



REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF BUNTINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL, HELD REMOTELY VIA ZOOM ON 8TH OCTOBER 2020 AT 7.00PM.

Membership: G. Bonner, J. Ling, Mrs S. Coote, Mrs P. Furness, G. Waite (Town Mayor) & S. Bowman (Deputy Town Mayor)

Present: G. Bonner, G. Waite, J. Ling, Mrs P. Furness & S. Bowman

Officer in attendance: J. Jones (Town Clerk) & A. Georgiou (Admin Officer).

Councillor Waite reported that sadly, he had this morning, received the resignation of Councillor John Noades. As Councillor Noades had been the Chairman of this Committee, the Deputy Chairman of the Committee, Councillor Ling, would oversee the voting of a new Committee Chairman.

89. TO APPOINT A CHAIRMAN OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE COUNCIL YEAR.

Following a proposal, second, no other nominations and a unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

That Councillor Ling be appointed Chairman of the Resources Committee for the remainder of the Council year.

90. TO APPOINT A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE COUNCIL YEAR.

Following a proposal, second, no other nominations and a unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

That Councillor Mrs Furness be appointed deputy Chairman of the resources Committee for the remainder of the Council year.

91. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCES

No Apologies received.

92. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NOTICE OF ANY DISPENSATIONS GRANTED.

None

93. TO RECEIVE A REPORT AND UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN (INFORMATION ONLY).

The Chairman stated that following the resignation of Councillor Noades, he was pleased to accept the Chairmanship of the Committee with Councillor Mrs Furness as Deputy Chairman of the Committee.

94. TO RECEIVE AND AUTHORISE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 12TH MARCH 2020.

Following a proposal, second and unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

That the minutes are a true record and the Chairman was authorised to sign them.

95. TO DISCUSS ANY ISSUES RELATING TO HIGHWAYS INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF SUPPORT FOR THE 20'S PLENTY CAMPAIGN AS REFERRED FROM COUNCIL FOR RECOMMENDATION BACK TO COUNCIL.

Councillor Waite stated that his response would be that the Town Council supports the campaign in principle providing proposals are in line with the Hertfordshire Speed Management Strategy.

The Chairman stated that we have to be flexible, decisions on speed are made on various criteria, road widths etc. A blanket approach may not be appropriate

Councillor Bonner stated that we should suggest to Highways that any decisions on 20mph in Buntingford should be discussed with the Town Council.

The Chairman stated that we have to get the County Council to recognise its responsibilities to its settlements. The Phoenix project is based on variable speed limits, left to the driver to be careful.

Councillor Mrs Furness referred to the speed indicator devices and their effectiveness. The Clerk responded that Highways are reluctant to install further SIDs as too many make them less effective.

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

RECOMMENDED

That the Town Council's response to the request from the 20's Plenty campaign group is: The Town Council supports the initiative in principle providing proposals are in line with Herts County Council's Speed management Strategy.

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

That the Town Council does not contact Herts Highways regarding speed in the town for three months.

Councillor Bowman referred to the flooding outside of the Co-op, the Clerk agreed to ask for an update from the County Councillor.

The Chairman stated that there is a similar problem all over the County with flooding.

Councillor Waite stated that when the new zebra crossing was installed, there was no drainage, so water collects on both sides of the crossing. The accesses from Station Road to the RC Church and the Benson Hall are continuing to be seriously affected by the flooding.

Councillor Mrs Furness stated that she knew that Father Cyril had been speaking with Highways Engineers and agreed to follow up on this.

96. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE PHOENIX PROJECT GROUP.

The Chairman reported that there has not been a meeting of the PPG in recent months. Some of you may know that there was a move from Government to support projects, one of which supported Hertfordshire and could have enabled funds to the Phoenix Project. The Chairman and the County Councillor spent many hours working on a submission only to be told that they had been misinformed of the deadline which had already passed.

The Chairman referred to a report commissioned by the County Council which supported the Phoenix Project, published in June 2020, he urged Members to read the PPG section and decide where the Phoenix project is going. We need to remind the County Council not to implement things that detract from the Phoenix project. The Chairman agreed to send the report round to Members.

97. TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS RELATING TO THE MANOR HOUSE

Orbital Travel

The Clerk explained that the travel industry has been hit hard by the Coronavirus pandemic with virtually no business coming in since March. Orbital Travel have asked if the rent can be waived on their offices until March 2021, when they are hopeful that business will improve.

The Committee acknowledged that Orbital Travel is a long-standing tenant and in view of this and following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

That the office rental for Orbital Travel is waived until March 2021.

Regency House Publishing

The Clerk reported that Regency House Publishing had suffered a break in in September when they had lost their computer equipment. The window is currently boarded up awaiting the insurance company agents to authorise repairs. The tenant is not prepared to move new

equipment into the office until the room is fully secured and has asked for the rent to be waived until they are able to move back in.

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

The office rental on Regency House Publishing offices is waived until the offices are secured.

New leases

The Committee noted that whilst a 3% increase is normally built in to renewed leases, in view of the current situation, rental sums on new leases should be maintained with no increase for at least until the end of the current financial year.

Following a proposal, second and a vote of 4 in favour and 1 abstention it was

RESOLVED

That renewed leases will hold current rates of rent until the end of the current financial year.

98. TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS RELATING TO THE SETH WARD COMMUNITY CENTRE INCLUDING REQUEST FROM BRAMBLE HILL FAMILY CENTRE FOR CONTINUATION AND INCREASE OF FREE USE OF THE CENTRE.

Alex explained that the Committee had previously agreed to Bramble Hill having free use of the centre for two days a month for 4 hours on each of the days, this had been agreed for a 6 month period, the 6 months has lapsed but Bramble Hill have not resumed these sessions. In addition to this, normally Bramble Hill use the centre on a Friday for which they pay £10.50 per hour. Bramble Hill has requested to have the Friday session free to hold baby weighing drop in sessions. This was previously done at the Health Centre who can no longer accommodate them.

It was agreed to negotiate separately should they request an extension to the 6 month agreement.

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

That Bramble Hill may use the centre on a Friday as requested free of charge until the end of March 2021, this is subject to receipt of their COVID Risk Assessment.

99. TO CONSIDER ANY GRANT REQUESTS RECEIVED

The grant request from Friends of the Rib and Quinn has been referred to the Civic Society for consideration.

100. PLASTIC FREE BUNTINGFORD

The Chairman reported that, due the Corona Virus Lockdown the Town's Annual Meeting was cancelled and therefore there was no Plastic-Free presentation as expected. There has been no activity since March.

Councillor Mrs Furness referred to something she'd seen on TV regarding plastic free red noses and a competition for children.

The Chairman stated he would take this up with the group.

101. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE TWINNING ASSOCIATION

The Chairman reported that there is little being planned due to the COVID crisis. There were to have been visits both ways this year and next with Ólvega and Luyne, but these have been put on hold.

102. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM A TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE ON THE RELIEF IN NEED CHARITY.

Councillor Bonner reported that the late Mrs Eunice Woods' estate has now been settled. Ex Councillor Mrs Woods left a legacy to be put in Trust to help the entry to Further and Higher Education and to Apprenticeships for those Buntingford young people who need financial assistance to do so. The Charity will administer this. The amount left was substantial. The Charity is currently in discussion with Freman College on how this could work, it's a wonderful gesture and it's hoped that many children will benefit. Mrs Woods wished for a large percentage to go towards higher education.

Meeting closed at 8.40pm

Next meeting: Thursday 12th November 2020 at 7.00pm