



WINCANTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE **EXTRAORDINARY MEETING** OF THE FULL TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 21ST JULY 2020 VIA ZOOM

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Four

MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL PRESS: None

PROPER OFFICER IN ATTENDANCE: Zöe Godden, Locum Clerk

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Tudgay (Chair), Eadington, Galitzine, Hearne, Hinks, Old (from 19:21), Power, Ralph, Rodgers, Smith, Thomas, Vagg and Walters.

Before the meeting began, there was a general discussion about the merits of allowing a period of public participation. It was **agreed** to allow the public to participate – six votes for, five votes against.

19:15 – The Chair allowed a public open session.

Members of the public asked questions about the content of the agenda and about amendments made to a previous set of minutes. The Chair noted the comments.

19:21 – The Chair brought the public open session to a close.

0045 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Councillors Greening and Shelbourn-Barrow.

0046 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members to declare any interest they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Council Code of Conduct.

There were no declarations of interest.

It was **unanimously agreed** to alter the order of business so that items 0048 and 0049 were dealt with before the exclusion of the press and public.

0048 LOCUM CLERK

To consider appointing a locum clerk for the duration of this meeting and for preparing the minutes.

There was some general discussion about the need and merits of employing a locum Clerk. The Chair informed Councillors that if a Locum Clerk were not appointed, a Councillor would have to take notes and prepare the minutes.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed to appoint the Locum Clerk for the duration of the meeting and to prepare the minutes. Nine votes for; Three votes against; One abstention.

0049 LOCUM CLERK

To consider under financial regulations the payment for a locum clerk for the Extraordinary Meeting.

The Chair informed Councillors that the total cost of employing the Locum Clerk would not exceed £70.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the Locum Clerk would be paid up to £70 for work pertaining to the meeting. Eight votes for; Five votes against.

0047 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider exclusion of press and public for remainder of meeting under Public Bodies Admissions

To Meetings Act 1960, Section 1 (2) on the grounds that discussion of the following business is likely to disclose confidential information relating to a staffing issue.

There was some general discussion about the need and merits of excluding the press and public.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed to exclude the press and public for the remainder of the meeting. Nine votes for; Two votes against; One abstention.

0048 PERSONNEL

To consider personnel issues and agree how to proceed.

The Chair explained that the Town Council needed to deal with a staff grievance and an external complaint. Having taken advice from the Somerset Association of Local Council and South West Councils, the Town Council needed to form a Complaints Panel and an Appeals Panel.

There was some general discussion about the dissolving of a previous Complaints Committee and the need and merits of forming a Complaints Panel and an Appeals Panel. There followed a discussion about the responsibilities of the Town Council as an employer and the need to deal with these personnel issues expediently in order to fulfil the Town Council's duty of care to its staff.

The Chair went on to say that, should the Complaints Panel and Appeals Panel be formed, South West Councils would be able to advise them on how to deal with the matters at hand and that it was estimated that the sum of £3500 should be allocated to cover the cost of this advice, to be sourced from the general reserve.

Councillors discussed these issues at length. Some Councillors felt that the issues should be deferred to a future meeting. The Chair explained that the issues needed to be dealt with as quickly as possible to ensure the Town Council was fulfilling its duty of care to its staff.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that £3500 would be allocated from general reserves to cover the cost of advice from South West Councils in relation to the current personnel issues. Eight votes for; Four votes against; One abstention.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to form a Complaints Panel consisting of seven members and an Appeals Panel consisting of five members. It was also unanimously agreed that the panel members would be as follows:

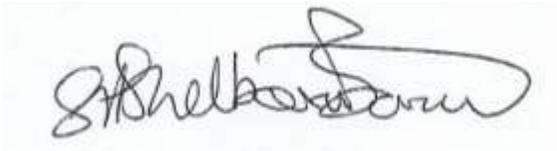
Complaints Panel – Councillors Galitzine, Hinks, Ralph, Rodgers, Smith, Vagg and Walters.

Appeals Panel – Councillors Eadington, Hearne, Old, Power and Thomas.

There followed some discussion about holding face-to-face meetings. The Chair said that current Government guidance was that this could not happen but that he would monitor any changes to Government guidance accordingly. In addition, the Chair noted that a risk assessment would have to be carried out before any face-to-face meetings could take place.

The meeting ended at 21:00.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Shelton', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Date: 10th August 2020