

STROUD TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of the
ANNUAL MEETING OF COUNCIL**

Monday, 13th May 2019, at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs Geoffrey Andrews, Simon Arundel, Alice Campbell, Kevin Cranston (Chair), Steve Dechan, Rob Green, Camilla Hale, Sarah Lunnon, John Marjoram, Steven Naumann, Margaret Poulton, Vanessa Price, Alan Sage, Lucas Schoemaker and Chas Townley.

In attendance: Marianne Sweet (STC Communications), Kate Montgomery (Deputy Town Clerk), Cllr Simon Pickering, Cllr Eva Ward

Action

1. Election of Mayor for 2018–19

Cllr Kevin Cranston was proposed, seconded and **elected** as Mayor for the coming year.

2. Mayor's declaration

The Mayor signed a declaration of acceptance of office.

3. Election of Deputy Mayor for 2018-19

Cllrs Margaret Poulton was proposed and seconded and **elected** as Deputy Mayor for the coming year.

4. Deputy Mayor's declaration

The Deputy Mayor signed a declaration of acceptance of office.

5. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Davies (work) and Cllrs Bloxsom and Sutton (personal).

6. Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations

None received.

7. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 11th March were **approved** by the members present and signed as a correct record by the Chair.

8. Mayor's remarks

The Mayor thanked Councillors for his re-election and reported on his recent visit to open the hub at the Stroud Station. The Mayor also noted that the restoration of the canal is going well with the works for the major scheme on the missing link at Stonehouse becoming a reality.

The Mayor reported that he had recently attended the Hawkwood Fair and had a tour of the farm which supports young people to train in agricultural skills. The Deputy Mayor attended the Anniversary celebration of the Citizens Advice Bureau with Princess Anne and the upcoming SoGlos Gloucestershire Lifestyle awards. The Mayor also reported that the Mayor's Bench was up and running again for the coming months and asked that anyone who could spare a couple of hours on a Friday to speak with members of the public should contact the office.

9. Questions from members of the public

There were no questions.

10. Reports from District and County Councillors

Cllr Eva Ward reported that she has written to all ward councillors to put forward any jobs for the lengthsman scheme. Cllr Ward outlined the focus of the latest District Road Safety Group as 'Enforcement' and that road safety was still a huge concern for residents in the parish.

GCC are hosting a climate change summit w/c 20th May for which they are oversubscribed. Cllr Ward is on the following committees for the coming year; Public Participation and Democracy, Plastics and Youth Strategy. Any feedback in those areas is welcomed.

Cllr Simon Pickering reported that he has been supporting other towns and parishes in the District to commit to a climate change resolution and is happy to facilitate any links which may be required. Cllr Pickering also reported that the District's Audit and Standards Committee are looking at ethical practices across the District and are keen to understand this at a Town and Parish Council level.

Cllr Chas Townley reported that the project for temporary accommodation for homeless people is moving along. The District recognises that it is using too much temporary accommodation outside the District which increases the difficulty for people maintaining links to education, work and family.

11. Clerk's report

The report was noted.

12. Appointment of an internal auditor

The appointment of GAPTC was **approved**.

13. Report from the Council's internal auditor

A year-end report from the Council's internal auditor was received.

The following recommendations were **approved**:

- To review the Transparency Code for Local Authorities 2015 particularly regarding publishing of payment information and land/building assets

Clerk

- Include payment schedule with minutes
- Review Financial Regulations to ensure Clerk's authority is clear
- Council to review Direct Debits / Standing Orders at least once every two years
- Expand Councillor internal finance checks to include areas of risk management.

14. Review of effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control

The updates recommended by the Clerk/RFO were **approved**.

Clerk

Cllrs Pickering and Ward left the meeting.

15. Year-end earmarked reserves movement

Transfers to and from earmarked reserves were **approved**.

16. Annual Governance Statement

It was **resolved** to approve the annual governance statement for the period 2018–19 which was then **signed** by the Mayor and Deputy Town Clerk.

17. Accounts

The annual accounts for the period 2018–19 were **approved** and **signed** by the Mayor.

Clerk

18. Accounting statements for 2018-19 and bank reconciliation

It was **resolved** to approve the 2018–19 accounting statements and the year-end bank reconciliation, which were then **signed** by the Mayor. They had been signed by the Responsible Financial Officer prior to the meeting.

19. Delegation arrangements

No changes were proposed. The delegation arrangements were **approved**.

20. Terms of reference for Committees

No changes were proposed. The terms of reference for Committees were **approved**.

21. Membership of Committees

Membership of committees was **agreed**, and Chairs and Deputies **elected**, as follows:

Clerk

Consultations

Simon Arundel (Chair), John Bloxsom, Alice Campbell, Kevin Cranston, Camilla Hale (Deputy Chair), Steven Naumann, Margaret Poulton, Vanessa Price, Chas Townley.

Green Spaces

Steve Dechan, Rob Green (Chair), Sarah Lunnon (Deputy Chair), John Marjoram, Steven Naumann, Margaret Poulton, Haydn Sutton and Chas Townley.

It was **agreed** that the Green Spaces Committee could temporarily reduce its membership to 8.

Clerk

Finance, Community and Policy

There were more nominations than positions on the committee so it was **agreed** to temporarily increase the membership of the committee from 9 to 11, and the following members were **elected**:

Geoffrey Andrews, Simon Arundel, John Bloxsom, Kevin Cranston, Steve Dechan, Rob Green, Camilla Hale, John Marjoram, Margaret Poulton, Alan Sage (Chair) and Lucas Schoemaker (Deputy Chair).

Personnel

Alice Campbell, Kevin Cranston (Deputy Chair) and Rob Green (Chair).

Appeals

It was **agreed** that membership of the appeals committee would be decided if it was required.

Clerk

22. Terms of Reference for new Governance Working Group

It was **agreed** that the proposed membership of the committee be increased to six and the quorum set at 4.

The terms of reference were **approved**.

Clerk

23. Membership of working groups

Membership of working groups were **approved** as follows:

Clerk

Lansdown Hall – Alice Campbell, Camilla Hale and Lucas Schoemaker. Plus co-opted member Steve Hurrell.

Neighbourhood Development Plan – John Bloxsom, Alice Campbell, Steve Dechan, Camilla Hale and Chas Townley.

Sub Rooms – Geoffrey Andrews, Kevin Cranston, Camilla Hale, Alan Sage and Lucas Schoemaker.

Road Safety – Steven Naumann, Lucas Schoemaker and Chas Townley.

Governance – John Bloxsom, Kevin Cranston, Laurie Davies, Rob Green, Margaret Poulton and Lucas Schoemaker.

24. New committees

There were no proposals for new committees.

25. Standing orders and financial regulations

Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were **re-adopted** with no changes.

26. Representatives on external bodies

Representatives were **agreed** as follows:

Cotswold Canals Western Consultative Group – Kevin Cranston

Gloucestershire Association of Parish & Town Councils – Sarah Lunnon

Stroud Hospital League of Friends – Camilla Hale

Stroud in Bloom – Steve Dechan

Concordat – Kevin Cranston (as Mayor)

Joint Cluster Group – Haydn Sutton

Stroud District Youth Forum – Laurie Davies

Gloucestershire Chartered Parishes – Vacant

NEW Stratford Park Management Group - Steven Naumann / Vanessa Price

27. Councillors' special interests

Councillors' special interests were **confirmed** as follows:

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| <u>Fair Trade Group</u> | Removed from list |
| <u>Allotments</u> | Vacant |
| <u>Children, play, young people and families</u> | Laurie Davies |
| <u>Cycling</u> | Sarah Lunnon |
| <u>Environmental responsibility</u> | Alan Sage |
| <u>Heritage</u> | Camilla Hale |
| <u>Business and economy</u> | Steve Dechan |
| <u>Health and wellbeing</u> | John Bloxsom |
| <u>Equality and diversity</u> | Geoffrey Andrews |

Clerk

Clerk

28. General Power of Competence

It was **resolved** that the Council continues to meet the eligibility conditions required for it to use the General Power of Competence.

29. Assets

The Council's inventory of assets was **noted** as per item 17.

Cllr Townley left the meeting.

30. Insurance

Confirmation of insurance cover was **received**. The Clerk was asked to check the ethical standards of the Council's insurers and report to the Finance, Community and Policy Committee.

Clerk

31. Subscriptions

The list of subscriptions was reviewed and **approved**.

32. Complaints procedure

The Council's complaints procedure was reviewed and no changes were proposed.

33. Freedom and information and data protection

The Council's procedures policies and practices were reviewed and no changes were proposed.

34. Press/media policy

The Council's Policy for dealing with the press/media was reviewed and no changes were proposed.

35. Employment policies and procedures

The Personnel Handbook was **re-adopted**. Cllr Sage requested some amendments to the policy relating to shared parental leave. It was **agreed** to refer this to the Clerk for potential consideration by the Personnel Committee.

Clerk

36. Expenditure under the General Power of Competence

A report on expenditure was noted.

37. Civic calendar

The calendar of meetings was reviewed and **approved**.

38. Internal controls

Simon Arundel, Steve Dechan, Margaret Poulton and Lucas Schoemaker were **appointed** to conduct internal control checks.

Clerk

39. Bank mandate

The mandate was reviewed and the following Councillors were **approved** to authorise payments; Geoffrey Andrews, John Bloxsom, Kevin Cranston, Camilla Hale, Alan Sage and Lucas Schoemaker.

Clerk

40. Draft motions for GAPTC AGM

The proposed motions were discussed and **approved**:

Given that the government, many principal authorities and a growing number of parish and town councils have declared a climate emergency we call on NALC to provide support and guidance for parish and town councils on how they can reduce their own carbon footprints and support their communities to do the same.

Clerk

We call on NALC to lobby government to extend the powers granted in London to prohibit parking on pavements to the rest of the country.

(See Highway Code Rule 244:

*“You **MUST NOT** park partially or wholly on the pavement in London, and should not do so elsewhere unless signs permit it. Parking on the pavement can obstruct and seriously inconvenience pedestrians, people in wheelchairs or with visual impairments and people with prams or pushchairs.”*

Law [GL\(GP\)A sect 15](#)

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Chair

Date