

Draft minutes – these have yet to be agreed.



Minutes of the Whitland Town Council meeting held on 20th March 2020

Cllr Chapman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Present: Cllr Barry Chapman (Chairman); Cllrs Sue Allen, Gabriela Poore, Dave Walsh-Gibbon, Jenny Davies-Scourfield, Mathew McDowall. A member of the public was also in attendance.

1. To accept apologies for absence. These were received from Cllrs Ffion Scourfield, Ron Jenkins MBE, Rob Morgan.

2. To disclose personal and pecuniary interests. No personal interests were declared.

3. To review and agree the minutes of the previous meeting on 2nd March 2020. These had been previously circulated, were agreed by all present as an accurate record, and so were accordingly signed. Proposed Cllr Allen, seconded by Cllr Poore.

4. To discuss new items of business:

Co-option of Councillor. One candidate (who was present) had come forward to fill a current vacancy. The information provided was reviewed, and they were invited to speak a little explaining their background and reasons for joining the Council. After this a vote was taken and it was decided unanimously that Avril Wilson should join the Council. She duly made her declaration of acceptance of office.

Coronavirus and measures to be taken by this Council. After discussion it was agreed that powers and the responsibility to make decisions, manage and run the ongoing business of the Council be delegated to the Clerk. The limits stated in Financial Regulation 4.1 would be increased to £2,500.00 from £1,000.00 for Clerk authorisation in consultation with the Chairman. Existing contractual arrangements such as for the streetlighting, or any expenditure that had already been agreed by Council would not be included within those limits. Records would be maintained of any expenditure and decisions and Council would be kept informed by email, with consultation where possible, although the final decision would be by the Clerk for this period. It was also agreed that cheque payments would be suspended with all payments being made online of necessity, and by the Clerk. Overview of the accounts would be carried out by the Finance working party and by the bank signatories.

Signed by Chair

Date

Draft minutes – these have yet to be agreed.

5. County Councillor's report. This had been circulated, and was discussed. Cllr Allen stated that she was encouraging the provision of a warden for St David's complex 7 days a week to assist those residents. CCC were providing business support, and up to date information on their website. Cllr Wilson stated that social services would be well aware of any in the community who had needed their services in the past, although care plans might not be up to date. People were encouraged to get in touch with CCC if they needed specific help that social services could provide. Cllr Allen stated that the Welsh Government would be writing directly to all those they know were potentially vulnerable in the next few days.

Those present then considered what actions would be carried out by the Council to ensure people were informed and that WTC played its part in the support of the community. It was agreed that WTC was part of a larger combined support system, and not in a position to organise separate support infrastructures by itself. It would use both Facebook and its website to provide accurate and timely information, and signpost resources. It was agreed to promote the M.P.'s website that was co-ordinating volunteers and offers of help and receiving requests for help. This would shortly be working with CCC's resources as a combined resource. The large screen in Canolfan Hywel Dda would be used to provide an outward facing information listing of telephone numbers and websites for advice. The Centre's telephone number would be used as an answerphone service for individuals, and checked daily – 01994 240867. CCC's contact number that was also available to all seven days a week between 8.30am and 6.00pm was 01267 234567.

It was agreed that the amenities page on the WTC website be revised to include offers from shops and businesses local to Whitland – this would supplement and in some aspects duplicate the information on Simon Hart's page, but would be a local resource.

Simon Hart had offered to do a mailshot to specific people in the Whitland community regarding what was available – this would cover those who might not have internet or Facebook access. It was agreed this should be to anyone over 60 within a 2 mile radius of Whitland town centre. The content would be put together by the Clerk, Chairman and Cllrs Allen and Wilson. Copies would also be made available in the local shops for people to pick up and take to neighbours, for instance.

It was agreed that mental health was important and one message to promote was that social distancing and self-isolating did not mean just staying indoors alone – it was possible to go out e.g for walks so long as care was taken about avoiding contact with others.

Finally it was agreed to go with the preferred website contractor.

6. Financial report.

The majority of the Council expenditure is contractual which will not need further authorisation, but good practice would entail acknowledgement of it by Council and in the minutes. Those are detailed below, with current amounts if applicable.

As detailed above, the Clerk has been delegated the power to carry out payments as and when they become necessary with the knowledge of the Council - specifically those Councillors with access to the bank accounts, but also periodically all Councillors by email. The accounts will be maintained and available to the Finance Working Party online.

Signed by Chair

Date

Draft minutes – these have yet to be agreed.

Example of regular invoices for consideration:

- Clerk's salary and expenses for each month
- John Lewis salary and expenses each month
- B+CE Holdings Ltd – pension payment
- EDF energy – electricity for toilet - £22.00 direct debit
- Welsh Water – water supply for toilet - £20.50 direct debit
- XLN business services CCTV line – £66.53 direct debit
- Llewelyn Davies – payroll services - £23.00 direct debit

Cllr Wilson left the meeting at this point.

7. Planning

No planning was considered in this meeting.

8. Correspondence:

No correspondence was considered in this meeting.

9. Date of the next meeting. This could not be stated. The Clerk would keep the Council informed as necessary.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.20pm

Signed by Chair

Date
