



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MILDENHALL HIGH TOWN COUNCIL

REMOTELY VIA ZOOM

Thursday 24th September 2020 – 7pm

Present:

Cllr. Alecock	Cllr. Neal
Cllr. Bowman	Cllr. Shipp
Cllr. Bristow	Cllr. Sulman
Cllr. Busuttil	Cllr. Sykes
Cllr. Martin	

Also in attendance: Mr. M Knight (Town Manager), County Councillor L. Busuttil. Sqn Ldr P Graham.

The Mayor opened the meeting and stated that item 47.5 would be discussed immediately after Public Participation due to the nature of the business.

037. APOLOGIES AND ACCEPTANCE FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were accepted from Cllr. Bloodworth, Leaman, Littlechild, Peachey, Power and Roman.

038. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

Cllr. Shipp: West Suffolk District Council.
Cllr. Alecock: West Suffolk District Council.
Cllr. Neal: West Suffolk District Council

039. TO RECEIVE APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE FULL TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD 16th JULY and two meetings on the 30th July 2020 FROM THOSE MEMBERS PRESENT AT THE MEETING

Cllr. Busuttil presented the minutes.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the two sets of minutes from the 30th July as

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

presented with one alteration regarding the order of business and one clarifying the trustees of the Mildenhall Museum. There were continued concerns over the content of the minutes of the 16th July 2020 were not presented before the meeting – the Town Manager reporting a corruption error on the Word document, so it was **AGREED** that these would be presented to the next meeting of the Full Council. Proposed by Cllr. Busuttill and seconded by Cllr. Sulman. All in favour.

040. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

County Councillor L. Busuttill gave a report on a recent trip to Frickenhausen in Germany in his role with the Mildenhall Twinning Association. It was reported that during these uncertain times friendship was a valuable resource and that he had recently visited the town in Germany which was near to Dussenberg and had been described as the Prague of Bavaria. Cllr. Busuttill went on to give a brief history of the town which was bombed on the 15th March 1945 by the RAF using Lancaster bombers from RAF Mildenhall which resulted in the deaths of 5,500 people.

A 'triangle of friendship' has been established between Mildenhall, Luc-Sur-Mer (the French town which is already twinned with Mildenhall) and Frickenhausen and representatives of both had attended the merry Mildenhall events in the past. It was requested that whilst permission was not needed from the Town Council that the Town Manager make an initial civic connection with the civic leadership of Frickenhausen.

047.5 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE MILDENHALL TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Cllr. Bristow echoed the sentiments and report from County Councillor L. Busuttill under item 040 and clarified that whilst support was not essential from the Town Council in this regard the blessing of the Town Council would be a positive gesture from one civic leadership organisation to another.

Cllr. Neal questioned the cost of the additional signage need should this be approved. He also raised concerns that the people of Mildenhall had not had a say yet regarding this process.

Cllr. Bristow replied that the cost would mainly involve small changes to the existing town signs.

Cllr. Bowman clarified that the request was regarding one of civic leadership and as such was a decision for the Town Council.

Cllr. Busuttill added that it was important now that Britain was out of the European Union to forge friendships in this manner.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

It was then **RESOLVED** to authorise the Town Manager to contact the civic leadership of Frickenhausen in Germany with a view of starting twinning between the two towns and making a civic connection. Proposed by Cllr. Bristow, seconded by Cllr Sulman, all in favour.

041a. REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

Cllr. Busuttil reported that she had attended the Battle of Britain 80th anniversary commemoration service which was very humbling. Also reported was the visit last month to Frickenhausen.

042b. REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY MAYOR

Cllr. Shipp had nothing to report.

043. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

County Cllr. L Busuttil reported that he had been involved in the Sunnica Energy Farm development, and the 1,300 home development at the West of Mildenhall this month and invited questions from those present. None were forthcoming.

044. REPORT FROM DESIGNATED DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Cllr. Neal reported one some of the items which he had been involved with this month. These included the Western Way development, the Bury St. Edmunds Hub and the Cornhill Development in Bury which has involved an £84 million development of the post office.

The recent Covid-19 health crisis cost has resulted in a large hole of the District Council's finances which are being covered by reserves, but that a second wave of the virus would be disastrous financially.

Conversations and reports regarding the closure of RAF Mildenhall, which is not going ahead. Has also stopped discussions on the Cambridge Metro, although 500 leaflets were recently dropped into the Mildenhall Co-op shop which invited feedback which was 100% positive.

Cllr. Neal also reported on several groups such as the Football Club, Social Club, Allotment Association and many other groups all benefiting from Locality Budget funding.

In July parking enforcement came into force and in August £69,575 in fines were issued as a result of 11,955 patrols over the district with 160 patrols taking place in Mildenhall resulting in 54 tickets. In August £81,202 worth of fines were issued from 13,180 patrols, of which 285 tickets were issues and 88 fines in Mildenhall.

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Dated:.....

Problems with dog fouling had been encountered and it had been agreed that a more joined up approach was needed over the area and from all levels of local government.

The County Lines project which monitors drug misuse had also resulted in 148 arrests from 289 intelligence reports.

Problems had also been reported regarding the Flagship development which had led to the neglect of residents which sometimes take an unreasonable amount of time to repair.

Cllr. Busuttill asked whether the £69,575 in fines figure from the August parking enforcement report was purely in parking fines or whether this took anything else into account.

Cllr. Neal promised to find out.

045. REPORT FROM RAF MILDENHALL BASE

Squadron Leader Graham reported that business at the base continued under stricter Covid secure measures, with a new announcement regarding a review of remote working.

Col. Freeman would be leaving the base on the 25th September 2020 and his replacement will be in place shortly.

Community engagement has continued in changed circumstances with representatives from the base doing what they can.

September saw the commemoration of the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain, the attacks on 11th September 2001 and the 73rd Anniversary of the formation of the United States Air Force which involved a fly-past and other heritage events including the burning of a piano which is significant.

Problems have also been raised regarding speeding which are being addressed in conjunction with the County Council and an update of the speed survey.

Squadron Leader also reported that he himself would be leaving in Mid-November with his last day being the 13th November 2020. Cllr. Busuttill confirmed he would be in attendance for the next Town Council meeting of the 29th October 2020.

Squadron Leader Graham then left the meeting at 7.42pm.

046. FINANCIAL MATTERS 2020/21

046.1 To receive and note the bank reconciliation up to 31st August 2020

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the figures as presented. Proposed by Cllr. Neal, seconded by Cllr. Bowman, all in favour.

046.2a Approval of Accounts – Payments – 16th July 2020 to 15th September 2020

Cllr. Sulman stated he was happy that the extra Ecology Survey had been completed and queried the boiler leak at the Children’s Center, it was confirmed that this would be recharged.

Cllr. Busuttil queried the high amount regarding problems with the alarms system, the Town Manager reported that this was under investigation but that might have been caused by water leakage in the recent roofing works.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the payments, proposed by Cllr. Bowman, second by Cllr. Sulman, all in favour.

046.2b Approval of Accounts – Receipts – 16th July to 15th September 2020

Cllr. Sulman requested that these receipts should be redacted for GDPR concerns, the Town Manager agreed.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the receipts, proposed by Cllr. Busuttil, second by Cllr. Bristow, all in favour.

046.3 To receive the list of current debtors to the Town Council

The document was received and **NOTED** with no current debtors to the Town Council.

047. GENERAL MATTERS

047.1 Update from Town Manager regarding Action Sheet

The document was presented and **NOTED** with no questions being asked..

047.2 To receive a request for authorisation from the Town Manager regarding the Cemetery Extension Project

The Town Manager reported that the project was now ready to be submitted for planning permission, but that he had now reached the limits of his authority to do so. He formally requested that permission be granted to move forward to the planning stage.

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Dated:.....

It was then **RESOLVED** to authorise the Town Manager to proceed to the planning application stage of the project, and that a meeting of the Cemetery Extension Working Group be called soon. Proposed by Cllr. Bowman, seconded by Cllr. Sulman, all in favour.

047.3 To receive the quarterly LCRS Risk Assessment report

The document was **RECEIVED** and **NOTED**, with no questions being asked. Cllr. Busuttill to sign the documents when safe to do so as Mayor.

047.4 To discuss an approach from West Suffolk Council regarding land management

Cllr. Shipp reported that an approach had been made from West Suffolk Council regarding the use and maintenance of the Mildenhall Swimming Pool, located between Town Council land and Sainsbury's car park. However this approach was not cost neutral and that a £100,000 was being expected as a return for a change in ownership. It was further reported that a full business plan would be needed to secure the building.

Cllr. Sulman stated that he thought that this should be discussed by a Standing Committee in detail.

The Town Manager stated that there was no immediate time scale on this, but that he would follow this up with the representative from the District Council.

Cllr. Shipp reported that the District Council were speaking with other parties regarding this.

Cllr. Martin asked if the land in question was purely for the use of the community. Cllr. Sulman confirmed that the land is freehold and owned by the District Council.

Cllr. Neal raised the issue of the memorial garden which bordered the land.

Cllr. Bowman then proposed that more information be gathered on this subject and for the item to be placed on the November Establishment and Policy Committee. It was so **RESOLVED**, seconded by Cllr. Sulman, all in favour.

048. COMMUNICATIONS AND EVENTS COMMITTEE

048.1 To note the minutes of the meeting held on the 10th September 2020

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

Cllr. Bowman introduced the minutes and reported on the recent change of Chair at the meeting from Cllr. Power to herself. There were no questions and it was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr. Bowman, seconded by Cllr. Busuttill, all in favour.

048.2 To ratify the Terms of Reference for this committee

The document was presented with no questions.

It was then **RESOLVED** to adopt the document. Proposed by Cllr. Bowman, seconded by Cllr. Alecock, all in favour.

048.3 To ratify a decision regarding the Merry Mildenhall Event

Cllr. Bowman stated that at the recent meeting it was decided to recommend to the Full Council to cancel the event for health reasons due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation.

It was then **RESOLVED** to reluctantly cancel the Merry Mildenhall event for 2020. Proposed by Cllr. Bowman, seconded by Cllr. Shipp, all in favour.

Other ideas were then discussed with the possibility of live streaming the switching on of the Christmas Lights and working in partnership with St. Mary's and King's Church.

Cllr. Sulman reported that there would be no Christmas Tree festival this year, but that local groups would be encouraged to contribute a candle or a wreath and all would be welcomed to socially distanced services over the period.

Also, the 800 year celebrations for St. Mary's church would be rescheduled to 2021 with a flower festival in June, a visit from the bishop in September and hopefully a return to the Christmas Tree festival next December.

Cllr. Bristow wondered if the wooden Market Cross could be incorporated into the Christmas decorations.

The Town Manager promised to advertise this cancellation on the Council website and social media.

048.4 To ratify a quote regarding the Christmas Tree

Cllr. Bowman stated that with not much left to celebrate this year that the Christmas Tree could be a focal point for the town.

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Dated:.....

It was then **RESOLVED** to accept the quote for £1,300 for the 23ft Christmas Tree for the town center. Proposed by Cllr. Bowman, seconded by Cllr. Alecock, all in favour.

048.5 To ratify a quote regarding a decorating service

Cllr. Bowman spoke to the matter of the difficulties in decorating the tree in the past and that with no money being spent on Merry Mildenhall this year the time was ideal to think again about these arrangements and how they could be improved. The Town Manager had obtained quotes and Cllr. Busuttil and Bowman had met with representatives of the company who gave a further quote on how these decorations could be expanded to cover more of the town center.

The new quote which involved a three-year arrangement where new lights and icicles would be placed on multiple businesses and the Market Cross in the town center by the company and the complete decoration of the tree.

Cllr. Sulman asked who would need to contact the businesses and stated that there was already £15,000 in reserves for this purpose.

The Town Manager stated that the contacting of the businesses would be an office task.

Cllr. Bowman stated that with £15,000 in reserves a decision would need to be made through the budget setting process whether another budget line would be added for future years, but that the initial cost would come from the Merry Mildenhall budget. The three year deal being a fixed cost.

Cllr. Bristow stated that the town would need cheering up at this time of year and that this would be a good opportunity.

It was then **RESOLVED** to accept the quote from LITE on the three year rental and decorating service. Proposed by Cllr. Bowman, seconded by Cllr. Alecock, all in favour.

048.6 To ratify a quote regarding the Council regalia

Cllr. Sulman raised a point of order regarding financial regulations if the invoice had already been paid.

The Town Manager stated that it had.

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Dated:.....

Cllr. Bowman gave a report on the process of this issue, coming as it did during the lock down period where the Emergency Scheme of Delegation gave authority to the Town Manager to proceed with all resolutions and recommendations from the Full Council, Standing Committees and Working Groups.

A robust discussion then took place regarding the process of this issue with various conduct and process issues being raised, explained and debated.

It was then proposed by Cllr. Bowman to accept the quote regarding the Council Regalia and the badges for past Mayors. Seconded by Cllr. Alecock. With no other proposal being tabled the vote took place with 7 in voting in favour and 2 against.

The motion was carried.

048.7 To ratify the budget proposal for this committee

Cllr. Bowman explained that as this committee was now a formal standing committee it would also have more direct control over it's own budget and that the budget proposal as presented is recommended to the Full Council.

It was then **RESOLVED** to adopt the budget proposal as presented with the addition of the Christmas lights service in the future. Proposed by Cllr. Bowman, seconded by Cllr. Shipp, all in favour.

049. PLANNING COMMITTEE

032.1 To note the minutes of the meetings held on the 11th August and 8th September 2020 and to discuss the request from the Mildenhall Scout Group concerning tree work

There were no questions and it was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meetings and the communication from the Scout Group. Proposed by Cllr. Power, seconded by Cllr. Busuttil, all in favour.

050. AMENITIES AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

050.1 To note the minutes of the meeting held on the 21st September 2020

There were no questions and it was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr. Shipp, seconded by Cllr. Alecock, all in favour.

050.2 To ratify the Terms of Reference for this committee

The document was presented with no questions.

It was then **RESOLVED** to adopt the document. Proposed by Cllr. Sulman, seconded by Cllr. Bristow, all in favour.

050.3 To agree the charges for Council run services for the 2021/2 financial year

It was recommended that all Council fees for services be frozen for the coming financial year with two changes. That returning circus or fair hirers pay £9 more per visit (£250) and that half plots at the Lark Road allotments be reduced to £20.

It was then **RESOLVED** to freeze all fees for services for the coming financial year with the two exceptions, proposed by Cllr. Bristow, seconded by Cllr. Sulman, all in favour.

051. ESTABLISHMENT AND POLICY COMMITTEE

051.1 To note the minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd September 2020

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes with one change to the attendees, with no questions, proposed by Cllr. Sulman, seconded by Cllr. Bowman. All in favour.

051.2 To ratify the Terms of Reference for this committee

The document was presented with no questions.

It was then **RESOLVED** to adopt the document. Proposed by Cllr. Sulman, seconded by Cllr. Bowman, all in favour.

051.3 To ratify the decisions made by the committee concerning the Asset Management Action Plan

The document was presented with no questions. Cllr. Sulman proposed that the recommendations be adopted with one vote. All were in agreement.

It was then **RESOLVED** to adopt the document. Proposed by Cllr. Sulman, seconded by Cllr. Bowman, all in favour.

051.4 To ratify the Accessibility Policy

The policy was presented with no questions.

It was then **RESOLVED** to adopt the policy. Proposed by Cllr. Sulman, seconded by Cllr. Bowman, all in favour.

051.5 To ratify the Full Council Functions

The policy was presented with no questions.

It was then **RESOLVED** to adopt the policy. Proposed by Cllr. Sulman, seconded by Cllr. Bowman, all in favour.

051.6 To ratify the Scheme of Delegation to the Town Manager

The policy was presented with no questions.

It was then **RESOLVED** to adopt the policy. Proposed by Cllr. Sulman, seconded by Cllr. Bowman, all in favour.

051.7 To receive a verbal update from the Town Manager regarding a neighbourhood plan

The Town Manager reported that the concept of producing and adopting a Neighbourhood Plan had been discussed at the Establishment and Policy Committee meeting and that it had been decided that it was necessary to invite a speaker to address the Council at the next Planning Committee.

A speaker from West Suffolk Council had now agreed to attend the next meeting in October and that this meeting would start hopefully at 6.30pm to allow for the meeting proper to begin at 7.30pm.

052. To consider a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the press and public for the duration of the following items in view of the confidential and personal nature of the business to be transacted. If resolved, such items to be dealt with after the item that confirms details of the next meeting.

This was so **RESOLVED**, all in favour.

055. EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

Cllr. Shipp reported that the next Town and Parish Forum would take place on 4th November

2020 between 6 and 8pm.

Cllr. Bowman reported on her attendance at the recent Sunnica Energy Farm meeting on the 21st September 2020, which launched the formal consultation process which would last from 22nd September to the 2nd December 2020. This would be mainly online, with a virtual exhibition, but booklets would also be sent out.

Cllr. Busuttill also reported that booklets would be sent to all homes within one mile of the proposed development.

056. Date of Next Full Council Meeting

This next meeting of the Full Council will be on 29th October 2020 at 7pm, remotely via Zoom.

053. To discuss an update regarding the Mildenhall Messenger

Cllr. Bowman gave a brief history of this project which involved the possibility of the Town Council taking on responsibility for the publication.

It was agreed that the publication was a valuable resource and source of communication for the residents of the town and many ways to improve this, including distribution, were discussed.

Questions were raised over feasibility and the value to the Town Council of the responsibility which were addressed with alternative methods of communication explored.

It was then **RESOLVED** to in principle support the continuation of the Mildenhall Messenger under the banner of the Town Council with help from a commercial partner. The Town Manager to begin negotiations with the commercial partner and bring a final position back to the Full Council for approval. Proposed by Cllr. Shipp, seconded by Cllr. Bowman, 8 in favour and 1 against. The motion was carried.

054. To receive an update regarding planning matters

It was **AGREED** not to discuss this at this time.

The meeting then closed at 9.35pm.