

## **MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 15<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER, 2020**

Present: The Mayor, Councillor B Taylor (Presiding) and Councillors R Arthur, E Bell, Mrs J Bell, Mrs G Bleasdale, Mrs K Brace, S Cudlip, Mrs S Forster, Ms R M Gratton, G N Hepworth, D McKenna, T Shepherd.

Apologies: Mrs L Kennedy, K Shaw.

Officers: P Fletcher (Town Clerk)  
Mrs J Knight (Finance Officer)  
Miss A Rountree (Minute Taker)

*Prior to commencement of the meeting the Chair advised members of this Committee and members of the public that in line with the amendment to 'the public bodies (admission to meetings) act 1960', which came into force in August, 2014, parts of this meeting may be recorded by photographic, video and audio means.*

### **FC157/20 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Members were reminded prior to the start of the meeting of the need to disclose any interests, prejudicial or personal, in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Such interests must be submitted to the Town Clerk prior to the meeting.

### **FC158/20 ACCEPTANCE OF AMENDMENT**

RECOMMENDED that Members accept the amendment to the standing orders to incorporate the new regulations from the Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, to conduct virtual Council meetings.

### **FC159/20 OPEN SESSION**

In accordance with established policy the Council provided a fifteen minute opportunity for any members of the public to raise questions. During this period no issues were raised.

### **FC160/20 TO CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEAHAM TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2020**

A Member questioned whether there had been any updates from other Councils regarding opposing the Northumbria Water treatment works. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he was working towards arranging a meeting in January along with other local authorities and it was also noted that the local MP was also fully behind this and would also wish to attend a meeting.

RESOLVED the Minutes of this meeting, a copy of which had been previously printed and circulated to each Member, be approved, and they be signed as a correct record by the Mayor.

**FC161/20     REPORTS OF SERVICE COMMITTEES**

RESOLVED that the reports of the following Committees, copies of which had been previously printed and circulated to each Member, be approved:

- a) Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on the 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2020.
- b) Report of the Planning & Environmental Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2020 subject to the Deputy Town Clerk stating that he is currently corresponding with Network Rail regarding two issues, those being the lighting at the Incline and also the overgrown vegetation. The work for the lighting is going out to tender from Network Rail.
- c) Report of the Parks and Events Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2020 subject to a Member requesting that item PE111/20 (b) page 145 the word collage be changed to montage.

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he had received contact details for Mrs Irene Hays but had not been able to make contact with her as yet. He will try to contact Mrs Hays in the new year to discuss a memorial plaque for the late Mr John Hays.

- d) Report of the Twinning Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2020.

**FC162/20     EXTERNAL AUDITOR NOTIFICATION OF COMPLETION OF THE AUDIT OF THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2019/20**

The Finance Officer informed Members that the report for the financial year 2019/20 was now finalised and the Town Council had received an unqualified position which is the best available outcome.

RECOMMENDED that Members approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the financial year 2019/2020.

**FC163/20     COUNCILLOR INFORMATION FROM DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that he had received a communication from Durham County Council requesting that he feedbacks to Full Council that a Councillor will receive training on social media and the Councils Code of Conduct.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

**FC164/20**    **ENCHANTED FAIRY HOUSES**

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he had received a request to have enchanted fairy houses in Seaham Town Park on 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2020 at 4.00pm which is the same day as the lantern parade.

Members discussed this item and agreed that they would need to be assured that risk assessments and insurance were provided by the organisation wishing to hold the event. If these could be provided to the Deputy Town Clerk he could then email Councillors for approval prior to the event.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk requests risk assessments/insurance details from the provider then emails Members for approval for the event to take place.