



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DIRECT SERVICES COMMITTEE
OF AYLESBURY TOWN COUNCIL HELD THROUGH THE ZOOM VIDEO
CONFERENCING SYSTEM, WEDNESDAY 20th JANUARY 2021 AT 7.00 p.m.**

Present: Cllr W Raja (Chairman)
Cllr C Adams
Cllr A Huxley
Cllr Mrs S Morgan
Cllr A Morgan

Officers in attendance: Mr K Gray (Town Clerk)
Mr M Broughton (Deputy Town Clerk)

Three members of the public were in attendance.

1. APOLOGIES

To note and agree apologies for absence.

RESOLVED: To accept apologies from Cllr T Hunter-Watts (work commitments).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3. MINUTES

To receive, accept and sign the Minutes of 29th October 2020.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be duly agreed and signed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

To receive any matters arising from the Minutes/report from the Clerk

The Clerk reported that there were no further matters to report.

5. DEVOLVED SERVICES

To receive an update from the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk gave a verbal update and indicated that outside maintenance works had continued during the current Tier 4 lockdown and were now in the winter phase. The Bourg Walk bridge had been salted on several occasions thus far, street signage was being cleaned systematically in both Aylesbury and the surrounding cluster parishes. The flood defences had been deployed to The Willows, most recently last weekend. Cllr Adams asked about the scheme at The Willows, whether it could be rolled out to other areas and the training involved. The Town Clerk responded that The Willows was a historical agreement to provide flood protection equipment at this particular location which the Town Council now managed and aside from staff also involved residents and volunteers. Town Council staff were trained as appropriate.

6. CEMETERY

To receive a verbal report from the Town Clerk on cemetery operations

The Town Clerk outlined that cemetery operations remained on course and there had recently been five well-attended burials and a further tranche of Muslim burial chambers were being procured. A report would be produced in due course detailing existing burial space and would identify any action needed to ensure continuation of burials into the medium- and long-term future, and this report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration. A member asked about progress on the cemetery chapels and the Town Clerk advised that this matter was presently ongoing.

Members noted the Town Clerk's report.

7. ALLOTMENTS

To receive an update on allotment availability.

The report of the Allotments and Devolved Services Officer had been circulated in advance of the meeting which included information on occupancy rates, fees charged, and plot availability per site. Members noted that there were a significant number on the waiting list, across the board. The Town Clerk added that some plots were being used to add value to the community through initiatives such as the food bank and other local community groups. In addition, the issue of site security at Bedgrove was presently under review and a report would be forthcoming to the next meeting of the Committee for formal consideration and decision.

8. JONATHAN PAGE PLAY CENTRE

To receive a verbal update from the Town Clerk on JPPC operations

The JPPC continued to be open and function for the children of key workers and also worked with local schools. The staff had worked tremendously hard to ensure continued operation of the centre.

Members noted the report.

9. TOWN HALL

To receive an update from the Town Clerk concerning Town Hall matters

The Town Clerk advised members that after Aylesbury was placed in Tier 4 lockdown last month, the Town Hall was effectively closed again to facilitate remote working of office-based staff using focussed IT. Only on the odd and unavoidably necessary occasion did staff visit the Town Hall and social distancing was observed in such instances.

A member asked about the problems of calls not going through to the office and the Town Clerk responded that there had been a couple of instances where the new VOIP phones had experienced brief technical blips but these teething issues had been resolved and contingencies had been put in place.

Members noted the position.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the date of the next meeting was provisionally scheduled for Wednesday 17th March 2021 at 7p.m.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.18 p.m.

Chairman _____

Date _____