



## UTTOXETER TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2021 IN THE ALAN DEAN SUITE, UTTOXETER TOWN HALL COMMENCING AT 7.00PM AND THERE WERE PRESENT:

#### Chair and Town Mayor – Councillor C Sylvester

Councillors: M Crutchley, D Goodfellow, R Hawkins, H Headech (Vice-Chair and Deputy Mayor), K Hudson, P Hudson, Z Krupski, N Lowe, L Sylvester, M A Trenery.  
Officer in attendance – T Jeffery, Town Clerk/RFO

It was noted that there were no Members of the Public or Press in attendance.

#### 1. CHAIR'S WELCOME

The Chair provided a brief on the provisions of the Filming of Meetings as in accordance with "The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014" and he briefed Councillors on the emergency exits from the Alan Dean Suite to the fire point located outside Wilkos in the event of a fire.

#### 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(a) The Clerk reported that approved apologies had been received from Councillor T Crutchley, P Lancaster, K Smith and M Williams. It was noted that Borough Councillor McGarry had issued her apologies.

RESOLVED that the same be noted and approved for Town Councillor apologies.

(b) The Clerk reported the names of Councillors absent from the meeting and their apologies had not been received: Councillor M Lloyd-Ewer.

RESOLVED that the same be noted.

#### 3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In accordance with Standing Order 3(e-h), the meeting be adjourned for up to 15 minutes to allow for public participation where members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they were entitled to attend in respect of the business on the Agenda.

It was noted that no members of the public were in attendance.

#### 4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declaration of any disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed at the meeting, and which was not included in the register of interests. Members were reminded that they were required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they had a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest was entered in the register of members' interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

Councillor Krupski reported that he had a non-pecuniary interest in Item No. 11(c).

#### 5. DISPENSATION PROCEDURE

To consider and approve dispensation requests as in accordance with Standing Order 13(d), that all Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Clerk as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the Dispensation was required. Council would decide whether to grant the dispensation at the relevant meeting. Unless Council grant the relevant delegated power to Committee, it was Council that decided whether to grant the dispensation.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

The Clerk reminded Members that Council Resolved at its meeting held on 11 June 2019 that *'Council authorised a general dispensation to be granted to all serving Members of Uttoxeter Town Council under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011, for the setting of the Annual Precept and the dispensation to be in operation until May 2023.'*

RESOLVED that the same be noted.

6. **ELKES BISCUITS**

Councillor Krupski requested that this matter be included within the Agenda and he requested Council gave consideration to what steps the Council could take to safeguard jobs at the Elkes biscuit factory. Councillor Krupski reported that Elkes Biscuit Business was currently going through a consultation process with its 500 plus employees and asked what Council could do to prevent its closure and what the Council could do to support the employees at this time. Council's instruction was sought.

It was noted that Members sympathised with all those individuals affected by the potential closure of the business within the Town. The Mayor reported that Kate Griffiths MP, ESBC and SCC were in the process of organising job fairs. The Mayor suggested that the Town Hall be offered for use for a job fair to be held within the Town. Members concurred with the suggestion for a jobs fair to be held locally within the Town Hall to provide assistance in introducing prospective employers to those who may be losing their jobs, provide support and assistance for applying for jobs, interviews and writing CV's and if need be, assistance with applying for benefits . It was noted that such a fair should be held in February/March 2022 as this would be after the consultation results had been announced and we would be aware of any potential purchaser of the business.

Councillor Lowe reported that he had been contacted by a Member of the Bowls Club to express their concerns that the Club who currently used the facilities at Elkes had been advised to approach the Bowls Club located at Bramshall Park to join/use their facilities. He reported that concerns had been raised that there was insufficient facilities within the Town for an additional 60 new members to join the Bramshall Park Club.

Following considerable debate, it was

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The Town Council take steps to support employees to find new jobs and offers the Town Hall for a job fair to be held locally.
- (ii) The Clerk write to the Owner of Elkes Biscuits to express Council's dismay that this proud brand and business has been in Uttoxeter for over 100 years and may close resulting in the loss of 500 jobs and Council urges you to increase your focus and efforts in finding a suitable new owner. Alternatively, to consider rationalising the business to make it more cost effective and profitable to either retain or to sell on.
- (iii) The Clerk write to the Leader of ESBC and the Leader of SCC and relevant Organisations (locally and nationally) to:
  - Ascertain what further action they have taken or are considering taking to preserve this much needed employment in Uttoxeter;
  - To ascertain, if the results of the consultation that is currently taking place is for the closure of the business and the loss of 500 jobs, what further action are they intending to take to find these individuals alternative employment and provide them with the appropriate support and assistance in finding gainful employment.
  - Advise that the Town Council wishes to work with ESBC and SCC and other Organisations to offer the use of the Town Hall for a jobs fair to assist the Elkes employees seek alternative employment.

It was noted that Councillors D Goodfellow, K Hudson and P Hudson abstained from the above mentioned votes.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

7. **COUNCIL IN PRIVATE – PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**  
Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act it was requested that the public and press were not present due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and were asked to withdraw.

RESOLVED that the same be accepted and approved.

8. **ESBC PRECEPT REQUIREMENT AND SUPPORT TAX GRANT FOR 2022-23**  
(a) Precept Requirement – The Clerk reported receipt of an email dated 24 November 2021 from ESBC’s Principal Accountant advising Council that the Support Tax Grant would remain as last year in the sum of £23,695 and that ESBC required the Council to advise them of the Precept Requirement for 2022-23 by Friday, 14 January 2022.

Council was advised that the Support Tax amount as recorded above had been incorporated within the Draft Estimates accordingly.

RESOLVED that the same be noted.

- (b) Tax base – Council was advised that at the time the Agenda was issued ESBC were yet to confirm the Tax base for 2022-23. Council was advised that the Clerk was hopeful to receive this information prior to the meeting. The Mayor and the Clerk reported no update on the Tax base had been received from ESBC and therefore they were unable to provide Members with an update on the proposed Parish Rate based on the Draft Estimates at this time.

RESOLVED that the same be noted.

9. **DRAFT BURIAL FEES 2022-23**  
Council gave consideration to the Draft Burial Fees for Uttoxeter Cemetery for 2022-23 which had been increased by 3% as requested by Council at its meeting held on 24 November 2020. Members were issued with the current Burial fees for their information. Council’s instruction was sought.

Council was informed that the above-mentioned Draft Burial Fees formed part of the Draft Estimates/Precept which would be submitted for consideration by Council at its meeting scheduled to take place on 11 January 2022.

RESOLVED that the draft Burial Fees for Uttoxeter Cemetery for the financial year 2022-23, as prepared by the Town Clerk/RFO and the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, duly increased by 3%, be accepted and submitted to the Council Meeting scheduled to take place on 11 January 2022 for approval.

10. **DRAFT TOWN HALL HIRE CHARGES 2022-23**  
Council gave consideration to the draft Town Hall Hire Charges for 2022-23 which had been increased by 5%. Members were issued with the current Town Hall Hire Charges for their information.

Council was reminded that following advice from Council’s Internal Auditor, from 1 April 2017, Town Hall bookings charges and the indoor markets rents were subject to VAT.

Council was informed that the above-mentioned Draft Town Hall Charges formed part of the Draft Estimates/Precept which would be submitted for consideration by Council at its meeting scheduled to take place on 11 January 2022.

Councillor Trenery sought clarity on the review of packages for hire of the Town Hall. The Mayor reported that he and the Office Manager were looking at including packages for hire of the Town Hall in readiness for future use.

RESOLVED that the draft Town Hall Hire Charges for the financial year 2022-23, as prepared by the Town Clerk/RFO and the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, duly increased by 5%, be accepted and submitted to the Council Meeting scheduled to take place on 11 January 2022 for approval.

**11. PROJECTS FOR INCLUSION WITHIN THE ESTIMATES/PRECEPT 2022-23**

*As Resolved by Council at its meeting held on 14 September 2021, that Members provide the Clerk/RFO with a specific projects/funding to be included within the Draft Estimates for 2022-23 by no later than 30 September 2021.*

The Clerk reported receipt of the following had been included within the Draft Estimates for 2022-23 as requested by Members:

- (a) An increase of £500 to £3,000 for Biodiversity Initiative Grants which had been included within the S137 Sundry Grant budget allocation rather than a separate allocation of £2,500 as currently as requested by Councillor M Williams.

The Clerk provided Council with an update in Councillor William's absence and reported that the movement of this allocation would permit members of the public and local groups/organisations to submit a S137 Sundry Grant form for Biodiversity and Climate Change Initiative Grants subject to an amendment to the Council's Sundry Grant form. It was noted that the current form precluded Biodiversity and Climate Change initiatives. The Clerk provided Council with an update on the current S137 Sundry Grant form inclusions.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The same be noted and approved.
  - (ii) The Clerk amend the Council's S137 Sundry Grant Form to include Biodiversity and Climate Change Initiatives.
- (b) An additional £2,000 be included for Uttoxeter in Bloom as requested by Councillor M Williams. The Clerk provided Council with an update in Councillor William's absence that the increase request was due to the decrease being made by the Bloom Grant as issued by ESBC as previously advised to Council and as in accordance with the planned budget for 2022-23 as agreed by the Bloom Committee. The Clerk provided Council with a brief explanation on the budget reduction from ESBC as part of the In Bloom Federation.

RESOLVED that the same be noted and approved.

It was noted that Councillor Goodfellow abstained from the above mentioned vote.

- (c) Roof Replacement Works for 32, 34-36 Carter Street – The Mayor reported that the budget allocation of £8,500 under 4310/120 for 32 Carter Street and £8,500 under 4365/301 Redfern Cottage was in addition to the current EMR of £24,000.

Council was advised that its Architect had confirmed on 24 November 2021 that the Council should budget for up to £60,000 for the replacement roof works which included Architect fees. Council was asked to give consideration to the balance of up to £19k being funded by the Council's current General Free Funds. Council's instruction was sought.

Councillor Goodfellow sought clarity on the requirement of the ventilation works to the cellar and the roof replacement of 32, 34-36 Carter Street and sought clarity on the works being funded from the Council's Reserves.

The Mayor and the Clerk reported that as further considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee at its meeting held on 23 November 2021, whose Recommendations were subject to ratification by Council on 14 December 2021, that following a site meeting with F&GP Committee Members and Council's Architect on 18 November 2021, both sets of works were required to be carried out as soon as possible to reduce further deterioration within the respective buildings.

The Mayor and the Clerk reported that as discussed at length with Council's Internal Auditor, Council could fund the balance of up to £10,000 for the cellar ventilation works, the balance of the roof works and the potential purchase of the Cemetery extension from its current General Free Funds however, this would be subject to Council not incorporating any additional EMR at the end of the current fiscal year.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

The Mayor and the Clerk reminded Council of the legal requirement for the Council to retain sufficient Reserves which was a minimum of a quarters expenditure. The Clerk reminded Council that she had a duty as RFO to include any expenditure that she was aware of within the Estimates. Following due debate, it was

RESOLVED that the same be noted and approved.

It was noted that Councillor Goodfellow voted against the above mentioned proposition.

- (d) The purchase of 4 no. additional SIDS Signs. It was noted that the Draft Estimates included 50% funding of two further pairs of SIDS Signs as requested by Councillor P Hudson.

Councillor P Hudson reported that he had allocated an additional £1,500 towards a further pair of SIDS this fiscal year and therefore the requirement to be included within the Estimates was for one additional pair. He reported that the two signs from this fiscal year would be located on Highwood Road and Kingfisher Way. He reported that the set to be included within the Estimates would be the second set for each of these locations with 50% of costs being funded by his County Councillor budget.

Councillor Treney objected to the costs of the SIDS being included within the Draft Estimates/Precept given it was not a Parish Council's responsibility to provide SIDS, which should be provided by the Police and the Highways Authority. She sought clarity on the accident data being used for the locations where the SIDS were being installed.

Councillor P Hudson reported that as requested by the residents of the Town, the Council had progressed with the Community Speedwatch Team and reviewed the traffic calming measures for the Town. He reported that the locations had been selected in conjunction with the local Police and the Community Speedwatch Team and that these two pairs would be the final ones to be purchased as all major entrances into the Town would be covered. Councillor P Hudson reported that the Permit to Dig and Section 50 were already in place for the additional signs along with the ground sockets. The costs would be for the purchase and installation only.

Councillor Goodfellow requested that Council consider funding the SIDS from its General Free Funds rather than including the monies within the Draft Estimates/Precept. The Mayor reiterated the advice received from Council's Internal Auditor with respect to allocation for funding from the General Free Funds as reported earlier within the meeting. Councillor Goodfellow suggested that Council should reconsider its current allocated Earmarked Reserves. The Clerk/RFO reported that clarification would need to be sought as some of the monies had already been allocated by Committees/Council and were awaiting progression of the project/invoices and some Earmarked Reserves were for Capital Expenditure only.

Councillor P Hudson reported that he would be attending a meeting with the County Council's Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to discuss potential grant funds towards the additional SIDS. Following lengthy debate, it was

RESOLVED that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, the Chair of the F&GP Committee and the Clerk/RFO review potential grant allocations/costs for the purchase of a pair of SIDS being funded this fiscal year and amend the sums included within the Draft Estimates/Precept accordingly, in readiness for further review by Council at its meeting on 11 January 2022.

It was noted that Councillor Treney voted against the above mentioned proposition.

**12. ESTIMATES AND PRECEPT 2022-23**

*As Resolved by Council on 14 September 2021 that the Clerk:*

- (i) *Convene an Extraordinary Council Meeting, in private, to enable Council to consider the Draft Estimates for 2022-23 (date to be determined).*

Signed: ..... Date: .....

- (ii) *Liaise with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee to ascertain as suitable date and provide members with an update on the date of the meeting accordingly.*

Council gave consideration to the Draft Estimates and supporting budget notes for 2022-23 as prepared and submitted by the RFO/Town Clerk, the Chair and Vice-Chair of Finance and General Purposes and the Deputy Mayor. Members perused the individual budget headings included under each cost centre.

Council was informed that the Draft Estimates/Precept would be included for consideration by Council at its meeting scheduled to take place on 11 January 2022.

Councillor Trenerly requested that, following a meeting of the Town Centre Forum Sub-Committee on 29 November 2021, sufficient funds be included within the Website budget allocation to cover the initial costs for the production/design of a Tourism Website which would benefit the residents, visitors and local businesses within the Town. It was noted that the funds would be for the initial set up only as local sponsors would be sought/advertising space be offered to enable the site to be eventually self-funding. The Clerk reported that costs were awaited from MidMC's Website Designer at this time.

Councillor Goodfellow was in support of the website and he requested that the Council consider funding the costs for the initial production/design from the Council's Reserves. Councillor Lowe spoke in favour of Councillor Trenerly's request to include £1,000 within the Draft Estimates/Precept for the Tourism Website and reported that the site would have a positive impact on the Town and would benefit hospitality, retailers, etc within the Town.

The Mayor and the Clerk/RFO provided Council with a brief update on queries raised by Members of the following inclusions:

- Staff Salaries under Admin and Town Hall allocations
- Cycle Racks Earmarked Reserve
- SID Sign inclusions
- Tourism website budget allocation
- Bank Charges
- Clarity on Civic Expenditure
- Market Associated costs
- Potential increase in bookings for the Town Hall and Alan Dean Suite
- Town Hall Gas/Electricity
- Roof works (as considered under Item No. 11(c))
- SID Signs (as considered under Item No. 11(d))

Councillor Goodfellow proposed to reduce the sum included within the Bank Charges from £1364 to £762. Councillor C Sylvester seconded the proposition. The vote being 2 votes in Favour; 7 votes Against and 2 Abstentions. The proposition was lost.

Councillor Krupski proposed that the sum included within the Draft Estimates for bank charges remain as is. Councillor M Crutchley seconded the proposition. The vote being 7 votes in Favour; 2 votes Against and 2 Abstentions. The proposition was carried.

The Clerk reported that the sum of £692 as included in the Actual Year to Date figures was for up to and including 30 September 2021. It was noted a further six months charges were to be received.

Council was informed that the Draft Estimates/Precept would be included for consideration by Council at its meeting scheduled to take place on 11 January 2022.

The Mayor and the Clerk provided Members with a brief update on the potential Tax base for 2022/23. They reminded Members that the Parish Rate for Uttoxeter for 2021/22 was 61.96, a reduction of 6.01 on the previous year.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The Clerk/RFO liaise with MidMC to seek initial costs for the production/design of the Tourism Website and incorporate up to £1,000 within the Website budget allocation for the provision of the start of the production and design of a Tourism Website within the Draft Estimates/Precept for consideration by Council at its meeting on 11 January 2022.
- (ii) The Finance and General Purposes Committee further review the bank charges and Council's bank accounts accordingly.
- (iii) The sum included within the current Estimates for the Bank Charges remain as is.
- (iv) The Markets Committee give further consideration to the promotion of the Wednesday outdoor market and its associated costs.
- (v) The Mayor, Chair of F&GP and the Clerk/RFO reconsider the costs as included within the Town Hall Gas/Electricity with a view of a potential increase in the budget allocation.
- (vi) The Draft Estimates as reviewed and subject to (i)-(v) as above, be included for further consideration by Council at its meeting scheduled to take place on 11 January 2022.

It was noted that Councillor Goodfellow abstained from the above mentioned vote for (vi).

It was noted that the above mentioned were in addition to Resolutions under Item Nos. 11(a)-(d).

13. **EARMARKED RESERVES**

For Members information, Members were issued with a detailed breakdown of the Council's current Earmarked Reserves as at 30 September 2021.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The same be noted.
- (ii) The Clerk liaise with Council's Internal Auditor to seek clarification on the Council reviewing its current Earmarked Reserves.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.