

KEYNSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on Monday 14 July 2020 starting at 7.30pm by Zoom conferencing.

PRESENT: Councillors D Cooper (Chairman), T Crouch, A McGuinness, D Biddleston, B Simmons and A Wait

IN ATTENDANCE: Cheryl Scott – Town Clerk

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

To note the re-appointment of Councillor Deb Cooper as Chairman of the Committee for the Municipal Year 2020-2021, as agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council on 19 May 2020.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

To note the re-appointment of Councillor Andy McGuinness as Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the Municipal Year 2020-2021, as agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council on 19 May 2020.

3. MEMBERSHIP

RESOLVED

To note that Councillors Dave Biddleston, Deb Cooper, Tony Crouch, Andy McGuinness Brian Simmons, Allan Sinclair and Andy Wait are the appointed members of the Committee for the municipal year 2020/2021, as agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council on 19 May 2020.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED

To note the Committee's Terms of Reference as agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council on 19 May 2020.

5. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none

7. DISPENSATIONS

None

8. RECORD OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Personnel Cttee meeting held on 10th February 2020 (previously circulated) be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman. The Chairman signed the minutes in front of the camera

9. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none

10. RATIFICATION OF DELEGATED DECISION – TEMPORARY GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SUPPORT

The Clerk advised that there was new information associated with the item which could only be given to the Cttee under confidential business.

It was therefore

RESOLVED

To defer the matter until later in the Agenda and move on to item 11

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED

To note the next scheduled meeting (Annual Salary review) will be held on Tuesday 17th November 2020 at 7.30pm

12. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

that pursuant to the provision of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business by reason of the confidential nature of business to be transacted - to progress staffing issues.

13. TEMPORARY GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SUPPORT

The Clerk advised that two applications for the post had been received from members of staff but one had been received 24 hours after the deadline for applications.

RESOLVED

- (i) To ratify the decision to appoint a temporary position for 21hrs per week until end of September that the Clerk had taken under delegated powers
- (ii) That both applications be considered

14. As it was necessary for the Clerk to leave the meeting for item 13 it was therefore

RESOLVED

That Agenda Items 14 and 15 are considered before Item 13

15. USE OF TOWN COUNCIL STAFF TO ASSIST WITH B&NES CLOSURES OF KEYNSHAM HIGH STREET AND TOWN COUNCIL PLAY AREA MONITORING

The Committee was presented with a report from the Clerk in respect of costed options to operate the High Street Barriers and provide marshalling of the Upper Memorial Park play area from the contractors currently being used by B&NES to operate the Barriers in Milsom Street Bath and provide marshalling for the play area in Royal Victoria Park in Bath. An alternative option costing for employed staff was also provided.

The Cttee considered the implications of double taxation and the advice from the Council's solicitor in respect of possible legal challenge of a failure to comply with Public Sector

Equality Duty if the Town Council assisted with the closure rather than just endorsed B&NES proposal, but felt that this was a matter for the Town Council to determine

Various options were therefore discussed in respect of how resourcing the barriers could be undertaken and a final proposal for a new temporary post with litter picking duties 7 days a week was agreed.

In respect of play areas, the Committee members felt that the cost of £66-70k p.a. for one play area was prohibitive and that a campaign of educating the public on the social distancing and other requirements to play safely should be undertaken in the first instance.

The Cttee returned to the fact that B&NES were financing contractors for marshalling the main play area in Bath and felt that the Council should direct concerns to B&NES about the fact that they were paying for barrier operation and playground monitoring in Bath but expecting the Town Council and its taxpayers to fund these activities in Keynsham with no financial support.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO TOWN COUNCIL

- (i) That it is not cost-effective to provide staff to monitor/steward Upper Memorial Play area and therefore an intensive social media and advertising campaign to encourage safe social distancing and safe play should be undertaken
- (ii) If there continues to be a complete lack of observance of safe play requirements in Upper Memorial Park, then it would need to be closed.
- (iii) That the Town Council consider the creation of a new temporary staff post of 1.5hours in the morning and 1.5hours in the evening 7 days per week to operate the barriers and litter pick in Memorial Park at National Living Wage until 30th September with view to extension if required
- (iv) That the Town Council consider how they wish to address the implications specifically the issue of B&NES funding COVID-safe measures in Bath but expecting the Town Council (and Keynsham tax-payers) to fund similar services in Keynsham – a letter to B&NES was suggested to see if any financial assistance or support would be offered.

16. RETURN TO OFFICE WORKING

The Clerk requested comments and observations from the Committee to the developing proposals in respect of how staff could return to work in the office whilst ensuring they remain safe in respect of COVID.

The Clerk further advised that whilst it would be preferable for the staff to continue to work from home, the current level of overtime being worked by the two Senior Officers in order to fulfil the office-based duties listed in the report that were normally undertaken by the administrative staff was unsustainable and had now reached an unacceptable level of TOIL accrued.

The Cttee discussed the practicalities of the proposals in respect of the staff returning to the office and made various suggestions in respect of COVID-safe access to the office by members of the public.

The Clerk reassured the Committee their suggestions for one-to-one meetings with each member of staff was already being undertaken by the Deputy Town Clerk and that this would

be followed up with an offer to each member of staff to visit the office to see what precautions and practices were being put in place before any final decisions were made about who would be asked to return to the office.

When asked when everything would be in place, the Clerk replied that there were still a number of protocols to write and materials and supplies to source so the earliest anticipated date would be sometime in August.

RESOLVED

None – item for discussion only

17. The Clerk handed over hosting to the Chairman of the Committee and left the meeting

18. GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

The Chairman's report, previously circulated by the Chairman to members, was discussed and a series of recommendations were agreed.

RESOLVED

To make the recommendations agreed to Town Council for discussion at the next Town Council meeting under confidential business

SIGNED:..... (Chairman) Dated:.....

DRAFT