

THORNBURY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 17 October 2019 in the Council Chamber

Present: Cllrs Angela Symonds (Chairman and Mayor)
Jayne Stansfield (Vice Chairman and Deputy Mayor)
Chris Davies
Benj Emmerson
Clive Parkinson
Guy Rawlinson
Pam Shipp
Clare Fardell

Louise Powell (Town Clerk)
Hannah Cornford (Minutes)

Absent: Cllr Ashley Bijster – absent
Cllr Martin Trueman – absent

1. **To receive any apologies for absence**

Cllr Bob Griffin (out of Thornbury)
Cllr Shirley Holloway (out of Thornbury)
Cllr Eva Fielding (another commitment)
Cllr Matt Stringer (another commitment)
Cllr Helen Harrison (out of Thornbury)
Cllr Maggie Tyrrell (another commitment)

2. **To receive any members' declarations of interest**

301/19 There were none.

3. **To receive any Chairman's announcements**

302/19 Cllr Symonds reported that Thornbury had won Champion of Champions in the South West region of Thornbury in Bloom. She had attended a civic reception and awards ceremony where she and the Thornbury In Bloom team had been presented with the award. An impressive number of Thornbury organisations had also been presented with Gold or Outstanding awards. She congratulated all involved. It was queried who was responsible for ordering a new plaque for the wall outside the Town Hall and it was agreed the staff would investigate.

303/19 Cllr Stansfield had attended a joint event by the Royal British Legion and Army Cadets. She presented a certificate to mark their joining of forces and reported that all were very welcoming.

4. **To receive any representations from the public**

304/19 There were no members of the public present.

5. **To consider the following matters related to Council finance**

a) To approve the accounts for payment

305/19 There were no accounts to pay; they would be going to the next Finance & Policy Meeting for approval.

b) To receive the financial statement for September/month 6

306/19 The Clerk explained that this document was currently in draft form as this month had not been reconciled at the point of printing. She had checked that day however after reconciliation had now been done and there was no significant change. There was discussion of various points including the transfers to earmarked and general reserves, leases paid by hall hirers, closure of bank accounts and amounts deposited within them. Cllr Emmerson concluded that most things were well within budget and this was positive.

307/19 The Clerk had written a letter of complaint to RBS regarding the new financial system set up. Although the staff had worked hard to input data, there were several points that she was unhappy with regarding the company installation and service. No response had yet been received.

6. **To consider the following matters to begin preparations for setting a council budget for 2020/21**

a) To review Council and Committee spend to date against the 2019/20 budget

308/19 An issue of staffing budgets was discussed. At present, the staff's pay must be divided up between committees depending on how much time they spend on differing activities. Cllr Emmerson proposed that staffing costs including national insurance and pensions be amalgamated into a single figure on Central Services. This budget and the staff training budget would then be the responsibility of the staffing committee in future years. Cllr Rawlinson seconded this, and it was agreed by a majority, with one Councillor not in favour.

309/19 Overall it was agreed that the spend to date against budget looked healthy for mid-year.

b) To consider budget pressures and Council priorities for 2020/21

310/19 The clerk presented two draft budgets. One which showed simply inflationary rises against the existing budget and the second which included items the clerk felt were essential to add for health and safety reasons or to comply with legislation. There was a list of budget pressures attached to the budget with an indicative cost and options for how it can be assessed by the Council. It was noted that the effect shown on the precept was not correct as the figures for band D houses had not been released and as such the figures shown were old and out of date.

311/19 Cllr Emmerson queried the size of the grant to the Armstrong Hall. He recollected that the previous year's grant had been exceptional, in order that specific problems could be addressed, with the expectation that the figure would come down this year. The Clerk explained how the figure had been arrived at.

312/19 It was agreed that the finance sub-committee would meet with the Clerk to continue to progress the draft budget. The Sub-committee consisted of Cllr Parkinson, Cllr Emmerson, Cllr Griffin and Cllr Davies.

c) To consider CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) programme – to complete the report for year 18/19 and consider priorities for future expenditure

313/19 The clerk was required to submit a report of what 2018/19 CIL money had been spent on. There was discussion of how to make the best use of the remaining CIL funds, in consideration of there being a time limit on their use. It was agreed that existing uses of CIL would be set out in the programme according to when they would be spent.

7. To receive any correspondence and notices to be dealt with on grounds of urgency

314/19 There were none.

8. To resolve under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of this item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

315/19 Resolved.

9. To consider quotations for lease review and redrafts

316/19 The quotes sought showed a large variance in prices. Cllr Parkinson proposed that we go ahead with the most cost effective, which the Clerk was reassured that the company had worked hard on as they wanted the contract. He also suggested that it should come from reserves to make the expenditure clearer for audit purposes. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Rawlinson and unanimously agreed.

10. To consider quotations for flooring to the Pavilion

317/19 3 quotes had been sought, of which 2 had been received and 1 not returned. Cllr Parkinson proposed that the cheaper quote be followed, with Cllr Emmerson seconding and all in favour.