



Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on 23 January 2024 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, East Street, Wareham at 7.00pm.

Members Present: Councillors C Turner (Mayor), M Cotton (Deputy Mayor), D Budd, D Cleaton, K Critchley, B Dean, B Ezzard, Z Gover, V Green, M Humphries, L Kirk, D Robinson.

Officers present: N Gray, Town Clerk & RFO, Gale Pettifer, Deputy Clerk

TC 112/24 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Goodinge, Cllr K Green, Cllr Wheatley, and Cllr Russell.

TC 113/24 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

TC 114/24 Public participation time

There were no members of the public present.

TC 115/24 Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting

It was **RESOLVED** the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 19 December 2023 be **APPROVED** and were signed by the Mayor.

TC 116/24 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

There were no matters arising.

TC 117/24 Reports by Dorset Councillors and representatives on outside bodies

The tabled report from Cllr Ryan Holloway was **NOTED**.

TC 118/24 Payments for outstanding creditors

Members considered the list of payments for approval.

It was **RESOLVED** that payments in the sum of £13,182.76 be approved.

TC 119/24 To receive such communications as the Town Mayor may wish to place before the Council

There were no communications placed before Council.

TC 120/24 Reports from committees and sub-groups

The minutes from the following meetings were **NOTED**:

- a) Amenities Committee – 1 November 2023 and 13 December 2023
- b) Museum Committee – 13 September 2023

- c) Personnel Committee – 26 September 2023 and 28 November 2023
- d) Planning and Transport Committee – 18 October 2023 and 8 November 2023
- e) Policy, Resources and Finance – 24 October 2023 and 5 December 2023

TC 121/24 Budget and Precept setting 2024/25 Financial Year

Member considered the recommendation from the Policy Resources and Finance Committee and noted the very small increase to the precept.

It was **RESOLVED** to APPROVE 2024/25 budget of £634,630.

It was **RESOLVED** to APPROVE an increase to the precept of 2.9% to £510,270.

TC 122/24 External Auditor Report

Members received and noted the conclusion of the annual external audit for the 2022/23 financial year.

TC 123/24 New Staff Appointments

Members considered the recommendation from the Personnel Committee for the appointment of a fourth Grounds Staff member and a Museum Manager.

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint a fourth Grounds Team member on the Town Council's standard terms and conditions at SCP 17, £28,770 in the current 2023/24 financial year.

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint a Museum Manager on the Town Council's standard terms and conditions but with performance related restrictions included in relation to the grant funding element of the post, at a starting salary at SCP 15, £27,803 in the current 2023/24 financial year.

TC 124/24 Local Organisation Grant

Members considered the grant request noting the shortfall between the grant request and the remaining grant budget. It was considered that the ticket sales had been underestimated and there was potential for the deficit to be less as a result.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve funding up to £810.00 to cover any deficit which arises, with the Clerk negotiating with the organisers regarding payments.

TC 125/24 Howards Lane Toilets Rebuild

The Chair of the Amenities Committee presented the report noting that it was a requirement of Full Council to approve the project spend and Public Works Loan. The Clerk explained the project would be subject to Financial Regulations processes and would therefore be put out for tender following

consultation with the Conservation and Planning Officers, and public consultation in order to meet the requirements of the Public Works Loan Board.

It was **RESOLVED** to APPROVE that the project be allocated a spend of £100,000, with £40,000 from CIL monies currently held in reserve, and the remaining £60,000 to be funded by way of Public Works Loan.

TC 126/24 Wareham Town Council Action List

The contents of the Action List were noted.

A meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group would be arranged for 8 February 2024 with an invite extended to Adam Fitzpatrick, Dorset Council, and a planning officer.

TC 127/24 2024 Freedom of Purbeck

The Clerk reported that following a meeting she had attended earlier in the day, the proposed military parade through Wareham, to honour the regiment's Freedom of Purbeck, had been postponed until 2025. Details would be confirmed later in the year for planning of the 2025 event.

TC 128/24 Beating of the Sea Bounds 2024.

The Clerk reported that the Poole Society's Beating of the Sea Bounds would be taking place on Sunday 7th July 2024, and information regarding arrangements would be made available following the election in May.

TC 129/24 Any other items the Mayor deems urgent

The Mayor reported that an *in-memoriam* tree had been requested to be planted in Wareham in memory of Hugh and Sue Elms by their son. Members deliberated about a suitable location, and it was agreed that the Mayor would advise the family to contact the Clerk to the Burial Joint Committee, regarding a location in the St. Mary's churchyard.

The Mayor expressed her thanks to Gale Pettifer, Katy Babbs, Tom Hannam, Heather Scharnhorst, and Jaquie Hall, for organising a very successful Volunteer Recruitment Fair. She reported that the event had been a good opportunity for groups to showcase their voluntary work and to network with other organisations.

The Mayor, on behalf of the Council, congratulated the Deputy Clerk on recently passing her Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA).

TC 130/24 Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Town Council was scheduled to be held on Tuesday 5 March 2024 at 7.00pm.

Mayor..... Date.....