

Council Offices, Commercial Road, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 8NG

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**Minutes of meeting**

**MEETING:** Full Council

**DATE & TIME**: Wednesday 8th January 2020 at 7.00pm

**PLACE:** Town Council Offices, Commercial Road, Weymouth, DT4 8NG

**Present:** Graham Winter Colin Huckle Mark Tewkesbury

**Councillors** Peter Barrow Alex Fuhrmann Christine James

David Gray Lucy Hamilton Tia Roos

Howard Legg David Northam Tony Ferrari

Graham Lambert Richard Nickinson Luke Wakeling

Michael Frost Jon Orrell Gill Taylor

Ken Whatley Kate Wheller Ann Weaving

Trefor Morgan David Harris Ryan Hope

Kevin Brookes Oz Kanji

**Officers** Jane Biscombe (Town Clerk)

Matt Ryan (Deputy Town Clerk)

Ian Milne (Business & Finance Manager)

Tara Williams (Parks & Open Spaces Manager)

Niki Ayles (Democratic & Administration Officer)

**Absent:**

**Councillors** Jan Bergman David Mannings

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| C0117 | **Welcome**  Cllr Graham Winter welcomed everyone to the meeting.  A one-minute silence was held in memory of former Councillor Cllr Bill White who recently passed away. |
| C0118 | **Apologies for Absence**  Apologies for absence were approved from Cllr Mannings and Cllr Bergman. |
| C0119 | **Declarations of Interest**  There were no declarations of interest. |
| C0120 | **Minutes of the last meeting**  The minutes of the last meeting held on 17 December 2019 were unanimously agreed as a correct record and were duly signed. |
| C0121 | **Councillor Question Time**  No questions had been received prior to the meeting.  Cllr James asked whether all Honorary Alderman scrolls are going to be displayed in the Council Chamber. This will be explored by Officers. |
| C0122 | **Public Question Time**  A member of the public was concerned that little is being done by WTC to obtain assets from the Unitary Authority.  Cllr Winter reminded the member of the public that WTC has only existed for nine months and its partnership with DC is still being established.  **Extinction Rebellion**  Two representatives from Extinction Rebellion presented a short statement with regards to air pollution both globally and locally, particularly in the Boot Hill area. Extinction Rebellion highlighted the important part that WTC has to play with regards to the proposed waste incinerator and felt that WTC should ensure that they are included as consultees in the planning process.  Cllr Winter confirmed that WTC will be a consultee in the planning process for the proposed waste incinerator. |
| C0123 | **Town Mayor’s Announcements**  The Christmas Day Harbour swim raised a lot of money for the Lions Fund and WTC’s Town Clerk took part in wig and gown.  A Barn Dance is being held on Saturday 25th January at the Centenary Club to raise money for the Mayor’s Charity, Family Matters. This will be a good opportunity for Councillors and staff to meet each other socially.  Notification has been received today that Cllr Griffiths has resigned from the role of Town Councillor for personal reasons. The process to fill the vacancy has been started and residents and Councillors will be kept informed. |
| C0124 | **Representatives on Outside Bodies and Local Updates**  No reports have been received. |
| C0125 | **Dorset Council Reports**  No reports have been received. |
| C0126  C0127 | **Committee Minutes and Recommendations and other Committees**  These minutes are approved by their respective Committees.  Resolved:  Members agreed unanimously to note the minutes.  **Presentation regarding Armed Forces Covenant**  Members received a presentation from Laura Cornette, External Funding and Grants Manager, Dorset Council, and Kevin Moore, Programme Coordinator, Dorset Armed Forces Covenant.  The Ministry Defence definition of the Armed Forces Covenant is:  “a promise from the nation that those who service or have served, and their families, are treated fairly and are not put at a disadvantage.”  Training modules have been developed that can be used by anyone who has signed up to the Covenant. |
| C0128  C0129  C0130  C0131  C0132 | **Armed Forces Covenant**  Cllr James agreed with WTC signing up to the Armed Forces Covenant and highlighted that regular updates would be beneficial to ensure that it was not forgotten. Additionally, she nominated herself to the role of Elected Member Armed Forces Champion.  Resolved:  Proposer: Cllr Orrell Seconder: Cllr Barrow  Councillors voted by a majority of 24 in favour, with 2 abstentions, that the Council:   1. Agrees to sign up to the Armed Forces Community Covenant;   Cllr Taylor proposed that the consideration of the nomination and the appointment of an Elected Member Armed Forces Champion be deferred to the Governance Working Group as it was previously agreed that Member Champions would be considered by that Group to ascertain what Champions were needed for the Council.  Proposer: Cllr Taylor Seconder: Cllr Legg  Councillors voted by a minority of 6 in favour, with 18 against and 2 abstentions for the consideration of the nomination and the appointment of an Elected Member Armed Forces Champion be deferred to the Governance Working Group. Therefore, the amendment was not carried.  Resolved:  Proposer: Cllr Wheller Seconder: Cllr Orrell  Councillors voted by a majority of 17 in favour to elect Cllr James to the role of Elected Member Armed Forces Champion.  Proposer: Cllr Taylor Seconder: Cllr Legg  Councillors voted by a minority of 6 in favour, with 19 against, and one abstention to nominate Cllr Brookes to the role of Elected Member Armed Forces Champion.  Resolved:  Members agreed unanimously that the Town Clerk is nominated as the Armed Forces Covenant Officer contact.  Jane Biscombe, Town Clerk, reassured Councillors that WTC operates an open and transparent recruitment process where no member of the community is disadvantaged. Working with veterans is very important to WTC.  **Draft Budget and Precept**  Cllr Harris introduced the report.  After a lively debate regarding the draft budget and precept, Councillors voted on the amended resolutions as follows:  Proposer: Cllr Ferrari Seconder: Cllr Wakeling  Councillors voted by a majority of 25 in favour, with 1 abstention to:   1. Agree that Members allowances for 20/21 will be £1,000 per Member per annum.   Cllr Ferrari requested that the vote on the precept was held before the vote to approve the budget.  When asked for assurances that there would be no effects on current services if there was a 0% increase to the precept, Jane Biscombe stated that there are so many unknown factors in terms of issues such as vandalism, future need and unexpected maintenance costs that she cannot 100% guarantee this. However, if Officers are unable to meet the needs of the Council and provide the level of services that have been agreed by Councillors, Officers will come back to Full Council regarding this.  Cllr Wheller requested an amendment to uplift the precept at the inflationary rate of 2%. This was seconded by Cllr Weaving and a recorded vote was held at the request of Cllr Hope as follows:  Cllr Barrow – Against Cllr Bergman - Absent  Cllr Brookes – Against Cllr Ferrari – Against  Cllr Frost – For Cllr Fuhrmann – Abstention  Cllr Gray – Against Cllr Hamilton – For  Cllr Harris – Against Cllr Hope – Against  Cllr Huckle – For Cllr James – For  Cllr Kanji – Against Cllr Lambert – Against  Cllr Legg – Against Cllr Mannings – Absent  Cllr Morgan – Against Cllr Nickinson – Against  Cllr Northam – Against Cllr Orrell – Against  Cllr Roos – Abstention Cllr Taylor – Against  Cllr Tewkesbury – Against Cllr Wakeling – For  Cllr Weaving – For Cllr Whatley – Against  Cllr Wheller – For Cllr Winter – Against  Councillors voted by a minority of 7 in favour, with 17 against, 2 abstentions and 2 absences, to uplift the precept at the inflationary rate of 2%. Therefore, the amendment was not carried.  Resolved:  Proposer: Cllr Harris Seconder: Cllr Ferrari  Councillors voted by a majority of 21 in favour, with 5 against to:   1. Agree to request a precept of £3,355,030 from Dorset Council for the 20/21 financial year, which represents a 0% increase.   Resolved:  Proposer: Cllr Barrow Seconder: Cllr Gray  Councillors voted by a majority of 21 in favour, with 5 against, to:   1. Approve the budget for the 20/21 financial year as detailed in the report.   Cllr Brookes left the chamber briefly during consideration of the next recommendation.  Cllr Northam proposed that the fourth and final recommendation be amended and that Councillors agree to hold an additional Finance and Governance Committee meeting, rather than an additional Full Council meeting, to consider budget implications if the pay award exceeds 3%, and this was seconded by Cllr Legg.  Councillors voted by a minority of 2 in favour, with 21 against and 3 abstentions, to agree the above recommendation.  Resolved:  Proposer: Cllr Wakeling Seconder: Cllr Tewkesbury  Councillors voted unanimously to:   1. Agree to hold an additional Full Council meeting to consider budget implications if the pay award exceeds 3%.   **WTC Social Media Policy:**  Cllr Legg and Cllr Frost left the Council Chamber briefly during this item.  Jane Biscombe clarified that where individuals are identifiable as Councillors, they are responsible for what they post on social media in line with existing legislation and the Code of Conduct. If posts are contrary to the Code of Conduct, the matter could be reported to the Monitoring Officer. Additionally, should the Social Media Policy be agreed at this meeting, it will become applicable immediately. She would therefore recommend that Councillors regularly review their social media posts.  Jane Biscombe clarified that should a member of the public post something libelous on the WTC social media page, the admins of that page can remove that post and legal action could possibly be taken.  Jane Biscombe confirmed that the draft Social Media Policy has been drafted by an Officer, and Cllr Hope requested that it go to the Finance and Governance Committee for input. He would also like to some training for Councillors before the policy goes live.  Cllr Roos felt that she should be able to post whatever she wishes on her personal page as she sees this as a reflection of herself and an expression of her freedom of speech. Only her friends can see her personal page and she has a separate page for her Councillor role. Jane Biscombe confirmed that both pages would still be required to confirm to existing legislation and the Code of Conduct.  Resolved:  Proposer: Cllr Hope Seconder: Cllr Northam  Councillors voted unanimously for the Social Media Policy to be put before the Finance and Governance Committee for input.  **Nursery Lease**  Jane Biscombe introduced the item.  Cllr Lambert was concerned that there are two natural gas boilers at the nursery, and explained that the biomass boiler is only half the cost. He is aware that the Green and Clean Working Group is looking at these kinds of issues but no decisions have been made as yet. Cllr Lambert was also concerned about the cost of the lease which is well over a 25% increase. However, he felt that the Council has no other option than to agree the lease.  Jane Biscombe clarified that the biomass boiler is the main boiler for the nursery and the gas boiler is there as a back up only. There is now only one gas boiler at the nursery, which is a new boiler and more efficient than the previous one.  Cllr Legg was absent from the Council Chamber during the voting process.  Proposer: Cllr Tewkesbury Seconder: Cllr Wheller  Councillors agreed by a majority of 24 in favour, with 1 abstention, to agree to the official sealing of the lease.  **Information Items**  **Cancellation of Services Committee scheduled to be held on 22January 2020**  Jane Biscombe informed Councillors that only “information items” have been received for the Services Committee scheduled to be held on Wednesday 22 January and it has therefore been decided, with the agreement of the Chairman of the Services Committee, that this meeting will be cancelled. If Councillors have any items that they would have raised at the meeting, they should contact the Chairman of the Services Committee, Cllr Northam, Jane Biscombe or Matt Ryan. The WTC website will be amended accordingly, and communications will be sent out publicising the cancellation.  Councillors noted other information items.  The meeting concluded at 9.19 pm. |