

Lichfield City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Lichfield City Council held via 'Zoom'
on Monday 26 April 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, Mrs J Greaves, P Jones, A Lax, Miss J Marks, T Matthews, P McDermott, C Rapley, P Ray, D Robertson, A Smith, J Smith, C Spruce, M Trent, M Warfield and R Yardley.

APOLOGIES: Councillor C. Greatorex

**A MINUTE'S SILENCE WAS HELD IN MEMORY OF
HRH THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH WHO DIED ON 9 APRIL 2021**

106 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that she had attended the Easter Sunday service at the Cathedral and a memorial service to HRH Prince Philip the Duke of Edinburgh. In addition, the Mayor attended a number of virtual events including a 'Zumbathon' organised by Lichfield Shinning Stars. In closing her announcements, the Mayor thanked members and officers for their support during her two years in office.

107 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

108 COUNCIL MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

RESOLVED: *That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 16 March 2021 (Nos 90-105) be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the amendment set out above.*

109 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: *That comments submitted to Lichfield District Council for the period 26 February 2021 to 1 April 2021 and made in the name of LCC via delegated authority as agreed by Council on 11 May 2020, be received.*

110 GRANTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Consideration was given to the minutes and recommendations of the Grants Advisory Committee held on 29 March 2021.

RESOLVED: *That the Minutes and recommendations of the Grants Advisory Committee meeting held on 29 March 2021 be adopted.*

111 LAND AT THE FRIARY/FESTIVAL GARDENS

Members considered the Town Clerk's report at agenda appendix 1. Councillor Spruce expressed satisfaction that the proposal had been withdrawn, a sentiment that was echoed by other City Councillors present.

RESOLVED: *That the report be noted*

112 PLANNING COMMITTEE – REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consideration was given to the Town Clerk's report and the draft terms of reference for the City Council's Planning Committee as submitted to council jointly by the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Planning Committee, and the Town Clerk. The proposals attracted cross party support.

RESOLVED: *That the draft Planning Committee terms of reference be adopted for a period of at least six months or until further review.*

113 OFFICERS' REPORT

The Mayor thanked the Civic Officer and all of the City Council staff associated with Civic events for all their support during her two years in office, with particular reference to Macebearer Richard Hunt. Councillor Mrs J Eagland complimented now retired Open Spaces officer Nick Burton for his efforts within her own ward and across the City, notably the work at Cappers Lane roundabout. Cllr Eagland's comments were echoed by other members present, with a desire for the Council's appreciation to be formally recorded in these minutes.

RESOLVED: *That the Report be noted.*

114 REMOTE MEETING PROVISION AND CALL FOR EVIDENCE

Members considered the Town Clerk's report and draft consultation response at agenda appendix 4. Informal discussions between the Town Clerk and group leaders in the week prior to the meeting led to two amendments from the Liberal Democrat group being incorporated into the Leader's proposal at point (b), namely the inclusion of members of the press and public within the recommendation, and clarification that the recommendation was not an instruction.

Cllr C Rapley spoke about Lateral Flow Test process, stating that such tests can give false security when they are returned as negative and cited recent publicity regarding the Medications and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's (MHRA) statements that the use of Lateral Flow Tests is a 'stretch' of the use of rapid tests. Cllr Miss J Marks asked what alternative the Liberal Democrats would propose. As Liberal Democrat Group Leader, Cllr P McDermott stated that while not necessarily disagreeing with Cllr Rapley's comments, she was giving her personal view and not representing the view of the Liberal Democrat group. Cllr Rapley's vote against resolution (b) below is duly recorded in these minutes.

In regard to recommendation (d), Cllr D Robertson suggested that savings in staff travelling time and the resulting benefits to work life balance should be incorporated to a greater degree in the draft submission; it was agreed that this would be included.

RESOLVED:

- a) Delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to implement remote meetings where legislation allows, and it is considered beneficial for the smooth running of the council (e.g. introduction of Government restrictions that would prevent in-person meetings or make them impracticable). The continuation of any such provision to be subject to formal discussion and voting thereon at the first meeting of the Council so held.***
- b) The Council recommend that all members and officers, as well any members of the public or press, likely to attend any formal in-person council meeting undertake a Lateral Flow Test in the 24 hours preceding the meeting. Such a recommendation is not intended as a compulsory order; members, officers and public and press attending are free to choose not to undertake such a test for a medical or any other reason.***
- c) The existing general dispensation for any member required to self-isolate due to a positive Covid-19 test or track and trace alert be extended to 31 December 2021.***
- d) The draft 'call for evidence' response (APPENDIX 4) be approved, subject to additional information being inserted regarding savings in staff travelling time and work life balance benefits, and delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk to submit the response in the name of the City Council.***

115 COVID-19 MEMORIAL – REQUEST FROM FM & J WAIT FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Members considered the request submitted by Waits Funeral directors to allow the siting of a memorial to the victims of COVID-19 and their families on City Council land. Some concern was expressed as to the funding of the proposal as it only from one source. Some concern was also expressed as to the suitability of the Garden of Remembrance as a location for the memorial, given the Garden's focus

on deaths in theatres of war. Cllr D Robertson emphasised that the number of deaths attributable to COVID-19 in Lichfield currently stands at 90, that being 7 more than the number of Lichfield residents commemorated who died in World War Two. Cllr Robertson suggested an area of open space could be developed into a separate COVID memorial. Cllr P Ray echoed the sentiment of Cllr Robertson but emphasised that such a memorial needs to be an exception rather than the rule. Cllr M Trent urged consultation with the families of those whose death was attributable to COVID-19 as plans for the memorial develop.

During informal discussion prior to the meeting, the Liberal Democrat Group had suggested the Friends of Lichfield Historic Parks Group should be consulted as the memorial project develops. This was incorporated into the Leader's proposal.

RESOLVED:

- a) *The Council grants an 'in principle' permission for the placement of a memorial to COVID-19 victims and their families on City Council land.*
- b) *Delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Leader of the Council and minority group leaders, taking into account representations from the Friends of Lichfield Historic Parks group, either in person or by written submission, to agree a finalised specification and location with the applicants in due course. The City Council also to confirm an 'in principle' intention to assume responsibility for the memorial once complete and unveiled.*

116 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

RESOLVED: *That payment of accounts be approved and confirmed for the periods 1 January 2021 to 31 January 2021 in the sum of £90,435.68 General Account and £6.00 Imprest Account and 1 February 2021 to 28 February 2021 in the sum of £70,845.26 General Account, and £6.00 Imprest Account.*

117 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.*

118 MARKET STALL CONTRACT

Members considered the Civic Officer and Town Clerk's report detailing the contract for the supply, erection, dismantling and storage of the City Council's market stalls. Members noted that a draft of this report had previously been considered by the City Council's Markets Working Group in readiness for its presentation to Council.

RESOLVED:

- a) *The City Council does not wish to enter into a three-year extension of the current five-year contract for the erection/dismantling, storage and transport of LCC owned market stalls as set out in the report.*
- b) *Delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk in consultation with the City Council's Market Working Group to advise All-Fit Towbars and Trailers of the Council's decision and to take the appropriate steps to facilitate the ending of the contract and disposal of the City Council's stalls, trailers and associated items for the best sum reasonably achievable.*

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS
THE MAYOR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 7.23 PM**

MAYOR