

OTC/05/20

Oswestry Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on Wednesday 23rd September 2020 at 7.00 pm via video conferencing using Zoom.

Present: The Mayor, Councillor D Kerr
Councillors S Best, P A Cherrington, M Coppock,
V Hunt, M Isherwood, M Jones, L Maguire, S Mason, D
P Milner, R Radford, O Rose and C Schofield.

In the Chair: Up to Item 3: The Deputy Mayor, Councillor M Jones
During Item 3 and onwards: The Mayor, Councillor D
Kerr

In attendance: Arren Roberts – Town Clerk
Simon Cranmer – Operations Manager
Sandra Trevor – Office Manager
Jim Creed – The Qube
One member of the Public
One member of the Press

Public Session

For 15 minutes previous to the commencement of the meeting, members of the public were invited to question the Council on local issues, etc. Questions to be answered by Mayor, Chairmen of Standing Committees, or Town Clerk.

There were no questions from the members of the public in attendance.

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92. Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Councillor B Edwards – work commitments

Councillor R Evans – hospital

Councillor N Hughes – work commitments

Councillor J Price – family commitments

Absent from the meeting:

Councillor J Moore

Resolved the apologies be accepted.

93. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

To receive declarations under consideration on this agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 s32 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

Councillor Radford expressed a pecuniary interest in **Item Number 14 Oswestry Markets and Events Update.**

94. Speaker

Jim Creed, Arts Development Officer from Oswestry Community Action, Qube, was in attendance and provided a presentation to Members giving a short overview of the Art projects and a number of projects involving young people since lockdown began in March. This included:

Get Creative

Qube's 2.6 Challenge

Creativity in Isolation

Good things to do at Home

Film Making for Creative Practitioners

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All projects were promoted with good publicity, marketing and PR via social media, with hard copy material for those not online, and emergency funding and support had been received since lockdown in March. 550 members of Dial A Ride had been offered shopping support via Morrisons during lockdown and, although Dial A Ride restarted last month, they were not yet to full capacity and only operating three times a week. The Qube had now re-opened, as well as the Arts Open Exhibition 2020.

A Building Better Opportunities project would be available for those who were made unemployed during lockdown, but the current Government Rule of Six prevents any support at the moment.

In terms of Youth Projects, the Qube offer creative activities and are currently developing a series of Young Writers workshops for 2021 in conjunction with Pentabus Rural Theatre Company, and Oswestry Youth Collective Music, a young person centred project for young musicians aged between 13 and 17 years of age.

The Mayor, who had experienced technical difficulties, joined the meeting during the presentation and thanked Mr Creed for his very informative and excellent presentation.

95. Minutes

Minutes of a meeting held on:

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Were confirmed and signed.

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96. To Answer Any Questions

To answer any questions in accordance with Standing Orders upon which formal notice has been given.

Resolved to note no questions were asked.

97. Shropshire Council Matters

Update from local Shropshire Councillors V Hunt, D P Milner and J Price on any policies, consultation or general matter relating to Shropshire Council.

Members were informed by Councillor V Hunt that recycling had increased by 23% in Shropshire during lockdown and flu jabs were now available for the over 50's.

Councillor Milner reported that he would be meeting the Police and Crime Commissioner on 1st October 2020 to discuss ways of resolving the issue of "boy racers" in Oswestry. He also informed Members that Shropshire Council would be reviewing their car parking charges in Beatrice Street which could benefit local residents significantly.

98. Investment Analysis

Report **TC/3903/20** from the Finance Officer set out the Investment Income for the period up to 31st July 2020.

A discussion took place concerning the transferring of funds to banks who offer the best rates of interest

It was **resolved** to note report **TC/3903/20** and to request the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer to review the investment fund portfolio and to make recommendations accordingly.

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99. Sundry Creditors

To adopt the below Statements of Accounts approved for payment by The Chairman/Vice-Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee:

- SC/555a/20 - 15th July 2020
- SC/556/20 - 1st August 2020
- SC/557/20 - 14th August 2020
- SC/558/20 - 1st September 2020

A question was raised regarding a payment of £57.07 on **SC/557/20** for Mayoral T-shirts. The Mayor informed Members that the t-shirts remain the property of Oswestry Town Council and were not personal property. The Town Clerk informed Members that approval for the use of the common seal was only needed for requests by outside organisations.

It was also **resolved** to adopt the Statements as listed.

100. Analysis Actual Income and Expenditure (all Committees)

Report **TC/3921/20** from the Finance Officer was set out in the form of an Analysis of Actual Income and Expenditure to 31st August 2020.

Resolved to note the update.

101. Performance Monitoring

Committees have a key role in monitoring the performance of the Council services and it is important that this level of scrutiny is maintained by elected Members. Elected Members considered a number of reports from the Responsible Finance Officer and it was **resolved** to note:

- Report **TC/3923/20** covering Market Performance;

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- Report **TC/3922/20** covering Car Parking Analysis;
- Report **TC/3925/20** covering Smithfield Throughput; and
- Report **TC/3926/20** covering Car Parks Pay & Display Enforcement.

It was further **resolved** to write off £667 bad debts for unrecoverable excess charge notices for 2019/20/

102. Oswestry CCTV – Vehicle Monitoring Industrial Estate Areas

Report **TC/3930/20** from the Town Clerk asked Members to consider a request and proposal from Oswestry BID for the installation of software which would allow for the monitoring of vehicle movement patterns through the industrial estate.

Resolved approve the installation of the software as recommended in report **TC/3930/20**.

103. Mile End Roundabout Footbridge

Council considered an email from WSP, acting on behalf of Shropshire Council regarding the consultation on a proposed footbridge across the northern A5 arm of the Mile End Junction.

It was **resolved** the Town Council would reiterate their previous support for a footbridge.

104. Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service are consulting on its draft Integrated Risk Management Plan 2021-25 and welcomed the view of Members.

The consultation began on 6th July and concludes at 5.00 pm on 30th September 2020.

Resolved to note the consultation.

105. Oswestry Programme of Events (including Civic Ceremonial)

Report **TC/3931/20** from the Town Clerk, and Retail Markets & Events Manager asked Council to consider its programme of events for the remainder of the Financial Year.

Councillor R Radford, who had declared a pecuniary interest, left the meeting at the start of this agenda item.

It was noted that new Government guidance had been provided since the reports had been submitted to Council and Members did not want to encourage social gatherings. Therefore, after discussion it was **resolved** that:

- The Bonfire and Fireworks evening would be cancelled;
- A dignified and respectful scaled back Remembrance Sunday would go ahead;
- A virtual Christmas Light Switch On would be arranged;
- The plans for an alternative Christmas Music Live would be revisited and any proposals agreed in consultation with the Mayor.

106. Oswestry Markets and Events Update

Members received report **TC/3934/20** from the Retail Markets & Events Manager which contained an overview of market activities and information about future events.

It was **resolved** to note report **TC/3934/20** and to invest in tables and chairs for the front of Powis Hall to produce an attractive visitor space as already proven on Festival Square.

It was also **resolved** that regular traders would attend the monthly market using the Bailey Head.

107. Schedule of Meetings and Council Committees

Members were asked to note that the Finance and General Purposes Committee have a specific responsibility to consider requests for financial assistance through the Grant Scheme and a meeting had therefore been arranged for Monday 5th October 2020 to give elected Members an opportunity to determine the applications received to date. In order to help manage Council business and workload, any other relevant matters would also be brought forward for consideration.

Members were also reminded that the Council has a scheme of delegation in place, which sees its responsibilities discharged or delegated through a Committee structure. Whilst this has been on hold due to the Covid pandemic, it was thought to be opportune (in preparation for the new Council in 2021) for the Council to review its Committee structures. Whilst any changes would need to be agreed by Full Council it would be prudent to request the Chairmen's Group to review the Committee structure and by default the Council's scheme of delegation.

It was **resolved** to note that the Finance & General Purposes Committee would hold a meeting on Monday 5th October 2020 and a meeting would be arranged for the Chairmen's Group to discuss the Committee structures.

108. High Winds Policy

Council were asked to adopt the High Winds Policy as submitted.

After discussion concerning the need for various wind speeds according to seasons, it was **resolved** that the Policy would be

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adopted but with an introduction of a reduced wind speed to 45mph for the summer months when trees are in leaf.

109. Appeals Panel and Town Clerk's Appraisal

Report **TC/3932/20** from the Town Clerk asked Members to consider appointments to the Appeals Panel and consider the appropriate body to undertake the Town Clerks annual appraisal.

After discussion it was **resolved** that:

- Report **TC/3932/20** be noted;
- The Town Clerk's Appraisal would be carried out by The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chair of Finance & General Purposes Committee;
- The Appeals Panel would comprise of The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor R Radford.

110. Government Kickstart Scheme

At its July meeting, Council adopted a Notice of Motion in the name of Councillor Rose giving a commitment to investigate the feasibility of employing two individuals through the Government's Kickstart Scheme.

The details of the scheme were published on 2nd September 2020 and it was identified that it was primarily aimed at large employers - applications must be for a minimum of 30 placements. Whilst there is an opportunity for groups of organisations to work collectively to create 30 placements, the time taken to co-ordinate this and administer the process would be significant.

Resolved the update be noted and a request made for the Town Clerk to write to Shropshire Council with regards to any other applications for placements.

111. Use of E-mail Policy for Elected Members

Members received report **TC/3933/20** from the Town Clerk requesting them to adopt a fit for purpose e-mail policy for elected Members.

Resolved report **TC/3933/20** be adopted.

112. Online Domestic Abuse Training Sessions

Details were received from the High Sheriff of Shropshire on Domestic Abuse Training Sessions being run this October for employers. These will be run by West Mercia Women's Aid and Shropshire Domestic Abuse Service.

After discussion it was **resolved** that appropriate representatives including U&I Counselling be invited to speak at a future meeting of the Council.

113. Oswestry Youth Music Festival

The minutes of a meeting of the Youth Music Festival Committee held on 7th September 2020 were presented to Council.

Members were made aware that the money raised at the Sunday Final of the Oswestry Youth Music Festival would be donated to a new charity created by Councillor Coppock and supported by Sue Turner. The principle aim of the charity is to supply free music tuition and instruments to pupils in state schools. £170 was raised on the day and it was noted that Councillor P Cherrington would match fund this amount to make a grand total of £340.

Resolved to note minutes **YMFC/01/20** and that the Town Council had opted not to receive the funds this year from Oswestry Youth Music Festival.

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Note: At **20:42** Council was suspended, and a meeting of the Development & Planning Committee took place.

The Council resumed business at **20:48**

114. Exclusion of Public and Press

That by the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (S1(2)) and in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 , the public and press be excluded for the remainder of the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Acts.

It was **resolved** to exclude the public and press

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Committee in Private Session

115. Car Parking Charging

116. Central Car Park Access and Design

117. MaRE Efficiency Grant

118. Management Procedures

DRAFT

Committee in Private Session

115. Car Park Charging

Report **TC/3935/20** was submitted by the Operations Manager for Members to consider options relating to Car Park charging, method and fees and information to make decisions.

It was unanimously agreed that this was a complex and significant issue that needed due consideration. It was therefore **resolved** to move this item to the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting which would be held on Monday 5th October 2020.

116. Central Car Park Access and Design

Report **TC/3929/20** from the Operations Manager presented contractor proposals for carrying out an options appraisal on access and egress from Central Car Park and improving the space.

It was unanimously agreed that this was a complex and significant issue that needed due consideration. It was therefore **resolved** to move this item to the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting which would be held on Monday 5th October 2020.

117. MarRE Renewable Efficiency Grant

Report **TC/3936/20** from the Operations Manager informed Members of options for renewable energy, including bids for Marches Renewable Energy Fund (MarRE), and other options for improving the energy efficiency of the Council's built estate.

Members noted that they would not be committed to expenditure at this stage but applying for funding.

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It was unanimously agreed and **resolved** that funding would be applied for.

118. Management Procedures

Report **TC/3927/20** from the Finance Officer asked Council to adopt the revised and re-written Management Procedures.

Resolved report **TC/3927/20** be adopted.

The meeting closed at 21:00 hrs.

The Mayor
Councillor D Kerr
Chairman