

Middlewich Town Council
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Minutes of the Five Hundred and Twentieth Meeting of Middlewich Town Council, held via Zoom video conferencing on Monday 15th June 2020, commencing at 7.15 pm

PART ONE

Present

Councillors Mike Hunter (Chairman), Jonathan Parry, Sean Boyle, Graham Orme, Carol Bulman, Gareth Williams, Vicky Perez, Chris Jones and David Latham.

In attendance:

Lisa Benskin - Town Clerk

Nicola Antony – Deputy Town Clerk

1. To receive and approve apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Pauline Hickey (Health)

2. To note any declarations of Members' Interests on any agenda item

Councillor Orme declared a personal interest as his wife is employed by the Police and Crime Commissioner, he is a former employee of Compass Minerals.

Councillors Parry, Bulman and Hunter declared personal interests as members of Cheshire East Council (CEC). Cllrs Hunter and Parry declared interests by virtue of their positions as Directors of ANSA and TSS respectively.

Cllr Boyle declared an interest as a member of the FAB organising group prior to the Council's involvement.

Cllr Latham declared an interest as an owner of a property on Booth Lane and as a member of the FAB Business Support Group.

3. To receive any announcements to be made by the Chairman

Cllr Hunter noted that a large amount of work had been carried out by officers and Councillors to produce the reports forming part of this agenda.

Cllr Hunter also encouraged residents to continue to follow the Covid 19 restrictions. Despite some relaxation in the lockdown rules it is still important to be vigilant to avoid a second spike, especially as Cheshire East was one of the areas in the North West where the 'R' number was at 1 or just above.

FEEDBACK AND REPORTS

4. Public Participation

It was noted that the resident who had put forward questions in advance of the meeting was not in attendance. In accordance with the Public Questions Policy a written response would therefore be provided to these questions.

A resident asked if there was any update on the Bellway Roundabout. Cllr Hunter advised that to the best of his knowledge the development is now complete and as such a stage 3 Audit should have been completed or be in the pipeline. Cllr Hunter advised he would check the position with the relevant officer and revert to the resident.

5. To receive and adopt the Minutes of the Five Hundred and Eighteenth Meeting of Middlewich Town Council held on Monday 18th May 2020

8357 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 18th May 2020 be received and confirmed as a true record.

6. To note the minutes of committees which have taken place since the previous ordinary meeting

The minutes were noted.

7. To consider the postponement of the Folk and Boat Festival until 16th to 20th June 2021

8358 It was **RESOLVED** that the 30th Anniversary Folk and Boat Festival be postponed until 16th to 20th June 2021. The Working Group would continue and work towards planning a 'Festive Fringe' event, potentially to coincide with the Christmas event to support local businesses.

8. To consider the postponement or cancellation of other upcoming events

8359 It was **RESOLVED** that the taking place of all upcoming events be reviewed on a monthly basis, save for the Classic Car and Bike show which would be cancelled for 2020.

9. To consider a report on and the implementation of a ‘Make it Middlewich’ Campaign to support local businesses

8360 Members thanked the Vision Manager for the excellent and detailed report. It was **RESOLVED** that the short term steps be commenced, particularly the business database and business forum and that costings be obtained for the other suggestions.

10. To receive an update from the Clerk on staff returning to work in the Council Offices

The Town Clerk advised that whilst she had now visited the offices and assessed what changes would be required for staff to return, costings for the required changes had not yet been obtained. In any event, having spoken to the staff and reviewed the current government guidance her advice was that staff remain at home for the present time. This was likely to be the case until the Victoria Hall was able to reopen.

11. To consider any Members’ Items previously submitted in writing

8361 It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk investigate the legal status of Middlewich Cemetery Board and provide a report to Council. The contents of this motion then be revisited and considered.

12. To receive verbal reports from Members of Cheshire East Council

Cllr Hunter advised that he has predominantly been involved with mock Planning meetings as it was important that the process was correct in order to avoid challenges from applicants at a later date. It was hoped the next Strategic Planning Meeting will take place on 24th June.

Cllr Bulman advised that she has been taking part in regular virtual meetings and that the focus for the Children and Families teams remains Covid19 and its impact. Cllr Bulman noted that CEC have worked incredibly hard for its residents and had so far spent £60million pounds as a result of the pandemic. They had received £20million from the Government.

Cllr Parry advised that he had attended and spoke at the Cabinet meeting and encouraged CEC to thank the Town and Parish Councils for their help in providing support to residents. Their involvement, especially in the People helping people scheme, hadn’t been referenced in the report prepared for Cabinet but has now been recognised by the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet.

13. To receive updates from any Members appointed to External Bodies

Cllr Orme provided a detailed update on his research undertaken and initial meetings with the Mid Cheshire Rail Users Association.

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Cllr Boyle advised that contact had been made by the Heritage Trust and an introductory meeting was being arranged.

14. To review the Resolutions Log

It was noted that responses as to updates, changes required priorities and had only been received from one Councillor. The Chairman requested members review the log and respond to the Town Clerk as soon as possible.

15. Member questions to the Clerk

Cllr Latham noted that the barrier planters and hanging baskets had gone up around the Town and were being well received. However, it had been noted that the planters on Town Bridge and within the car park at Seabank had not yet been completed. The Town Clerk advised that the intention was that the Council Maintenance officer would plant up these planters as soon as possible.

The Chairman subsequently allowed Cllr Latham to raise an urgent query with respect to flooding at Seabank and the crossing near the cemetery. The Clerk advised that officers would contact CEC on the matter. Cllr Hunter advised he would also raise the issue with Highways.

FINANCE

16. To consider the Council's Income and Expenditure to date

The Town Clerk advised that as the data for the finance package had only been received back from the accountant preparing the year end accounts last week, she had not yet had time to bring the data up to date. This would be rectified by the next meeting. Members noted the issue and advised they were happy for it to be held over to the next meeting.

17. To consider and approve invoices due for payment

8362 It was **RESOLVED** to approve the items due for payment.

18. To note payments made

Members reviewed and noted the payments.

19. To consider the allocation of the RFO role

8363 It was **RESOLVED** to retain Derek Kemp of DCK Accountants as the RFO at a cost of approximately £250 per quarter on the basis that the day to day finance work was carried out by the Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk, and he was there to provide advice and check any issues.

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

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20. To consider the proposed temporary closure of Wheelock Street and related changes by Cheshire East Council ready for the government's high street lockdown restrictions being lifted

Members thanked Cllr Parry and the Town Clerk for their hard work on this matter and working with CEC efficiently, effectively and out of hours to avoid the closure of Wheelock Street. Members noted that they fully supported the proposal made to CEC which was adopted by them.

ENVIRONMENT

21. To consider concerns raised by the public with respect to the odours emanating from the ANSA Environmental Hub on Cledford Lane

8364 It was **RESOLVED** to support the resolution of the External Committee namely;

- Write to Cheshire East to request information on when and why the diffusion tubes were removed and how long before they were replaced
- What the data obtained from the diffusion tubes was?
- Call an emergency meeting of the ANSA Liaison Group to discuss the Town Council concerns, the current situation regarding the odour from the Ansa site on Cledford Lane and the increased vehicle movement at this time.
- To invite a representative of Ansa to join the next Zoom Meeting of the Full Council.
- To Request a copy of the report that Ansa sent to the Environment Agency.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

22. To note dates of forthcoming meetings

Members noted the dates.

The Town Clerk confirming that there were no part two items, the meeting was brought to a close by the Chairman.

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