

## **WALMER PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Walmer Parish Council held on Wednesday, 2 December 2020 via Zoom Video Conference.**

#### **Present Councillors:**

J Murray	Miss Herring	Mrs Beard-Gould
M Eddy	D Symons	P Heath
P St Ange	C Weale	Mrs Le Chevalier
D Thompson	G Bearman	Cllr J Lonsdale

#### **Officer Present:**

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

#### **6026. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**None received**

#### **6027. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**None received**

#### **6028. 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.

#### **6029. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Cllr Murray reported that it had been a busy month with much communication with local residents. He had received notification that an official complaint against him had been received at DDC and was being dealt with by the Monitoring Officer. He also reported that he had represented the Council at both the Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day services in Deal.

A complaint against Cllr Eddy from Margaret Johnson had been received in the office and had been dealt with according to Council procedure. A Covid-safe meeting had been held in the office and was attended by Mrs Johnson, Cllr Eddy, the Chairman and the Clerk. A discussion took place, and a resolution was reached which satisfied both parties. As a result, Cllr Murray read out the following statement from Cllr Eddy:

"I am sorry that Mrs Margaret Johnson feels upset as a result of my questioning Cllr Heath at full council regarding my discovery of a website apparently linking Mrs Johnson to Cllr Heath in a business enterprise."

Following the publication of this statement in the minutes of the meeting all parties are satisfied that the matter is now resolved.

**RESOLVED: Members agreed to note.**

### **6030. MINUTES**

Members considered the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 4 November 2020.

**RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record and will be signed by the Chairman at the earliest opportunity.**

### **6031. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA**

Minute 6008: Cllr Murray reported that written confirmation from the local builder had now been received and his kind offer to donate a small piece of land at Station Drive to the Council would now be progressed via the Council's solicitor. The land could be used either for bike sheds or for EV charging points.

Minute 6013: Cllr Mrs Le Chevalier gave an update to the issue of debris on the road at the Hawkshill carpark/Liverpool Road junction. She reported that that further correspondence with the complainant has revealed that the issue is not just down to rainfall but to movement of traffic along Hawkshill Camp Road and across the car park. DDC have been informed that this is an issue and will attend to sweep the road if the matter is reported in the normal way via the website. Methods of keeping an eye on the area in future will be discussed at the next Walmer In Bloom meeting on 12 January 2021.

### **6032. QUESTIONS AND/OR OBSERVATIONS FROM THE ELECTORATE OF WALMER**

Members agreed to suspend the meeting for up to 15 minutes to allow discussion with members of the electorate of the Parish of Walmer present at the meeting. Five members of the public asked to speak.

Three speakers were concerned with the proposed office move. Two questioned the validity of the public consultation and requested that the Council pause to consider the public comments in more detail. One spoke in favour of the move stating it made financial sense.

Another resident representing a group from York and Albany Close spoke to object to the proposed community housing project on the amenity land there. She reported that the land is well used by many local residents and is a haven for wildlife.

The final speaker brought the issue of speeding on the Dover Road to members' attention and it was noted that this issue would be discussed in more detail under the Clerk's report at item 12.

### **6033. CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR REPORTS**

- i) Members received information from the PCSO who attended the meeting via telephone. He reported a decrease in local anti-social behaviour in all the recognised hotspots which could be put down to the colder weather and darker evenings. He was currently investigating a spate of car damage in Walmer Castle Road.

**RESOLVED: Members agreed to note**

- ii) Monthly Surgeries: currently suspended

### **6034. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

- i) Members received the report of the Chairman and the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10 November 2020.

**RESOLVED: Members agreed to note**

### **6035. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

- i) Members received the report of the chairman and the draft minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 25 November 2020.

**RESOLVED:**

**i) Minute 1082: That Cllr Sue Le Chevalier be added as a signatory to the HSBC account.**

**ii) Minute 1084: That a grant of £24,250.35 be made to DDC for the maintenance and running of the public conveniences in the parish during 2021/22. This figure reflects the discount offered in lieu of the toilets remaining closed during the first stage of the Coronavirus pandemic. It does not include the grant for the paddling pool which could be requested at a later date.**

**iii) Minute 1085: That HR Partnership Services be asked to carry out an office review at a cost of £2095 plus vat.**

**iv) Minute 1087: That forecast income for 2021/22 be used to offset expenditure in the same financial year.**

**v) Minute 1087: That the draft budget be analysed by full council – at item 17**

**vi) Minute 1088: That the Clerk be awarded one incremental point on the salary pay scale backdated to April 2020.**

Councillors requested that the meeting finished time of 8.57pm be recorded.

### **6036. AMENITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

- i) Members received the report of the chairman and the draft minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 18 November 2020. Cllr Eddy confirmed that he had compiled a list of Frequently Asked Questions with answers about the proposed community housing project at York & Albany Close and that it had been posted on the website. Cllr Heath queried the background to the proposal and requested the issue be kept on the agenda and that residents be kept informed of any developments.
- ii) Members received an update on the Granville Road project from DDC. The Clerk reported that the quote from rkgraphics which had been accepted by Council at minute 5976 in September had been revised due to the escalating cost of aluminium. The new cost for the sign would be £608 – an increase of £60.

**RESOLVED: That the new price be accepted in order to move the project forward.**

### **6037. REPORT OF THE CLERK**

- i) Members received and considered a report on local highways issues.

**RESOLVED:**

**i) That the Hawksdown parking issues be taken to the A&E committee for further consideration.**

**ii) That the new Speedwatch campaign is supported in principle and that the group be asked to return at a future date if they have a specific request such as funding.**

- ii) Casual Vacancies – members received an update and considered a closing date for applications. The Clerk reported that the time for electors to call an election for the vacancy created by the resignation of Brian Pitcher had now expired and that the Council was now free to co-opt.

**RESOLVED: That the closing date for applications be set at 14 January 2021**

### **6038. FINANCIAL ISSUES**

Members received the report of the Responsible Financial Officer and considered payments and orders as detailed.

**RESOLVED:-**

**(i) That payments dated 25 November 2020 be authorised as detailed below:-**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
Office Electricity	Npower	131.43	6.57	138.00
Office phone and internet	BT	165.91	33.18	199.09
salaries, tax, NI, pension	staff	4,639.87	0.00	4,639.87
new email set up	EDGE I.T	60.00	12.00	72.00
Expenses	Cllr M Beard Gould	30.42	0.00	30.42
Grass cut and clearance	Rhino Plant Hire	870.00	174.00	1,044.00
Training	KALC	50.00	10.00	60.00
Training	KALC	45.00	9.00	54.00
Training	KALC	150.00	30.00	180.00
Paddling pool grant	DDC	2,500.00	0.00	2,500.00
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confidential shredding	castles shredding ltd	30.00	0.00	30.00
Christmas lights	Deal & Walmer Chamber of Commerce	149.00	0.00	149.00
Grant	astor theatre	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
Printing of public consultation leaflet	East Kent leaflet Distribution	230.00	0.00	230.00
delivery of public consultation leaflet	East Kent leaflet Distribution	245.00	49.00	294.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>12,796.63</b>	<b>323.75</b>	<b>13,120.38</b>

**(ii) That income dated 25 November 2020 be noted as detailed below:-**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>VAT Type</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
Bank interest	HSBC	E	0.62	0.00	0.62
Bank interest	NatWest Bank	E	0.09	0.00	0.09
	<b>Total</b>		<b>0.71</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.71</b>

**(iii) That the financial position of the Council as at 25 November 2020 be noted as detailed on the summary of receipts and payments and statement of monies available in the Council's bank accounts as shown below:-**

<b>Nat West Current</b>	<b>£ 76,288.35</b>
<b>Lloyds Bank</b>	<b>£ 76,613.48</b>
<b>Cooperative Bank</b>	<b>£ 75,192.86</b>
<b>NatWest SIBA</b>	<b>£ 10,895.73</b>
<b>HSBC bond</b>	<b>£ 75,315.03</b>
<b>Unity Trust Bank</b>	<b>£ 55,574.24</b>

**RESOLVED: members agreed to note.**

### 6039. CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

This is a standing item but there was nothing to report this time except for the fact that the office is closed to members of the public but staff are still working there singly. The remaining staff work from home.

**RESOLVED: Members agreed to note**

### 6040. PROPOSED OFFICE MOVE

- i) Members received the results of the public consultation.

**RESOLVED: Members agreed to note**

- ii) Members received and considered a report analysing the results of the public consultation

**RESOLVED: That the report be approved (8 votes for, 3 against, 1 abstention)**

- iii) Members received and considered the updated business plan

**RESOLVED: That the report be approved (8 votes for, 3 against, 1 abstention)**

- iv) Members received and considered a proposal to submit the borrowing approval application to MHCLG

**RESOLVED: To seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government to apply for a Public Works Loans Board loan of £250,000 over the borrowing term of 20 years for the purchase of office space and community hub. It is also intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments by 11% which is the equivalent of an additional £5.46 a year.**

**(8 votes for, 3 against and 1 abstention)**

The Chairman thanked the public for their attendance and contribution.

### 6041. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 13 January 2020 at 7 pm via Zoom virtual meeting.

*The following item was discussed in private under the terms of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960*

### 6042. BUDGET 2021/22

Members received and considered the first draft of the budget for 2021/22

The chairman pointed out that there were a series of unknown factors which could affect the final budget, both in terms of income and expenditure. The initial requirement figure is £196,641 and it was noted this takes into consideration all the council’s proposed projects. Members agreed there were varied exciting projects planned as the Council moved forward.

The chairman paid tribute to those who had managed to keep the budget so low for such a long time whilst delivery a wide variety of services. Cllr Miss Herring commended the Clerk and the F&GP committee for producing the draft budget in such uncertain times.

The Clerk will continue to work on the budget as other factors become clear and present a second draft at the next meeting.

**RESOLVED: Members agreed to note.**

**The meeting closed at 8.45 pm**

Signed: .....

Date: .....