



ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes Council

Time and date

6.30pm on Tuesday 25 January 2022

Place

Upper Guildhall, High Street, Andover

Cllr B Long - Town Mayor (P)		
Cllr R Hughes - Deputy Town Mayor (P)		
Cllr N Asamoah (P)	Cllr L Banville (A)	Cllr D Coole (P)
Cllr J Coole (P)	Cllr C Ecclestone (A)	Cllr L Gregori (P)
Cllr K Hughes (A)	Cllr N Long (P)	Cllr R Meyer (P)
Cllr M Mumford (P)	Cllr R Rowles (A)	Cllr J Sangster (P)
Cllr D Treadwell (P)	Cllr S Waue (P)	

Officers Present:

Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk)

Tor Warburton (Deputy Town Clerk) (Taking the minutes & managing online streaming)

County/Borough Councillors:

Councillor Zilliah Brooks

Members of the Public: 2

Members of the Press: 1

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic this meeting was held in the Guildhall following Coronavirus preventative measures. The Town Council made arrangements to stream the meeting virtually to allow as much public access as possible.

Prior to the commencement of the Council meeting, the Town Mayor announced that Item 11 of the agenda would be moved to after Item 13, to allow for time sensitive items to be considered first.

C138/01/22	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
	Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors C Ecclestone, K Hughes and R Rowles.

C139/01/22	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
	A Declaration of Interest was made by all Members of the Council in Agenda Item 9.
C140/01/22	MINUTES
	<p>An amendment to the Council Minutes of 15 December 2021, reference C129/12/21 was requested.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor R Hughes and seconded by Councillor D Coole that the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 20 October 2021 and the amended Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 15 December 2021 be signed by the Chairman as correct records.</p> <p>A vote was taken which was unanimous.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 20 October 2021 and the amended Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 15 December 2021 be signed by the Chairman as correct records.</p>
C141/01/22	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
	<p><i>The notes below are a precis of statements/questions. They are not recorded word for word.</i></p> <p>Member of Public 1:</p> <p>2021 not a great year for anybody. It was an appalling year for the Town Council. Allotments are in disarray and new opportunities are being ignored. The Christmas Lights were shambolic. We saw more threats of judicial Review than we saw of any real achievement. Now we find through the Andover Advertiser that the faith in the Andover Town Council, is at an all time low. It is time for the Andover Town Council to work for Andover and not just its members. Will we see the installation of the Speed Indicator Signs? The Council voted in favour of the creation of a Youth Community Worker. Let 2022 be the year it happens.</p> <p>Let the new allotment site be a priority. Let the proposal for a paper free environment be taken seriously and actually work towards it. Let us develop the Town Mayors idea for a Charter Stone. Let the Jubilee funding not just be a token gesture. Let the 2022 Andover Town Council have a "let's do something" attitude. Can the Town Councillors here present, promise to make 2022 a year of achievement? Politics despite some claims, isn't a game. Its serious. That doesn't mean it can't be fun. There's an opportunity to do something, please do not waste it. Thank you.</p> <p>Town Mayor's response:</p> <p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>Member of Public 2:</p> <p>I am here on behalf of the residents, who are not happy about the completion of the Augusta Park allotment site. I have a list of questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What action has taken place since October 2021, when Taylor Wimpy had already put up the fence, built the car park and put water to the gate? It doesn't look like anything has been done since. 2. Who is the Councillor or Staff Member, responsible for making the allotment sites ready and prepared for the tenants? 3. How many meetings have taken place with Taylor Wimpy about the Augusta Park allotment site since January 2010?

4. Is it possible for Taylor Wimpy to be instructed in what it is doing, to be completed, via email or video call to them? Does it have to be a face-to-face meeting, which always seems to get cancelled?
5. What is an expected completion date for the allotment site at Augusta Park?
6. The plots are not full sized, what is the anticipated cost per plot?

Town Mayor's Response:

I will answer some of those questions now.

The expected completion date has not changed. The expected completion date is March. Taylor Wimpy have not come back and said it is expected to be any longer than that.

We are waiting for the water pipes to be connected and we are waiting for the access path to be put down. They have agreed to put hard standing down for the sheds, which they haven't done as yet.

Myself and Councillor Long have been joining a staff member in meetings at the site. To ensure things are going ahead.

As far as I know only one face to face meeting has been cancelled, which was due to Christmas and Covid.

Taylor Wimpy do know everything they are doing and we are expecting them to be delivering on time. We are due a meeting with them in the next two weeks. We are expecting them to deliver it in March, then it has to go to Legal to sign the paperwork, for us to then own the site. Legal with Ox Drove took months.

The plots are the equivalent of a 5-rod plot, which in old terms would be classed as a half rod plot and the anticipated cost at the moment is 40 pence per square metre. We have had it confirmed the plots are 125 square metres. Water charges will be on top. That is the present cost of plots. The Allotment Committee are looking at whether that cost will need to rise or not. It will be discussed in the February meeting.

Member of Public 2:

Thank you.

C142/01/22

BACK TO BASICS

Members received and considered a report on 'Back to Basics' and the way forward for the Town Council.

It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that:

- It is noted that all requirements listed are included in the 'Back to Basics' plan.
- Additional work i.e., Queen's Jubilee needs to be clearly listed researched and costed in Officers time and approved by Full Council if it is to be added to the 'Back to Basics' plan.
- Once the above is noted, it is to be agreed that external contractors will be brought in to discuss with the Council, the next steps and who will be involved in implementing them.

Members were reminded that the Council had suggested that an Extraordinary Council meeting be set up, with an external contractor, where the next steps would be discussed and who would implement them. The Town Mayor confirmed it was Ellis Whittam who would be invited back to talk to the Councillors and that an Extraordinary Council meeting date was needed.

The Town Mayor asked who was in favour of agreeing that Ellis Whittam were invited to come to an Extraordinary Council meeting and talk to the whole Council.

A vote was taken:
FOR – 11, AGAINST – 1, ABSTENTIONS – 0

RESOLVED: That:

- **It is noted that all requirements listed are included in the 'Back to Basics' plan.**
- **Additional work i.e., Queen's Jubilee needs to be clearly listed researched and costed in Officers time and approved by Full Council if it is to be added to the 'Back to Basics' plan.**
- **Once the above is noted, it is to be agreed that external contractors will be brought in to discuss with the Council, the next steps and who will be involved in implementing them.**
- **Ellis Whittam be invited to an Extraordinary Council meeting to talk to the whole Council.**

C143/01/22 STAFFING APPRAISALS & PAYROLL FOR INCLUSION IN BUDGET 2022/2023

Members considered a report on the conclusion of Staffing Appraisals and recommendations for the Payroll Budget to be included in the Budget 2022/2023.

Salary Scale Increments:

It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the staff be awarded the 1 Salary Scale Increment for 2022/2023.

Members went into a debate.

Members were reminded that Budget and Staffing Committee was disbanded in May 2021, under a new format of how the Council was going to work this year. A Human Resources (HR) Panel was put together. The HR Panel had the Terms of Reference for doing the appraisals. Appraisals have never come to Full Council. They are confidential. They would have to do be done in Confidential Matters. It would not be able to be done in the Public.

Councillor N Long made a motion that the Members move straight to a vote, which was seconded by Councillor L Gregori.

The Town Mayor moved to a vote on the first recommendation.

A vote was taken:

FOR – 7, AGAINST – 5, ABSTENTIONS – 0.

RESOLVED: That the staff be awarded the 1 Salary Scale Increment for 2022/2023.

Salary Scales:

Members were asked to note that some of the staff had reached the top of the payscale as agreed in 2018 and that it needed to be referred back to the HR Panel to ensure funding was in the Budget, in order for the payscales to be reviewed.

Councillor D Coole proposed a minor amendment to the recommendation to read "It is recommended that in line with the 'Back to Basics' review findings, a new Bench Marking exercise be carried out to ensure that the staff are being paid fairly and that any adjustments to salary scales can be made."

It was seconded by Councillor R Meyer.

A vote was taken:

FOR – 9, AGAINST – 1, ABSTENTIONS – 2

RESOLVED: That the recommendation be amended to read, "It is recommended that in line with the 'Back to Basics' review findings, a new Bench Marking exercise be carried out to ensure that the staff are being paid fairly and that any adjustments to salary scales can be made."

Budget 2022/2023:

Members noted that it was agreed in the Council meeting of December 2021, that the payroll budget would be £215,000.00, which is what the current staffing structure required.

C144/01/22 EARMARKED RESERVES 2022/2023

Members considered the levels of Earmarked Reserves and went into debate. Councillor D Coole proposed an amendment to the Earmarked Reserves which was seconded by Councillor R Meyer. However, it was pointed out that this proposal could not be allowed as it would negate the item and its original recommendations and would therefore be invalid.

It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that:

- The Council approves the costs of Elections to be taken from Earmarked Reserves.
- The Legal Expenses Earmarked Reserves be removed and transferred back into Operational Reserves.
- That Full Council approves the movements /amendments to Earmarked Reserves, with a final total (removing Legal Expenses) of £292,955.05.

The Andover Town Council's Responsible Financial Officer, the Town Clerk, made the following statement:

"I appreciate what Councillor Coole has said with regard to the movement of Earmarked Reserves, however, we can trace those Earmarked Reserves right back to when we very first started. Each one has been documented. There is a management file going all the way back to 2012. The Earmarked Reserves that Councillor D Coole has presented to you this evening starts again. I have gone through them and I have to confess I'm confused. I am concerned that they don't actually follow the Reserves Policy which states that they have to be documented, they have to be for specific reasons and they can not be held for ongoing expenditure. I just want to make that point clear that the Earmarked Reserves that you have had in your report can be traced right back to the beginning of 2012.

The alternative ones appear to start again. That is a decision for Council to make but it was a point I want to point out to you."

Members were reminded that the Earmarked Reserves can be moved and approved at another Council meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the Members moved straight to a vote.

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
N Asamoah	X		
D Coole		X	
J Coole		X	
L Gregori	X		
R Hughes	X		
B Long	X		
N Long	X		
R Meyer		X	
M Mumford	X		
J Sangster	X		

D Treadwell		X	
S Waue	X		
TOTAL	8	4	0

RESOLVED: That:

- **The Council approves the costs of Elections to be taken from Earmarked Reserves.**
- **The Legal Expenses Earmarked Reserves be removed and transferred back into Operational Reserves.**
- **That Full Council approves the movements /amendments to Earmarked Reserves, with a final total (removing Legal Expenses) of £292,955.05.**

C145/01/22 BUDGET 2022/2023

Members received and considered a report on the Budget for 2022/2023. It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the Budget 2022/2023 of £370,077.50 (three hundred and seventy thousand, seventy seven pounds and fifty pence), as recommended by the Policy and Resources Committee be accepted and approved.

No Members of the Council raised any questions or debate.

A vote was taken.

FOR – 7, AGAINST – 5, ABSTENTIONS – 0

RESOLVED: That the Budget 2022/2023 of £370,077.50 (three hundred and seventy thousand, seventy seven pounds and fifty pence), as recommended by the Policy and Resources Committee be accepted and approved.

C146/01/22 PRECEPT 2022/2023

Members received and considered a report on the Precept level for 2022/2023. It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the Precept level for 2022/2023 be £361,801.70 (three hundred and sixty one thousand, eight hundred and one pounds and seventy pence) based on a tax base of 17,147 @ £21.10 per Band D Equivalent Dwellings, plus £8,275.80 from Operational Reserves, be accepted and approved.

A vote was taken:

FOR – 7, AGAINST – 4, ABSTENTIONS – 1

RESOLVED: That the Precept for 2022/2023 be £361,801.70 (three hundred and sixty one thousand, eight hundred and one pounds and seventy pence) based on a tax base of 17,147 @ £21.10 per Band D Equivalent Dwellings, be accepted and approved.

That £8,275.80 be taken from Operational Reserves to make up the shortfall for the Budget 2022/2023.

Councillor L Gregori gave his thanks to the Officers and Members of the Policy and Resources Committee for their hard work in relation to the Budget.

C147/01/22 DELEGATED AUTHORITY IN EXTREMIS

Members received and considered a Scheme of Delegation, which allowed the Town Council to continue to function “in extremis”.

It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the Scheme of Delegation to the Town Clerk in Extremis, be accepted and approved.

	<p>As a result of some Members debating the necessity of having this scheme in place, Councillor R Hughes proposed and Councillor B Long seconded that an amendment to the recommendation to read, 'that the delegated authority is accepted with the proviso that it is reviewed every 12 months', be accepted.</p> <p>A vote was taken: FOR – 6, AGAINST – 4, ABSTENTIONS – 2</p> <p>RESOLVED: That an amendment to the recommendation to read, 'that the delegated authority is accepted with the proviso that it is reviewed every 12 months' be accepted.</p> <p>Members moved to vote on the original recommendation with the amendment. A vote was taken: FOR – 8, AGAINST – 3, ABSTENTIONS – 1</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Scheme of Delegation to the Town Clerk in Extremis, with the proviso that it is reviewed every 12 months, be accepted and approved.</p>
C148/01/22	FINANCE
	<p>Members received the list of payments up to 18 January 2022. It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor R Hughes that the List of Payments up to 18 January 2022 be approved.</p> <p>A vote was taken: FOR – 10, AGAINST – 0, ABSTENTIONS – 2</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the List of Payments up to 18 January 2022 be approved.</p>
C149/01/22	COUNCIL OFFICES - OPTIONS
	<p>Members received and considered a report on options for the future of the Town Council.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor D Coole and seconded by Councillor J Coole that an amendment to include a fourth option of not to have an office be considered. It was felt that the previous almost 2 years, had shown that Officers had been working from home successfully and paying for office space would not be justified.</p> <p>Members debated the amendment. A vote was taken: FOR – 5, AGAINST – 7, ABSTENTIONS – 0</p> <p>Motion not carried.</p> <p>The Members returned to discuss the original options. It was proposed by Councillor R Hughes and seconded by Councillor L Gregori that Option 1, Serviced office in the town centre @ £21,572.16 per annum, be accepted and approved.</p> <p>A vote was taken: FOR – 9, AGAINST – 2, ABSTENTIONS – 1</p> <p>RESOLVED: That Option 1, Serviced office in the town centre @ £21,572.16 per annum, be accepted and approved.</p>
C150/01/22	MOTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS
	<p>Members considered a motion on increasing the Standing Committee Membership numbers to 11 each, as proposed by Councillor D Coole and seconded by Councillor N Asamoah.</p> <p>A vote was taken:</p>

	For – 4, AGAINST – 7, ABSTENTIONS – 1 Motion not carried.
C150/01/22	DATE OF NEXT MEETING
	Members noted the date of the next meeting: Wednesday 23 February 2022 , at the Guildhall, High Street, Andover, starting at 6.30pm.
C151/01/22	EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC
	It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor D Coole that the Members of the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting at Agenda Item 16 due to consideration of Confidential personal details protected under Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR UK 2018. A vote was taken: FOR – 9, AGAINST – 3, ABSTENTIONS - 0 RESOLVED: That the Members of the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting at Agenda Item 16 due to consideration of Confidential personal details protected under Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR UK 2018.
	CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS
C152/01/22	FREEDOM OF TOWN CERTIFICATE
	Members considered the presentation of the Certificate for the Freedom of the Town posthumously to Mr Holloway's daughter. A vote was taken which was unanimous. RESOLVED: That the Certificate for the Freedom of the Town is presented posthumously to Mr Holloway's daughter. It was proposed by Councillor D Coole and seconded by Councillor N Long that Officers ascertain whether Mr Holloway's daughter would prefer the presentation of the Certificate for the Freedom of the Town posthumously, to be in the public or in private. That Officers be delegated to arrange for the framing of the Certificate to match the colour of the historic Squires shop front. A vote was taken which was unanimous. RESOLVED: That Officers ascertain whether Mr Holloway's daughter would prefer the presentation of the Certificate for the Freedom of the Town posthumously, to be in the public or in private. That Officers be delegated to arrange for the framing of the Certificate to match the colour of the historic Squires shop front.
The Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.20pm.	

Town Mayor

Date