

Lichfield City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Lichfield City Council held remotely via 'Zoom' on Monday 15 June 2020 at 6.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs D Baker (Mayor), J Anketell, H Ashton, C Ball, Mrs G Boyle, J Checkland, D Dundas, C Greatorex, Mrs J Greaves, I Jackson, P Jones, Mrs A Lax, Miss J Marks, T Matthews, P McDermott, S Pritchard, C Rapley, R Rathbone, P Ray, D Robertson, A Smith, J Smith, C Spruce, M Trent, M Warfield and R Yardley.

APOLOGIES: Councillor Mrs J Eagland.

16 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported on recent engagements including socially distanced visits to local care homes to support staff and residents. The Mayor also congratulated Councillor Mrs G Boyle on her 40 consecutive years as a Lichfield City Councillor, having been first elected in May 1980; Councillor Mrs Boyle was presented with a framed certificate to commemorate the occasion and members offered their congratulations on the milestone.

17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None

18 COUNCIL MINUTES

Cllr C Rapley highlighted a typographical error in Minute number 2 ('20201' written instead of '2021') and asked that this be amended.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 11 May 2020 (Nos 1-15), as amended at Minute no.2, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

19 MATTERS ARISING

None

20 PLANNING COMMITTEE (DELEGATED AUTHORITY)

RESOLVED: That comments submitted to Lichfield District Council for the period 1 March – 26 May 2020, and made in the name of LCC via delegated authority as agreed by Council on 11 May 2020, be received.

21 NOTICE OF MOTION

It was proposed by Cllr D Robertson and seconded by Cllr C Ball that;

"Given the difficulties facing local businesses due to Covid-19 and, in order to support the recovery of the local economy, this Council resolves to sign the "Pay in 30 Days" pledge, as supported by the Lichfield and Tamworth Chamber of Commerce, and similarly resolves to develop a local procurement policy to support, where possible, the business recovery in the City."

Cllr C Spruce proposed an amendment in order that the motion would state payment would be made within 30 days of *receipt of invoice*; this was seconded by Cllr A Lax. Councillor D Robertson responded that the pledge was not within the City Council's gift to change and such an amendment would prevent LCC from signing the pledge in its current form. It was agreed that Councillor Robertson would clarify this issue with the Lichfield and Tamworth Chamber of commerce. Both Cllr Spruce and Councillor Lax confirmed they were happy to withdraw the proposed amendment on the

condition that such clarification was sought. On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried as presented and it was:

RESOLVED: Given the difficulties facing local businesses due to Covid-19 and, in order to support the recovery of the local economy, this Council resolves to sign the "Pay in 30 Days" pledge, as supported by the Lichfield and Tamworth Chamber of Commerce, and similarly resolves to develop a local procurement policy to support, where possible, the business recovery in the City.

22 AUDIT COMMITTEE

Councillor Warfield thanked the Internal Auditor for his thorough report. Councillor Spruce commented that the report showed that good financial controls were being operated by the Council and thanked the Officers for their excellent work.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Audit Committee held on 11 June 2020 be adopted and that;

- 1 **The Out-Turn Statement 2019/20 be received.**
- 2 **The Council as Trustee of the Johnson Birthplace Charitable Trust make a payment of £13,791 from the Trust Funds to the City Council as the contribution to the expenditure incurred by the City Council in operating the Museum during the 2018/19 financial year.**
- 3 **In respect of the External Auditor Annual Return for the year ending 31 March 2020:**
 - a. **The Council approve the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the Annual Return) and that this be signed by the Mayor and Town Clerk on behalf of the Council.**
 - b. **The Council approve the Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the Annual Return) and this be signed by the Mayor on behalf of the Council.**
 - c. **The Council note the Annual Internal Audit Report section of the Annual Return.**

23 LICHFIELD PLACE BOARD – REQUEST FOR THE USE OF THE MARKET SQUARE

Members considered the Town Clerk's report and recommendations at Agenda Appendix 2. Several Councillors confirmed that while they had initially been in support of the proposal, the responses received from the consultation exercise had been clear that the majority of respondents were not in favour, though members were keen to emphasise that those who were in favour should also be recognised and an ongoing dialogue be in place to ensure the City Council's position remained reflective of the prevailing mood. Cllr Ray asked what reviews would be put in place to this effect; the Town Clerk responded that an open dialogue with local businesses was being encouraged, and the key was to be flexible to the ever changing social landscape as we exit lockdown. The delegated authority within the agenda recommendations would allow the Council to respond quickly to these changing demands.

The Market was seen as a draw to the City and its removal would possibly be of detriment, rather than assistance, to local businesses. Councillor D Robertson suggested that Traders may wish to have a seat on the Lichfield Place Board and that this should be pursued. Councillor C Spruce stated that he believed the proposal to be ill thought out and that the Place Board should have contacted the City Council informally in the first instance to discuss the proposal in further detail. Councillor J Checkland voiced concerns as to the policing of the Square if it was used for the requested purpose, especially during evenings. City Council officers were congratulated on their work in providing members with the necessary information in a very short timescale, allowing appropriate consideration of this complex matter.

RESOLVED:

- a) **The City Council does not wish to make the Square available for the purposes set out in this report on Market days due to the lack of support for the request from the public, market traders and local businesses alike.**

- b) In principle, the City Council will make the Square available for businesses located around the Square on non-market days, but on a small scale only, beginning with further discussions with St Marys.**
- c) Any other interested businesses are encouraged to contact the council directly to discuss their requirements, but with the proviso that the City Council will take a cautious approach to activity on the Square and a particular regard to the potential for ASB and breach of social distancing guidelines. Businesses will be required to provide comprehensive proposals to mitigate such risks.**
- d) Delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Leader of the Council to progress necessary discussions to facilitate and manage the use of the Square on non-market days**
- e) The council to formally acknowledge the potential for the provision to be withdrawn by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Leader, with or without notice, in the event of negative outcomes arising.**

24 CITY COUNCIL MARKETS – TRADER INCENTIVES

Members considered the Town Clerk's report and recommendations at Agenda Appendix 3. Councillor J Checkland stated that the meeting with Traders had proven very useful and that it was appropriate to support them as we exit lockdown.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the current 50% reduction in prevailing rental charges be extended until Monday 10 August 2020, that being 8 weeks from the date of this meeting [the reduction in estimated income being in the region of £9,264, comprising £6,168 as a result of the revised market layout due to social distancing, and £3,096 as a direct result of this incentive]**
- b) For reasons of VAT compliance, the prevailing service charge as applied to Friday and Saturday Markets to be £5.00 per pitch. This pricing structure to be reviewed on an ongoing basis in light of Government guidance and the provision (or not) of LCC owned Market Stalls. The 50% reduction at point (a) above does not apply to this charge.**
- c) Delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Leader of the Council to vary the service charge based on the ongoing review set out at point 2 above.**
- d) No arrears to be charged to stall holders who are self-isolating, or those who confirm in good time that they will not attend. Arrears will be charged when a Trader, who has confirmed their intention to stand at a particular market, subsequently does not attend and has not provided at least 24 hours' notice (unless they are self-isolating).**
- e) The Markets Working Group convene to review the appropriateness of ending, extending or varying the rental incentive no later than Wednesday 5 August 2020, with delegated authority to implement the outcome of those discussions with effect from 11 August 2020. Any further incentive agreed to be for a period of no longer than a further 5 weeks [thereby allowing the consideration of any further incentives at the September meeting of the Council if appropriate]**

25 APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor C Spruce stated that there would no longer be any St John's Lichfield representatives following the incorporation into a CIC and asked that this outside body be removed; the Town Clerk to confirm.

RESOLVED:

- a) *That two representatives be appointed to serve on Dovehouse Fields Community Garden; Councillors Mrs J Greaves and J Smith.*
- b) *Councillor Mrs J Greaves to replace Mr Terry Finn on Michael Lowe's and Associated Charities, and the best thanks of the Council be accorded to Mr Finn for his many years service*
- c) *Remaining appointments on outside bodies be confirmed as indicated in the agenda report [final appointments reproduced below]*

Outside Body	No of Reps	Period of Office	Appt Ends	2020/2021
BID Steering Group/Board	1	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Cllr C Spruce</i>
Boley Park Community Hall Management Committee	4	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Cllr M Warfield</i>
			Jun-21	<i>Cllr Mrs D Baker</i>
			Jun-21	<i>Cllr R Yardley</i>
			Jun-21	<i>Cllr Mrs J Eagland</i>
Boley Park Community Hall Trustees	4	Until retire or replaced	Until retire or replaced	<i>Cllr Mrs J Eagland</i>
				<i>Cllr R Yardley</i>
				<i>Cllr C Spruce</i>
				<i>Cllr M Warfield</i>
Bower Committee	1	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Cllr Mrs J Greaves</i>
Curborough Community Association	3	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Cllr D Robertson</i>
			Jun-21	<i>Cllr P Jones</i>
			Jun-21	<i>Cllr D Dundas</i>
Darwin Hall Community Association Trustees [and Company Directors]	4	Until retire or replaced	Until retire or replaced	<i>Cllr J Checkland</i>
				<i>Cllr S Pritchard</i>
				<i>Cllr I Jackson</i>
				<i>Cllr A Smith</i>
Dovehouse Fields Community Garden	2	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Cllr Mrs J Greaves</i>
				<i>Cllr J Smith</i>
Dr Milley's Hospital	1	4 Years	Mar-23	<i>Cllr C Rapley</i>
Erasmus Darwin Foundation	1	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Cllr Mrs G Boyle</i>
Friends of Samuel Johnson Community Hosp.	1	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Cllr Mrs A Lax</i>
Friends of Lichfield Historic Parks Group	1	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Cllr R Rathbone</i>
Guild of St Mary's Centre Lichfield (Ltd)	1	1 Year	-	<i>Mayor in Office</i>
Johnson Council (non-voting observers)	2	1 Year	-	<i>Mayor in Office</i>
			-	<i>Sheriff in Office</i>

Outside Body	No of Reps	Period of Office	Appt Ends	2020/2021
Lichfield District Arts Executive Committee [non-voting observer]	1	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Cllr Mrs J Greaves</i>
LDC – Parish Forum	2	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Cllr M Field</i>
			Jun-21	<i>Cllr Miss J Marks</i>
Lichfield Camera Club	1	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Mayor in Office</i>
South East Staffs C.A.B.	1	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Cllr Miss J Marks</i>
Lichfield Conduit Lands Trust	2	1 Year	-	<i>Mayor in Office</i>
		4 Years	Jun-21	<i>Cllr Mrs G Boyle</i>
Lichfield District Tourism Association Executive	2	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Museums & Heritage Officer</i>
			Jun-21	<i>Cllr Miss J Marks</i>
Lichfield Rail Alliance, West Coast Rail 250, and all other rail related matters	1	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Cllr M Warfield</i>
Mary Slater's Charity	2	1 Year	-	<i>Mayor in Office</i>
			-	<i>Sheriff in Office</i>
Michael Lowe's and Associated Charities	5	4 Years	15 July 24	<i>Cllr Mrs J Greaves</i>
			23 April 22	<i>Mrs D Greatorex</i>
			3 April 22	<i>P Hitchman</i>
			26 July 24	<i>Cllr M Warfield</i>
			5 July 23	<i>Cllr Mrs J Eagland</i>
Municipal Charities	4	1 Year	-	<i>Mayor in Office</i>
		4 Years	Oct-23	<i>Cllr P Jones</i>
			Nov-24	<i>Cllr Mrs J Greaves</i>
			Nov-24	<i>Mrs D English</i>
Speakers Corner Committee	1	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Cllr Mrs D Baker</i>
SPCA - Executive Cttee (nomination only – subject to election by SPCA)	1	2 Years	Nov-21	<i>Cllr Miss J Marks</i>
St Giles Hospice Local Government Friends'	1	4 Years	Jun-23	<i>Cllr J Anketell</i>
Support Staffordshire (formerly Lichfield and District CVS)	1	1 Year	Jun-21	<i>Cllr Mrs D Baker</i>
Twinning Association	3	1 Year	-	<i>Mayor in Office</i>
			Jun-21	<i>Cllr H Ashton</i>
			Jun-21	<i>Cllr D Dundas</i>

26 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Members considered the Town Clerk's update on the timescales for a Community Governance Review to be undertaken by Lichfield District Council following recent communications confirming a delay in the Review until after the elections scheduled for May 2023. There was general disappointment at the delay but also a recognition of the considerable workload currently faced by the District Council, not least in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was generally agreed that members would like to see Garrick Road incorporated into Chadsmead, Burton Old Road incorporated into Stowe and Pentire Road incorporated into Boley Park. This would create coterminous boundaries with LDC wards and would reduce resident confusion caused by differing parish and district ward boundaries. Councillor D Robertson highlighted that there remained a great deal of variation across District wards in regard to the number of residents per elected member and believed that there was a wider point to be raised in regard to these variances.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk write to Lichfield District Council on behalf of the City Council to express disappointment at the revised timescale for the review, and to ask that it be prioritised if at all possible. The Town Clerk to request LDC advise whether the incorporation of Garrick Rd, Burton Old Road and Pentire Road to create coterminous boundaries could be undertaken as a relatively swift administrative exercise prior to the 2023 elections; if this was not possible, the Town Clerk to seek reasons for this from LDC and report back to the Council as appropriate.

27 OFFICERS' REPORT

The Mayor highlighted the work of the City Council's Open Spaces Officer, Nick Burton, especially in regard to the social distancing measures that had been put in place and the continuing inspection regime. Councillor C Greatorex commended officers for a 'business as usual' report under the extremely difficult circumstances caused by the lockdown. Councillor D Dundas stated that the replacement LED lanterns on the City Council's pathways and open spaces were an excellent upgrade.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and officers be commended for a thorough and informative report under difficult circumstances.

28 PAYMENT OF REGULAR SERVICE PROVISION BY DIRECT DEBIT

Members considered the Town Clerk's report at Agenda Appendix 6.

RESOLVED: That the City Council renews its resolution to enter into direct debit payment arrangements with those providers listed at Appendix 6; the resolution to be considered for further renewal at the meeting of the City Council in June 2021.

29 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

RESOLVED: That payment of accounts be approved and confirmed as listed in Agenda Appendix 7 for the period 1 March 2020 to 31 March 2020 in the sum of £108,853.74 General Account and £232.99 Imprest Account.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MAYOR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 7.51 PM

MAYOR