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Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on Thursday 29th April 2021 at 6.30pm

Present:

Councillor Chace (Mayor)
Councillor Blanchard-Cooper
Councillor Buckland
Councillor Long
Councillor Molloy
Councillor Northeast
Councillor Price
Councillor Rhodes
Councillor Tandy
Councillor Turner
Councillor Dr Walsh KStJ

2020/2021

This meeting is available to view using the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWnv1TbrqRo&t=1356s>

101. Virtual Meeting Protocol and Use of Mobile Devices

The Mayor opened the meeting and explained how it would be conducted and the protocol that would be followed, including how any break in the proceedings due to technical difficulties would be managed.

102. Apologies

There were no apologies.

103. Declarations of Interest and Urgent Items

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda. The standing declarations were noted.

104. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25th March 2021 (previously circulated) were confirmed as a true record and it was noted that arrangements would be made for these to be signed at a later date.

105. Town Mayors Report and Urgent Items

105.1. Town Mayors Report

Council paused for a moment to remember HRH Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh and those who were recently lost in the parish, David Twinn and Eileen Smart both of whom were great champions of the community and local character, Tony Molica-Franco.

106. Public Forum

In accordance with the Remote Meetings Protocol introduced by the Town Council, members of the public who wished to address the Council or any of its Committees during a remote meeting should have emailed their representations one clear working day before the meeting. There were none.

107. Installation of Town Mayor

- 107.1.** The Deputy Mayor and Mayor Elect Councillor Michelle Molloy was installed as the Town Mayor with effect from 6:30pm on 13th May 2021. It was noted that the Chain of Office would be presented to Councillor Molloy when circumstances allowed.
- 107.2.** Councillor Molloy read and duly signed her declaration of acceptance of office as Town Mayor. It was noted that the register would be signed when circumstances allowed.
- 107.3.** Councillor Molloy briefly addressed the meeting and stated that whilst she never expected to have this opportunity, she relished the opportunity to serve the Town in this way. She also thanked the outgoing Mayor for his support and guidance over the past year and looked forward to raising funds and awareness of the Charities which she had chosen to support during her Mayoral year. Her Charities would be West Sussex Mind, Arun Youth Projects and the Arun Veterans and Armed Forces Club.
- 107.4.** The Mayor's Consort, Mr Shay Etherington was also recognised. It was noted that the emblem would be presented to Mr Everton when circumstances allowed.

108. Appointment of Deputy Mayor

Councillors Chace and Long were duly proposed as candidates for Deputy Mayor and the proposals were duly seconded. Supporting statements were made and in accordance with Standing Order 12(b), a secret ballot was held. It was **Resolved** that:

Councillor Long be elected Deputy Mayor for 2021 to 2022, Vice Chair of the Council and Town Mayor Elect with effect from 6.30pm on 13th May 2021.

It was noted that the valedictory statement and handing over of the chain and badges of Office would be made at the meeting on 24th June 2021 when it was hoped that normal meetings would have resumed.

109. Appointment of Committees, Representatives on Outside Bodies and Cheque Signatories

The Town Clerk presented a report (previously circulated) which explained the allocation of Committee places and vacancies for outside bodies. A revised list of proposals which had been agreed with Group Leaders prior to the Council meeting was also circulated to Members for approval. It was noted that for continuity the Community Centre's Sub-Committee membership would be unchanged and it was also proposed that Councillor Long be appointed as Vice Chair of the Sub-Committee. Regarding the Planning and Transportation Committee, it was also proposed that Councillors Chace and Tandy remain on the Committee to ensure continuity of representation until the forthcoming by-elections. In this respect, it was also recommended that authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Group Leaders, to allocate Committee places and nominate representatives to outside bodies in respect of the new councillors. The memberships would be reviewed by Full Council on 24th June 2021. These proposals were supported, and it was therefore **Resolved** that:

- 1. The Committee appointments and nominations for representatives on outside bodies for 2021 to 2022 be approved. (Appendices 1 and 2 attached to the Minutes)**
- 2. The Chairs and Vice-Chairs be appointed to the Council's Committees.**
- 3. The Membership of the Community Centre's Sub-Committee be approved and that Councillor Tandy and Councillor Long be**

confirmed as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Sub-Committee.

- 4. Authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Group Leaders, to allocate Committee places and nominate representatives to outside bodies in respect of the new councillors following the byelections in the Brookfield, River and Wickbourne wards and that these appointments be reviewed at Council on 24th June 2021.**

- 5. The Mayor, the Chairs of the Policy and Finance, Community Resources, Planning and Transportation and Property and Personnel Committees be confirmed as authorised Member signatories and that the Town Council's bank mandate be amended accordingly.**

110. The Next Committee Cycle and Annual Town Meeting

- 110.1.** Council had before it a report (previously circulated) which proposed a way forward for meeting remotely in May and June 2021 should it not be possible to do so through current legislation. It was also proposed that the Annual Town meeting be postponed to 8th July 2021 when it was hoped that current restrictions would be lifted allowing public meetings to resume. The Town Clerk reported that in the period since publication of the agenda, the High Court had issued a decision confirming that remote meetings will not be able to continue after 6th May leaving local authorities with no option other than to follow ministerial advice about delegating decisions.
- 110.2.** It was therefore proposed that the Committees would be temporarily stood down and replaced by Advisory Groups. This would allow continuation of the existing remote meeting arrangements until 21st June when the Government Road Map envisaged all restrictions would be lifted. It was noted that the Advisory Groups would undertake the same functions as the Committees and operate under the existing Standing Orders. The main change would be that rather than making decisions, the Advisory Groups would recommend them to the Town Clerk, and this would be reflected in the reports and minutes. It was noted that attendance would count against the six month rule for Councillors.
- 110.3.** Owing to the uncertainty regarding the duration of the restrictions, it was proposed that the Annual Town meeting be held on 8th July 2021. The next meeting of Full Council scheduled for 24th June would be proceeding as planned and the venue would be confirmed nearer the time. There was a

strong desire to return to “normal meetings” as soon as possible however as it was unlikely that this would happen before the end of June, Officers were exploring alternative venues for meetings. Although it was hoped that it would be possible to meet in the Manor House, Southfields Jubilee Centre was also an option. This was considered a pragmatic approach to the current situation and it was therefore **Resolved** that:

- 1. The May/June cycle of Committees be delivered as Advisory Groups, with the same Memberships, Terms of Reference, and Standing Orders as now, other than they are only able to make recommendations to the Town Clerk.**
- 2. In these circumstances, authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to implement the recommendations of the Advisory Groups.**
- 3. Authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor and Group Leaders, to extend this arrangement if he believes it is needed.**
- 4. If circumstances permit, the Annual Town Meeting be held on 8th July 2021 either at the Southfields Jubilee Centre or remotely, with authority delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Town Mayor, to make the appropriate decisions on this matter.**
- 5. The Urgent Action undertaken by the Town Clerk (in consultation with the Mayor and Group Leaders) in bringing forward Annual Council to 29th April 2021 be noted.**

111. Exempt Business

There was none.

The meeting closed at 7:03pm.

TOWN MAYOR