

Alfreton Town Council

Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 18th January 2022

Meeting Room Alfreton Leisure Centre

**Present:**

Town Mayor: Councillor S Marshall-Clarke

Councillors: C Dale, J Gdula, H Jowett-Frost, M Kerry, J Walker and K wood

Officers: D T Holmes

## 01/22 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were RECEIVED and APPROVED from:-

Councillors;

M Bennett – Illness

G Dolman – Family Commitment

C O’Brien – Illness

A Richardson – illness

C Robinson – Transport difficulty

S Swain- Childcare

D Taylor – Childcare

S Walker – Business commitment

## 02/22 To receive any declarations of interest from Members

The following declarations of interests were received;

## Councillor J Walker 159/21: To ratify Planning Applications DPI to leave the meeting

**Councillor S Marshall Clarke and Councillor M Kerry** 154/21g: To receive a grant application from; Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre (DUWC) for £5,000.00 Non DPI to remain in the meeting but not vote

## Councillor H Jowett-Frost 154/21 d To receive a report on rental increases for tenants in Alfreton House and allotments DPI to leave the meeting

## 03/22 Recording and Filming of Council and Committee Meetings

It was NOTED that there were no requests to record or film this meeting consequently none were authorised

## 04/22 Public Participation

There was none

## 05/22 To consider any items which should be taken in exclusion of the press and public

**RESOLVED**

**That the following items be heard in exclusion of press and public**

a. Item 154/21b To receive a report on pay grades and proposed increments following successful completion of Community Governance – Item to be heard in exclusion – due to GDPR and confidential nature

b. Item 154/21d To receive a report on rental increases for tenants in Alfreton House and allotments – due to commercial confidence

## 06/22 To hear from a representative of Derbyshire Police should one be available

No police officers were available to attend the meeting

## 06/22b To receive a response from a local Police Sergeant regarding Remembrance Sundays minute 133/21b also refers

*Members received information clarifying the Polices’ role in attending Remembrance Day Parades, which informed the Town Council that the Police will not be supporting the traffic closures at events such as Remembrance Day to which they have no statutory role.*

The meeting heard from an elected member that the Police had attended the Remembrance Day event in Chesterfield, which is in the same police division as Alfreton

**RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk seeks further information from the police to clarify their role, if any at the Chesterfield Remembrance Day

## 07/22 To read and consider the Minutes of the Meeting of Alfreton Town Council held on Tuesday 16th November 2021 copies have been circulated to each Member with the summons to attend the meeting; the Minutes may be taken as read.

The minutes were read and confirmed as a correct record

## 08/22 After consideration to approve the signing of the Meeting Minutes of Tuesday 16th November 2021 by the person presiding as a correct record

**RESOLVED**

The minutes having been approved as a correct record should be signed by the Town Mayor, as the person presiding

## 09/22 To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting

There are none

## 10/22 To receive and consider reports and minutes of committees

**RESOLVED** To receive the notes of the Regeneration Working Party held on 7th December 2021 and to approve the recommendations made

The notes/ minutes were NOTED, and the actions/recommendations contained therein were APPROVED

## 11/22 To receive and consider additional agenda items in the order in which they have been notified.

**a. To receive a report to appoint an Internal Auditor 2022**

**RESOLVED**

1. That an Internal Auditor is appointed
2. That the costs are noted for the External Audit for 2021/22 of approximately £600.00
3. That support is provided by Bradley & Co for the audit figures within a specified budget, suggested £500.00 from the Personnel Budget

**b. To receive a report on pay grades and proposed increments following successful completion of Community Governance – This item was heard in exclusion see agenda item 05/22 a**

**RESOLVED**

1. That an acceleration of two increments within and up to the maxima of the present pay scales of the Joint Town Clerk (TC) and the Assistant Town Clerk to recognise their success in completing the Certificate of Higher Education in Community Governance. Those increments are to be effective from December 1st, 2021, payroll. The officers will also receive incremental progression, subject to scale maxima on 1st April 2022.

Also

1. Members NOTED and APPROVED the action of the Leader and Deputy Leader in paying additional hours worked of 62.5 hours to the Joint Town Clerk (TC) and 20.5 hours to the Assistant Town Clerk as outlined in the report that would have been presented to the December 21st, 2021, meeting of the Town Council which was abandoned on national advice

**c. To review the Christmas Lights Switch on Event 2021 and produce a lessons learnt document  
RESOLVED**

a.That the report is received and the recommendation to produce a ‘Lessons Learnt’ document is APPROVED

b.It was NOTED that the use of Firs House as a venue for stalls at the Christmas Switch-On Event will be considered at the next meeting of the Events Committee

**d. To receive a report on rental increases for tenants in Alfreton House and allotments This item was heard in exclusion see agenda item 05/22 Also the minutes will show that Councillor H Jowett-Frost left the meeting whist this item was discussed and a resolution made see minute 02/22**

**RESOLVED**

i.That rents for all tenants and allotment holders remain static for the following 6 months and that an item is placed on the July 2022 meeting to allow members to review the situation

ii.That the reserved minutes will record the action to recover a debt of £768

iii.That notice is served on Allotment Associations that a rent increase could be made with effect from April 1st, 2023. It was **NOTED** that action is taking place to comply with good practice and Allotment Law

**e.To receive a response regarding Environmental Matters from AVBC**

Amber Valley Borough Council had responded to the Town Councils concerns regarding reports of rats being sighted in and around Alfreton.

*The Borough’s response informed the meeting that Generally speaking it is not uncommon to see rats and other rodents as they are prevalent in our environment and this is particularly true where the environment contains harbourage or cover and a source of food and / or water for the rat.  Shrubs and undergrowth are an obvious natural cover with dumped waste also being an attractive environment for rats and these are the common things we look out for when surveying an area.  Of course the real public health risk associated with rats increases significantly when they gain access into houses or businesses (particularly food businesses).*

**RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk corresponds with Amber Valley Borough Council to outline:- in particular concerns at the Welfare Park and request that action is taken to:-

maintain the holly hedge and other hedges near children’s play areas to reduce their attraction as natural cover for rats. To investigate the gully /drain areas which were baited in the past to ensure that is still happening

ii To take particular action to reduce rat numbers near areas, in the Borough’s control which are used by children and families.

**f. To receive an update of further changes to East Midlands Railway services**

Having heard of the reduced services to Alfreton. It was RESOLVED that the following be sent to the management of East Midlands Railways.

*The senior management of East Midlands Railways, in little under 12 months, has overseen a substantial reduction in services to the Town of Alfreton, including the removal of the Towns direct London services after almost 50 years. Most recently the company has delivered a 35% reduction in regional services to the Town with 48 hours’ notice with mass cancelation in June due to operational difficulties and has now twice reneged on promises to reinstate those services from the 12th of December and the 3rd of January respectively, only advising stakeholders and passengers after these dates have passed. This week, East Midlands Railways has advised of indefinite cuts of 19% of its Regional Services through the Town, including a further 7% of cuts from the 17th of January. It is apparent that East Midlands Railways have been less than transparent in their correspondence, most notably with fare paying customers, and would seemingly have an unhealthy culture in that respect. Examples of this include issuing inaccurate information in respect to terminating trains and empty coaching stock moves as justification for the London train removals, suggesting that there was just a 25% reduction in services in June, when in fact this was actually more than 35% reduction, and this week’s suggesting that there was a slightly reduced timetable, which has subsequently transpired to be a 19% reduction in services, virtually 1 in 5 of their trains scheduled to call at Alfreton.*

*The Town Council has previously passed a vote of no Confidence the management of East Midlands Railways, it was unanimously resolved at January 18th 2022 meeting of the Town Council that should be extended to call for the top level of management to consider their position to allow both the culture and service at East Midlands Railways to be addressed by a new team.*

It was also **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk would report to the next meeting with an update on the situation regarding progress on the Alfreton Station platform bridge link in the Access for All programme

**g To receive a grant application from Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre (DUWC) for £5,000.00**

**The Town Mayor, as a Trustee of the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre together with Councillor Mary Kerry took no part in the debate or resolution of this item Minute 02/22 refers**

**RESOLVED**

That a grant of £5000 be made to the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre

**hTo set a budget and subsequent precept for the financial year 2022/2023**

**RESOLVED (Unanimously)**

i. That the attached budget proposal shown as Appendix B to these minutes is accepted.

ii That under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 The Council of the Borough of Amber Valley being the charging Authority for the said Borough are given notice that in the respect of the financial year beginning 1 April 2022 that Alfreton Town Council will require from them the sum of £189,958 to meet the expenses of the Town Council and that Alfreton Town Council require Amber Valley Borough Council to levy the said sum as an additional item of the Council Tax 

## 12/22 To authorise the signing of orders for payment

**RESOLVED**

That it was NOTED and APPROVED that payments in November £18,782.50 had been made

## 13/22 To receive reports from Members who may have attended Outside Bodies meetings

Members heard from the Town Mayor, who is a trustee of the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre reported his attendance at a recent meeting.

## 14/22 To consider 5 topics for communication

The Joint Town Clerk (TC) and the Assistant Town Clerk success in completing the Certificate of Higher Education in Community Governance.

Recent and planned Events in the Town

Concerns with EMR

The 2022/23 Precept

Grant to Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre

## 15/22 To review and approve the following policies:

1. Fire Risk Assessment
2. Risk Management Policy
3. Grievance Procedure
4. Equal Opportunities Policy

## RESOLVED That all the above policy updates are APPROVED

## 16/22 To ratify Planning Applications:

That the Planning Decisions reported to the meeting were NOTED

**17/22 Date of the Next Meeting and proposed agenda items**

The next meeting of the Town Council will be held on 15th February 2022

The following items have been added to the agenda thus far

Recycling collection service in Alfreton

Potential Close of the B&M store and its effect on the Severn Square car park and area

The Parkwood Training Centre

Road Safety in Alfreton in particular traffic regulation orders

RESERVED MATTERS

Arising from Minute 11/22 d

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk is instructed to correspond with LunaTech to seek to recover a debt to the Town Council of £768