

KEYNSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on
Tuesday 22nd June 2021 in The Space at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors D Biddleston, C Brennan, C Buxton, D Cooper, C Fricker, A Greenfield, A Halliday, H MacFie, A McGuinness, A Ross, B Simmons and A Wait (Chairman)

IN ATTENDANCE: Cheryl Scott– Town Clerk and Dawn Drury - Deputy Town Clerk

NOT PRESENT Cllr D Brassington, A Sinclair and J Wallcroft

22. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr O'Brien (B&NES Ward Councillor)

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

24. DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

25. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none.

26. RECORD OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 5th May 2021 be deferred to the meeting on 22nd July for confirming as a true record and signing by the Chairman.

27. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) The Chair of Council reported that he had recently attended two public events: -

- (i) A publicity photoshoot on the High Street with Dan Norris, newly elected Mayor for WECA and Kevin Guy, Leader of Bath and North East Somerset Council. This was to promote the fact that WECA are providing most of the funds towards the Phase I part of the High Street works. The Chair also took the opportunity to talk to Dan Norris in respect of improvements to local cycle paths.
- (ii) The second outing was a photoshoot with the Bristol Bears female baseball team, who are in a national league, that hold their training sessions at the Chocolate Quarter Sports Pavilion fields. Cllr Wait was accompanied by Cllr Buxton to this event where Bristol Bears were hosting a national league event for five additional teams. An article in respect of this photoshoot appeared in the Bristol Post.

28. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BY MEMBERS

There were none.

29. KEYNSHAMNOW

The Chairman gave the report: -

- (a) KeynshamNow which is a small local group of young people continues to struggle for numbers but does have some very loyal regular attendees.
- (b) The groups will be having a stall at the CTKS Eco Festival on Saturday 18th September and will holding an Environmental online (to save the use of paper) quiz.
- (c) On 18th July KeynshamNow will be supporting a group of young people that are walking from Lands End to Glasgow, as part of the Covert 21 Climate Emergency event, and members will walk the section from Keynsham to Bath. The Baptist Church is to be used as a stop over place for the main walkers on the night of 17th July 2021.
- (d) The KeynshamNow Youth Charter is in its fourth draft. At the last meeting the young people decided that they did not like the word Charter, as they did not understand what it meant, so the document has now been re-named Ambitions.
- (e) KeynshamNow got involved in The Great British Clean Up on 13th June by litter picking locally.

RESOLVED

To receive and note the report from KeynshamNow.

30. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

- (a) KMFA: Cllr Brennan reported that the Music Festival would be going ahead but in a much smaller format, including more community/businesses involvement at venues (pubs and restaurants) on the High Street. Smaller performances will take place during the weekend of 4th/5th September.

RESOLVED

To receive and note the report from KMFA.

31. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND NOTES FROM CONSULTATIONS

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Date 2021</u>	<u>Status</u>
Finance & Policy Consultation	15 June	Notes
EATH Consultation	9 June	Notes
Environment & Sustainability Cons	25 May	Notes
Planning & Development Meeting	4 May	Notes
Consultation	10 May	Notes
Consultation	24 May	Notes
Personnel Cttee Meeting	29 April	APPROVED
Personnel Cttee Meeting	6 th May	DRAFT
Personnel Consultation	25 May	Notes
Personnel Cttee Meeting	9 June	DRAFT
Grants Consultation	16 June	Notes to follow

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Minutes of the above meetings are received and noted.
- (ii) That the recommendations that are not subsequent Town Council Agenda Items are approved.

32. DELEGATED ACTIONS SINCE LAST MEETING

In accordance with the Schedule of Delegation approved on 22nd April 2021, to ratify the delegated decisions taken by Senior Officers in consultation with Members as detailed below:

- a) Planning consultation responses (Deputy Town Clerk)
- b) Job descriptions for new staff (Town Clerk) – It was reported that this will come back to Personnel Committee for further consideration.
- c) Christmas Lights/Winter Festival (Deputy Town Clerk)
- d) List of recommendations drawn up for approval by Finance & Policy Cttee on 22nd June for immediate submission to this meeting of Town Council in connection with the Annual Return and Accounting Statements (Town Clerk)
- e) Grants to be awarded to Community Organisations for 2021/2022 (Deputy Town Clerk) – It was reported that an additional application has been received that was within the closure deadline and this will be dealt with under delegated powers in conjunction with Grants Committee and this will be ratified at the next Town Council meeting.
- f) CONFIDENTIAL - Item 33 (Deputy Town Clerk)

RESOLVED

To receive and note the delegated actions made since the last meeting.

MONTHLY FINANCE

33. SCHEDULE OF INVOICES DUE FOR PAYMENT APPROVED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS – MAY 2021 (MONTH 2)

RESOLVED

That the Schedule of Invoices be approved for payment.

34. KEYNSHAM MEMORIAL PARK FOOTBRIDGE

The Chair of Council reported that costs in respect of the bridge are escalating, and the bridge is in a very poor state. There have also be various changes in respect of the lead officer from B&NES on this project which has made getting information difficult. The latest update is that the bank on both sides is very crumbly and secure, particularly on the bandstand side. There is a huge amount of weight affecting this side structurally. Currently there are plans for one temporary solution and possibly to permanent solutions for fixing that are being considered.

The bridge problems were highlighted to Kevin Guy during his visit to Keynsham and he was informed this is one matter on the Town Council's list of items needing resolution as soon as possible.

The temporary solution is the installation of a ramp from the small play area across the river meeting with the wide section of the footpath on the other side. This is not an ideal solution as it is expensive and the ramp would need checking every day.

Other alternatives are a short (approximately 10 year) fix costing about £350,000 or a more permanent fix in the region of £1,000,000.00.

Currently, there is a lot of negative comments on social media in respect of the time that it is taking to resolve the bridge problem. The Town Council giving an update on the website and Facebook and sharing to other community groups would be helpful.

A suggestion was made that the Town Clerk write to B&NES stating that the residents of Keynsham are concerned in respect of the bridge delays and requesting projected timelines and providing this information to the community. Also, a report from B&NES for inclusion in a future Keynsham News was suggested.

An explanation or signage detailing alternative routes to the other side of the river was also suggested.

RESOLVED

- (i) That a letter be written to B&NES letting them know that the residents are significantly discomforted with the lack of information and time that it is taking to get the bridge repaired. Also, point out to B&NES that it would be useful to provide alternative route signage for the safety of the public and offering them the opportunity to have an article in Keynsham News that will go to every household.
- (ii) That a request be made to B&NES to attend a future Town Council meeting to discuss their plans, as soon as they have someone in post that is leading on this project.

35. UPDATE COVID RISK ASSESSMENT AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

The Town Clerk reported that: -

The Town Council has a continually involving COVID risk assessment due to the rapid changes in restrictions and regulations.

There has not been one case of COVID within the Councillors or staff that has been a result of Town Council activities. Councillors and staff were thanked for following the guidelines, being sensible and support in helping the Town Council achieve this.

The Delta variation and long COVID is still an issue of concern.

With restrictions possibly being lifted on 19th July the Town Council needs to have plans in place in respect of many of its activities, including do people want to rush back into face-to-face meetings when COVID case numbers are once again on the rise?

The Government are still not making moves to allow meetings to be held virtually, even though Wales has passed such legislation making such meetings legal. Steps have been taken through the recent consultation to make the Government aware of the views of Town and Parish Councils.

This document is giving a series of mitigation measures and further information for discussion and for the Town Council to decide what to do. Do we continue with face-to-face meetings, if so, what precautions should be put in place to protect everyone at those meetings, or do we continue with virtual consultations with delegated powers to the Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk?

The Clerk reported that 2.9% of people that contract COVID go on to suffer long COVID and there are some members and staff that cannot have the vaccinations for one reason or another. Also, there are degrees of protection between the vaccinations on offer. The matter of self-isolation was also explained in respect of when and how.

The risk assessment and plan contain a series of mitigation measures including the wearing of FFP2/FFP3 masks at meetings/for undertaking workplace activities, using alcohol spray, social distancing indoors (2m for 15 minutes without a mask) and lateral flow testing.

A decision needs to be made whether Councillors want to wear masks at meetings, take LFT tests and have virtual consultations, face-to-face meetings or hybrid meetings. The procedure for Finance and Policy Committee meetings was explained.

Risk Assessment

RESOLVED

That the risk assessment be approved with the addition of a request that a Lateral Flow Test be undertaken 48 hours before any Town Council meeting.

Mitigation measures

RESOLVED

That the mitigation measures be approved, with the addition that best alternatives to the suggested masks can be used, if a suitable fit cannot be found and that there will be no requirement for those with an exemption certificate to wear a mask at Town Council meetings.

Meetings

It was explained that the Council runs the risk that any decision made could be declared unlawful and challenged by judicial review, it means that any contracts or agreements that need signing will be invalid because there has not been a proper fully constituted meeting and Council's need to be seen to acting lawfully and transparently and the Internal Auditor would spot meetings that are not being held lawfully.

Virtual meetings, face to face meetings and hybrid meetings were discussed fully.

It was explained that to hold a consultation followed by a face-to-face meeting to legally confirm any decisions would result in over 100 meetings for staff. It was made clear that a delegated decision made by the Town/Deputy Town Clerk cannot be overturned just ratified at a face-to-face Town Council meeting.

RESOLVED

That all committee meetings apart from Finance and Policy will be held as consultations and powers for these meeting will be delegated to the Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk.

That Finance and Policy Committee meetings or any others, as required, will be held as a consultation in the initial stages, followed by a short face to face meeting to ratify the decisions.

That Planning and Development Committee meeting will be held as face-to-face meetings.

All delegated decisions made at Committee meetings to be ratified at the next a face-to-face Town Council meeting.

That the above to be reviewed after 6 months or as the risk assessment informs.

That through a working party in the New Year, a way forward in respect of hybrid meetings be resolved.

36. END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS AND ANNUAL RETURN SUBMISSION

A) RISK MANAGEMENT, INTERNAL CONTROL AND ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The following items were considered in order to enable the Town Council to take a view on the Assertions it will be required to make on the Annual Return.

(i) INTERNAL AUDITORS FINAL REPORT (2020/2021) AND COMPLETION OF ANNUAL RETURN INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The Internal Auditor has completed the Year End Audit and has signed the Annual Return Report.

The recommendation concerning the adjustment of the asset register to include the mower purchased in March 2021 has been implemented by the RFO.

The Internal Auditor has also observed the importance that the Town Council continues to stay focused on its intention to recruit a full-time Finance Officer.

RESOLVED

That the Internal Audit report and recommendation be approved.

(ii) STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

Following review of the Statement, the Clerk recommended the Statement was signed by the Chair of Finance Cttee for submission to Town Council.

RESOLVED

That the Statement of Internal Control be approved and signed by the Chair of Council.

(iii) ANNUAL RETURN 2020/2021 – ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Town Council is required to INDIVIDUALLY approve the 8 Assertions of the Annual Governance Statement which is then signed by the Chairman and Town Clerk. JPAG Guidance provides details of what elements of the Town Council's activities need to be reviewed against each of the Assertions before approval can be given. Councillors are requested to review the statements with a view to a recommendation to Council on whether each assertion should be approved. Assertion 9 is not applicable to the Town Council.

RESOLVED

That the Assertions 1-8 are approved.

END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS AND ANNUAL RETURN ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

(iv) 2021/2022 BUDGET WITH ACTUAL 2020/21 END OF YEAR FIGURES

With the completion of Year End 2020/2021, the Council's approved 2021/2022 budget spreadsheets, together with actual year-end figures for 2020/2021 and historic financial information, are circulated for noting and ongoing reference throughout the financial year.

RESOLVED

To note receipt of the 2021/2022 budget with actual 2020/21 end of year figures.

(v) BUDGET MONITORING REPORT – YEAR END – MONTH 12 (attached)

This is the final Year End Budget Monitoring Report following the completion of year end procedures. To consider the report, noting surpluses and deficits with the following recommendations:

RESOLVED

- (i) To approve the Budget Monitoring Report.
- (ii) That the Town Council (via Planning & Development Cttee and Finance & Policy Cttee) must in future make every effort to monitor existing and proposed s106 agreements agreed between B&NES and developers for larger scale development in Keynsham, to ensure the Town Council is consulted and that the best outcomes for Keynsham are obtained from s106 contributions, including before new agreements are signed.

(vi) MOVEMENT TO AND FROM GENERAL & EARMARKED RESERVES (attached)

In accordance with the decisions of the Town Council throughout 2020/2021, the report shows movement to and from general and ear-marked reserves in respect of surpluses and transfers.

RESOLVED

- (i) To approve the closing balance of earmarked and general reserves as at 31st March 2021 including transfer of surpluses.
- (ii) To note the proposed list of drawdowns to support the current year's expenditure as approved by the Town Council in January 2021.
- (iii) That the preliminary work required to progress the possible office move be expedited as soon as is practically possible in order to be considered at the September Finance & Policy Meeting

(vii) ANNUAL BANK RECONCILIATION

The Annual Bank Reconciliation is attached for discussion. Individual bank statements and reconciliations for the various accounts throughout the year are available for inspection by appointment with the office.

RESOLVED

That the Annual Bank Reconciliation for submission to the External Auditor be approved.

(viii) STATUTORY BALANCE SHEET– 2020/2021

The Responsible Financial Officer has submitted the Balance Sheet for the year ending 31st March 2021 for submission with the Annual Return.

RESOLVED

That the Balance Sheet 2020/2021, for signing by the Chairman of the Town Council and submission to the External Auditor, be approved.

(ix) STATUTORY INCOME/EXPENDITURE STATEMENT 2020/2021

The Statutory Income and Expenditure statement is submitted by the Responsible Financial Officer for consideration prior to publication on the website.

RESOLVED

That the statement for publication and submission to the External Auditor be approved.

(x) ANNUAL RETURN 2020/2021 – ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

The completed Accounting Statements (Part 2 of the Annual Return) is submitted by the Responsible Financial Officer for consideration prior to submission to the External Auditor.

RESOLVED

That the Accounting Statements for 2020/2021 to be signed by the Chairman of the Town Council at the Town Council meeting be approved.

(xi) ANNUAL RETURN 2020/2021– ACCOMPANYING SCHEDULES

The Town Council is required to complete accompanying schedules when submitting the Annual Return. In addition, the Town Council has to submit the Notice of Public Rights with correct dates.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Schedule of Significant Variations be approved.
- (iii) That the Bank Reconciliation with reference to Box 8 be approved.
- (iii) That the the Reserves Reconciliation with reference to Boxes 7 and 8 be approved
- (iv) That the Notice of Public Rights and accompanying s26/27 explanation for submission with the Annual Return be approved.

(xii) ANNUAL RETURN 2020/2021– INTERMEDIATE LEVEL REVIEW

As the Town Council's total gross income or expenditure is greater than £200,000 then it automatically meets the requirements for an intermediate level review and the following additional information in support of one of the assertions must accompany the Annual Return

- Evidence that the authority is registered as an employer with HMRC.

JPAG (2020) s 5.48-5.54 refers in respect of the Council's obligations re employment.

RESOLVED

The material to be submitted be approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

37. SCHEDULE OF INVOICES DUE FOR PAYMENT – JUNE 2021 (MONTH 3)

RESOLVED:

That the Schedule of Invoices be approved for payment.

38. FINANCE MONTHLY REPORTS

- a. Schedule of Expenditure - Months 1 & 2 (April/May)
- b. Bank Reconciliation - Months 1 & 2 (April/May)
- c. Petty Cash Expenditure - Months 1 & 2 (April/May)
- d. Journals - Months 1 & 2 (April/May)
- e. Budget Monitoring Report- Months 1 & 2 (April/May)
- f. Youth Finances - Months 1 & 2 (April/May)

RESOLVED:

To defer the above reports for consideration at the July meeting.

39. UPDATE ON YOUTH SERVICE

There was none.

40. CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

- a) High Street Disabled Parking.

RESOLVED

That the correspondence be noted.

41. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED

To note that the date for the Town Council's next meeting of the Town Council, is **Thursday 22nd July 2021** at 7.30pm in the Space.

42. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RECOMMENDATION:

In accordance with Standing Order 3(d) to RESOLVE 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. Item 33 to progress staffing issues.

43. LETTER FROM TOWN CLERK

RESOLVED

- (i) That a response to a letter received from the Town Clerk be approved.
- (ii) That recommendations from Personnel Cttee meeting of 9th June 2021 be approved.
- (iii) That delegated decisions be ratified.
- (iv) That Personnel Committee have power to negotiate in respect of this matter to an agreed sum.

The meeting finished at 22.15 p.m.

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

DRAFT