



ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes Council

Time and date

6.00 pm on Tuesday 26 January 2021

Place

Virtual On-Line Meeting via "Zoom"

Cllr R Rowles - Town Mayor (P)

Cllr L Banville - Deputy Town Mayor (P)

Cllr N Asamoah (A)

Cllr D Coole (P)

Cllr J Coole (A)

Cllr C Ecclestone (P)

Cllr L Gregori (P)

Cllr R Hughes (P)

Cllr B Long (P)

Cllr R Meyer (P)

Cllr J Sangster (P)

Cllr D Treadwell (P)

(Arrived at 6.26pm)

Officers Present:

Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk)

Tracy Predeth (Locum Clerk)

Michelle Young (Committee Officer) (Taking the notes)

County/Borough Councillors:

Cllr Z Brooks

Cllr N Matthews

Cllr I Anderson

Cllr K Hamilton

Cllr T Burley

Members of the Public: 13

Members of the Press: 1

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and Government legislation regarding Social Distancing, it was not possible to hold this meeting at a normal public venue. Therefore, the Town Council made arrangements under the Coronavirus Act 2020, and subsequent Regulations permitting remote meetings, to hold the meeting virtually. A voting procedure was actioned via role call method with each Member's name and response recorded in the Minutes.

C 328/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors N Asamoah and J Coole.

C 329/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor D Coole declared an interest in Item 13 of the Agenda.

C 330/19 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

It was proposed by Councillor R Rowles and seconded by Councillor D Coole that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 7 December 2020 be signed by the Town Mayor as a correct record.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
R Rowles	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole	X		
C Ecclestone	X		
L Gregori	X		
R Hughes	X		
B Long	X		
R Meyer	X		
J Sangster	X		
TOTAL	9	0	0

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 7 December 2020 be signed by the Town Mayor as a correct record.

C 331/19 TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

C 332/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The notes below are a precis of statements/questions. They are not recorded word for word.

Member of Public 1:

- 1) F.O.I. request – A locum Clerk was appointed on 5 November 2020. How much longer can we expect her to stay and the total cost of doing so.
- 2) F.O.I. request – This Council has had 13 extraordinary/emergency meetings so far. What is the total cost of all this, including Officer time, writing Agendas, Minutes, overtime, toil (time off in lieu), to the tax payer of Andover?
- 3) F.O.I. request – Is the Town Council GDPR compliant? Are all Town Councillors complying with GDPR by using the @andover.co.uk emails?
If not using the @andover.co.uk email, what is the Council's GDPR Officer doing to ensure that it complies with its own policies?
Are the quarterly year audits still being done?

A recent F.O.I. request showed that 5 Councillors are having hard copies of all agendas sent to them. With a digital age we are in, how can this be justified?

A huge cost to the Council. Time to put a stop to it and help reduce the budget. Also the £20,000 of proposed allowances to Councillors, as I feel you have not done anything to actually deserve it!

A quick reduction to budget of over £20,000.

Chairman's Response:

We will provide written responses to you.

Member of Public 2:

Regarding Councillor training. Will it be mandatory? Some Councillors have not had any training and in light of their behaviour, I think it should be compulsory.

Chairman's Response:

Councillor training is not compulsory at Parish Council level.

Member of Public 3:

Do you have two offices? Are you going to get rid of the offices?

Chairman's Response:

No, we have 1 office. It has been suggested and we will discuss that in a confidential session. The landlord should be notified first.

C 333/19 REPORTS FROM TVBC AND HCC COUNCILLORS

The notes below are a precis of statements/questions. They are not recorded word for word.

Councillor Z Brooks:

Could I ask the Councillors to let me know of any school children that do not have access to a laptop.

Starting from 18 January 2021, Hampshire County Council has temporarily changed the time restrictions on the free older person bus pass. It can be used for travel at any time of the day, to assist with essential journeys such as food shopping and vaccinations. School meals – National School Meal vouchers are available from 18 January 2021 to 12 February 2021.

Hampshire County Council has made £320,000.00 available to charity organisations through the February half term period, to provide support for families and individuals in financial hardship because of the pandemic.

Councillor C Ecclestone:

Test Valley Borough Council and Northern Area Planning Committee are holding meetings where the subject of the Rendezvous Community Hall being turned into a gym will be discussed. Anyone wishing to listen to the debate please attend the meetings. Test Valley Borough Council's meeting will be on 27 January 2021 and Northern Area Planning Committee's meeting will be on 28 January 2021.

Councillor N Matthews:

Roman Ward update.

Parking issues in Genoa Court, over the last twelve to eighteen months Test Valley Borough Council have been carrying out parking enforcement on behalf of Hampshire Highways. We have managed to keep the ticket numbers down. However, it is important to spread the word that Hampshire Highways have taken back the authority of parking enforcement. So be aware the free sessions have ended now.

The post box on Augusta Park, I'm delighted to say, has now been commissioned by the Royal Mail. It is down to the local mail sorting office to include it in their rounds.

Another 6 grit bins have been deployed around Augusta Park.

(Councillor D Treadwell joined the meeting at 6.26pm)

Councillor I Anderson:

Pot holes in Recreation Road have been reported to Hampshire County Council.

Leaf clearing in Pilgrims Way, Micheldever Road and other areas has been done to the best of ability.

Sinking drain in Newbury Road has been reported.

There has been a sighting of a rat problem by Tesco and reported to the Environmental Services.

C 334/19 QUESTIONS FROM TOWN COUNCILLORS TO TVBC AND HCC COUNCILLORS

Councillor L Banville to Councillor Z Brooks:

Is there a link for the laptops for schools?

Do you know if Hampshire County Council are doing anything with the electric car scheme?

Councillor Z Brooks to Councillor L Banville:

If you can email me, I will forward your email address to the relevant department at Hampshire County Council for a response.

The electric car scheme is part of the Hampshire County Council's environmental policy. I can send you information on how this will be managed.

Councillor L Gregori to all:

Thank you to all colleagues of Hampshire County Council and Test Valley Borough Council for all their hard work during the pandemic.

C 335/19 ACTION POINTS FROM LAST MEETING

Members noted the action points from the last meeting.

C 336/19 COMMITTEE MINUTES

The following Committee Minutes were received and noted:

22 September 2020 – Assets and Communities Committee

8 December 2020 – Assets and Communities Committee

1 December 2020 – Policy and Resources Committee

19 October 2020 – Planning Committee

16 November 2020 – Planning Committee

30 November 2020 – Planning Committee

21 December 2020 – Planning Committee

C 337/19 PRECEPT 2021/2022

Members considered the Precept report for 2021/2022.

It was proposed by Councillor L Gregori and seconded by Councillor C Ecclestone that the precept for 2021/2022 should be maintained at current levels of 2020/2021.

It was felt that due to the current pandemic and the difficulties had by people over the last year, there was no justification for a budget rise. An amendment was suggested by the Town Mayor.

It was proposed by Councillor R Rowles and seconded by Councillor L Banville that the Precept for 2021/2022 be maintained, in principle, at the current level of 2020/2021.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
R Rowles	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole		X	
C Ecclestone		X	
L Gregori	X		
R Hughes	X		
B Long	X		
R Meyer		X	
J Sangster	X		
D Treadwell	X		
TOTAL	7	3	0

RESOLVED: That the Precept for 2021/2022 be maintained in principle, at the current level of 2020/2021.

A Member felt that the Precept item should not be discussed until after the Budget had been considered.

It was proposed by Councillor D Coole and seconded by Councillor R Meyer that this item be deferred until after item 13 of the Agenda.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
R Rowles		X	
L Banville		X	
D Coole	X		
C Ecclestone	X		
L Gregori		X	
R Hughes		X	
B Long		X	
R Meyer	X		
J Sangster	X		
D Treadwell	X		
TOTAL	5	5	0

The Town Mayor used his casting vote and voted against the proposal.

Motion not carried.

The Locum Clerk clarified to the Members that the Council did have to set its budget before the Precept, in accordance with the Law. This item was moved to Item 13 on the Agenda.

C 338/19 YOUTH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Members considered the appointment of a Youth Community Development Officer. The majority agreed in principle. It was commented that the position should be as a contractor and not a full-time member of staff. The job description was considered to be light in detail, relating to length of contract and costings. A Member commented that there were organisations already in existence who provided support to the Youth of Andover, such as Love Andover.

It was proposed by Councillor R Hughes and seconded by Councillor Ecclestone that this item be postponed to another date, in order that discussions would be held at the next Policy and Resources Committee, which would include costs.

The Town Mayor clarified that the position of Youth Community Development Officer required a highly trained individual, a contract length of one year and the monies would come from the New Building Fund. This position would also report directly to full Council. It was proposed by Councillor D Coole and seconded by Councillor C Ecclestone that this item be deferred to Policy and Resources Committee.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
R Rowles		X	
L Banville		X	
D Coole	X		
C Ecclestone	X		
L Gregori		X	
R Hughes	X		

B Long	X		
R Meyer	X		
J Sangster		X	
D Treadwell		X	
TOTAL	5	5	0

The Town Mayor used his casting vote and voted against.

Motion not carried.

It was proposed by Councillor J Sangster and seconded by Councillor R Rowles that the Town Council will appoint via a tendering process, a Community Youth Development Officer, who will work on behalf of the community and report directly to full Council. Contracted hours and associated budget will be taken entirely from the New Building Earmarked Reserves for a maximum of £35,000 and the contract will last no more than a year.

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
R Rowles	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole		X	
C Ecclestone		X	
L Gregori	X		
R Hughes		X	
B Long	X		
R Meyer		X	
J Sangster	X		
D Treadwell		X	
TOTAL	5	5	0

The Town Mayor used his casting vote and voted for.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council will appoint via a tendering process, a Community Youth Development Officer, who will work on behalf of the community and report directly to full Council. Contracted hours and associated budget will be taken entirely from the New Building Earmarked Reserves for a maximum of £35,000 and the contract will last no more than a year.

It was agreed that the salary would be voted upon in the next meeting.

C 339/19 EARMARKED RESERVES

It was proposed by Councillor R Rowles and seconded by Councillor L Gregori that the meeting be extended beyond the 2 hour period by an extra 1 hour.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
R Rowles	X		
L Banville	X		

D Coole		X	
C Ecclestone		X	
L Gregori	X		
R Hughes	X		
B Long	X		
R Meyer		X	
J Sangster	X		
D Treadwell		X	
TOTAL	6	4	0

RESOLVED: That the meeting be extended beyond the 2 hour period by an extra 1 hour.

Members considered the levels of Earmarked Reserves as recommended by the Policy and Resources Committee and a proposal put together by Councillor R Hughes, which would enable the precept level to remain unchanged.

It was proposed by Councillor R Hughes and seconded by Councillor R Rowles that the Precept level for 2021/2022 be £364,430.00 (three hundred and sixty four thousand, four hundred and thirty pounds) based on a tax base of 16,568 @ £21.10 per Band D Equivalent Dwellings, plus £15,000 from reserves, be accepted and approved.

(Councillor D Treadwell left the meeting at 8.05pm)

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
R Rowles	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole		X	
C Ecclestone			X
L Gregori	X		
R Hughes	X		
B Long	X		
R Meyer			
J Sangster	X		
TOTAL	6	1	1

RESOLVED: That the Precept level for 2021/2022 be £364,430.00 (three hundred and sixty four thousand, four hundred and thirty pounds) based on a tax base of 16,568 @ £21.10 per Band D Equivalent Dwellings, plus £15,000 from reserves, be accepted and approved.

It was proposed by Councillor R Rowles and seconded by Councillor B Long that the meeting be extended by a further 30 minutes.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
R Rowles	X		

L Banville	X		
D Coole		X	
C Ecclestone		X	
L Gregori	X		
R Hughes	X		
B Long	X		
R Meyer		X	
J Sangster	X		
TOTAL	6	3	0

RESOLVED: That the meeting be extended by a further 30 minutes.

(Councillor C Ecclestone left the meeting at 9.01pm)

C 340/19 BUDGET 2021/2022

Members considered the Budget for 2021/2022.

It was proposed by Councillor B Long and seconded by Councillor L Gregori that Members moved straight to a vote.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
R Rowles	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole		X	
L Gregori	X		
R Hughes	X		
B Long	X		
R Meyer		X	
J Sangster	X		
TOTAL	6	2	0

RESOLVED: That Members moved straight to a vote.

It was proposed by Councillor R Hughes and seconded by Councillor B Long that the Budget 2021/2022 of £ 364,430.00 (three hundred and sixty four thousand, four hundred and thirty pounds) with £15,000.00 taken from reserves, be approved.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
R Rowles	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole		X	
L Gregori	X		
R Hughes	X		
B Long	X		
R Meyer		X	
J Sangster	X		
TOTAL	6	2	0

RESOLVED: That the Budget 2021/2022 of £ 364,430.00 (three hundred and sixty four thousand, four hundred and thirty pounds) with £15,000.00 taken from reserves, be approved.

It was proposed by Councillor R Rowles and seconded by Councillor L Banville that the Council Meeting moved straight to the Confidential section of the Agenda.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
R Rowles	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole		X	
L Gregori	X		
R Hughes	X		
B Long	X		
R Meyer		X	
J Sangster	X		
TOTAL	6	2	0

RESOLVED: That the Council Meeting moved straight to the Confidential section of the Agenda.

C 341/19 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was proposed by Councillor R Rowles and seconded by Councillor B Long that the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting at Items 20, 21 and 22, due to consideration of reports which contain confidential personnel information and the Confidential Internal Audit Report which contains confidential personnel information.

A recorded vote was as follows:

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
R Rowles	X		
L Banville	X		
D Coole		X	
L Gregori	X		
R Hughes	X		
B Long	X		
R Meyer		X	
J Sangster	X		
TOTAL	6	2	0

RESOLVED: That the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting at Items 20, 21 and 22, due to consideration of reports which contain confidential personnel information and the Confidential Internal Audit Report which contains confidential personnel information.

C 342/19 PROVISION OF SUPPORT

Members considered a report on the provision of support to the Town Council.

C 343/19 PROVISION OF MEDIATION AND SERVICES

Members considered a report on the provision of mediation and services to the Town Council.

C344/19 INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT

Members received the Confidential Internal Auditor's report for subsequent approval.

The Town Mayor closed the meeting at 9.45pm.

Town Mayor

Date