

# Costessey Town Council

**Minutes of the Meeting of Costessey Town Council held at the Costessey Centre, Longwater Lane, Costessey, NR8 5AH on Tuesday 14 December 2021 at 7.30pm**

**Present:** Cllrs D Burrill (Chair), G Blundell (Vice Chair), J Amis, M Bedford, G Dole, L Gibbs-Kneller, L Glover, S Hannant, T Laidlaw, J McCloskey, J Newby, P O'Connor, J Sealey & S Sizeland; H Elias (Town Clerk) & L Trabucco (Minutes Secretary). One member of the public.

**396/21:** The Chairman opened the meeting explaining the importance of wearing a mask while in the meeting room, and advised that it would be a preferred option going forward in line with the latest Government guidelines, except for anyone who was exempt for medical reasons. He reminded Councillors that live commentary on the meeting during the meeting, including on social media, was prohibited. He also informed Councillors that, as the agenda was quite substantial, the aim was to move through the items swiftly to finish the meeting at 9pm unless proposed otherwise

## **TO APPROVE APOLOGIES**

**397/21:** No apologies were received from Cllr Alam

**RESOLVED** to approve Apologies from Cllrs K Deane (illness), T East (illness), G Jones & S Jones (other commitments) and CCllr S Blundell (unwell).

## **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (pecuniary, non-pecuniary & sensitive)**

**398/21:** None

## **TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT 7PM ON 9 NOVEMBER 2021**

**399/21: Min 390/21:** Typo on page 3000 Heading should read "District and County Councillors' Reports" not "Councilors"

**RESOLVED** to approve the minutes with the above amendment

## **TO RECEIVE COMMITTEE AND WG MINUTES & NOTES AND TO CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN:**

**400/21:** The Chairman informed all Cllrs that in order to keep to the cut-off point of 9pm he would sign the committee minutes "as received" after the meeting had ended. The Clerk informed Councillors that the P&E minutes had missed the bundle, but that the P&E recommendation could be voted on as it was listed on the agenda; the *Notes from a meeting concerning updated plans for the delivery of the "safe" cycleway and path across the A47 Longwater Bridge on 29/11/21* were confidential minutes from a meeting the Clerk had attended as a guest so could not be included in the bundle. **ACTION: Chairman / Town Clerk**

## **TO RECEIVE UPDATES ON MATTERS IN MINUTES NOT LISTED BELOW (NB: No resolutions may be passed)**

**401/21: Min: 384/21: Purchase the sound system for Jerningham Room from Cloudy IT:** The sound system had been ordered and was due to be installed in February 2022.

**Min 394/21 Consider preliminary issues with the transfer of QH play areas from SNC:** SNC had been contacted to arrange a site visit, but no further response had been received. **ACTION: Town Clerk**

## **TO ADJOURN THE MEETING FOR 15 MINUTES' PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**402/21:** A member of the public was present via Zoom, but no items were raised

## **TO CONSIDER FINANCE MATTERS (see also Finance Committee Minutes)**

**403/21: a) To approve the accounts for September 2021 & receive a budget report: (Min: F188/21):** The Chairman stated that the accounts were in order. A comment was made regarding the *stationery and printing* as more meetings scheduled meant more photocopying, printing supporting documents and papers; it was suggested that the Council should take a more environment friendly way of cutting down carbon emission, sharing the same information using electronic means where possible. **ACTION: Town Clerk / Deputy Clerk**

**RESOLVED** to approve the accounts for September 2021 in the balance of £851,301.79

**404/21: b) To consider the preliminary budget figures for 2022/23 (Final precept demand to be agreed in January 2022):** The Chairman explained the possibility of the January 2022 meeting not going ahead, due to new Covid-19 restrictions from the Government, and therefore that it was possible to vote at this meeting to set the precept. A brief explanation was given of the proposed budget figures and assumptions. Unusually at this time the new tax base had been received and figures proposed were based on a 5% increase. It had become clear that the economic situation had changed, and that inflation was on the rise. Current predictions are the Bank interest rate could rise by 3.5% and that inflation itself might reach 4.5%. On current figures it looked as though CTC might end the year with an underspend, though obviously things could change. This is mainly due to the fact that extra staff needed to be hired for Queen's Hill play areas when they were transferred to CTC plus a second additional cleaner, and that Breckland Hall cleaning was still being outsourced rather than being brought back in-house. Salaries in 2022/23 had been calculated with a possible 3% rise both this year and next, and had been hit by the Chancellor's announcements of new NIC rates to 15.05%, with the Norfolk Pension Employer contribution rising another 0.5% to 24%. The figures in the Omega accounts print-out showed the Precept as £702,795 corresponding to 5% rise in Band D rate to £126.95 with a (deficit) of £16,236. A Balanced Budget would result in a Band D rise to £129.86 with a Precept of £718,896.

IF CTC had raised the 2007 Band D rate (£92.95) every year in line with inflation accordingly to the Bank of England CPI tracker, then Band D rate would now stand at £137.61.

**PROPOSAL to set the precept of £718,896 - a 5% rise and run a deficit budget.**

**AMENDMENT was made to run a balanced budget with a correspondingly larger increase in Band D rate**

**RESOLVED to run a balanced budget; Town Clerk to recalculate the figures. ACTION: Town Clerk**

**405/21: c) To increase the Senior Pitch Hire fees to £600 and Veterans to £300 (Min: F181/21):** A brief explanation was given and it was mentioned that the fees had not increased in the last three seasons (2018/19 when a 10% increase was approved), therefore CTC were now considering an increase for season 2022/23. The use of the changing rooms and running costs and staff wages were taken into account, together with the overall costs of wear & tear and maintenance.

**RESOLVED to increase the Senior Pitch Hire fees to £600 and Veterans to £300. ACTION: Deputy Clerk**

**406/21: d) To raise the Youth and Ladies pitch hire fees by RPI rounded up to the nearest pound (Min: F182/21):**

**RESOLVED to raise the Youth and Ladies pitch hire fees by RPI (November) rounded up to the nearest pound. ACTION: Deputy Clerk**

**407/21: e) To increase the football tournament fees by 10% (from £110 to £121 per day) (Min F183/21):** The tournament is a two- day event and a suggestion was made to increase the fee to £200.00 per day to recuperate the costs for using changing rooms and running costs, staff wages and wear and tear on the pitches. After much discussion it was agreed to provide the fields at no cost just for the 2 two- day tournament in June 2023.

**RESOLVED to provide the fields and hall for the two-day football tournament for June 2023 at no cost. ACTION: Deputy Clerk**

**408/21: f) To increase the Hall Hires Fees by RPI across all fees and types of hire from 1 April 2022 (Min: F190/21):** An explanation was given and it was agreed to increase the hall hires fees by RPI across all fees and types of hire from 1 April 2022

**RESOLVED to increase the Hall Hires Fees by RPI (November) across all fees and types of hire from 1 April 2022. ACTION: Deputy Clerk**

**409/21: g) To end the £100 Saturday night offer on 31 March 2022 apart from any pre-booked events beyond this date (Min: F191/21):** A brief explanation was given and after much discussion it was agreed to end the £100 Saturday night offer on 31 March 2022 apart from any pre-booked events beyond this date

**RESOLVED to end the £100 Saturday night offer on 31 March 2022 apart from any pre-booked events beyond this date. ACTION: Deputy Clerk**

**410/21: h) To agree that Bank Holiday bookings should not be made available except for New Year's Eve parties and the Fete (Min: F192/21):** An explanation was given and a suggestion was made to amend the wording of the recommendation so that Bank Holiday bookings should not be taken except for charitable purposes for Queen's Hills and Breckland and for New Year's Eve parties and the Fete **RESOLVED that Bank Holiday bookings should not be made except for charitable purposes for QHCC and Breckland Hall, and for New Year's Eve parties and the Fete. ACTION: Deputy Clerk**

**411/21: i) To purchase new curtains for the Dinneen Hall at Queen's Hills Community Centre with JHD Interiors Limited at £5,276.67 plus VAT using stellar marine colour (Min: PE108/21):**

**RESOLVED to purchase new curtains for the Dinneen Hall at Queen's Hills Community Centre with JHD Interiors Limited at £5,276.67 plus VAT in "stellar marine" colour. ACTION: Building Manager**

**412/21: RESOLVED to continue the meeting beyond 9pm until 9.30pm**

**413/21: Cllrs L Gibbs-Kneller and L Glover left the meeting at 9pm**

**TO APPROVE THE SETTING-UP OF A CTC YOUTUBE ACCOUNT FOR LIVE STREAMING MEETINGS WITH COMMENTS FROM SUBSCRIBERS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE (Min: CO17/21)**

**414/21:** Some examples were given where comments from YouTube subscribers gave ratings on specific live streaming, and therefore this was a way of communicating with the community. It was suggested that "comments" could be made available for three months as a trial period with the option of turning it off.

**RESOLVED to approve the setting-up of a CTC YouTube account for live streaming meetings, with comments from subscribers to be made available for three months as a trial period with the option of turning it off. ACTION: Deputy Clerk**

**TO CONSIDER INVESTIGATING THE NEED AND FEASIBILITY INVOLVED IN THE PROVISION OF A POST OFFICE IN QUEEN'S HILLS**

**415/21:** A resident had suggested the provision of a post office at Queen's Hills because this service was not available. It was suggested that the need and feasibility involved in the provision of a Post Office should be investigated

**RESOLVED to consider investigating the need and feasibility for the provision of a post office in Queen's Hills. ACTION: Town Clerk**

**TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF THE FETE 2022**

**416/21: a) To change the Fete WG to a Fete & Events Committee:** Cllr G Blundell gave a brief background and examples, suggesting changing the Fete WG to a "Fete & Events Committee" to discuss all community events going forward, as the Fete WG had no delegated powers and could only discuss the Fete. This would require a restructure of meetings; the increase in workload for office staff should be considered as agendas and minutes would have to be published on the CTC website. **A vote was taken**

**For: 5 Against: 5 The Chairman's casting vote was against the proposal  
The proposal was NOT approved**

**417/21: b) To arrange a Christmas event for 2022 with a set budget of £2,500 per Hall (Total £7,500):** Cllr G Blundell gave an update of the recent Christmas switch-on event on Wednesday 1 December 2021 at Queen's Hills and the Costessey Centre, and explained that with a set budget it would allow a professional company to improve Christmas light decorations across all three halls. He considered

it a reasonable cost considering the longevity of lights over a 10-year span. The organisation and planning of a Christmas event would be done well in advance to provide a better turn out for the community. Investigations of costings could be done using several professional companies for comparison.

**PROPOSAL to set up a working group to investigate, with the Buildings Manager and the Deputy Clerk, the feasibility and costings for a Christmas Lights event, based on a maximum budget of £2,500 per hall. ACTION: Cllr G Blundell / Deputy Clerk & Building Manager**

A named vote was requested:

**For: Cllrs M Bedford, G Blundell, J Newby, P O'Connor, S Sizeland (5)**

**Against: Cllrs J Amis, G Dole, S Hannant, T Laidlaw, J McCloskey, J Sealy (6)**

**The proposal was NOT approved**

**418/21: THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS WERE DEFERRED:**

- 11: To receive correspondence
- 12: To receive District & County Councillors' Reports
- 13: To consider the latest current COVID 19 situation and CTC's response
- 14: To confirm the date of the next meeting taking into account Christmas commitments
- 16: \*To receive any confidential updates

**419/21: RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 on the grounds that it was not in the public interest to disclose on the items below due to the discussions relating to contracts and staffing. Live streaming was stopped due to Council entering closed session**

**THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE DISCUSSED IN CONFIDENCE**

**TO RECEIVE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION WITH REGARD TO STAFFING**

**420/21:** The Town Clerk had announced her retirement in late Spring 2022. The Staffing Committee had agreed to engage LCC (Local Council Consulting) for the recruitment process. **ACTION: Town Clerk, Members of the Staffing Committee**

**TO RECEIVE COMMITTEE AND WG MINUTES & NOTES AND TO CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN:**

**421/21:** *a) Minutes of the Staffing Committee of 5 November 2021:* Signed as received

**422/21:** *b) Minutes of the Planning Meeting on 9 November 2021:* Signed as received

**423/21:** *c) Minutes of the Planning Meeting on 23 November 2021:* Signed as received

**424/21:** *d) Minutes of the Finance Committee of 11 November 2021:* Signed as received

**425/21:** *e) Minutes of the Comms WG of 16 November 2021:* Signed as received

**426/21:** *f) Notes from the Budget WG of 19 November 2021:*

**427/21:** *g) Minutes of the Property & Environment Committee of 23 November 2021:* It was noted that the P&E minutes were not included in the bundle but available to be signed & received.

**428/21:** *h) Notes of the Fete WG on 3 December 2021*

**429/21:** *i) Notes from a meeting concerning updated plans for the delivery of the "safe" cycleway and path across the A47 Longwater Bridge on 29/11/21:*

**430/21: The meeting closed at 9:35pm**

**Chair:**

**Date:**