

DEVIZES TOWN COUNCIL
Special Meeting
24th March 2020

Councillors: Carter Corbett Gay
 Giraud-Saunders Godwin Hopkins
 Johnson Pennington

Officers: Simon Fisher –Town Clerk

Members of the Public: None

590. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 12th March 2020, having previously been circulated, were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

591. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rose Evans, Mrs Evans, Burton, Bridewell, Nash, Shaw, Geddes, Parsons, Rowland, Von Berg and Greenwood.

592. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

None declared.

593. FOR DECISION – THAT THE COUNCIL MAKES CHANGES TO ITS STRUCTURE TO ENSURE IT CAN STILL ACT AS A DEMOCRATIC BODY DURING TIMES OF NATIONAL, REGIONAL OR LOCAL EMERGENCY

It was proposed by Councillor Carter, seconded by Councillor Pennington and **RESOLVED**

THAT The Council agreed to set up an Emergency Cabinet Committee with Councillors Nash, Corbett, Giraud-Saunders, Hopkins, Pennington, Carter and Godwin being full members and every other member of the Council being a deputising member.

It was further recommended by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Corbett and **AGREED**

THAT decisions on planning applications would be delegated to the Town Clerk.

594. FOR DECISION – CHANGE TO STANDING ORDERS TO INCLUDE EMERGENCY COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS

Following a brief discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Hopkins and AGREED

THAT Council agrees changes in Standing Orders to include provision for a new emergency Cabinet committee of seven full members and fourteen deputies, as set out in the Agenda, but made a small change so that the Committee only meets as required, with no regular meeting date.

595. COMMON SEAL

It was proposed by Councillor Carter, seconded by Councillor Hopkins and agreed

THAT the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to or the Town Clerk do sign on behalf of the Council where appropriate any Orders, Deeds or Documents necessary to give effect to any of the matters and recommendations contained in the reports received and adopted at this meeting or other decisions of the Council thereat.

596. QUESTION TIME

Cllr Hopkins asked a question about the financial viability of the Council as a result of the Covid19 pandemic.

Officers set out their concern about the lack of revenue from all the Council's commercial activities, representing 40% of total income, which will leave the Council extremely short of funds as we head into the autumn of 2020. The Town Clerk has raised the issue with both Devizes' MP and the National Association of Local Councils, both of whom have said that the Government is aware of the pressure the pandemic is placing on Councils and is looking into it.

Unfortunately, Local Authorities do not qualify for any of the current grants and in the case of the Rates Holiday are precluded by law from Rate Relief.

597. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

CHAIRMAN