ELLESMERE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the Town Council held via Zoom on Monday 6th July, 2020 at 7.15pm.

PRESENT:	Town Mayor (Chair):	Cllr P Goulbourne
	Councillors:	Cllrs N Cull, A Devismes, G Elner, J Frost, M Hancock, R Hartley, G Hutchinson, D Lunn, J Mowl and A Wignall
	Town Clerk & RFO:	Joanne Butterworth
	Assistant Clerks:	Jean Hynes and Phil Smith
	Unitary Councillor	1
	Members of the Public:	0
	Press:	0
	Police	0
	Guests	2

Public Question Time – No public were present

17/20 **To Receive Apologies and Reason for Absence.**

All Councillors were present.

18/20 **Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests in Items on the Agenda**

None received.

19/20 **Grant Dispensations**

None received.

20/20 **Response to Public Questions**

None received.

21/20 **Police Matters**

PC Paul Crump was not able to attend, so the Town Mayor read out the Police report for the period since the last Town Council meeting in March 2020:

"During the period from mid March to 4th July, there has been a total of 18 Recorded Crimes for Ellesmere, broken down as follows:
7 x Assaults.
4 x Criminal Damage.
1 x Malicious Communication
1 x Harassment.
1 x Fraud.
1 x Burglary of Outbuilding.
1 x Sexual Offences.

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1 x Theft.
1 x Public Order Offence.

I will not be able to break them down as usual, due to time constraints and the dates to be covered. During Covid, there have been fewer Crimes per Month than normal. However, Officers have been continually busy with Covid reports from the Public. This has undoubtedly led to a difference in the way we have policed. With the Town being a popular tourist attraction, there have been instances where persons have travelled too far to get exercise. This has been the exception rather than the rule though, thankfully".

22/20 **Shropshire Council Report**

Shropshire Cllr Mrs A Hartley reported on the following matters:

- Covid-19 period – congratulations were due to the Town Council for the speed in setting up the Covid-19 Volunteers Group in Ellesmere. Shropshire Council had worked well in co-ordinating the response in the county and maintaining essential services. A lot of staff had been transferred to temporary positions – eg: in public health and administering grants to businesses etc. The Joint Interim Chief Executives and the Director of Public Health had led the response well. Most Shirehall based staff had been working from home during the pandemic, and this had worked well after a slow start. A Local Outbreak Control Plan was being developed for the next phase.

- The outcome of the Local Plan Review would be considered at a special Cabinet meeting on 20 July.

- There was a virtual Full Council meeting on 16 July which would be live-streamed for the public.

- The cost of the Covid-19 pandemic to the Council was estimated to be around £35 million. Additional Government funding had been received, but it was likely that there would be a shortfall of around £4 million – which would need to be found from within existing budgets. There was no budget crisis, but pressures remained high on key services.

23/20 **Minutes**

It was moved by Cllr G Hutchinson, seconded by Cllr R Hartley and

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the Town Council meeting on 11 June, 2020 be approved and signed by the Town Mayor as a true record.

24/20 **Casual Vacancy**

The Town Clerk reported that two applications had been received in response to the advert for co-option to fill the vacancy on the Council following the resignation of Ben Reincke. A copy of their application forms had been circulated prior to the meeting. In accordance with the Co-option Policy, it was

RESOLVED –that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and Section 100 (A) of the Local Government Act 1992,

the public and press be excluded for the remainder of this item of business on the grounds that it may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Acts.

Temporary amendments to the co-option process to reflect the online nature of current meetings had been agreed at the last meeting. The two candidates joined the meeting virtually, and were invited to give a short address to Members in turn, outlining their background and experience and stating their reasons for wishing to become a Councillor.

One of the candidates stated that he wished to withdraw his application. After careful consideration of the remaining applicant, including responses to questions, it was

RESOLVED – that Tim Hunter be co-opted to fill the casual vacancy on the Council.

The Town Clerk reported that she would inform the successful candidate the next day, and invite him to call in to the Town Hall to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

The public and press were readmitted to the meeting.

25/20 **Planning**

a) Planning Applications For Consideration

20/01540/FUL – Mereside Farm, Mereside, Ellesmere – erection of a single storey extension to existing holiday let accommodation.

It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED – that the application be supported.

20/02417/FUL – Fire Station, Grange Road, Ellesmere – erection of extension and remodelling of existing fire station.

It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED – that the application be supported.

26/20 **Finance/Contracts**

(i) Payments for April 2020

The payments made during April, 2020 had been circulated with the Agenda. It was moved by Cllr G Hutchinson, seconded by Cllr A Wignall and

RESOLVED – that the payments for April 2020 be approved, confirmed and signed as a true copy.

(ii) Payments for May 2020

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The payments made during May, 2020 had been circulated with the Agenda. It was moved by Cllr N Cull, seconded by Cllr D Lunn and

RESOLVED – that the payments for May 2020 be approved, confirmed and signed as a true copy.

(iii) Funding Request from New Saints Foundation for Summer Holiday Activity Provision

The Town Clerk reported that the holiday activity sessions at Easter and May half term which the Mayor and the Council respectively had agreed to fund (see minute 268/19) had not taken place due to the Covid-19 lockdown. New Saints Foundation had now submitted a request for financial assistance to offer 2 hours of weekly holiday activity in Ellesmere during August (4 weeks) at Beech Grove Recreation Area, which would include the provision of a healthy packed lunch for all children. To make up the deficit on the funding already raised (including the Mayor's donation), the amount requested was £228 to provide places for 10 children or £768 for 20 children.

The Town Clerk added that the Council had allocated £2k for Youth Provision in its current budget. If the activity sessions were to be funded by the Town Council, Members felt that participants should come from within the Ellesmere Urban area. Cllr A Devismes added that vulnerable children should get priority, as this group had often been disproportionately affected by the lockdown.

It was moved by Cllr N Cull, seconded by Cllr G Elner and

RESOLVED – that a sum of £768 from the Youth Fund budget be approved for the provision of 20 places on the TNS Summer Holiday Activity Scheme in Ellesmere (subject to it going ahead), with the proviso that participants should live within the Ellesmere Urban Ward and, if possible, priority given to children identified as vulnerable by local schools.

(iv) Furlough Claims

The Town Clerk reported that payments totalling £3,896.85 had been received from the Government to cover 80% of the wages of furloughed Town Hall staff for the period from March until the end of May. Noted.

(v) Shropshire Council Covid-19 Support Grant

The Town Clerk reported that the Council had received a £500 grant towards the cost of setting-up the Ellesmere Community Support Group and for the provision of personal protective equipment. Noted.

27/20 **Finance – Cemetery Working Group**

(i) Payments for April 2020

The payments made during April, 2020 had been circulated with the Agenda. It was moved by Cllr G Hutchinson, seconded by Cllr Mrs A Wignall and

RESOLVED – that the payments for April 2020 be approved, confirmed and signed as a true copy.

(ii) Payments for May 2020

The payments made during May, 2020 had been circulated with the Agenda. It was moved by Cllr J Frost, seconded by Cllr Mrs A Wignall and

RESOLVED – that the payments for May 2020 be approved, confirmed and signed as a true copy.

28/20 **LGA Consultation on Draft Model Code of Conduct**

The Local Government Association (LGA) was consulting on a new Model Code of Conduct for all councillors. The consultation document and questionnaire had been circulated.

Members went through the questions which sought views on the key areas for discussion, and formulated the Council's responses to those. The Town Clerk reported that the responses would now be submitted to the LGA on the an-line survey form.

29/20 **Re-opening of Ellesmere Town Hall**

The Town Clerk presented a Return to Service Plan, which detailed the risk assessments, health & safety measures and special hire conditions that would apply when the Town Hall re-opened to the public. As part of the easing of Covid-19 lockdown, the Government had announced that multi-purpose community centres could re-open from 4 July 2020, but detailed guidance was awaited. Regular hirers of the Hall were being contacted to find out if/when they might be able to return, but it was unlikely that many would be doing so in the short-term.

It was moved by Cllr N Cull, seconded by Cllr R Hartley and

RESOLVED – that the Town Hall Return to Service Plan be approved, subject to receipt of further Government guidance.

30/20 **Cross Street Public Toilets**

As part of the easing of the Covid-19 lockdown, the Government had issued guidance that public toilets could be re-opened as long as social distancing measures were adhered to. The Town Clerk presented a Return to Service Plan, which detailed the risk assessments, health & safety measures and cleaning regime that would be in place. She had met with Healthmatic today, and they had agreed to refund £745 from the cleaning contract due to the enforced closure of the toilets. This would enable an additional daily clean to that outlined in the Plan, which would be undertaken by Town Hall staff.

It was moved by Cllr D Lunn, seconded by Cllr A Wignall and

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RESOLVED – that the Cross Street Toilets Return to Service Plan be approved, with a view to the re-opening of the toilets on 9 July 2020.

31/20 **Kingfisher Walk and Beech Grove Play Areas**

Both play areas had been closed since the start of the lockdown on 23 March 2020. As part of the easing of Covid-19 lockdown, the Government had announced that play areas/playgrounds could re-open from 4 July 2020, as long as a Covid-19 risk assessment was in place. The Town Clerk reported that a risk assessment form had been completed, a copy of which was circulated. Shropshire Council would carry out a safety inspection of the Play Areas on 9 July, and, subject to a satisfactory outcome, it was proposed to re-open the play areas after the inspection.

RESOLVED – that the risk assessment and plan for re-opening Kingfisher Walk and Beech Grove play areas be approved for implementation on 9 July 2020, subject to a satisfactory safety inspection.

32/20 **Web Accessibility**

The Town Clerk reported that from 23 September 2020, all local councils would need to comply with Regulations to make their websites accessible to people with various disabilities. NALC had produced a guidance document, a copy of which had been circulated.

It was moved by Cllr N Cull, seconded by Cllr G Hutchinson and

RESOLVED – that the Information & Communications Task & Finish Group evaluates the Council's website for compliance with the Accessibility Regulations.

33/20 **Membership of Outside Bodies - Vacancy**

Following Ben Reincke's resignation from the Council, there was a vacancy for the Council's representative on Ellesmere Chamber of Commerce.

RESOLVED – that Cllr N Cull be appointed as the Council's representative to Ellesmere Chamber of Commerce.

34/20 **Progress Report**

A report outlining progress on agreed works/projects/contracts since January 2020 had been circulated. Cllr A Wignall asked about signage for the Ellesmere LNR, and the Town Clerk advised that Shropshire Council had been contacted about that. Noted.

35/20 **Councillors' Reports**

(i) Cllr N Cull, new chair of the Community Vision Task & Finish Group, reported on progress being made with the Plan. Eleven areas/ideas had been identified for further development and consultation, and he went through each of these. It was emphasised that some of these were long-term, and not all fell directly

within the remit of the Town Council – although the Council could be a catalyst for action. The Group had agreed that the Community Vision should have a strapline to help brand it, and "Our Town, Our Future" had been suggested. Ben Reincke, who had led the work on the Plan prior to his resignation as a Councillor on 1 May, had indicated that he would be willing to continue to assist/advise the Task & Finish Group.

It was moved by Cllr N Cull, seconded by Cllr G Hutchinson and

RESOLVED –

(a) That the use of the strapline "Our Town Our Future" for the Community Vision Plan be approved;

(b) That Ben Reincke continue as a member of the Task & Finish Group in an advisory role.

(ii) The Town Mayor reported on recent virtual meetings of the SALC Executive Working Group, which had included feedback on the impact of Covid-19 on local councils, a review of the Parish Charter and an update on the Rural Strategy.

36/20 **Unsung Heroes of Covid-19 Crisis**

The Town Mayor suggested that the Town Council should formally recognise/honour the contribution of "unsung heroes" within the local community during the recent Covid-19 pandemic. It was proposed to ask residents of the town to nominate any such persons, and Cllr N Cull suggested that there should be press releases and publicity to help highlight this initiative and the role played by volunteers in supporting vulnerable residents.

It was moved by Cllr J Mowl, seconded by Cllr N Cull and

RESOLVED – that the community be asked to nominate "unsung heroes" of the Coronavirus emergency for recognition by the Town Council in the form of a certificate/letter of thanks etc.

37/20 **Summer Recess – Delegation of Powers**

As the full Council would not meet again until early September, it was recommended that arrangements be agreed to delegate decision making powers in the event of an unforeseen urgent decision being required. It was confirmed that the temporary scheme of delegation agreed on 20 March 2020 to cover the lockdown period had ended on 11 June when Council meetings had re-commenced.

It was moved by Cllr J Frost, seconded by Cllr R Hartley and

RESOLVED – that powers be delegated to the Finance, Asset & Resources Committee and the Town Clerk (in consultation with the Chair of Planning & Infrastructure Committee in relation to responses to planning applications) to act on behalf of the Council during the Summer Recess.

7/9/2020

38/20 **Future Meeting Dates**

Monday 13th July 2020 at 1pm – Finance, Asset & Resources Committee via Zoom
Monday 7th September 2020 at 7.15pm – Town Council (format to be advised in due course).

39/20 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

It was moved by Cllr G Hutchinson, seconded by Cllr R Hartley and

RESOLVED - that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and Section 100 (A) of the Local Government Act 1992, the public and press be excluded for the remainder of the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Acts.

40/20 **Assistant Clerk Roles**

The Staffing & Governance Sub-Committee had met prior to this meeting to consider arrangements to replace the Assistant Clerk (10 hrs per week) who was leaving on 31 July 2020, and to review the temporary contract for the other Assistant Clerk (20hrs per week).

Further to the review of Town Council staffing, the Sub-Committee had recommended replacing the one Assistant Clerk post with an Administrative Assistant post for 20 hours per week on salary scale point 6. The post had been job-evaluated by Shropshire Council HR, and copies of the proposed job description, person specification and job advert had been circulated. A couple of minor amendments to the job description were suggested. The Sub-Committee had agreed the arrangements for advertising the post, and the membership of the interview panel.

It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr G Hutchinson and

RESOLVED –

(a) that the Assistant Clerk (10hrs per week) post be deleted, to be replaced by the post of Administrative Assistant (20 hours per week) at Salary Scale point 6;

(b) that the job description (as amended), person specification and job advert for the post be approved.

Following a recommendation from the Town Clerk, the Sub-Committee had recommended that the Assistant Clerk's (20 hrs per week) temporary 6 month contract should be made permanent from 9 September 2020. Further to the review of Town Council staffing, it was also recommended that the job title of the post be amended to Deputy Clerk and Deputy RFO.

RESOLVED – **that the postholder be made a permanent member of staff with the job title Deputy Clerk and Deputy RFO (on the same salary, terms and conditions as her current post) with effect from 9 September2020.**

41/20 **Planning Enforcement**

The Town Clerk reported on a notification from Shropshire Council regarding enforcement action being taken relating to a site in Ellesmere. Noted.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm

Mayor: .....

Date: 7/9/2020

Date: 30/06/2020

Time: 08:07

Ellesmere Town Council 2019/2020

Town Council Current A/c

List of Payments made between 01/05/2020 and 31/05/2020

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Authorized Ref	Transaction Detail
04/05/2020	British Telecom	DDR	103.44		Telephone TH
04/05/2020	Entanet International Ltd	DDR	53.69		Broadband TH
04/05/2020	Peninsula Business Services Lt	DDR	21.60		EAP
06/05/2020	Shropshire Council Pensions	008102	700.00	008102	Annual Deficit
06/05/2020	Paperstone Ltd	008101	59.96	008101	Stationery
06/05/2020	PG Skips Ltd	008038	54.98	008038	TH Skip
06/05/2020	Groundforce Ltd	008040	1,275.00	008040	Garden Services TH
06/05/2020	Technical Services Shrops Ltd	008039	1,972.92	008039	Annual CCTV Maint
11/05/2020	British Gas	DDR	2,053.26	DDR	British Gas TH
11/05/2020	Ricoh UK Ltd	DDR	330.26		Clerks Printer
13/05/2020	Healthmatic	008104	2,535.00	008104	Cleaning Public Toilets Cross
13/05/2020	RBS Software	008103	636.00	008103	Annual Support & Maintenace
13/05/2020	Opus Energy	DDR	689.33		Gas TH
14/05/2020	Paperstone Ltd	008105	140.92	008105	Stationery
14/05/2020	Groundforce Ltd	DDR	729.00	DDR	Grounds Maint TH
15/05/2020	Shropshire Council	DDR	861.00		Rates for TH
18/05/2020	Ellesmere In Bloom Committee	008107	50.00	008107	Ellesmere In Bloom Grant
26/05/2020	EE & T-Mobile	DDR	23.08		TH Clerks Mobile
27/05/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	2,238.78		ADMINISTRATION
27/05/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	665.89		ADMINISTRATION
27/05/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	563.85		ADMINISTRATION
27/05/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	278.57		ADMINISTRATION
27/05/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	492.13		ADMINISTRATION
27/05/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	647.88		ADMINISTRATION
27/05/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	109.91		ADMINISTRATION
27/05/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	278.57		ADMINISTRATION
27/05/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	1,133.07		ADMINISTRATION
27/05/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	1,260.05		Pension Payment
28/05/2020	RBS Software	008106	672.00	008105	year end closedown
28/05/2020	Border Janitorial Supplies	008109	333.67	008109	Cleaning Products
28/05/2020	Miss Joanne Butterworth	008108	11.99	008108	Reimbursement for ZOOM

Total Payments 20,975.80

6/7/20

Date: 30/06/2020

Time: 08:05

Ellesmere Town Council 2019/2020

Town Council Current A/c

List of Payments made between 01/04/2020 and 30/04/2020

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Authorized Ref	Transaction Detail
01/04/2020	British Telecom	DDR	100.58		2 x Clerks Phone
01/04/2020	Entanet International Ltd	DDR	53.69		Broadband TH
03/04/2020	Groundforce Ltd	008019	840.00		008019
08/04/2020	Peninsula Business Services Lt	DD	21.60		EAP
14/04/2020	Groundforce Ltd	DDR	729.00		DDR
14/04/2020	Opus Energy	DDR	946.28		Gas TH
15/04/2020	Shropshire Council	DDR	858.75		Rates 20/21
23/04/2020	PG Skips Ltd	008020	75.17		008020
23/04/2020	PG Skips Ltd	008021	65.57		008021
23/04/2020	David Preston	008022	700.00		008022
23/04/2020	E.on Energy Solutions Ltd	008023	261.18		008023
23/04/2020	NABMA	008024	358.00		008024
24/04/2020	All Together Ellesmere	008025	60.00		008025
24/04/2020	Ellesmere Men in Sheds	008026	200.00		008026
24/04/2020	Ellesmere Youth Project	008027	100.00		008027
24/04/2020	Ellesmere Sculpture Initiative	008028	100.00		008028
24/04/2020	Ellesmere Bowling Club	008029	200.00		008029
24/04/2020	Fizzgigs	00031	200.00		00031
24/04/2020	2nd Ellesmere Brownies	008032	250.00		008032
24/04/2020	Ellesmere In Bloom Committee	008033	250.00		008033
24/04/2020	Oswestry Community Action	008034	250.00		008034
24/04/2020	Ellesmere Town Scout Group	008035	250.00		008035
27/04/2020	EE & T-Mobile	DDR	23.08		Clerks Mobile
27/04/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	665.89		ADMINISTRATION
27/04/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	278.57		ADMINISTRATION
27/04/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	520.15		ADMINISTRATION
27/04/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	335.62		ADMINISTRATION
27/04/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	1,133.07		ADMINISTRATION
27/04/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	712.26		ADMINISTRATION
27/04/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	118.98		ADMINISTRATION
27/04/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	278.57		ADMINISTRATION
27/04/2020	ADMINISTRATION	FASTERPAY	2,156.84		ADMINISTRATION
29/04/2020	Shrops Assoc of Local Councils	008036	1,527.63		008036
29/04/2020	Shropshire Council	008037	1,596.80	008037	Shropshire Council
30/04/2020	Peninsula Business Services Lt	DDR	208.39		Business Safe / Employment Ser
	Total Payments		16,425.67		

6/7/20

Date: 30/06/2020

Time: 08:07

Ellesmere Town Council 2019/2020

Cemetery Working Group

List of Payments made between 01/05/2020 and 31/05/2020

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Authorized Ref	Transaction Detail
04/05/2020	Bowenson & Watson	FASTERPAY	82.50	FasterPay	Management Fee
14/05/2020	Groundforce Ltd	SO	1,345.00	SO	Ground Maintenence Contract
19/05/2020	British Gas	DDR	17.00	DDR	Boiler Cover
		Total Payments	1,444.50		

6/7/20

Date: 30/06/2020

Time: 08:05

Ellesmere Town Council 2019/2020

Cemetery Working Group

List of Payments made between 01/04/2020 and 30/04/2020

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Authorized Ref	Transaction Detail
03/04/2020	Shropshire Council	000102	935.63	000102	Shropshire Council
03/04/2020	Bowenson & Watson	FASTERPAY	82.50		12.5% Management Fee
14/04/2020	Groundforce Ltd	SO	1,345.00		Ground Maintenance Contract
20/04/2020	British Gas	DDR	17.00		Boiler Cover Cemetery Lodge
		Total Payments	2,380.13		

6/7/20