

## **STAMFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL STAMFORD TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 26 JANUARY 2021 AT 7.00PM AT REMOTE LOCATIONS USING VIDEO AND AUDIO LINKS (Occasional interruptions may have occurred during this meeting)**

**PRESENT** Councillor Mrs G Johnson, Deputy Chairman (Deputy Mayor)

Councillor H Bisnauthsing  
Councillor M Exton  
Councillor B Sandall  
Councillor Mrs S J Sandall  
Councillor J Dawson  
Councillor Miss B Griffin  
Councillor Mrs S Sismore  
Councillor D Taylor  
Councillor A Croft  
Councillor S Carroll  
Councillor D Dorson  
Councillor Mrs M Pitt  
Councillor Mrs A Wheeler  
Councillor Mrs A Carter-Begbie  
Councillor Mrs J Clarke  
Councillor Mrs E Hooper  
Councillor S Ford

**ALSO PRESENT** Town Clerk  
Deputy Town Clerk  
Rev. Peter Stephenson  
3 Members of public  
1 Members of Press

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

*Resident* – Residents in St. George's Street recently monitored the traffic movements along St. George's Street whilst it was closed during the current lockdown, which highlighted some positive effects. Consequently, the residents formed the St. George's Residents Association (SGRA) and would like to suggest that the area is pedestrianised. This was communicated to Lincolnshire County Council Highways. However, they were directed to the Town Council and Ward Councillor in the first instance. Residents were consulted and it is requested that the initiative of a 'Low Traffic Neighbourhood' in this location is explored. A diagram illustrating the traffic flow along St. Mary's Street, St. George's Street and St. Leonard's Street was shared with the Council indicating where there were dangerous pinch points, blind spots and where pedestrians on footpaths are vulnerable to passing vehicles. SGRA would like to canvas the Town Council's support in their request to Lincolnshire County Council to consider making this area a Low Traffic Neighbourhood.

Councillor J Dawson stated engagement has already commenced with an inspection of this area by Stamford's MP, County, District and Town Councillors. Although the proposal was welcomed, it was recognised that vehicle access will be necessary to supply retail outlets. It was believed that a first stage could be to introduce a one-way system in St. George's Street and St. Leonard's Street leading to Marks & Spencer.

Councillor D Taylor advised, as the Chairman of Connect Stamford, this is also an aspiration of Connect Stamford, which likewise is engaging with the County Council. The information gathered

by SGRA is very useful and should support the case to introduce a ‘Low Traffic Neighbourhood’ scheme in the vicinity of St. George’s Street which would be supported by Connect Stamford.

Councillor Mrs A Wheeler viewed, as a resident of St. George’s Street, a member of the SGRA and Chairman of the Climate Action Working Group of the Town Council, that this initiative should be supported.

Councillor Mrs G Johnson Deputy-Chairman of the Council thanked the resident for his presentation, which would be considered by the Town Council.

Formal meeting commenced 7.15pm

#### **394. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Point 2)**

Councillor B Turner, Chairman (Town Mayor) and Councillor S Fenn submitted their reasons for absence.

Councillor Mrs G Johnson wished to remind the Council that Councillor Fenn is inhibited from travelling due to the Pandemic and as a result has missed several meetings.

**Proposal 1** – It was proposed by Councillor D Taylor and seconded by Councillor Mrs S Sismore and **RESOLVED** by a majority vote that the reasons for absence were accepted.

#### **395. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (Agenda Point 3)**

Councillors M Exton and H Bisnauthsing declared a Personal Interest in respect of any discussions related to planning as they are on the SKDC Development Management Committee.

Councillor D Dorson declared a Personal and Prejudicial Interest in respect of any discussion relating to personnel as his wife is Deputy Town Clerk.

#### **396. MINUTES (Agenda Point 4)**

The notes of the Town Council meetings held on Tuesday, 22 December 2020 and 05 January 2021 had been circulated.

- i. *Item 353bi* – Cllr Bisnauthsing wished the sentence ‘This was supported by Councillor Bisnauthsing’ to be struck from the minutes, as he considered it was out of context.
- ii. *Item 359* – Cllr Clarke wished to record that she was unable to attend the Extra-Ordinary Town Council meeting as it was scheduled at 5pm during her working day. She had examined the application S20/2056 and was pleased that her observations had informed the meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor J Dawson seconded by Councillor D Taylor and **RESOLVED** by majority vote that the minutes are an accurate reflection of the Town Council Meetings held of 22 December 2020 and 05 January 2021 and be signed by the Chairman subject to the above amendment. There was one Abstention.

#### **397. REPORTS ON OUTSIDE BODIES / ORGANISATIONS (Agenda Point 5)**

- a. *Lincolnshire County Council* – There was no representation.
- b. *South Kesteven District Council*:
  - i. *Mid-Lent Fair* – Cllr Exton reported that the 2021 Mid-Lent Fairs in Stamford and Grantham have been cancelled due to the Covid Pandemic.
  - ii. *Public Conveniences in Stamford & Grantham* – Cllr Mrs S J Sandall confirmed that these facilities would remain open, with the cleaning regime streamlined.
  - iii. *Stamford Information Centre* – Cllr Mrs Wheeler confirmed that this customer service point would be located in the Stamford Arts Centre when it re-opens.

c. *Town Councillors on Outside Bodies:*

- i. *Municipal Almshouses Charities* - Cllr Dawson reported on the activities of this charity which owned several buildings in the centre of Stamford. A restoration programme is underway to fully restore the properties owned by this Charity, so they fulfil the purposes for which they were intended which is to assist the elderly, poor and needy in Stamford.
- ii. *Truesdale Hospital Charity* – Cllr Bisnauthsing reported that the collapsed wall adjoining Truesdale Hospital and Torkington Garden has been repaired.
- iii. *Patient Participation Group (PPG)* - Cllr Bisnauthsing encouraged as many to attend the virtual Zoom PPG - Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 27 January at 6pm.

d. *Stamford Ward Councillors:*

- i. *Welland Valley Railway Development* – Councillor Mrs Hooper reported that the Stamford MP is meeting with representatives of the Welland Valley Railway Group and has given his support to the project. The feasibility study is still ongoing.
- ii. *Stamford Scouts Troup* – Cllr Mrs Wheeler drew attention to online fundraising raffle of Stamford Scouts in aid of the construction fund for their HQ building. If any Councillor can contribute and support the raffle it would be greatly appreciated.
- iii. *East Meadows* – Cllr Mrs Wheeler enquired whether there had been any further movement from the landlords in respect of the temporary wooden fencing which had been erected. It was anticipated that this temporary measure was for only a couple of weeks, but access to the public footpath remains restricted. The Town Clerk will pursue this matter. Cllr Carroll urged Cllrs Dawson and Taylor to follow-up on this matter if possible, on behalf of the residents of Stamford.
- iv. *Covid Vaccination Centre* – Cllr Mrs Wheeler informed the meeting of the new vaccination centre which has opened in Peterborough, towards which Stamford residents may also be directed.
- v. *Covid Signs* – Cllr Ford informed the meeting that the replacement Covid signs in the Town centre have yet again been pulled down. This is disturbing especially in view of high level of infection and as a visual reminder of the guidance is required. Cllr Ford suggested that an item should be placed in the Stamford Mercury. The Town Clerk will obtain further replacement signs and arrange for them to be installed.
- vi. *Cambridge Road* – Cllr Exton reported that the roadworks on Cambridge Road this month have been rescheduled due to the adverse weather conditions. It is believed that the works may be reorganised for possibly next week.
- vii. *Lincolnshire Police* – The Town Clerk informed the meeting that all Town Council members had been circulated with the Safer Together Coordinator details, operating on behalf of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire. This is a new set-up and, once fully in place, it is hoped routine updates on Police actions may be received.

**398. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT (Agenda Point 6)**

- a. *Correspondence* – A schedule of correspondence had been e-mailed to all Members to examine. Any queries relating to any element of such correspondence should be directed to the Officer dealing with that subject.
- b. *Action Points* – Update and feedback on action points:
  - i. *Review of the tariff for Town Hall Hire and Civil Ceremonies* – The Town Clerk enquired how the Council wished to progress her report on reviewing said tariff, which had been circulated to all members of the Council.
  - ii. *Terms of Reference* – The Terms of Reference require reviewing and a draft for each of the standing Committees has been prepared. It was suggested that each Committee review their own respective document in preparation for approval at the March Town

Council meeting, in readiness for the Committee appointments in May 2021 when the Terms of Reference will apply. The Chairman Councillor Mrs Johnson proposed that a meeting is convened of the Chairmen of all the standing Committees on Thursday 18 February 2021 at 2pm to review the feedback prior to the Town Council meeting. This approach, which had been adopted for other matters, seemed to operate well and ironed out any issues beforehand.

- iii. *Holocaust Commemoration* – Details of the virtual Holocaust Commemoration service had been circulated by the Civic Officer to members of the Council. The Service had been recorded and would be streamed on Wednesday 27 January 2021 at 11am on the Council's website and social media.
- iv. *Quarter Three Financial Report* – Is being prepared and will be uploaded on the Councillor Hub in due course. Any Councillor wishing a paper copy should contact the Town Clerk.
- v. *Internal Audit 2020/2021* – The Council's Internal Auditor, Godfrey Parkes, will be conducting the first examination of the financial accounts in the coming weeks.
- vi. *Armed Forces Employers Recognition Scheme* – It was noted that the Town Council currently hold a Silver Award and the Town Clerk enquired whether the Council would like to pursue the Gold Award? However, there are additional constraints and commitments to be made by the Town Council and it was therefore proposed to defer this matter to the Finance Committee for review.
- vii. *Local Council Award Scheme* – It was noted that the Town Council currently has attained Silver standard and the Town Clerk enquired whether the Council wished to pursue the Gold standard? There will be a requirement to ensure that the Council's operations comply with the stringent criteria demanded to meet the required level, which included Councillors attending training sessions.

**Proposal 2** – It was proposed by Councillor D Dorson, seconded by Councillor Mrs A Carter-Begbie and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Town Council pursues the application for the Local Council Gold Award Scheme.

#### **399. AMENITIES (Agenda Point 7)**

- a. Councillor Mrs G Johnson confirmed on behalf of the Committee that the notes are a true and accurate reflection of the Amenities meeting held on Tuesday, 05 January 2021.
- b. Matter for discussion:
  - i. *Allotment vacancies* – Councillor Johnson apologised that the updated information on the allotments had been omitted but advised that there are 65 requests on the Waitlist; 24 plots are being prepared for letting; there had been 14 viewings with three confirmed lettings. Four tenants had been served Notice.
  - ii. *Closed Session* – It was noted that a Pink Paper had been circulated on a confidential matter relating to Personnel, and consequently should a Councillor wish to comment on its content the Council would be required to go into Closed Session.
- c. It was proposed by Councillor Mrs G Johnson, seconded by Councillor J Dawson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on Tuesday 05 January 2021 with the acts, proceedings and recommendations are approved by the Council, with the exclusion of the Pink Paper.

#### **400. PLANNING COMMITTEE (Agenda Point 8)**

- a. Councillor S Ford confirmed on behalf of the Committee that the notes are a true and accurate reflection of the Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 12 January 2021.
- b. Matter for discussion: None raised
- c. It was proposed by Councillor S Carroll seconded by Councillor Mrs M Pitt and **RESOLVED** by majority vote that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held

on Tuesday 12 January 2021 with the acts, proceedings and recommendations are approved by the Council. There were three abstentions.

#### **401. FINANCE COMMITTEE (Agenda Point 9)**

- a. Councillor Mrs S J Sandall confirmed on behalf of the Committee that the notes are a true and accurate reflection of the Finance Committee meeting held on Tuesday 09 January 2021.
- b. Matter for discussion:
  - i. *LCC grass verge Cutting* - Councillor Carroll requested clarification on the cost of this service. The Town Clerk confirmed the breakdown: 2020/21 LCC contribution £5,803.61. Grass verge cutting cost Stamford Town Council £17,900.00 for 2020/21. This cost of £17,900.00 is for an enhanced cutting specification, as approved by the Town Council in February 2020. This was in direct response to the volume of complaints received from residents in respect of the minimal specification required by LCC (cut only 1m from edge of kerb x 3 cuts per year). The enhanced specification includes cutting the full area of every verge, strimming around any street furniture/signs / posts and increasing the number of cuts per year to from three to four. Taking into account the LCC contribution, the cost to the Town Council is £12,096.39 during 2020/2021; a cost of £3,024.10 + VAT per cut.
  - ii. *Section 106* – Councillor Mrs S J Sandall reported that a meeting had been convened with the Sec. 106 Officer and it was confirmed that the resource of £300,000.00 had to be used toward all sporting facilities on the Empingham Road Playing Field site only. All the sports clubs have been approached to apply, identifying projects which they would like funding using this resource. It is understood that the District is also considering providing improvements to the changing facilities available on the site so promote sports activities. All submissions will then be considered by SKDC. The Town Clerk confirmed that SKDC has kindly agreed to extend the request period to the end of February 2021 to provide sufficient time for all parties to prepare the necessary paperwork.
  - iii. *Review of the tariff for Town Hall Hire and Civil Ceremonies* - Councillor Mrs S J Sandall related the details on the Clerk's report in respect of this matter. Following discussion, it was considered that this matter should be deferred to the next Finance Committee for discussion. However, a number of Councillors viewed that the hire rates should remain unchanged.

**Proposal 3** – It was proposal by Councillor S Carroll, seconded by Councillor M Exton and **RESOLVED** by majority vote that the tariff for hire arrangements for Meetings and Civil Ceremonies remain the same level during the next financial year 2021/2022. There were two Abstentions

- c. It was proposed by Councillor Mrs S J Sandall seconded by Councillor J Dawson and **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held Tuesday 19 January 2021 with the acts, proceedings and recommendations are approved by the Council.

#### **402. Approval of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations (Agenda Point 11)**

The Chairman Councillor Mrs G Johnson stated that the Standing Orders, together with the Financial Regulations and associated suite of documents, had been circulated to the Members of the Council in December 2020 and that they would be taken as being read. There were no issues raised with the exception that titles should be neutral in respect of gender where appropriate.

**Proposal 4** – It was proposed by Councillor D Taylor, seconded by Councillor B Sandall was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Standing Orders, together with the Financial Regulations and associated suite of documents be accepted and approved subject to any necessary titles being amended to a neutral reference where appropriate.

**403. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT (Agenda Point 11)**

Schedule no. 10 (transactions 15198 to 15308) had been circulated for consideration. Councillor Mrs S J Sandall noted the typing error in respect of item 15216, which should read final payment for 2020 not 2019 Xmas Lights. This was noted. Following discussion, it was observed that the cost of these were in accordance with the Events Budget, reflecting the enhancements and replacements approved by the Town Council.

**Proposal 5** – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs S J Sandall seconded by Councillor Mrs S Sismore and unanimously **RESOLVED** that Schedule No. 10 is agreed and approved for payment.

**404. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Point 12)**

- i. *Revised Model Code of Conduct* – Cllr Exton advised that the revised LGA Model Code of Conduct had been released and recommended Councillors read the document.

**405. TO RESOLVE TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION**

The Chairman Councillor Mrs G Johnson asked the Council whether they wished to go into Closed Session to discuss the Pink Paper contained within the Amenities Committee minutes of 05 January 2021.

**Proposal 6** – It was proposed by Councillor Mrs G Johnson, seconded by Councillor D Dorson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that in pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Pink Paper is discussed in Closed Session due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed being related to personnel.

**20.17 pm** Meeting continues in Closed Session

During the discussion in Closed Session, it was resolved that the standard of performance of the Amenities Operatives was failing to meet the Council's expectation and was deteriorating. The Council's Grievance procedure, which is in progress, should continue to be pursued following the close advice of the Council's HR Adviser.

**21.10 pm** Meeting resumed in Open Session

**406. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Tuesday 23 February 2021**

Chairman  
(The meeting closed at 21.10p.m.)