



EMERSONS GREEN
TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Full Council
held in the Council Chamber, Emersons Green Town Council

7.10pm on Thursday 14 April 2022

Present: Councillors S Budd (Chairman), D Somers, R Hunt, C Johnson, C Edwardson and P Morgan.

Absent: Councillors Bassett, Palmer, Nichols.

In attendance: Charlotte Starkie, Locum Clerk

Public attendance: Representatives from Ham Farm Festival

2021.210. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Al-Hassan, Councillor Sunderland, Councillor Hill, Councillor J Hunt and Councillor Jones.

2021.211. To agree the engagement of the Locum Town Clerk

It was agreed that Charlotte Starkie act as Town Clerk and Proper Officer and be delegated the appropriate authority to fulfil these duties, on a temporary basis until such time that another appointment is made.

2021.212. Declarations of Interest under the Localism Act 2011

There were no declarations of interests.

2021.213. Public participation

There were no questions from members of the public.

2021.214. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 10 March 2022

It was **Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2022 were a true and accurate record of the meeting and these were signed by the Chairman.

2021.215. NALC Briefing on Ukraine

It was **Resolved** that Emersons Green Town Council endorse the following statement, issued by the National Association of Local Councils and the Local Government Association:

We, local leaders, strongly condemn the multiple attacks and violations of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. We express our full support and solidarity to the Ukrainian people and our peers in local and regional government. We will not accept that our European values and integrity be attacked by the Russian Federation after the violation of Georgian territories by Russian in 2008. We are firmly opposed to the dismemberment of a free and democratic state in Europe.

2021.216. Outstanding Items from these Minutes

There were no outstanding items from these minutes.

2021.217. Chairman Update

A verbal update was received from the Chairman on the recent workshop to consider elements for a new corporate plan. A second workshop would take place on Saturday 30th April and all councillors were encouraged to participate in the process. A Corporate Plan was being drafted and will be considered at a future meeting.

2021.218. Planning Committee update

A verbal update was received from the Chairman of the Planning Committee.

2021.219. Finance Committee update

There was no update as the Committee had been temporarily merged with full council.

2021.220. Open Spaces Committee update

A verbal update was received from the Chairman of the Open Spaces Committee. In particular the new noticeboard on Emersons Green common has been subject to graffiti, as had the board at Vinney Green. Friends of Emersons Green Park had undertaken a thorough clear of the undergrowth and brambles in Green Lane.

2021.221. Local Action Nature Plan Working Group update

There was an opportunity for the council to receive a presentation on where to plant trees for their most effectiveness, and so it was proposed that Matthew Lipton be invited to a future meeting.

2021.222. To authorise March and April 2022 payments as per circulated schedule

It was **Resolved** to approve the payments for March and April 2022, as per the circulated schedule, and the payment of staff wages.

Action: Assistant Clerk (Planning and Finance)

2021.223. To receive bank statements and a bank reconciliation to the end of March 2022

Members inspected the bank statements and bank reconciliation.

It was **Resolved** to approve the bank statement to end of March 2022

2021.224. To consider and agree the use of the professional services of RBS business solutions to close down the accounts package as one element of the year end process

It was **Resolved** that the council will engage the services of RBS to undertake the year end process and for the Clerk to raise the order for £600.

Action: Town Clerk

2021.225. To consider the awarding of a grant to the Lyde Green Open Spaces Community Group for the provision of community information boards

It was **Resolved** that the council will make an award of a grant of £3,554, in support of quote A, to Lyde Green Open Spaces Community Group, but place a condition on the award, that the community group be asked to ensure that recognition be given to Emersons Green Town Council on the signs, for making this award.

Action: Assistant Town Clerk (Open Spaces)

2021.226. To consider and agree the following grant applications

- a. Members considered the grant application from **1st Mangotsfield Rainbows**, requesting £210 towards a Jubilee Event.

It was **Resolved** that a grant of £210 be awarded to the 1st Mangotsfield Rainbows.

Action: Town Clerk

- b. Members considered the grant application from **Emersons Green Ladies**, requesting £250 towards a Jubilee event and a further £500 towards running costs to reduce the membership fee.

It was **Resolved** that a grant of £250 be awarded to Emersons Green Ladies as a contribution towards the Jubilee event.

Further discussion took place regarding a contribution towards the running costs.

It was **Resolved** that a contribution to the running costs would be split into 2 tranches, and that after an initial contribution of £250, the Emersons Green Ladies would need to provide evidence of sustained membership and attendance, in order for the second payment to be released at the six month point. Delegated to the Town Clerk to inform the group of this condition.

Action: Town Clerk

- c. Members considered the grant application from **Ham Farm Festival**, requesting £3,000 towards the cost of hosting a community summer music festival.

A representative from the group attended to give background information to the application.

It was **Resolved** that a grant of £3,000 be awarded.

Action: Town Clerk

2021.227. To consider and agree payments to Youth In Sodbury

Members considered the increased costs incurred by the organisation in order to meet the increasing number of youth participation at the youth sessions. Disappointment was expressed that the organisation had increased their costs without consultation with the town council in advance of the increase. Whilst the council recognised that there might be a need for additional adult supervision and therefore increased costs, it was not in favour of supporting the additional costs. Instead, the Clerk was requested to contact the group and negotiate a reduction in the invoice, and to express the concern from the council that if numbers increase, permission must be sought in advance for any increased costs. However, it was willing to make a smaller contribution towards the increased costs for the sessions that had already taken place, providing that evidence could be provided to support the increased attendance. The clerk was authorised to make a payment appropriate to what was agreed in line with the contract.

Councillors also considered the request for Youth in Sodbury to facilitate two handover sessions to the new contractor. This was agreed but within a budget of £600.

It was **Resolved** that the Clerk liaise with the Youth In Sodbury group to negotiate a suitable outcome in relation to the increased invoice for March, April and May 2022. And that the Clerk informs the group that it has an upper limit of £600 to coordinate two handover sessions with the new provider.

Action: Assistant Clerk (Planning and Finance)

2021.228. Hedgehog Houses

It was **Resolved** that authority be given to the officers to distribute the remaining hedgehog houses. It was suggested that one of them could be a raffle prize at the Emersons Green Festival in June.

2021.229. Items from members to report

Councillor Hunt reported that an allocation of £20,000 had been made to tackle speeding in Willowherb Road. This would assist with the provision of traffic calming measures.

2021.230. Clerk's Update: To note that two councillor vacancies have been advertised for co-option

Councillors received an update on the recent vacancies on the council. No election had been called by the electorate, and therefore the council would co-opt to the vacancies. The positions were being advertised with a closing date of 3rd May 2022 for consideration at the meeting on 12th May 2022. An application form had previously been used but it was proposed that instead of using the form, applicants present themselves in a one page letter explaining why they would like to become a councillor and what skills and competencies they would bring to the role.

Action: Town Clerk

2021.231. To consider a resolution to exclude the press and public for the discussion of confidential nature of the following business

It was **Resolved** to exclude the public and press due to the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

2021.232. Confidential: To receive an update on the recruitment of the town clerk

- a. Members received a verbal update on the current vacancy. A Personnel Committee meeting would be held on Monday 25th April for the purpose of considering applications and interview feedback.
- b. Members considered the offer of a relocation package for a new town clerk and agreed the following terms:
That the package would have an upper limit of £5,000
That it would be paid if the new clerk travelled a distance of more than 40 miles from their current home to the office, and that the terms of the package would be discussed with the Personnel Committee in advance of appointment

2021.233. Confidential: To discuss current security service

It was **Resolved** that authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to enter into a new contract with a new security provider.

Action: Town Clerk

2021.234. Next Meeting

7.00pm on Thursday 28th April 2022 to be held in the Council Chamber, Emersons Green Town Council
7.00pm on Thursday 12 May 2022 -Annual Council meeting

The meeting closed at 2100 hrs.