

Frodsham Town Council

Extraordinary meeting of
The Policy, Process & Revenue Committee
held on Wednesday 18th March at 6pm in Castle
Park House, Frodsham



MINUTES

Meeting 3

Attended by: Cllr J Critchley (Chair), Cllrs Griffiths, Lord Pennington, Mostyn-Jones, Ashton, Dawson, Hayes & J O'Donoghue (Town Clerk)	
No	Item
PART A	
94	Apologies for absence RESOLVED: Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Sumner, D Critchley and Poulton.
95	Declarations of interest NOTED: There were no declarations of interest
96	Requests from the public to speak NOTED: No member of the public attended the meeting
97	COVID-19
97.1	To note the risk assessment and business continuity report from the Clerk on and the recommendations contained within NOTED: The risk assessment was noted and discussed.
97.2	To approve the risk assessment RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Griffiths, seconded by Cllr Lord Pennington and unanimously agreed to approve the risk assessment.
97.3	To recommend to full Council that Finance Regulation 4.5 be amended to permit the Clerk to spend up to £5,000 per single transaction in cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services NOTED: ITEM NOT REQUIRED, COVERED UNDER 98.1 DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY
97.4	To recommend ratification of the purchase of infection control supplies by the Town Clerk under Financial Regulation 4.6 and that all purchase in connection with the COVID-19 outbreak for health and safety be accounted for in a new budget code and money taken from reserves. (Full list of purchases to be supplied to Town Council) RESOLVED: The purchase of supplies up to a maximum of £50 was approved.
97.5	To approve full sick payments to staff in line with staff contracts and the Green Book terms and conditions from day 1 RESOLVED: It was agreed to approve full sick payments to staff in line with staff contracts and the Green Book terms and conditions from day 1 following the latest Green Book advice.
97.6	To approve full payment for staff who self-isolate for 14 days following advice from 111 RESOLVED: It was agreed to approve full payment for staff who self-isolate for 14 days following the latest government advice.
98	Business continuity
98.1	To discuss what practical measures need to be taken in respect of business continuity including whether it is necessary to temporarily suspend any Financial regulations or Standing Orders and nominate substitutes for the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council as part of the delegation of authority to the Clerk in order to ensure certain matters can continue. NOTED: Discussion took place and consideration was given towards supporting local community groups in particular Churches Together who are co-ordinating various initiatives.
98.2	To agree action to be taken RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Lord Pennington, seconded by Cllr Griffiths and unanimously agreed to accept the scheme of delegation which is appended to these minutes (Appendix A). It was proposed by Cllr Hayes, seconded by Cllr Mostyn-Jones and unanimously agreed to cancel all scheduled meetings until further notice. It was proposed by Cllr Griffiths,

	seconded by Cllr Critchley and unanimously agreed to provide £5,000 to Churches Together to help co-ordinate support to the elderly and vulnerable of Frodsham during the COVID-19 epidemic and that further funding could be available should it be required. It was unanimously agreed that the Clerk be given delegated authority to respond to planning applications following email consultation with members of the Planning Committee. It was proposed by Cllr Lord Pennington, seconded by Cllr Critchley and unanimously agreed to purchase a detailed scale map of the cemetery and grave numbers.
99	Castle Park House To discuss practical arrangements
98.2	To agree action to be taken RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to close down the office base from 5pm on Thursday 19 th March until further notice. Both the Town Clerk and Administration Officer will work from home using FTC laptops and software.
99	Clerk's items
100	Exclusion of press and public To consider passing a motion to exclude press and public due to the sensitive nature of the following items RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to exclude press and public from the following items.
PART B	
101	Confidential staffing report To receive a report from the Clerk RESOLVED: The Clerk provided a verbal report and it was agreed that reception staff will no longer be able to work in the office from 5pm Thursday 19 th March and will be paid full salary until May payroll as a minimum. This will be reconsidered in May and in the light of government advice.
102	Cemetery management To receive a report from the Clerk and agree action NOTED: ITEM NOT REQUIRED
103	Date of next meeting To be confirmed

APPENDIX A

FRODSHAM TOWN COUNCIL DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY POLICY DURING COVID19 OUTBREAK

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Town Council has been monitoring Government advice as the COVID19 pandemic escalates in the UK. This policy has been developed in response to that advice which as of 16th March 2020 has introduced social isolation measures to such an extent that the Town Council is no longer able to meet according to the requirements of the Local Government Act (1972) to conduct its business and all Council staff are required to work from home
- 1.2. The Town Council has conducted a full Risk Assessment and approved a Business Continuity Plan which is now dependent upon the delegation of further authority to the Town Clerk/RFO in order to ensure that the Council will be able to operate its business to the best of its abilities during the pandemic while protecting, as far as is reasonably possible, its employees, Councillors, volunteers, contractors and members of the public

2 OPERATIONAL PERIOD

- 2.1 This policy will come into effect immediately the Chairman closes the meeting of Town Council at which this policy is approved on Wednesday 18th March 2020.

- 2.2. This policy will be rescinded by a subsequent Town Council meeting when all Councillors and Members of the public are next able to meet in person in accordance with Government advice in respect of the COVID19 outbreak and the requirements of the Local Government Act (1972)

3.0 ROLE OF THE CLERK

- 3.1. The Clerk as Proper Officer /RFO is the only individual in law who can act on behalf of the Council and lead the administration of all the Council's activities Some obligations are statutory whilst others are determined by the Council as part of the Clerk' job description. These delegated powers therefore arise as the everyday duties of the Proper Officer and Responsible Finance Officer, including management of all staff, services and finances.
- 3.2. The purpose of this policy is to delegate further authority to the Clerk/RFO in order to ensure the Council can continue to operate its business to the best of its abilities for the benefit of the Frodsham community.

4.0 DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

- 4.1. With the exception of

- a) matters which the law states cannot be delegated and are reserved for full Council, and
- b) Employment Appeals procedures

Any decision requiring Committee of full Council approval where it is not possible to convene a lawful meeting is hereby delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with 3 Councillors for the Operational Period. Prior to the decision all Councillors will be circulated with the information by email and sent a text alert.

- 4.2. Where practicable, the 3 Councillors should consist of the Chairman together with two other Councillors.

5.0 TEMPORARY ALTERATIONS TO FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- 5.1. The Clerk is authorised to make expenditure on revenue items up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. Financial Regulation 4.1 is suspended during the operational period in favour of authorisation as follows:
- 3 Councillors as described in clause 4.2. of this policy for all items over £5,000
 - Chairman and vice Chairman of a duly delegated committee of the council for items over £1000; or
 - the Clerk, in conjunction with Chairman of Council or Chairman of the appropriate committee, for any items below £1000
- 5.2 In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of Council services, Financial Regulation 4.5 permits the clerk to authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the Council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure. During the operational period this shall be subject to an increased limit of £15,000 for a single transaction. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council and Chairman and Vice Chairman of Finance & Policy Committee as soon as possible and to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 5.3. The Clerk/RFO shall prepare the monthly schedule of accounts for payment which shall be circulated electronically to all Councillors for inspection and questions. After 3 working days, the schedule shall be approved as per clause 4.2 and approved by the Chairman by email.

- 5.4. In respect of Financial regulation 6.15, access to internet banking accounts will be permitted from home addresses but shall still be via Council laptops.
- 5.5 In respect of Financial Regulation 10.3, it is accepted that in these unprecedented circumstances, there may be insufficient suppliers available to obtain 3 or more quotations for a specific transaction. Therefore, provided that at least 3 suppliers have been approached to quote, an order may be placed on best value terms available at the time without the requirement for 3 or more responses.