

Lichfield City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Lichfield City Council held via 'Zoom' on Tuesday 16 March 2021 at 6.30 pm

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

APOLOGIES: None

90 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that she had attended a number of virtual events including a talent show for *Shinning Stars* which included a variety of performances. The Mayor also invited members to join her online via YouTube for a virtual Civic Service on Sunday 21 March at the Methodist Church.

91 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Anketell, Field, Mrs Greaves A Smith and J Smith declared an interest under Appendix A of the City Council Code of Conduct with respect to Minute 94 (Grants Advisory Committee).

Councillors Mrs Baker, Ball, Checkland, Field, Mrs Greaves, Greatorex, Jones, Miss Marks, Matthews, Warfield and Yardley declared an interest under Appendix B of the City Council Code of Conduct with respect to Minute 94 (Grants Advisory Committee).

Councillor C Greatorex declared a prejudicial interest in Minute 100 (Land at the Friary/Festival Gardens) as County Councillor for the project and left the meeting during discussion and voting thereon. Councillor Mrs J Eagland also declared an interest in this item as a County Councillor.

92 COUNCIL MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Cllr M Trent requested an amendment to Minute 87 which inaccurately reported that Cllr Trent had commended the Twinning Officer for her work in organising safe recycling of LCC computers via 'IT Schools Africa'. While acknowledging the value of this project, Cllr Trent wished the records to show that he was at the time actually commenting on the work undertaken by the Twinning Officer to facilitate contact between Chadsmead Primary School and 'Ecole Chatelain' in St Foye, a project that allows pupils to exchange letters detailing their experiences and feelings during the current time.

RESOLVED: *That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 25 January 2021 (Nos 76-89) be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the amendment set out above.*

93 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: *That comments submitted to Lichfield District Council for the period 24 December 2020 to 25 February 2021 and made in the name of LCC via delegated authority as agreed by Council on 11 May 2020, be received.*

94 GRANTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Consideration was given to the minutes and recommendations of the Grants Advisory Committee held on 1 February 2021. The Mayor advised of an error in the Minutes relating to the grant award for Fusion Credit Union, the award being listed as £500.00 when the recommended grant was £0.

Councillor P Ray highlighted the applications for grants from youth groups and asked all present to continue to encourage such applications in the future.

RESOLVED: *That the Minutes of the Grants Advisory Committee meeting held on 1 February 2021 be received, and that the recommendations therein be adopted, subject to amendment of the amount allocated to Fusion Credit Union.*

95 AUDIT COMMITTEE

Members considered the Minutes and recommendations of the Audit Committee meeting held on 11 March 2021. Both Cllrs C Spruce and D Robertson highlighted the good financial controls in place at the Council. Cllr Robertson proposed a minor addition to the Minutes for clarification purposes in order to confirm that the water bills paid based on estimated readings would not result in financial loss to the council as any overpayment would be recouped by correct payment when based on actual meter readings.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 11 March 2021 be adopted, subject to the addition of the clarification as set out above.

96 MARKETS WORKING GROUP

Consideration was given to the minutes and recommendations of the Markets Working Group held on 10 March 2021. Councillor P McDermott highlighted the decision to allow the Producers' Market to take place on Easter Sunday.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes and recommendations of the Markets Working Group meeting held on 10 March 2021 be adopted.

97 NOMINATIONS FOR CIVIC OFFICE

a) Mayor Elect

It was proposed by Councillor Mark Warfield, seconded by Councillor Mrs Janet Eagland and

RESOLVED: That Councillor Robert Yardley be nominated Mayor Elect for the year 2021/22.

b) Deputy Mayor Elect

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Janet Eagland, seconded by Councillor Christopher Spruce and

RESOLVED: That Councillor Jamie Checkland be nominated Deputy Mayor Elect for 2021/22.

c) Sheriff Elect

It was proposed by Councillor Colin Greatorex, seconded by Councillor Angela Lax and

RESOLVED: That Mr Peter Hitchman be nominated Sheriff Elect for the year 2021/22.

98 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2021/22

Consideration was given to the draft calendar of meetings. Cllr C Ball asked whether the Council could look again at the full council meeting scheduled for Wednesday 20 April 2022 as this is Easter week. The Town Clerk confirmed little other choice was available due to conflicting meetings, but the matter would be looked into again. Discussion then turned to the provision of remote meetings and the expiry of legislation that has facilitated them for the past 12 months or so. The Town Clerk advised that he would contact members with an update as and when there were developments, but in the absence of an extension to current provisions, the City Council would be required to meet in person from May 2021. Cllr A Lax confirmed that the City Council's Planning Committee falls outside of these regulations if appropriate delegated authority and terms of reference are in place; a matter that is due before Council at its April meeting.

RESOLVED: That the calendar of meetings for 2021/22 be as follows;

Calendar of Meetings 2021/2022

DATE	TIME	MEETING
2021		
Monday, 17 May	6.30pm	ANNUAL COUNCIL
Wednesday, 26 May	7.30pm	ANNUAL TOWN MEETING (if called)
Thursday, 27 May	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Thursday, 10 June	6.30pm	Audit Committee
Monday, 14 June	6.30pm	COUNCIL (Year-end accounts)
Thursday, 24 June	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Wednesday 21 July	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Monday, 26 July	6.30pm	COUNCIL
Thursday, 19 August	6.30 pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Wednesday 15 September	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Monday, 20 September	6.30pm	COUNCIL
Thursday, 14 October	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Tuesday, 2 November	10.30am	Johnson Birthplace Advisory Committee
Thursday, 4 November	6.30pm	Staffing Committee
Wednesday 10 November	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Thursday, 2 December	6.30pm	Audit Committee
Monday, 6 December	6.30pm	COUNCIL
Thursday, 9 December	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
2022		
Thursday, 6 January	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Monday, 24 January	6.30pm	COUNCIL
Tuesday, 1 February	6.30 pm	Grants Advisory Committee
Wednesday 2 February	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Thursday, 3 March	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Thursday, 10 March	6.30pm	Audit Committee
Monday 14 March	6.30pm	COUNCIL
Thursday, 7 April	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Wednesday 20 April	6.30pm	COUNCIL
Tuesday, 26 April	10.30am	Johnson Birthplace Advisory Committee
Wednesday 4 May	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Monday, 16 May	6.30pm	ANNUAL COUNCIL
Wednesday, 25 May	7.30pm	ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
Thursday, 2 June	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)

99 OFFICERS' REPORT

Councillors recognised the efforts of the City Council's Open Spaces Officer as his retirement date approached and asked that the appreciation of the Council be formally recorded and conveyed to him. Cllr Greatorex emphasised the work being undertaken by officers to facilitate the continuation of the Markets during lockdown and the important service the market provides for the residents of the City. Councillor M Trent commended the progress on the Twinning Officer's project which sees Chadsmead Primary School link with Ecole Chatelain to allow pupils to exchange correspondence on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and their own experiences during this time.

RESOLVED: That the Report be noted.

100 LAND AT THE FRIARY/FESTIVAL GARDENS

Members considered the Town Clerk's report at agenda Appendix 6 and the extensive recommendations that followed the report.

Significant discussion took place as to whether Staffordshire County Council's (SCC) preferred option had merit or were necessary/proportionate, the impact on the City entrance, notably in regard to tree loss, the City Council's options before and after consultation, the provision of an evidence base that would be necessary to satisfy the City Council as to the appropriateness of the proposal, and possible outcomes if the City Council did not accept the proposal.

An amendment was proposed by Cllr Ray and seconded by Cllr Spruce to set a further condition on the requested disposal that the City Council be convinced as to the merits of the proposed works. On being put to the vote the amendment was declared carried.

Further discussion continued on the principle of disposal and the detailed conditions. It was agreed it would be beneficial for a meeting to be held between representatives of LCC and SCC/AMEY to discuss the concerns and queries raised by City Councillors; the Town Clerk offered to arrange such a meeting and to circulate arrangements to members as soon as practicable.

It was also agreed that the recommendations in the agenda report be approved in order to facilitate the necessary consultation with local residents to ensure their opinions are incorporated into a final decision, rather than rejecting the proposal at this stage and without resident input or further dialogue with SCC.

RESOLVED:

- a) ***Subject to legal duties, additional consultation as set out in recommendations below, and the Council being convinced of the merits of the proposed works, the Council agree in principle to dispose of the area of Festival Gardens marked (approximately) by the shaded area at Appendix A of this report, to Staffordshire County Council to facilitate the preferred option improvements to the A51 Western Bypass/Friary junction.***
- b) ***That in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, and the General Disposal Consent 2003, the Council advertise its proposals to dispose of the land; the advertisement of proposals be extended to include the distribution of information to occupiers of nearby homes and businesses and to include details of how occupiers can respond and the timescales thereof.***
- c) ***That the Council consider any objections received following public consultation prior to any decision confirming the disposal (or not) of the land, and that such consideration takes place at the meeting of the Council scheduled for 19 April 2021.***
- d) ***That the matter of any sale price be deferred until the City Council meeting of April 2021 where consultation responses will be considered.***
- e) ***Any disposal agreement that is entered into following the above must include provision that:***
 - ***a detailed specification is provided to set out the works which will be undertaken and the corresponding timeframes.***
 - ***a plan of the precise area to be disposed is provided.***
 - ***approval of the contractor's Risk Assessment Method Statement (RAMS) prior to any start on site***
 - ***any landscaping, felling of trees etc be undertaken at no expense to the City Council, and in full knowledge/approval of the LDC Arboricultural Officer as appropriate.***
 - ***any damage caused to remaining LCC land (or land which the City Council is to be required to maintain) or items thereon such as footway lights, pathways etc be made good to the satisfaction of the City Council at the earliest opportunity.***
 - ***LCC to approve the satisfactory completion of the works before maintenance responsibility is handed over and/or S79 Notice is served***
 - ***any trees required to be felled are to be replaced by saplings of a size and species as agreed by LCC and at the cost of the purchaser within 12 months of the date of sale.***

- **LCC be indemnified by the purchaser in regard to any claims arising from the proposed work on LCC land.**
 - **the reasonable legal costs incurred by the Council to be covered in full by the purchaser in addition to the purchase price.**
 - **SCC/LCC enter into a covenant to maintain the land to be disposed following completion of the works as appropriate.**
- f) **Should disposal take place, LCC confirms its intention to SCC to abide by the provisions of a Notice under s79 of the Highways Act that would compel the City Council to ensure the visibility splay (hatched area on the plan) is kept clear of obstructive vegetation.**

101 CURBOROUGH COMMUNITY CENTRE GARDENS

Members considered the Town Clerk's report at agenda Appendix 7 and the recommendations therein. Members were very supportive of the aims of Curborough Community Centre. Cllr D Robertson and C Creatorex highlighted the opportunity presented within these plans to facilitate disabled access.

RESOLVED:

1. **The City Council confirm its 'in principle' approval of the proposals for the Curborough Community centre outdoor space, and support for the proposals to extend pathways outside of the community centre boundary to facilitate wheelchair access. Approval is subject to compliance with all prevailing planning requirements, adherence to appropriate guidelines, standards and working practices etc.**
2. **Delegated authority is given to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Leader of the Council, Curborough ward members and LCC representatives on Curborough Community Association, to decide upon the appropriateness of any minor variations to the project as may emerge over time.**

102 SANDFIELDS PUMPING STATION – CIL CONTRIBUTION

Members considered the Town Clerk's report at agenda Appendix 8. Cross party support for the work of the Lichfield Waterworks Trust was evident, and the principle of a CIL contribution was agreed. Concern was raised however at the relatively large amount of CIL reserve being potentially allocated to this project (approximately 30%) when there was no further CIL income forecast until at least October 2021. Following further discussion as to the amount of such a contribution it was proposed by Cllr M Field and seconded by Cllr Ball that the original proposal made by Cllr Warfield of a £10,000 contribution be reduced to £5,000. On being put to the vote the amendment was declared lost. Councillor D Robertson emphasised that care must be taken as CIL allocations appeared to be centring on the South of the City. Councillor C Creatorex and D Dundas both emphasised the potential benefits of the funding to an important local building and a project that features prominently in the City Council's adopted Neighbourhood Plan, and that such funding from LCC would facilitate the ability of the Lichfield Waterworks Trust to apply for greater funding from other parties in the future.

RESOLVED: That the City Council make an 'in principle' CIL contribution of £10,000 to facilitate the transfer of Sandfields Pumping Station to Lichfield Waterworks Trust as set out in the report, subject to confirmation of administration and audit processes.

103 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

RESOLVED: That payment of accounts be approved and confirmed for 1 December 2020 to 31 December 2020 in the sum of £120,145.07 General Account and £7.93 Imprest Account.

104 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, by reason of the confidential nature of the business next to be transacted, the public and press be excluded from the Meeting.

105 TENDERS COMMITTEE

Members considered the Minutes of the Tenders Committee meeting held on 24 February 2021 at which the tenders for the proposed renovation of the Cruck House annex accommodation were opened.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Tenders Committee held on 24 February 2021 be received.

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS
THE MAYOR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.11 PM**

MAYOR