

WALMER PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of Walmer Parish Council held on Wednesday, 30 September 2020 via Zoom Video Conference.

Present Councillors:

J Murray	Miss Herring	Mrs Beard-Gould
M Eddy	B Gardner	Mrs Le Chevalier
P Heath	P St Ange	D Symons
D Thompson	J Lonsdale	

Officer Present:

Mrs K Holroyd (Clerk) Ms S Plews & Mrs J Watson (Technical support)

5983. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies with reason were accepted from Cllr B Pitcher.

5984. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received

5985. OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY

To remind those present of the following: -

The right to record, film and to broadcast meetings of the council, committees and sub committees is established following the Local Government Audit and Accountability Act 2014. This is in addition to the rights of the press and public to attend such meetings.

While those attending meetings are deemed to have consented to the filming, recording or broadcasting of meetings, those exercising the rights to film, record and broadcast must respect the rights of other people attending under the Data Protection Act 2018.

Any person or organisation choosing to film, record or broadcast any meeting of the Council or a committee is responsible for any claims or other liability from them so doing.

5986. MINUTES

Members considered the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9 September 2020. Cllr Gardner and Cllr Mrs Le Chevalier were listed as present but in fact had been absent. Cllrs Heath and Lonsdale were listed as absent but in fact were present.

RESOLVED: That with these amendments the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9th September 2020 be approved as a correct record and will be signed by the Chairman at the earliest opportunity.

5987. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

There were no matters arising.

Councillor Murray gave some housekeeping rules and guidelines for the smooth running of the meeting. The Clerk confirmed that members of the public had been given information whilst still in the waiting room letting them know that questions could be submitted via the chat function to the host and would be read out at the chairman's discretion.

5988. PURCHASE OF FREEHOLD PROPERTY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PARISH OFFICES

a) Members received and considered the Clerk's report to Council.

Since members had received the report well in advance of the meeting and had not submitted any questions as invited, the Chairman took the report to be noted.

b) Members received and considered the Clerk's financial report to Council.

Since members had received the report well in advance of the meeting and had not submitted any questions as invited, the Chairman took the report to be noted.

A lively discussion then ensued, and each councillor was given the opportunity to speak. The Clerk also read out several comments and questions from the DDC and KCC councillors present Cllrs Vinson and Murphy.

c) Members considered whether to vire the ringfenced funds currently allocated to the Hawkshill Conservation Project to the purchase of 62 The Strand.

RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed to vire the ringfenced funds allocated to the Hawkshill Conservation Project currently totalling £14755 to the purchase of 62 The Strand.

Agreed by Cllrs J Murray, M Beard-Gould, M Eddy, B Gardner, S Le Chevalier, J Lonsdale, P St Ange, D Symonds.

Opposed by Cllrs P Heath, A Herring & D Thompson.

d) Members considered making a borrowing approval request to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

RESOLVED: Council decided to make a borrowing approval request to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Agreed by Cllrs J Murray, M Beard-Gould, M Eddy, B Gardner, S Le Chevalier, J Lonsdale, P St Ange, D Symonds.

Cllr P Heath objected.

Cllrs A Herring & D Thompson abstained.

5989. IF COUNCIL AGREES TO THE PRINCIPLE OF BORROWING:

a) Members considered and agreed the length of the term and the amount of the loan.

RESOLVED:

i) That the Council seek to borrow £250,000.

Agreed by Cllrs M Beard-Gould, M Eddy, B Gardner, S Le Chevalier, A Herring, J Lonsdale, J Murray, P St Ange, D Symons & D Thompson.
P Heath objected.

ii) That the Council seek to borrow the money over 20 years.

Agreed by M Beard-Gould, M Eddy, B Gardner, S Le Chevalier, J Lonsdale, P St Ange, D Symonds.

Cllrs D Thompson, J Murray & A Herring objected (preferring a term of 25 years)
Cllr P Heath objected.

b) Members considered the type of loan: Annuity or EIP (Equal Instalments of Principle)

**RESOLVED: The EIP loan was agreed by Cllrs M Beard-Gould, M Eddy, A Herring, S Le Chevalier, J Lonsdale, J Murray, P St Ange, D Symonds & D Thompson.
P Heath objected, and B Gardner abstained**

Councillors noted from the Clerk's financial report that borrowing of £250,000 over 20 years would attract a fixed interest rate (currently 2.41%) and require loan repayments of £16,025 per annum fixed for the term of the loan. These repayments would be added to the annual precept demand.

c) Members considered the effect of a £16,025 increase would have on the precept and measured it using the Band D equivalent amount.

**RESOLVED: Councillors noted that a loan of the agreed amount and term would necessitate an increase of £5.42 on the Band D equivalent council tax – currently £48.66 per annum.
This is equal to a rise of 11.1%. Members noted that this amount still falls well below other local councils in the District.**

d) Members received information concerning a public consultation and noted that borrowing is subject to demonstration of the support and approval of the local electorate. They discussed the relative merits and pitfalls of various methods of conducting surveys.

RESOLVED: All members voted for a door to door hand delivery leaflet/survey to be posted through every property in Walmers door. All in favour.

The Clerk agreed to put as an agenda item for the next Council meeting the design and information content of the leaflet although it would not be possible to have a document ready for approval at that meeting due to time constraints.

e) Members considered appointing a valuer for an independent valuation and a condition survey.

RESOLVED: Cllr M Eddy proposed and Cllr M Beard-Gould seconded accepting the quotation from Robert Wilkie F.R.I.C.S Chartered Surveyor to carry out a valuation and building survey at a cost of £650.00. All in favour.

f) Members considered appointing Hardman's solicitors to act for the Council in this matter.

RESOLVED: A Herring proposed, and D Symonds seconded this item that Hardman's Solicitors are instructed to act for the Council in this matter.

**This appointment is subject to a favourable response from the public consultation. Agreed by J Murray, M Beard-Gould, M Eddy, S Le Chevalier, J Lonsdale, P St Ange, D Symonds, P Heath, A Herring, D Thompson.
B Gardner objected to using Hardmans.**

5990. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 7 October 2020 at 7 pm via Zoom virtual meeting. The meeting closed at 20:25

Signed:

Date: