

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

12 October, 2021

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Present: The Mayor (Councillor Taylor) in the Chair

Councillors:

Alcock	J Fradgley
Cleeve	How
Coles	Jackson
Curtis	Lee
Dowling	Rolfe
Fojtik	Vos
I Fradgley	

Clerk: Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Press: None present

Public: None present

45) Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dyer, Mackenzie, Wall and Warren-Howles and were accepted for the reasons given.

46) Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

47) To receive written requests for dispensation for disclosable pecuniary interests

None were received.

48) To grant any requests for dispensation

None were received.

49) Public Participation

No one wished to speak in Public Participation.

50) Draft Open Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 27 July 2021

RESOLVED: The Draft Open Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 27 July, 2021 be approved as a correct record.

51) Draft Open Minutes of Planning Consultative Committee Meetings held on 3 August, 31 August and the Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 28 September, 2021

RESOLVED: Draft Open Minutes of Planning Consultative Committee Meetings held on 3 August, 31 August and the Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 28 September, 2021 be approved and adopted.

52) Draft Open/Confidential Minutes of the Finance & Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 7 September, 2021

RESOLVED: Draft Open/Confidential Minutes of the Finance & Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 7 September, 2021 be approved and adopted.

53) To Adopt the Draft Open Minutes of the Civic, Heritage & Events Pre-Discussion/Consultation held on 14 September, 2021

RESOLVED: The Draft Open Minutes of the Civic, Heritage & Events Pre-Discussion/Consultation held on 14 September, 2021 be approved and adopted.

54) Draft Open/Confidential Minutes of the Personnel Pre-Discussion/Consultation held on 5 October 2021

RESOLVED: The Draft Open and Confidential Minutes of Personnel Pre-Discussion/Consultation Meeting held on 5 October, 2021 be approved and adopted.

- 55) To Adopt the Notes from the Stratford Support Meeting held on 7 September, 2021

RESOLVED: The Draft Open Notes of the Stratford Support Meeting held 7 September, 2021 be approved and adopted.

- 56) To Adopt the Minutes of the Youth Town Council Meeting held on 23 September, 2021.

RESOLVED: The Draft Open Minutes of the Youth Town Council Meeting held on 23 September, 2021 be approved and adopted.

- 57) To receive an update from the Chairman of the Finance & Scrutiny Committee and the RFO on the Budget Strategy for the Financial Year 2022 – 2023

The Chairman of the Finance & Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Coles, gave a brief overview regarding the budget process which has now begun. She issued a word of caution against any profligacy and urged the Chairman of each Standing Committee to liaise with the Responsible Financial Officer to discuss any planned expenditure by their committee which may put added pressure on what must be a very tight and prudent budget.

The report was noted.

- 58) CIL Policy for Community Projects:

It was Proposed, Seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED: To approve and adopt the proposed CIL Policy which should be used in parallel with the Council's Initiatives Policy as there is a correlation between both policies.

Using both policies to award financial support for community projects will enable the Council to operate both strategically and unilaterally.

- 59) To meet Mr Daryl Bailey, the Treasurer from the Avon to Arrow Greenway Project and consider the Town Council's involvement, including financial support for the venture

Together with his associate, Gill Smith, Daryl Bailey gave a comprehensive account on the aims of the venture, progress to date and the pledged financial support by other parish councils along the route. Firm commitment has been received from Luddington and Bidford Parish Councils but they are still short of £9,000 to finance a Sustrans feasibility study.

Following the presentation, quite a protracted debate ensued. There were mixed opinions with some believing that this is a County Council issue. However, many thought the project met with the Council's aims and objectives with regard to green open leisure space and cycle routes. To this end, it was considered that this should be reviewed in more depth by the Environmental Sustainability Panel.

It was Proposed, Seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED: To refer the proposal to the Environmental Sustainability Panel. Although not a Standing Committee, it does have responsibility for its own budget, sanctioned by the Community Services Committee to which the recommendation will be referred.

The Mayor thanked Daryl and Gill for their presentation. They then withdrew.

- 60) Electoral Review of Stratford on Avon – Draft Recommendations

Although discussed in depth, from the outset it was apparent that members considered that there was no benefit whatsoever in having multi-member wards. In order to achieve parity and consistency membership should either be one member per ward, or two members per ward. Consistency does not equate to a ward having one member and another having two. There was also concern with regard to combining two wards into one.

It was Proposed, Seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED: To respond to the consultation expressing the opinion 'the simpler the better'. Wards should not be combined from two into one and that Council supports one member per ward.

61) Proposed South Warwickshire Council

This sparked another lengthy debate:

- The Town Council does support cost saving by sharing jobs and sees merit in sharing services;
- There would be a democratic deficiency if wards were increased, impacting fundamentally on localism which would be lost;
- What additional costs and responsibilities, if any, will be handed down to the town and parish councils?
- One unitary council for the whole area would be far too large and once again, impact on local democracy. However, splitting the area into two with a southern and northern unitary authority may address this imbalance, which would do away with the need for District Councils.
- The Town Council questions why point 6 of the 10 options put forward 'cannot be considered at this time'. This is a statement not an explanation and if consulting, then consultees should be provided with the reasoning behind such a statement – unitary authorities remain 'the elephant in the room'.
- A merger to get a super district on the way to perhaps getting something else (unitary) is not the answer;

It was Proposed, Seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED: That the Town Council finds the consultation lacks clarity, is confusing and there is concern over the transparency of its compilation. If the status-quo is not on the table, any merger should safeguard local democracy at its grassroots.

62) Review of Statement of Gambling Policy – Gambling Act 2005

The Town Council approves of the policy in general but would be unwilling to support it unless the District Council includes a

paragraph which vigorously restricts the promotion and advertising of gambling, this should extend and include all social media platforms.

Ideally the Town Council would prefer to ban the advertising of gambling completely, but is conscious that lotteries are providing a valuable source of revenue to finance good causes on behalf of the community and would not wish to hinder this. Therefore, restriction of advertising rather than banning all advertising is the preferred option but it is vital that this paragraph is included in the final policy.

It was Proposed, Seconded and

RESOLVED: To respond to the consultation in line with the above.

63) The appointment of a Trustee to the Municipal Charities

It was Proposed, Seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED: To appoint Kevin Taylor acting in his Councillor capacity as the Trustee to the Municipal Charities, taking over from Councillor Coles.

64) The appointment of a Town Council Representative to the Community Builder Project Board

It was Proposed, Seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED: To appoint Councillor Alcock as the Town Councils representative to the Community Builder Project Board.

65) Restoration work to the Town Hall

The Town Clerk gave a verbal update on the restoration work to the Town Hall. Although the work is progressing well, further unexpected restoration is required, which includes a considerable amount of additional pointing and up to three courses of brickwork at high level. Consequently, the work has now exceeded the contingency. A detailed breakdown of

anticipated additional expenditure will be considered at the next Town Hall Site Meeting on 18 October.

The Town Clerk conveyed information regarding the findings in the niche, which has now been inspected by an archaeologist. The report is awaited but it has been confirmed that the relics are not of any significance.

66) Written Reports by Representatives to Outside Bodies

Councillor I Fradgley's report was noted.

67) Ward Reports

Cllr Rolfe – Road Closure

At the end of October, Knights Lane in Tiddington will be fully closed for 3-4 months to enable the widening of the road and the installation of the pavement.

Cllr J Fradgley – Stratford in Bloom

Stratford-in-Bloom is currently reorganising and a report on these changes will be brought to Council in due course. S-i-B would like to thank all those who took part in the front garden judging and prize giving event.

68) Town Clerk's General Verbal Report for Information

Nothing further to report.

69) 'Celebration of the Mayoralty' Event

The date was noted. The Town Clerk advised that a rehearsal was essential and will set a date as soon as possible. Councillor Coles requested that she would appreciate the rehearsal being held either early in the morning or later in the day so it does not conflict with peak working hours during the day.

70) Date and Venue of Next Town Council Meeting

The next Town Council Meeting will be 23 November, 2021 at 6:30pm at the Town Hall.

The Mayor declared the meeting closed at 8.45pm