connection with the closed Cinder Path, Cllr Evans will raise the concerns with Cllr Martin Terry and request that the Community Safety Officers circulate more.

61. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

There were none.

62. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk advised Council that a COVID testing centre had been set up by Government in the Elm Road car park. Cllr Evans informed the meeting that it was for appointments only. The Town Clerk let Councillors know that information would be circulated to them all following the Census 2021 presentation from the Borough Council.

COMMITTEES / PDGS AND REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS
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63. COMMITTEES – **Agenda Item 9**

a) **Planning, Highways & Licensing Committee**

The Chairman presented the minutes as per the Agenda which were **NOTED**.

b) **Community & Culture Committee**

The Chairman presented the minutes as per the Agenda which were **NOTED**

64. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PDG – **Agenda Item 10**

Cllr Smith provided an overview of the meeting and the quicker things that could be tackled in the immediate future by the Council. The subject was discussed.

Council **RESOLVED** to set up a working group along with the Marketing & Profile Officer and Events & Project Officer to formulate engagement guidelines to present to the Finance & Governance Committee in March and any recommendations as well to alter the current Statement of Intent – Community Engagement.

The following Councillors volunteered to be a part of the group: Cllrs Bowry, Evans, Forde, O'Boyle, Smith and Wilkins.

65. COVID EMERGENCY FUND

Council **NOTED** the report.

66. REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

No reports were made.

DECISION ITEMS

67. COMMITTEE VACANCIES – **Agenda item 13**

Cllr Evans is now a member of the Community & Culture Committee.

A vacancy still remains on Planning, Highways & Licensing Committee but Councillors may use the substitute system as per the Terms of Reference for the Committee.

68. MAGAZINE EDITOR & EDITORIAL GROUP – **Agenda item 14**

Council **RESOLVED** the process as recommended and Cllrs Forde, Smith and Wilkins volunteered to be on the Editorial Group with the Marketing & profile Officer as its Officer.

69. ANNUAL COMMUNITY MEETING – **Agenda item 15**

Council **RESOLVED** for the date to be changed to Friday 21st May 2021.

70. COUNCIL'S OPINION ON A BUS SHELTER MATTER - **Agenda Item 16**

Following discussion, the overall consensus was that the shelter was necessary and should stay. The Council **RESOLVED** for the Town Clerk to advise Southend Borough Council that only the panels should be changed but that the shelter should remain in situ.

71. TO NOTE INTERNAL ACCOUNT TRANSFERS AND APPROVE EXPENDITURE - **Agenda Item 18**

The Council **NOTED** the account transfers and **RESOLVED** the expenditure.

72. COUNCIL BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2021/22 – **Agenda item 19**

Whilst the Town Clerk had reduced the draft budget for recommendation of an annual increase in the precept by £1.17 for the year for a Band D property, a view was expressed that the precept should not rise in 2021/22 given the current circumstances. A discussion ensued and the Town Clerk advised where a further £10,000 reduction could be made. Cllr Bromfield requested a recorded vote.

Following a proposal (Cllr Wilkins, seconded Cllr Wells) Council **RESOLVED** to make the amendments suggested by the Town Clerk along with an additional amendment to reduce the budget for LCC refurbishment by £10,000 to £40,000 and thus to freeze the precept to £50.58 for a Band D property. There will therefore be no percentage increase.

Councillors voted as follows:

Hart	for
Healey	for
Evans	for
Bromfield	for
Wilkins	for
Cowell	for
O'Boyle	for
Bowry	for
Forde	for
Smith	for
Wells	for
Cracknell	for
Gilson	for

73. SALARY BUDGET 2021/22

The hard copy schedule will be signed by the Town Clerk and Chairman of the Council when circumstances permit.

74. COMMUNITY CENTRE DOORS – **Agenda item 21**

Discussion took place with comments made regarding the quotes obtained by the Town Clerk. Cllr Evans asked for it to be recorded that 'on more than one occasion tonight we have had some real disingenuous comments. I am happy for people to make comments but the way that they are made I actually find them quite offensive. We have had 2-3 digs at the Town Clerk which I feel is disingenuous, the attack on Cllr Smith which I felt was quite disingenuous. You (the Chairman) read the Nolan Principles in the beginning and I would just like to take a little bit of issue with our language to each other and I am sorry by I feel so strongly about that. Thank you'. The Chairman asked the Town Clerk to please make a note.

The Town Clerk highlighted that she had all the information from the door companies and therefore Council could go in to closed session if they wished to as details of contracts should not be discussed in the public domain. A proposal was not forthcoming. Cllr Bromfield requested a recorded vote.

Council **RESOLVED** the original quote of £7,838 to replace the doors as per the recommendation.

Councillors voted as follows:

Bowry	for
Hart	for
Evans	for
Bromfield	against
Wilkins	for
Healey	for
Forde	for
O'Boyle	for
Cowell	for
Smith	for
Wells	for
Cracknell	abstain
Gilson	abstain

FOR NOTING / CONSIDERATION

75. RESPONSE FROM SOUTHEND AIRPORT

Council **NOTED** the response. Cllr O'Boyle provided further background information stating that complaints against Southend Airport had gone up 1000% over the last year and felt that the response letter trivialised the impact on Leigh-on-Sea with perhaps the data being 'cherry picked'. He will make further points at the next consultative meeting as well as verifying environmental data and will raise that if relevant. General discussion ensued supporting the Council's continued approach and Cllr O'Boyle as the representative.

76. COUNCIL INCOME & EXPENDITURE BUDGET UPDATE AS AT 4TH JANUARY 2021

Council **NOTED** the budget.

77. COUNCIL BANK ACCOUNT BALANCES AS AT 6TH JANUARY 2021

Council **NOTED** the balances.

78. INTERNAL AUDIT

Council **NOTED** the report.

79. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Council **NOTED** the request.

80. CASUAL VACANCY – ST CLEMENTS WARD

Council **NOTED** the report.

81. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council **NOTED** all the items.

The meeting closed at 9.38 pm