

HONITON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the Town Council held Via Zoom on Monday 27th July 2020 at 7.00 pm

Present

St Michael's Ward

Cllr J Taylor
Cllr J Zarczynski (Chairman)
Cllr J McNally
Cllr L Dolby
Cllr M Pollington

St Paul's Ward

Cllr R Coombs
Cllr C Kolek
Cllr P Carrigan
Cllr C Gilson

In attendance

Heloise Marlow, Deputy Town Clerk
30 plus Members of the public

PART A

20/01 The Chairman welcomed Councillors and members of the public who were attending via ZOOM and confirmed that the meeting would be recorded.

20/02 To adopt supplementary standing orders to meet the statutory requirements for the holding of remote meetings

The Deputy Clerk explained that the supplementary standing orders needed to be adopted to allow the meeting to proceed as a remote meeting.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt the supplementary standing orders.

20/03 To receive apologies for absence

Cllr V Howard

The Deputy Clerk advised that Cllr Howard had given her apologies and was seeking acceptance of these apologies under the six-month rule. The reason provided was as a result of ill-health.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept Cllr Howard's apologies for reason of ill health.

20/04 To receive declarations of interest and receipt of requests for new DPI dispensations on items on the agenda

None received.

20/05 To note the grant of dispensations made by the Town Clerk in relation to the business of this meeting.

None were made.

20/06 Public question time on items on the agenda

Mr Burgess raised the following question:

Agenda Item 6 – Approval of expenditure etc for 2019-2020

In the budget for the last financial year, the council budgeted £1576 for legal fees but spent £42,242.

*The budget for this year shows £1500 as projected expenditure on legal fees but with the Bailey's Dispute on-going this is not a realistic figure. **What is the actual expenditure on legal fees that the council is expecting this year?***

Cllr Zarczynski responded advising that he could not answer the question as the Baileys Partnership dispute was still ongoing and was an item for discussion on the agenda. The Council would be considering three possible options relating to the dispute but until Members had voted on which option to pursue, he was unable to advise as to whether any further legal costs would be incurred in relation to this matter.

Mr Burgess queried this further on the basis that Honiton Town Council may already have spent the allocated £1500 in the first three months of 2020/21 and suggested that Honiton Town Council should review its budget figure upwards.

Cllr Zarczynski advised that Council can be faced with unexpected legal costs and had to make provision for this. However, he was hoping to see an end to legal costs being incurred. He hoped to be in a position to answer the question in more detail at the Full Council meeting in August.

Mr Jeffrey Middleton raised the following question:

Since the pandemic took hold, venues like the Beehive have had to close, which has had a huge effect on their finances. So can I have some assurance from you tonight, Mr Mayor, that HTC will get behind the Beehive and support them both financially and also in the local media. Otherwise I fear, Honiton could lose their arts centre altogether?

Cllr Zarczynski confirmed that he had met several times with the new Chair of HCC and Honiton Town Council has always supported the Beehive. Honiton Town Council had received a very concerning letter from HCC that day which would be discussed later in Part B but he was hoping tonight for an agreement to keep the item in Part A for the next meeting. Cllr Zarczynski agreed that the Beehive was an

asset to Honiton and that he had fought hard to have the building build despite some opposition and was appointed as the Cllr representative to oversee the build

Cllr Kolek relayed the following question received from a member of the public which was addressed to the Mayor:

In your interview with Nub News, and also referred to this evening, you have stated that you have had a number of meetings with Serena Sexton. Could you state how many meetings?

Cllr Zarczynski confirmed that he had had 2 recent meetings with Mrs Sexton and a telephone conversation with her before the recent Trustee's meeting and that Mrs Sexton would like to meet again. He is currently waiting to hear from her with regards to this.

20/07 To review and approve the detailed Income & Expenditure Report for the year ending 31st March 2020 and the Receipt and Payments reports for October 2019, November 2019, December 2019, January 2020 and February 2020.

The Deputy Clerk confirmed that these reports had been on the website since April and had been emailed to all Cllrs at the same time, so all Members had had sight of these reports. The reports were prepared by a third party as she had not received the necessary training to produce the reports. However the Deputy Clerk would endeavour to answer any queries raised by Members and hoped that Members would be able to approve the reports which would then allow her to move on to dealing with income and expenditure reports for April onwards so that these can be on the agenda for the meeting on the 10th August.

Cllr Zarczynski thanked the Deputy Clerk for all the work she had done with regards to getting these accounts out and the work done in preparation for the internal audit.

Cllr Taylor advised that he was abstaining from voting as he had queries regarding some payments and whether they were proper or not. However, it would not be right to raise those queries tonight.

Cllr Coombs advised that he was abstaining as he did not believe there had been enough scrutiny as there had not been enough meetings of the Finance and Policy Committee.

Cllr Gilson advised that she was abstaining as there had been no finance meetings during the year.

Cllr Kolek advised that she was abstaining as she had not had the opportunity to review the accounts and as such could not approve them and apologised for this.

Cllr Zarczynski advised that he was abstaining as there had been insufficient scrutiny of the accounts as there had only been one Finance and Policy meeting during the year.

Members **RESOLVED** by a majority vote of 3 votes in favour with 6 abstentions to approve the detailed Income & Expenditure Report for the year ending 31st March

2020 and the Receipt and Payments reports for October 2019, November 2019, December 2019, January 2020 and February 2020.

Proposed by Cllr Carrigan and seconded by Cllr Dolby.

20/08 Part B items

It was proposed to take items 7, 8 and 9 into Part B of the meeting that deals with exempt business. This was **RESOLVED** by a majority vote of 7 for with 2 against.

Proposed by Cllr Zarczynski and seconded by Cllr Gilson

Mrs Sexton then spoke to advise that she understood why the item relating to HCC has been moved to Part B. However, if there were any issues regarding the Charity and the letter submitted she would be very happy to speak with Cllrs either at a meeting to be arranged at their convenience or at the next Full Council meeting. Also, regarding the payments received from Honiton Town Council mention has been made of a subsidy. She wanted to clarify that the Beehive building is owned totally by the Town Council. Any mortgage payments are paid by the Council and have nothing to do with HCC who are in effect the managing agents for the services provided in the Beehive. This is not a subsidy as none of these monies are paid to HCC. She thanked Cllr Zarczynski for meeting with her to try and resolve the problems relating to future funding and she was looking forward to receiving HTC's response to the letter sent.

The meeting went into confidential session at 7.30pm

PART B

20/09 Bailey Partnership Dispute

The Deputy Clerk set out the options available which were discussed by Members.

Members **RESOVLED** that the matter be deferred to the Finance and Policy Committee for further discussion.

Proposed by Cllr Zarczynski and seconded by Cllr Coombs.

Motion carried by 7 votes to 2.

20/10 Honiton Community Complex and The Beehive

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to defer this matter to the Full Council meeting on 10th August and for the item to be discussed in Part A.

Proposed by Cllr Zarczynski and seconded by Cllr McNally

20/11 HR and current staffing matters

Members made 4 confidential resolutions relating to HR and current staffing matters.

20/12 To close the meeting

The meeting was closed at 9.15pm.