



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DIRECT SERVICES COMMITTEE OF AYLESBURY TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, 5 CHURCH STREET, AYLESBURY, ON WEDNESDAY 18th DECEMBER 2019 AT 7 P.M.

Present: Cllr S Jarvis (Chairman)
Cllr C Adams
Cllr T Hunter-Watts
Cllr A Huxley
Cllr G Moore
Cllr T Dixon (substitute for Cllr W Raja)

Officers in attendance: Mr K Gray (Town Clerk)
Mr M Broughton (Deputy Town Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES

To note and agree apologies for absence

RESOLVED: To accept apologies from Cllr M White (work commitments), Cllr J Puddefoot (family commitments) and Cllr W Raja (family commitments).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3. MINUTES

To receive, accept and sign the Minutes of 4th September 2019.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be duly agreed and signed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

To receive any matters arising from the Minutes/report from the Clerk

The Clerk reported that there were no matters arising.

5. DEVOLVED SERVICES

To receive an update from the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk gave a verbal update and indicated that presently all was running well. A member asked about responsibility for cleaning a traffic sign in the Market Square as it was filthy and hard to read. The Town Clerk confirmed that the sign in question was the responsibility of Bucks County Council to maintain and they should be contacted in this regard.

6. CEMETERY

- a) To receive a report and consider and agree proposals concerning cemetery fees in 2021/21.

A report detailing proposed an inflationary increase across the board had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Chairman indicated that the fees were reviewed regularly and recommended to increase by an inflationary 3% across the

board. Town Clerk reminded members that in comparison with other local burial authorities the fees charged by ATC remained relatively low. Indications were that burial figures had reduced in Tring Road cemetery this year and there could be a correlation with the new crematoria established in Watermead and Bierton earlier this year. A member asked about the designation of “non-residents” and in response was advised that only residents of Aylesbury parish paid the residents fees and that people from adjacent parishes such as Fairford Leys and Berryfields, for example, were classed as non-residents who were charged the appropriate fee to be buried in the cemetery.

RESOLVED : It was proposed by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Moore that the schedule of fees recommended in the report be adopted from 1 April 2020 and on being put to the vote there were 5 For and 1 Against, thus the motion was duly carried.

- b) To receive a verbal report from the Town Clerk regarding works on cemetery chapels.

The Town Clerk explained that progress had been hampered due to the conditions of the roofs being worse than previously anticipated. The proposal for replacement on a like-for-like basis had been abandoned due to the high costs that would be incurred and instead planning consent was now being sought to replace with plasterboard panelling, for which an architects report was presently awaited. This would then be submitted to AVDC for approval. Members noted the position.

7. ALLOTMENTS

To receive an update on allotment availability.

A report had been circulated in advance of the meeting which included information on occupancy rates and fees charged, and plot availability per site. A member drew attention to the relatively high number of vacant plots at Bedgrove and asked what could be done to encourage take-up. The Town Clerk indicated that over the years there were always more vacancies at Bedgrove than the other sites the Council maintained and previous attempts to promote the Bedgrove site had included use of social media, the Aylesbury Town Matters magazine and offering plots to non-residents of the parish.

The report was noted.

8. TRANSFER OF LAND AT ELEANOR GARDENS, AYLESBURY

To receive a verbal report from the Town Clerk, consider and make appropriate decision(s)

- Registration of land
- Tree planting and future maintenance

The Town Clerk apprised members of the history of this particular site and following significant research of the history of the site and more latterly a meeting with local residents and liaison with Aylesbury Vale DC. It was suggested that ATC seek to register the land and to provide grounds maintenance in future, along with some tree planting to enhance amenity value and help align to the Council’s corporate Climate Change agenda.

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Hunter-Watts, seconded by Cllr Dixon and on being put to the vote carried unanimously that Aylesbury Town Council would seek to register the land at Eleanor Gardens and also provide tree planting and grounds maintenance at the site in future.

9. TOWN HALL

- a) To receive and consider a proposal to review room booking fees in 2020.

A report was circulated in advance of the meeting.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the last fees review had been undertaken in summer 2017 and a further review was now timely. Comparison with other room providers in Aylesbury showed that the existing ATC rates were very low, yet demand was sustained and this realised a modest income stream to the Council through hire of the Council Chamber. Members discussed issues including flexibility of room hire and the different fees options available.

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Moore that option 4.3 of the report be approved which would see an across the board 10% increase (rounded) for all new bookings in the Council Chamber from 1 January 2020, and on being put to the vote there were 4 For, 1 Against and 1 abstention, thus the motion was duly carried.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the date of the next meeting was scheduled as Wednesday 19th March 2020 at 7p.m.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.33 p.m.

Chairman _____ Date _____