

TENBY TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TENBY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD
17TH MARCH 2020

PRESENT: Cllr T Brown Mayor
Cllr. Mrs. C. Brown
Cllr L Blackhall
Cllr M Evans
Cllr Mrs S Skyrme-Blackhall
Cllr D Morgan

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr A Davies Clerk
Mrs S Thompson Assistant to the Clerk

413. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

Apologies received from the Cllr Mrs Lane, Cllr Mrs Rossiter, Cllr Mrs Evans, Cllr Hallett, Cllr Whitehurst and Cllr Ronowitz.

414. TO DISCLOSE ANY PERSONAL INTERESTS IN ITEMS OF BUSINESS LISTED BELOW

None declared.

415. TO AGREE ITEMS OF CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMITTEE MINUTES OTHER THAN THOSE MARKED NOT FOR PUBLICATION BEING GIVEN TO MEMBERS OF THE PRESS PRESENT

Proposed by Cllr Blackhall and seconded by Cllr Mrs Brown.

RESOLVED

That items of Correspondence and Committee Minutes other than those items marked Not for Publication be given to members of the Press present.

Cllr Blackhall proposed that, in line with Standing Orders 14 and 21, council moves to item 15 as an urgent matter. Cllr Mrs Skyrme-Blackhall seconded the proposal.

416. TO CONSIDER COVID-19 CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS AND AGREE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO PROPOSALS

The Clerk had prepared a very detailed briefing paper which was distributed to councillors.

Cllr Blackhall thanked the Clerk for the briefing paper and suggested that council suspend all future meetings for the time being and agree to delegation of powers to enable decision making so that the council may continue to function.

He felt that this was necessary to ensure the continued safety of councillors, staff and members of other agencies or the public who may likely be in attendance at future meetings.

Based on advice from SLCC and OVW and, taking Section 101 of the LGA 1972 into account, the Clerk suggested that it would be in order for delegated powers to be given to a sub-committee in these circumstances.

This could feature the Clerk, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor although, in light of the forthcoming change of chair, the Clerk also felt that the Mayor Elect should be included. Communication will be via telephone and email and the sub-committee could call on the opinion of the other councillors via these methods before making a decision should it prove necessary.

The Clerk also commented that the AGM would have to go ahead by statute unless government policy changed but the format may have to change to accommodate the current crisis.

Cllr Mrs Brown believes that the Clerk and his assistant are capable of getting on with council work on their own and there is always the possibility of working from home for a couple of days a week. However, she agreed that delegation was needed to deal with matters if the council did not meet.

She also feared for the elderly who would be worried about the situation.

Cllr Evans asked that the council staff be written to asking that they are happy with the support and guidance that councillors are giving to them.

The Clerk said that staff were happy to keep the office open at the moment (depending on personal circumstances and Government advice).

Cllr. Blackhall felt that the Council office is a good point of information but protection for the Clerk and his assistant should be paramount. The office is currently operating 'through the hatch' rather than their usual 'open door' to limit social contact and the general public could be asked to telephone or email the office instead of physically attending if possible.

With regard to payment of invoices, the council still use cheques and the Clerk had concerns that signatories may not be able to attend the office. Cllr. Blackhall suggested that a certain number of cheques by pre-signed by one signatory and be kept in the safe. We have considerable measures in place to ensure the security of pre-signed cheques.

The Clerk informed councillors that usual Augustus Community Hall bookings were being put on hold for the time being and councillors unanimously agreed to waive fees payable by these user groups until further notice to show support for the community.

Cllr Blackhall asked how we as a council can contribute and support residents of Tenby at this time. A group calling itself Tenby Together is being launched through Facebook which will involve local businesses and community spirited people and act as a source of information, support and assistance. Tenby is a Beautiful Place and a Beautiful

Community; people were already pulling together and the town council could help co-ordinate all the local offers of volunteer support that are being made.

It was

RESOLVED

- 1. That all council, committee and sub-committee meetings be suspended until further notice to ensure the safety of councillors, staff and others who may be in attendance.**
- 2. That, under Section 101 of the LGA 1972, delegated authority be given to a sub-committee of The Clerk, the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and the Mayor Elect to make decisions to ensure town council services are maintained. The views of remaining members of council will be sought and considered as part of the decision-making process where necessary.**
- 3. That, as staff are prepared to do so (dependent on personal circumstances or Government advice) the Council keeps the office open but, to limit social interaction, ask that contact is made via telephone, email or Facebook unless the public have no alternative other than to attend in person.**
- 4. Should it become necessary, arrangements will be put in place for staff to work from home to allow those services delivered by the town council to continue.**
- 5. That arrangements be put in place to ensure that the Council can pay salaries and invoices in a timely manner.**
- 6. That hire fees for regular users of the Augustus Place Community Centre be waived for the foreseeable future to help support these valued community groups.**
- 7. That Tenby Town Council look to help co-ordinate all the local offers of volunteer support that are being made.**
- 8. That all other business on the agenda be deferred to be determined under resolution 2.**
- 9. That the position be kept under review based on Government advice and policy decisions.**

417. TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM(S) OF BUSINESS UNDER THE “PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT OF 1960”

The Mayor agreed to the following item being considered as a matter of urgency.

De Valence Pavilion Trust

RESOLVED

That the Council pay the De Valence Trust three months grant in April rather than the usual monthly arrangement to enable them to pay wages and utility bills due to the impact the number of events that have been cancelled over the next two months will have on their cash flow situation.

Mayor _____

Town Clerk _____

Date _____

DRAFT