

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**HELD ON MONDAY 28 JUNE 2021 COMMENCING AT 7.00 P.M.**

Present: Councillor Gloria Martin (Town Mayor); Councillor Liz Jones (Deputy Town Mayor); Councillors, Sid Abbott, Lisa Bird, Matthew Brennan, Philip Crawley, Alan Corkhill, Peter Hollick, Pam Ghent, John Gurney, Kenson Gurney, Gladys Sanders, and Johnson Tamara with David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), John Crawley (Head of Grounds and Environmental Services), Becky Wisbey (Head of Community Services) and Ian Reed (Democratic Services Manager).

Members of the public: Nil

Before the commencement of the meeting, John Hassall the Mayor's chaplain led the Council in prayer.

**109. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Wendy Bater, Greg George, Mark Cant, Cameron Restall and Lee Roberts

**110. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19 April 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

**111. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no specific declarations of interest declared at the meeting.

**112. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

The Town Mayor spoke in support of a report that had been circulated. She had attended a charity walk through Dunstable organised by the East of England Ambulance Service and attended the virtual Big Lunch on 8 June. She reminded the Council that she was hosting a number of events for NHS and Front-Line Workers Day at Priory House on Monday 5 July. The Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire would be attending. The events included raising the NHS flag and banner, two minutes silence at 11 am, Toast to the Heroes at 1pm and a garden party.

**113. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions put to the meeting

**114. TO ANSWER QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 16**

There were no questions put to the meeting.

**115. COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

In relation to minute 82 the Council was reminded that the litter picking events were open to all Councillors to attend. Also, Councillor Liz Jones hoped that the summer events planned would be held in all of the Town Council's wards.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 7 June 2021 be received.

**116. GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

In relation to Minute 96, Councillor Lisa Bird commented on the opening of the Splash Park. Members commented on how lovely the parks looked this year.

**Action – officers be complemented on the look of the flowers and parks**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting of the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee held on 14 June be received.

**117. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21 June 2021 be received.

**118. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2020/21**

The Council meeting considered a report detailing the requirements for the submission of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to the auditor in compliance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234) for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The AGAR comprised four sections, namely, the Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20; the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 (Section 1); the Accounting Statements 2019/20 (Section 2) and the External Auditor Report and Certificate (Section 3). The Head of Finance and Support Services gave an explanation on each of the four sections and the Council were pleased to note that the Annual Accounts would be made available for inspection as required.

**RESOLVED:** i) that the Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/2021 be noted.

ii) that the Annual Governance Statement 2020/2021 at Section 1 of the Annual Return be completed in the affirmative and the Town Mayor and Town Clerk and Chief Executive be authorised to sign accordingly.

iii) that the Accounting Statements 2020/2021 at Section 2 of the Annual Return be approved, and the Town Mayor be authorised to sign accordingly.

iv) that the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2021 be approved for submission to the auditor.

## **119. ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21 AND REVIEW OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented the Annual Report for 2020/2021 which would be published on the Council's website and made available at other usual public distribution outlets. The document provided an evidence source to residents as to the quality of services provided by the Council, as well as being an important planning tool for the organisation to ensure it could demonstrate continuous service improvement.

The format for the Annual Report was the same as agreed for last year's report and included a summary of the Council's activities and achievements over the last year, illustrated as "A Year in Dunstable". Section 4 set out how the Council is performing in relation to its stated aims contained within the Corporate Plan, the objectives for which are from the Corporate Plan adopted in February 2020. Also included was a report on the annual outturn for the Council's adopted performance indicators.

The Corporate Risk Log had been updated and Members noted that the main identified areas of strategic risk remained as income generation and property management. Income generation had been identified as high risk because of the current economic downturn caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic and property management arrangements had been identified as high risk due to the high cost of maintaining Council property which included listed buildings.

Members noted the reviewed Council's Health and Safety and the Environment and Sustainability Policies.

**RESOLVED:** i) that the Annual Report 2020/2021 be approved.

ii) that the improvements to the Council's governance arrangements be noted.

iii) that the Corporate Risk Log be noted.

iv) that the Council's Health and Safety Policy be approved.

v) that the Council's Environment and Sustainability Policy be approved.

## **120. REPORTS/UPDATES BY MEMBERS OF CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL ON MATTERS OF INTEREST TO THE TOWN COUNCIL**

The Council received an update on the following CBC initiatives from Councillor Johnson Tamara as follows:

- CBC Councillor Assets Grants Scheme - £25,000 was available for match funding community schemes
- CBC Community Safety funding scheme

**RESOLVED:** that the Dunstable Joint Committee be advised that the Town Council would like to see closer contacts formed between the Town Council and the Safer Community Team.

**121. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** To exclude the public and press in accordance with Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1961 S1.2 to allow discussion on matters relating to the financial and business affairs of the Town Council.

**122. LAND AT WHITE LION BUSWAY STOP**

The Council considered a report on the potential adoption of new public open space at the White Lion Busway on College Drive from Luton Borough Council.

**RESOLVED:** That, if the transfer of land identified in the appendices of the report and explained at paragraph 2 of the report, proves to be possible; the Council agrees to the adoption of the land on the terms set out in paragraph 3 of the report.

**The meeting closed at 7.42 p.m.**