



Kington Town Council

The Old Police Station, Market Hall Street, Kington HR5 3DP
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Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held via video-conferencing on Monday 1st June 2020 at 7.00pm

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllr. R. Widdowson (in the Chair)
Cllr. E. Banks
Cllr. A. Bennett
Cllr. J. Cooke
Cllr. J. Dennis
Cllr. M. Fitton
Cllr. R. Griffiths
Cllr. R. MacCurrach
Cllr. E. Rolls
Cllr. I. Spencer

IN ATTENDANCE

Liz Kelso – Clerk
Merrie Kent – Green Spaces Administrator
1 member of the press

Agenda

| Item | Minute |
|------|--------|
|------|--------|

- | | | |
|---|--------|---|
| 1 | 056-20 | <p>Apologies, declarations of interest and requests for dispensation.</p> <p>Apologies were noted from Cllr. T. Bounds and Cllr. R. Banks. It was unanimously agreed to grant Cllr. Bounds leave of absence for a period of 6 months with immediate effect due to a period of ill health and difficulty in accessing remote meetings during the Coronavirus lockdown.</p> <p>Cllr. E. Banks declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 7, planning matters. Cllr. R. Griffiths declared an other interest in the same agenda item.</p> <p>There were no requests for dispensation.</p> |
| 2 | 057-20 | <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 4th May 2020</p> <p>It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 4th May 2020 be approved.</p> |

3 058-20 Public Participation

a) Matters raised by members of the public in attendance

There were no members of the public in attendance but it was noted that there have been requests for information on the re-opening of the recycling centre in Kington and the Clerk will raise this with Herefordshire Council

b) Ward Councillor Report

Apologies from Cllr. James were noted.

4 059-20 Mayor's Report

The Mayor's report, as attached to these Minutes, was noted. The Mayor also reported that calls for support from the voluntary group were reducing as those requiring help have generally been identified. Similarly, calls to the Herefordshire Council Talk Community network, which is working alongside and with local volunteers, have seen fewer calls. With concerns expressed about a potential second wave of infection later in the year, lessons are being learned at how best to support people. It was agreed to consider this at the next meeting but in the meantime to attempt to gather information on levels of infection within the local community so that future levels can be assessed.

Members were asked to consider candidates for local and national honours in recognition of those who have supported communities during the pandemic.

There is now a need to consider business recovery and it was agreed that a meeting with the Chamber of Trade to review the impact of the lockdown and support needed to restart local businesses can be assessed.

5 051-20 Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report, as attached to these Minutes, was noted.

6 052-20 Financial Matters

a) Payments

Payments totalling £2,131.11 (inclusive of VAT) as detailed on the attached schedule were approved.

b) Recurring payments by direct debit

The schedule of recurring payments made by direct debit in accordance with financial regulations was noted and confirmed, as per the attached schedule.

7 053-20 Planning Matters

Cllr. E. Banks left the meeting for this agenda item, having declared a disclosable pecuniary interest.

Members consider application reference 201251 relating to the variation of condition 2 of permission 192489 for Ridgebourne House, Ridgebourne Road. After

due consideration, it was agreed that there were no objections to the proposals and that Herefordshire Council be notified accordingly.

Cllr. Banks then returned to the meeting.

8 054-20 Kington in Bloom

Members noted the report from the Kington in Bloom working party on progress to plant up the baskets and planters around the town. Appropriate risk assessments had been carried out and, with the support of the Recreation Ground ground staff, the majority of the planting has now taken place. Some funds have been retained within the budget to replace annuals with perennial planting in the autumn.

Members thanked the volunteers working within the group for their efforts during this particularly difficult time.

9 055-20 Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place via video conferencing on Monday 6th July at 7pm. Funding for on street electric vehicle charging was requested as an agenda item.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 7.50pm.

Chairman: 6.7.2020

Appendix 1

Mayor's Report

Mayor's Report 1st June 2020

1. During the period of the lockdown I have been hosting the Community Contact Line on which people can leave request for information and/ or support.

The support network organised by Anna Weston and Dawn Stradling has been supporting almost 70 self isolating households through a network of volunteers. It has also linked with the Herefordshire Council's Talk Community service.

2. The new High Sheriff of Herefordshire is Patricia Thomas. I held a conversation with her on May 19th. Her theme for the year is preparing young people for work.

3. In late April I held a telephone discussion with Cllr Harrington, Cabinet member for Infrastructure and Transport, about Kington being included in transport plans being developed for each of the Market towns.

4. As the lockdown is beginning to ease we will need to gather information about its impact on the town, particularly local businesses.

Appendix 2

Clerk's Report

This report identifies activities of the Clerk since the last meeting other than those addressed elsewhere on the agenda or addressed by other Members as part of their report.

1. Annual Accounts

Every year Local Authority external auditors are required to conduct an audit of town and parish councils where the turnover is £25,000 or more. For local councils with receipts or payments not exceeding £250,000 this is known as a "light touch" audit. Each year external auditors are required to randomly select 5% of their total number of audit for an intermediate review which looks in more depth at the Annual Governance and Accounting Return and for year ended 31st March 2020 Kington Town Council has been selected for this intermediate review. This involves submitting more documents and evidence to support the assertions and figures contained within the Annual Return so does involve some more work on the part of the Clerk/RFO but is not something to be concerned about.

As a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic, the timetable for the completion of annual accounts has been amended this year by the Government with the dates by which various stages of the process must be completed having been extended. The Clerk has been working with the internal auditor and the company providing the accounting software to complete the accounts, submit paperwork for internal audit in a manner which is consistent with lockdown and social distancing, and to complete the end of year actions required before the current year's accounts can be opened. Although this is not yet complete, final accounts and the Annual Governance and Accounting Return will be presented to the July meeting for consideration and approval, subject to the return of all documentation from the internal auditor. External auditors have requested submission of all documentation by 31st July although the statutory deadline is now 30th September. Subject to all stages being complete, and subject to government guidance with regard to social distancing, the Clerk is proposing that the period for the exercise of electors rights (when members of the public can view the accounts and supporting papers) starts on August 31st. It is not yet clear how this can take place within current social distancing rules so is subject to confirmation.

Finally since lockdown commenced, the PAYE annual return and VAT reclaim for the year ended 31.3.2020 have been submitted to HMRC and with regard to the latter, the sum of £7,143.78 has been reclaimed but not yet received from HMRC.

2. Meetings

As at the time of writing, although some of the lockdown measures have been relaxed, there seems to be no hurry on the part of the government to relax the rules with regard to gatherings (social or otherwise!). As the new regulations with regard to local authority meetings enable remote meetings for a period up to May 2021, it is unlikely that this will change for the immediate future but will be kept under review at all times. The Clerk has

now purchased a licence to use Zoom beyond the initial 40 minutes and this licence can be used for multiple meetings at any time although requires the Clerk to "host" the meeting in order to set it up. It can therefore be used for meetings other than full council, if required, subject to the usual requirements in accordance with our Standing Orders with regard to decision making.

3. Recreation Ground

Throughout the lockdown our grounds staff have continued to work in the Recreation Ground and more recently in helping with the Kington in Bloom effort. In accordance with Government advice, the children's play area remains closed, as does the toilet block. The Green Spaces Administrator has updated the risk assessment with regard to both areas in the light of Government advice on public spaces and has concluded that as the safety of the public cannot be guaranteed at the moment so under the current guidelines, these areas will remain closed.

4. Markets

Government guidelines now indicate that subject to being able to meet certain conditions with regard to the maintenance of social distancing, open air markets can recommence in June. Our markets group has indicated that it is reviewing the situation and may reopen in a limited form during June.

5. Town Council Offices

Similarly Government guidelines with regard to adjustments required for staff to return to work have been reviewed with regard to the Town Council office accommodation. The building is owned by Herefordshire Council and currently remains closed although access is available if required. Whilst the main office used by the Town Council can be cleaned by staff, the common areas cannot be guaranteed to be safe for staff or visitors and accordingly staff remain working from home for now but can now travel to the office if required to do so. Telephone messages are being collected on a daily basis.

Appendix 3
Payments Authorised at the meeting

Appendix 4
Recurring payments made by Direct Debit

Kington Town Council
Schedule of payments to be approved 1st June 2020

| Voucher # | Payee | Payment type: | Detail | Minute Ref. | Net | VAT | Total Payment |
|---|----------------------------|----------------|--|-------------|------------|---------|---------------|
| Payments for information - Direct Debits | | | | | | | |
| 18 | Npower | DD - pd 5.5.20 | Rec. Grant - Utilities | | £ 94.95 | £ 4.74 | £ 99.69 |
| 19 | Lloyds Bank Ltd. | DD - 18.5.20 | Admin - Office costs | | £ 25.81 | £ 4.57 | £ 30.38 |
| Payments for authorisation at meeting | | | | | | | |
| 20 | Anthony Collins Solicitors | BACS | Asset Transfer advice legal fees | | £ 150.00 | £ 30.00 | £ 180.00 |
| 21 | Countrywide | BACS | Rec. Grant - Grass cutting | | £ 147.50 | £ 29.50 | £ 177.00 |
| 22 | Herefordshire Council | BACS | Election costs | | £ 137.87 | | £ 137.87 |
| 23 | Herefordshire Council | BACS | Admin - Office Rental (June) | | £ 190.00 | | £ 190.00 |
| 24 | Herefordshire Council | BACS | Admin - Office Rental (April) | | £ 190.00 | | £ 190.00 |
| 25 | Amazon EU | BACS | Admin - Stationery | | £ 23.32 | £ 4.66 | £ 27.98 |
| 26 | Vision ICT | BACS | Admin - Website accessibility statement | | £ 85.00 | £ 17.00 | £ 102.00 |
| 27 | KBS | BACS | Rec. Grant - Consumables | | £ 22.96 | £ 4.59 | £ 27.55 |
| 28 | HWS Pest Control | BACS | Rec. Grant - Treatment of Moles | | £ 120.00 | | £ 120.00 |
| 29 | HMRC | BACS | Salaries | | £ 808.24 | | £ 808.24 |
| 30 | HMRC | BACS | Rec. Grant - Salaries | | £ 40.40 | | £ 40.40 |
| | | | | | | | £ - |
| | | | Total payments this month excluding salaries | | £ 2,036.05 | £ 95.06 | £ 2,131.11 |

FOR INFORMATION

| | | | | |
|---|----------|---------|----------|--|
| Total of payments made through grants received: | | | | |
| Total of payments made as a grant | | | | |
| Recreation Ground Trust | £ 425.81 | £ 34.09 | £ 459.90 | |
| | | | £ - | |

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