

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN COUNCIL

14 June, 2022

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Present: The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Rolfe) in the Chair

Councillors:

Alcock	Jackson
Coles	Lee
Fojtik	Taylor
I Fradgley	Vos
J Fradgley	Warren-Howles
Harding	

Clerks: Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Press: Absent
Public: There was one member of the public present throughout the meeting

Prior to declaring the meeting open, the Deputy Mayor congratulated and welcomed the newly elected member for Bishopton, Councillor Roger Harding.

13) Apologies

Apologies for absence was received from Mayor Cleeve and Councillors Curtis, Dowling, Dyer, Mackenzie and How and accepted for the reasons given.

14) Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no written requests for dispensation.

16) To grant any requests for dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation.

17) Public Participation

Mrs Caroline Nash introduced herself and gave a brief explanation of her career to date with Stratford on Avon District Council and her attributes and strengths making her ideal for the role of Town Clerk. Caroline confirmed that she very much looked forward to working with the Town Council and outlined her skills and attributes making her an ideal replacement.

18) To Adopt Draft Open Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 20 May, 2022

RESOLVED: The Draft Open Minutes of the Annual Town Council Meeting and Mayor Making held on 20 May, 2022 were approved as a correct record.

19) To Adopt the Draft Open Minutes of the Finance & Audit Committee Meeting held on 7 June, 2022

RESOLVED: The draft Open Minutes of the Finance & Audit Committee Meeting held on 7 June, 2022 were approved and adopted.

20) Financial Statements (Annual Accounts) for the Year Ending 31 March, 2022

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) explained that the internal auditor had recommended that the Annual Accounts should reflect additional expenditure relating to the maintenance of the Town Hall in 2021/22 which had not been invoiced at the time the Annual Accounts were prepared. This resulted in amended documents for consideration, which were tabled as **Appendix 'E'**. The deficit of £253,518 was substantially impacted by the maintenance programme of the Town Hall, with the expenditure for this item now shown as £239,185. The deficit has been funded from reserves and the General Reserve carried forward has reduced to £149,948.

It was Proposed, Seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED: That Council approve the Annual Accounts for the Year ending 31 March, 2022.

21) Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/22

For the reasons reported above, further amended documents were tabled. Members noted the report, which included the completed Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/22 (**Appendix 'F'**), and an amended version of the Accounting Statements 2021/22 (**Appendix 'G'**) to reflect the changes made to the Annual Accounts.

21a) It was Proposed, Seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED: That Council approve the Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the financial year 2021/22.

21b) It was further Proposed, Seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED: That Council approve the Accounting Statements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the financial year 2021/22.

22) To Ratify the Appointment of the new Town Clerk

Mrs Caroline Nash was asked a number of light hearted questions regarding her candidacy as the new Town Clerk and then left the chamber in order for Council to consider her appointment.

Each member of the Recruitment Panel gave a very brief account of why they recommended her for the position and Council quickly and unanimously

RESOLVED: To appoint Mrs Caroline Nash to the position of Town Clerk and Proper Officer to Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council with effect from Monday 25 July, 2022.

On re-entering the Chamber, Caroline received a warm round of applause.

22) Town Clerk's General Verbal Report

The Town Clerk explained that:

- 22.1 She had met with Caroline on a number of occasions to commence a slow induction and hand-over.
- 22.2 The Town Clerk Designee would commence employment on Monday 25 July and the Town Clerk would conclude her tenure on Friday 29 July. This should allow sufficient time for an in-depth look at the systems and policies and introductions to key personnel at various organisations within the town.
- 22.3 The RFO is leaving the Town Council on 7 July, 2022 but has confirmed that he will continue on a zero hours basis until such time that the new RFO is in place and inducted.
- 22.4 Caroline has confirmed that she had no desire to change the staffing structure in the short term and would like the recruitment process to commence as soon as possible for a new RFO to be employed on a like for like basis, i.e. part time. The Town Clerk advised that she would begin the process as a matter of priority.
- 22.5 The Town Clerk ended her briefing with a request that whenever a councillor comes to the Town Hall, they check their pigeon hole.

23) Date and Venue of Next Town Council Meeting

The next meeting of the Town Council will be at the Town Hall on Tuesday, 26 July, 2022 at 6:30pm.

The Deputy Mayor declared the meeting closed at 6:56pm