

MELTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 22 JUNE 2020

Present via video conference or phone:	Councillor Buchanan (Chair), Councillor Bampton, Councillor Keighley, Councillor Sonia King, Councillor Noon, Councillor Storey, Councillor White and Councillor Wrathall
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PUBLIC SESSION: 2 Members of the public were in attendance regarding Item 8 shop front grant application to answer any questions that Councillors may have regarding the application.

20/76 NOTICE OF THE MEETING

Taken as read.

20/77 ADMISSION TO THE PUBLIC

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended by the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020

RESOLVED: That because of the confidential/ personal/ commercially sensitive or legally prejudicial nature of the business to be transacted, the public and the press leave the meeting during consideration of the following: -

- Item 3 Councillors' reasons for absence – to consider this item in private as it would divulge personal confidential information
- Item 9 request to purchase land – to consider this item in private due to the commercially sensitive nature of the business to be transacted.

20/78 (a) APOLOGIES / REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Haigh and Councillor Spencer King.

(b) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

20/79 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) – YEAR END 31 MARCH 2020.

Councillors noted that the internal auditor carried out their inspection on 15 May 2020 and that a copy of the report had been circulated with the agenda. The Chair explained the single point arising from the audit and it was decided that no further action was required as the financial Regulations were being redrafted.

Councillors noted that the AGAR documentation had to be with the External Auditor by 31 July 2020 (the regulations having been amended due to the Corona Virus).

Councillors considered each of the assertions listed on the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) enclosed with the agenda to determine whether the Council agreed with the

assertion or not and then decided to approve the Annual Governance Statement accordingly (Section 1).

Minute 20/79/a

RESOLVED: To approve the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1).

The original was then signed by the Chair and the Clerk during the meeting.

Councillors considered the year end accounts circulated with the agenda. Clarification was sought on the relationship between the Balance Sheet and the Asset Register and the Clerk agreed to make some enquiries of the accounting package and circulate further information. It was:

Minute 20/79/b

RESOLVED: To approve the Year End Accounts ending 31/03/20.

Councillors considered the Accounting Statements 2019/20 (Section 2) enclosed with the agenda and it was:

Minute 20/79/c

RESOLVED: To approve the Annual Accounting Statements 2019/20 (Section 2) circulated with the agenda

The original was then signed by the Chair at the meeting (the Responsible Finance Officer having certified the statements in advance of the meeting).

RESOLVED: That Item 8 Shop Front Grant Application be considered next and thereafter the original agenda be resumed.

20/80 SHOP FRONT GRANT APPLICATION

Councillors considered an application received on the 22 May 2020 for a grant under the Council's Shop Front Grant Scheme which was circulated with the agenda. It was noted that the grant scheme does not cover roofing works which had been included as part of the grant application and would therefore not be eligible for a grant. Councillors thought that the remaining proposed works met the criteria set out in the grant scheme. Councillors agreed that the maximum amount of grant award that could be made under the Council's agreed grant scheme would amount to £2283.38.

RESOLVED: To approve the shop front grant application in the sum of £2283.38

20/81 MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor White and seconded by Councillor Bampton and

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 11 May 2020 be approved.

20/82 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

It was proposed by Councillor White and seconded by Councillor Noon and

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Planning Environmental and General Purposes Committee held on the 11 May 2020 be approved.

It was proposed by Councillor White and seconded by Councillor Noon and

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Planning Environmental and General Purposes Committee held on the 1 June 2020 be approved.

20/83 INTERNAL CONTROLS

Councillors considered the Schedule of receipts and payments for April and May 2020 circulated with the agenda and

RESOLVED: That the Schedule of Payments for April 2020 in the sum of £6366.21(net) be approved.

RESOLVED: That the Schedule of Payments for May 2020 in the sum of £8674.90 (net) be approved.

Councillors noted that in the absence of face to face meetings the monthly bank reconciliations and the corresponding current account bank statements are being scanned and sent to the Mayor and Chair of Finance for consideration.

20/84 REQUEST TO PURCHASE LAND

Councillors considered a request to purchase land believed to be in the ownership of the Town Council circulated with the agenda. Councillors welcomed the proposals to improve the woodland in question but did not think that the Council should sell the land. The Clerk was asked to explore the possibility of leasing the land instead and it was agreed that a tree survey of this land be undertaken along with another Council owned site.

20/85 MARIE CURIE EMERGENCY APPEAL IN KIRKLEES

Councillors considered a request from Marie Curie to support their emergency appeal in Kirklees circulated with the agenda. Councillors applauded the work that Marie Curie undertake but it was noted that the Council do not ordinarily make donations to national charities preferring instead to focus its limited resources on local charities and organisations.

20/86 JAPANESE KNOTWEED TREATMENT

Councillors considered whether to go ahead with treatment for Japanese Knotweed for the third consecutive year on Council owned land and agreed to proceed and approved the necessary expenditure detailed in the documents circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED: That the Council proceed with treatment for Japanese Knotweed on Council owned land this year and that the necessary expenditure detailed in the documents circulated with the agenda be approved.

20/87 REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE TO ESTABLISH OWNERSHIP OF TREES

Councillors considered a request for assistance to ascertain the ownership of some protected trees circulated with the agenda and confirmed that the Town Council did not have any interest in the land in question. The Clerk was asked to respond accordingly.

20/88 COVID WORKING GROUP

Councillors considered whether a Covid 19 working group was necessary and decided that these issues could be picked up as part of normal council business and therefore a specific working group was not necessary.

20/89 LOGGING OF ACTIVE TRAVEL ISSUES

Councilors noted the correspondence regarding logging of active travel issues circulated with the agenda.

20/90 CONSULTATION MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

Councillors considered the consultation on the new member code of conduct and the model code circulated with the agenda. The Clerk was asked to circulate the consultation document electronically so that members could complete it.

20/91 SPEEDING WORKING GROUP

Councillors received an update from the working group and the Clerk was asked to recirculate the information on possible additional SID / VAS devices.

20/92 REVIEW OF RISK REGISTER STANDING ITEM

Councillors reviewed the risk register circulated with the agenda. There was a discussion as to whether it adequately covered responses to a pandemic, but it was concluded these issues were covered in specific risks identified. Councillors approved the risk register.

RESOLVED: That the risk register circulated with the agenda be approved following a review.

20/93 ROBERT ASHTON MEMORIAL PARK

Councillors considered and approved the risk assessment regarding the toilet facilities in the Robert Ashton Park circulated with the agenda together with a note setting out the proposals regarding the future operation of the toilets and agreed methods of working for Council staff and contractors.

RESOLVED: That the risk assessment regarding the toilet facilities in the Robert Ashton Park circulated with the agenda together with a note setting out the proposals regarding the future operation of the toilets and agreed methods of working for Council staff and contractors be approved.

Councillors received an update from the Clerk on additional expenditure incurred as a result of Covid 19 and the implementation of the steps identified in the risk assessment.

Councillors noted that the Grounds Maintenance Contractor's fees remain unchanged for 20/21

Councillors received an update from the Clerk on the master plan for the park and it was agreed to convene a meeting of all Councillors to consider an abridged presentation of the draft plan with a view to setting up a Councillor working group to look at the proposals in more depth.

20/94 PAINTINGS FORMERLY IN MELTHAM HALL

The Clerk reminded Councillors of what had been agreed at the last meeting where this matter had been considered. It was noted that the issues were still outstanding.