

STROUD TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of COUNCIL  
7<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at 7.30pm**

**Online meeting via Zoom**

**Present**

Cllrs Geoffrey Andrews, Simon Arundel, John Bloxsom (from item 7), Alice Campbell, Kevin Cranston (Chair), Rob Green, Camilla Hale, John Marjoram (from item 4), Jess McQuail (from item 2), Margaret Poulton, Alan Sage, Lucas Schoemaker and Haydn Sutton.

**In attendance**

Helen Bojaniwska (Town Clerk), Kate Montgomery (Deputy Town Clerk), Marianne Sweet (Communications Officer)

**Absent**

Cllrs Davies, Naumann, Price

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr Chas Townley (SDC meeting)

**2. Declarations of Interest or Requests for dispensations**

No interests were declared. There were no requests for dispensations.

Councillor McQuail joined the meeting.

**3. Election of a new member for the Regeneration Committee**

Cllr Alice Campbell was elected to join the Regeneration Committee to fill a vacancy created by the resignation of Cllr Steve Dechan.

**4. Minutes of meeting of 20th July 2020**

The minutes of the council meeting on 23rd June 2020 were **approved** by the members present and will be signed as a correct record by the Chair at the next possible opportunity.

Councillor Marjoram joined the meeting.

**5. Mayor's remarks**

The Mayor reported that he had attended the online launch of Stroud Book Festival and was pleased to see that they had an interesting programme planned, which had been fully funded by a successful crowdfunding campaign. He had also visited the Stroud bus depot and been impressed by their thorough cleaning regime. He reported that bus services were now back to their normal timetables and extra buses are being provided for school journeys.

**6. Questions from members of the public**

None.

## **7. Verbal reports from District and County Councillors**

Cllr Sutton reported that funding was being made available for cycling projects.

Councillor Bloxsom joined the meeting.

Cllr Marjoram reported that site visits by the Development Control Committee had not yet resumed

## **8. Clerk's report**

The Clerk's report was noted. The Clerk additionally reported that discussions were in hand with Highways to review the road closure on London Road which had been part of measures to promote social distancing in the town centre. It was now felt that based on the numbers of shoppers during the week, a Saturday only closure was more appropriate. A decision on this from Gloucestershire Highways was awaited.

The Clerk also reported that the online consultation on walking and cycling was going well.

## **9. Project officer post to support Stroud Town CAN**

Cllr Green introduced a recommendation from the Personnel Committee that a new Project Officer post should be created to support the work of the Stroud Town CAN. The Clerk answered questions about the impact on the Council's budget, partnership working with other parishes and the District Council. Some suggestions were made for improvements to the draft job specification, which the Clerk was asked to incorporate before advertising the post. It was **resolved** unanimously to create the new post for a 12 month trial period.

**Action: Clerk**

## **10. Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils, AGM**

It was **resolved** to put forward a motion to the Annual General Meeting that the Association should promote devolution to parish and town councils. Cllr Bloxsom volunteered to work with the Clerk on the wording of the motion and to represent the Council at the meeting.

**Action: Clerk and Cllr Bloxsom**

## **11. Devolution**

Cllr Cranston introduced a report on the anticipated government White Paper on devolution. There was a concern that this issue could prove to be a distraction from higher priority work, but it was felt that the Council should be prepared and set up a small working group once the White Paper was published. Cllrs Cranston, Bloxsom, Andrews and Hale volunteered to join the group and it was noted that other councillors not present at the meeting might also wish to join.

**Action: Clerk**

## **12. Receive committee reports**

The following reports were received.

Regeneration:

2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020

Environment: 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020  
Personnel: 6<sup>th</sup> August 2020  
Consultations & Highways: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020, 10<sup>th</sup> August 2020

**13. Exclusion of press and public**

The Council **resolved** to exclude the press and public from the following item due to the commercially sensitive confidential nature of the report.

**14. Office refurbishment**

It was **resolved** to appoint Childs and Sulzmann architects to advise on potential refurbishment of Thanet House and to give OpenHouse informal notice that their lease on the flat might not be renewed in 2021.

**Action: Clerk**

The meeting ended at 9.15pm.

Chair..... Date.....