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Community Way
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Rickmansworth
Hertfordshire WD3 3SU

MINUTES OF the 351st MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD Online using ZOOM secure video conference
ON THURSDAY 23 APRIL 2020

Present: Cllr Gallagher in the Chair
Ryan Bennett – Clerk to the Council
Amanda Gardiner – Administrative Assistant

Cllrs Benner, Birch, Cole, Hughes, Jacob, Kyriakou, Mitchell, Montague, Taylor, Tobin, Vassiliou, Walker, Wallington and Yeung

Voting Members: 15

Members of the Public: 0

CC2090/20 Apologies for Absence

All Members present.

CC2091/20 Declarations of Interests by Members

The Chairman recommended that any declarations be made at the appropriate time.

CC2092/20 Representations from the Public

CC2096/20 – Written representation from former Clerk, David Allison, read out by Cllr Gallagher “I would like to express my sincere congratulations to Mr Clerk, Ryan Bennett, in successfully achieving his CiLCA. It is well deserved and I wish him well and the Parish Council in this new era particularly under current and challenging circumstances.” Members endorsed the comment and congratulated the Clerk.

CC2093/20 Minutes

The Minutes up for review were the Minutes of the 350th Monthly Meeting of the Council held on Thursday 30 January 2020 and the Extraordinary Meeting held on Wednesday 18 March 2020.

Resolved:

- That the Minutes of the 350th Monthly Meeting of the Council held on Thursday 30 January 2020 and the Extraordinary Meeting held on Wednesday 18 March 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

CC2094/20 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

CC2095/20 Committee Reports

CC2095.1/20 Planning and Development Committee held on Tuesday 14 January, Thursday 6 February and Tuesday 18 February 2020

Resolved:

- That the Minutes of the Planning and Development Committee meeting held on Tuesday 14 January, Thursday 6 February and Tuesday 18 February 2020 be adopted as a report of the meeting.

CC2095.2/20 Any Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

CC2095.3/20 Leisure, Events & Environment Committee held on Tuesday 7 January 2020

Resolved:

- That the Minutes of the Leisure, Events & Environment Committee held on Tuesday 7 January 2020 be adopted as a report of the meeting.

CC2095.4/20 Any Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

CC2096/20 General Power of Competence

The Clerk introduced the topic of adopting General Power of Competence. The Clerk explained that the council meets the requirements (the Clerk has achieved CiLCA and two thirds of the councillors were elected) to attain the General Power of Competence. The General Power of Competence enables eligible local councils to take on an enhanced role within their community. Cllr Benner asked if the Clerk would notify all Councillors before taking on any additional tasks and the Clerk responded that he would notify all Councillors.

Resolved:

- That Croxley Green Parish Council meets the eligibility criteria to exercise the General Power of Competence as defined in the Parish Council (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 and therefore adopts the power.

CC2097/20 Coronavirus – Setting a Strategic Direction for Council & Establishing a Working Group

Cllr Cole introduced the topic of setting a strategic direction for the Council. Councillors discussed the paper and were in favour of setting a strategic direction for the Council, reviewing Committee and Council budgets to determine reserves that could be redeployed during the coronavirus lockdown and contacting local organisations to determine level of help required. Cllrs Benner, Cole, Mitchell, Montague, Walker, Vassiliou and Yeung expressed an interest in joining the Working Party.

Resolved:

- That the Council establishes a Working Group to draft a mission statement and a high level strategic summary.
- That Cllrs Benner, Cole, Mitchell, Montague, Walker, Vassiliou and Yeung become members of the Working Group

CC2098/20 Annual Accounts & Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

The Clerk gave a verbal update on the changes to the Annual Accounts and AGAR confirming that an extension to the submission deadline has been granted due to coronavirus lockdown. The Clerk advised Members that due to internet access issues in the Office, which impacted downloading an update to the accounting software, there has been a delay with finalising the Annual Accounts.

CC2099/20 Croxley Green Coronavirus Volunteer Scheme

The Administrative Assistant provided a verbal update on the coronavirus volunteer scheme. Paper flyers were distributed to residents in Croxley Green asking for volunteers and providing vulnerable residents with information on contacting the office if they needed help. The Administrative Assistant thanked councillors for assisting with delivering the paper flyers.

471 people registered as volunteers and 42 vulnerable residents have contacted the office asking for help and have been paired with a volunteer. Calls from vulnerable residents needing help have reduced since Easter, which is due to the increased visibility of help from Three Rivers and Watford Volunteer Service, Herts Help and NHS Responders.

CC2100/20 Delegation Scheme

Members considered a resolution to adopt an interim measure - In response to the COVID-19 outbreak in the UK and in the event that it is not possible to convene a meeting of the Council in a reasonable time, the Clerk shall have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the Council where such decision cannot reasonably be deferred and must be made in order to comply with a commercial or statutory deadline. The delegation does not extend to matters expressly reserved to the Council in legislation or in its Standing Orders or Financial Regulations. Any decisions made under this delegation must be recorded in writing and must be published in accordance with the relevant regulations. This delegated authority ceases upon the first meeting of the Council after the Council meeting at which the delegation was put in place.

Councillors requested to be notified when the delegation is used.

Resolved

- That the Clerk is granted delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the Council where such decision cannot reasonably be deferred and must be made in order to comply with a commercial or statutory deadline.

Live Streaming Council Meetings

[Under Standing Order 13.1.10 the Clerk presented a paper regarding the possibility of live-streaming Council meetings on YouTube.]

The Clerk introduced the paper and spoke about the steps that need to be taken to ensure that online meetings are as open and as transparent to the public as ordinary meetings, which they are entitled to attend in person.

A majority of Members did not support the inclusion of the paper and as such it was not discussed.

CC2101/20 Closure

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:21pm