



EVESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **TOWN COUNCIL** held at 6.30 pm on **MONDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2021** via the Zoom video conferencing platform and in accordance with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Those present:

Chairman: Cllr Mrs S Amor (Town Mayor)
Vice Chairman: Cllr P Clifford (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors: Cllr A P Booth, Cllr A Dyke, Cllr G Bearcroft, Cllr G Hale, Cllr R Hale,
Cllr Mrs J Haines, Cllr M S Goodge, Cllr Mrs J Johnson,
Cllr Mrs E Nishigaki, Cllr R W Raphael, Cllr Mrs M Sale,
Cllr Mrs S Schaathun, Cllr Mrs C Smith, Cllr Mrs F S Smith,
Cllr Mrs B Timbrell, Cllr Mrs J Tucker, Cllr N S Tucker

Officers: Mr S D Carter (Town Clerk)

Also present was one member of the public.

52. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs J Sandalls, Mrs S Smith, and Miss E Haynes.

53. Declarations of pecuniary or other interest (if any)

There were no declarations of interest.

54. Announcements by the Town Mayor

The Town Mayor Cllr Mrs Amor informed members that she planned to launch a 'Covid Heroes' award. The aim was to give recognition to everybody who had played their role no matter what they had done, during the pandemic. It was planned to invite nominations from the Evesham public and that everyone nominated would receive a special pin badge and certificate. The idea was that it was inclusive, so whether the person had worked on the frontline or helped get shopping, all had played their part and would be recognised. The Mayor stated she planned to pay from this from her allowance and that publicity would go out in the coming weeks.

55. Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on 11 January 2021

The Town Clerk had circulated with the agenda the minutes of the previous Town Council Meeting. It was moved seconded and **RESOLVED** that the minutes for the Council meeting held 11 January 2021 be approved and adopted as a true record.

56. Committee Minutes

The Town Clerk had circulated with the agenda the minutes of the following committees:

- a) **Personnel Committee held on 18 January 2021.** It was moved seconded and **RESOLVED** that the minutes and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

In response to a question about the Personnel minutes the Clerk explained that he had sent over the contract and secondment letter to the Abbey Trust. He was awaiting a reply and also a management document from the trust.

- b) **Planning and Estates Committee held on 25 January 2021.** It was moved seconded and **RESOLVED** that the minutes and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

57. Finance – Payments and Receipts for January 2021

The Town Clerk had circulated with the agenda details of the income and expenditure of the Council for the month of January 2021. Also attached were the bank reconciliation reports. The payments had been approved by the Chairmen of the Committees in line with the scheme of delegation.

In response to a question about a payment for Almonry pest control £737, the Clerk stated he would confirm by email what this was for.

Clerk's note: This was an annual contract for pest control services at the Almonry.

In response to a question it was confirmed that the payment to Gottfire was the annual servicing of the fire extinguishers at all the council sites and replacement of any that were out of date.

In response to a question it was confirmed that the payment detailed as Town hall listed building was payment for the preparation of the design and access statement relating to the planning application to install a banister and audio visual display equipment at the town hall.

It was moved seconded and **RESOLVED** that the receipts and payments and bank reconciliation for January 2021 be approved.

58. Almonry Advisory Panel

The Chairman of the Almonry Advisory Panel updated members on the latest meeting. Cllr Dyke informed members that they had recently met to discuss the quote to prepare the electrical specification at the Almonry. It was planned to formally present this to the Council at a special meeting that the Mayor had agreed to call on 18 February 2021. Cllr Dyke also confirmed that the panel had agreed that the Almonry should be free entry in the coming financial year. Once again, this would be formally considered at a special meeting of the Council on the 18 February.

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59. Review of the Systems if Internal Control and Audit

A report was circulated to Members detailing the measures the Council has in place with regards to internal audit, internal controls and assessment of risks.

It explained that the Council was required to carry out a review of the effectiveness both of its internal controls and its system of internal audit. The Annual Return also required Members to agree that they have ‘assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.’”

Attached for Members was a risk management policy and controls which had been adopted by the Council a year earlier. It was explained that this document aided both the Council and the Clerk in ensuring that the proper checks were in place with regards to risk management and internal controls.

It was highlighted that as part of the Council’s internal audit programme, it had appointed a qualified local government accountant to act as its independent internal auditor. It was explained that the role of the internal auditor was to assist the Council in fulfilling its responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption, errors and mistakes. Currently, the internal auditor made one visit towards the end of the financial year to review the internal controls and to carry out testing on the transactions undertaken and to ensure compliance with financial regulations (these visits had been conducted remotely in 2020). A further review, particularly regarding the year end annual accounts was carried out when the annual accounts had been prepared and to assist with the submittal of the Annual Return. The auditor tested systems and controls, checked procedures and made recommendations on how these could be improved or where it was lacking.

The clerk highlighted a number of points raised in italics on the document. The dual authorisation bank account was a priority but had been delayed by the pandemic. Also highlighted was the provision of health and safety support. The pandemic had brought in new specific health and safety measures and support similar to that of the Human Resources services should be looked at.

Members reviewed the policy and **RESOLVED** to approve the system of audit, internal controls and risks.

60. Reports from Council’s Representatives

There were no reports from Council Representatives.

61. Matters of urgency raised, for information only, at the discretion of the Town Mayor

There were no matters raised under this item.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6.55pm.

COUNCILLOR S AMOR
TOWN MAYOR