

## **LISKEARD TOWN COUNCIL**

**AT A MEETING** of the **TOWN COUNCIL** held remotely on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 7.30 p.m. there were included:

The Mayor – Councillor Rachel Brooks – in the chair.

Councillors – David Ambler, Ian Barlow, Simon Cassidy, Sally Hawken, Jane Pascoe, Sue Shand, Julian Smith and Naomi Taylor.

Town Clerk – Steve Vinson

Mayors Chaplain – Rebecca Bell

Responsible Financial Officer and Deputy Town Clerk - Yvette Hayward

Facilities Manager - Jacqui Orange

Technical Support – Kailan Blanks

Member of the Public – Nick Craker (Cornwall Councillor).

Rebecca Bell led the council and members of the public in saying special prayers for the town and council in the context of the Coronavirus.

**530/19 APOLOGIES** – The Deputy Mayor Councillor Mitchell, Councillors Clarke, Goldsworthy and Powell.

### **531/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS, REGISTERABLE AND NON-**

**REGISTERABLE** – Councillor Ambler in Agenda Item 9 Schedule of Payments Pckernow BACS payment £90 and as Chair of the Forum possibly Agenda Item 8c Social Emergency Fund.

### **532/19 MAYOR'S REMARKS** –

I don't know how you're feeling but, as we face this unprecedented situation, I have all sort of emotions.

I'm worried about family and friends and how schooling at home is going to work. At times I feel overwhelmed by the uncertainty and potential scale of the challenges

I'm also hopeful when I see how many people are stepping up to take action and make offers of help. In Liskeard we already have effective organisations run by capable and caring people and good links, which we can strengthen.

And I'm determined to do what I can to make a difference. I don't know how much of that you share but I'm pretty sure we all share the determination for the Town Council to do what it can to provide leadership to collaborate with others and do the right things as an employer, landlord and operator of facilities. We're probably going to have different views about how to do it, which is very healthy, but let's start our discussions knowing we share a commitment to help and support local people.

I'm really glad we've been able to make this video conference work. But operating in this way is new to most of us so let's bear with each other while we learn to operate with unfamiliar technology. In particular bear with me. I'm going to try to go slowly and carefully and err on the side of making sure everyone is heard. If at any point you can't hear properly, or something is confusing please message.

**533/19 TO RECEIVE AND ADOPT THE MINUTES OF THE 25<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2020**

**COUNCIL MEETING:** – The Mayor proposed, Councillor Smith seconded, and the Council **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the minutes of the Council meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

**534/19 NOMINATIONS FOR DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE 2020/2021 CIVIC YEAR**

As indicated in a previously circulated e-mail, Councillor Naomi Taylor has chosen to withdraw her nomination. Therefore, the remaining nominee Councillor Sandra Mitchell will be Deputy Mayor for the 2020/2021 civic year.

**535/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** – No speakers.

**536/19 TOWN CLERK'S UPDATE – ITEMS FROM 25<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2020**

Further to the written report including the telephone conference scheduled for 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020, the Community Lead Local Development Programme Manager Judith Hann had been in contact to confirm that work on project applications could continue and guidance on the impact of the Coronavirus on the timetable would be issued when known.

**537/19 CORONAVIRUS REPORT:**

**A. SCHEME OF DELEGATION / BUSINESS CONTINUITY**

Following confirmation that a list of decisions would be kept, and the resolution would last for a period of three months, the Mayor proposed, Councillor Ambler seconded, and the Council **RESOLVED** That the Council delegates authority to the Clerk (RFO / Deputy Town Clerk and Facilities Manager depending upon the area of service responsibility and availability through sickness) in consultation with the Mayor (Deputy Mayor and Chair or Vice Chair of the relevant service committee and availability through sickness) to take any actions necessary with associated expenditure to protect the interests of the community and ensure council business continuity during the period of the pandemic Coronavirus, informed by consultation with the members of the council.

**B. CONDUCTING COUNCIL BUSINESS ELECTRONICALLY**

The Town Clerk updated that the Government was presently progressing a Coronavirus Bill through parliament included at Clause 20 was the power to permit local authorities, including Town Council's to make decisions remotely.

It was agreed to hold monthly remote meetings of the Council.

### **C. FULFILLING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS AND AUTHORISING PAYMENTS**

The Responsible Financial Officer /Deputy Town Clerk explained, that following the receipt of further advice the agenda and the holding of the 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020 Planning Committee would now be done remotely.

In addition, the electronic circulation of the Schedule of Payments could be undertaken with a number of days for councillors to respond with questions or comments.

Both these measures were supported by Council.

### **D. CRITICAL SERVICES / E. MANAGEMENT OF COUNCIL FACILITIES**

Following the “stay at home” advice from the previous day, it was reported that:

- Public Hall – and its letting rooms, the Mayors Parlour and Council Chamber were now closed. – Caretaking would check the buildings and the park on a rota basis.
- Foresters Hall – the Museum, TIC and shop were now closed – The till is being reprogrammed and other information provided and the website updated from the staff members’ homes.
- Town Council offices – were now closed – the Town Council was still contactable via e-mail and telephone. The website would be updated and social media posts would be made. The staff are working from home.
- Parks – access for walking was being maintained but the play equipment was out of bounds.
- Toilets – Sun girt and Dean Street were closed – Westbourne only was open to enable homeless people to have access to the facilities.

Councillor Cassidy proposed, Councillor Hawken seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to adopt a model landlord approach and offer support through [a rent holiday](#) to tenants at the Guildhall suffering hardship in the current trading conditions.

### **F. BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

Councillor Smith proposed, Councillor Ambler seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to increase the amount indicated in Financial Regulation 4.1 to £5,000 and in Financial Regulation 4.5 to £15,000.

Following extensive discussion, the Mayor proposed, Councillor Hawken seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** that the Council set up a Social Emergency Fund, initially of £20,000, to support applications from organisations offering immediate help and support to isolated people in need. The Fund should take account of the emerging guidance on the Government resources being allocated to Cornwall Council. (Support to individuals). The form itself should be shortened and the application and decision-making process should be quick.

#### **G. WIDER COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

The event on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 had generated a lot of useful ideas. The key conclusions were:

- We will work together, no one needs to solve a problem alone.
- This is a marathon not a sprint. Need to maintain community resilience.
- Key need is to reach those not online. Town Council will produce and distribute a leaflet to all local households.
- Food to those in need and the pastoral needs across our community were seen as our top priorities. Foodbank, Real Junk Food Project and Café Abundance to coordinate around food.
- Our route to escalating issues is through our Community Link Officer & Covid19@cornwall.gov.uk
- Volunteer activity needs to be managed safely for residents and volunteers. Recommending sign up to Volunteer Cornwall who can match support needs and offers of help sustainably.  
<https://www.volunteercornwall.org.uk/coronavirusvolunteer>
- Communications need to be messages from trusted sources, reinforcing positive behaviours and keeping morale up. If in doubt to check in with each other before sharing something on social media.

#### **H. HUMAN RESOURCES**

The Council confirmed its commitment to continue to employ staff during the period of the Coronavirus crisis.

## **RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER (RFO) REPORTS 9-10**

**538/19 SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS** – Councillor Smith proposed, Councillor Cassidy seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments.

**539/19 STAFF MOBILES** – Councillor Smith proposed, Councillor Cassidy seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the option proposed by our present provider.

**540/19 WASTE MANAGEMENT – REMOVAL OF RECYCLING BINS** – Proposed approach to delegated Working Party approved.

**541/19 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING** – None. (post meeting note – remote Council to follow monthly – on the Finance, Economic Development and General Purposes Committee and Town Council draft dates?)

The Mayor proposed, Councillor Smith seconded, and the Council **RESOLVED** to move into PARTII.

### **542/19 PART II - PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 and having regard to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of Business:

**ROUNDBURY PARK – LAND ACQUISITION** - to note the update from the agent.

**LAND AT WELL LANE** – to consider next steps.

**LAND AT MAUDLIN FARM** – to consider next steps following the preliminary investigation report.

**COODES LEGAL ADVICE** – to report the advice obtained from the Solicitor.

### **543/19 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 and having regard to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, the Press and Public were readmitted to the meeting.

The Mayor proposed, Councillor Ambler seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the resolution.

**ROUNDBURY PARK – LAND ACQUISITION** – noted.

**LAND AT WELL LANE** – check as suggested. Approach after Coronavirus

**LAND AT MAUDLIN FARM** – check as suggested and report further.

**COODES LEGAL ADVICE** – adopt the advice of the Solicitor.

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