



Glastonbury Town Council

Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 24th March 2020 at 7pm

- PRESENT:** Councillors S Barnet, J Cousins, S Henderson, S Roney-Dougal and I Tucker.
- APOLOGIES:** Cllrs Browne, Coles, Cottle, Keery, MacDougall, Michell, Mutch, Outten, Prior, Smyth.
- IN ATTENDANCE:** The Town Clerk
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198. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

199. FOLLOW THE ADVICE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS AND DELEGATE CERTAIN POWERS TO THE TOWN CLERK WITH CONSULTATION WITH THE MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR

The outbreak of the Coronavirus – Covid 19 pandemic has necessitated the isolation of individuals and enforced periods at home, particularly for the sick, those at high risk, including those aged over 70 years of age. It is most unlikely that for the foreseeable future, public meetings will be permitted, or gatherings of people, including councils. Until the legislation has been amended permitting a council to conduct its business electronically, there is still a requirement for a quorum of five councillors to be present at a suitably advertised and recorded meeting. At the guidance of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), there is a requirement to delegate certain powers to the clerk and key councillors to enable the business of the council to continue.

As directed by the National Association of Local Councils

Proposer Cllr Henderson, seconder Cllr Ronay-Dougal

Due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and government advice, this council resolves that:

(a) As the council is unable to meet the Clerk be given delegated authority to progress all ongoing matters and projects and authorise all regular payments and incur expenditure in line with the council's agreed budget.

(b) Any decisions taken under resolution (a) above will be taken, whenever possible, in consultation with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the council and the relevant Committee Chair (if appropriate). A record of all decisions and expenditure incurred under delegated authority will be kept and reported to members **monthly**.

(c) The authority to decide the council's response to planning applications be delegated to the Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the Planning Committee and Mayor and Deputy

Mayor of the council. Whenever possible, members of the Planning Committee will be informed of applications out for consultation and will be invited to submit comments to the Clerk.

(d) The provisions outlined in resolutions (a-c) above will override any requirements to the contrary in the council's standing orders, financial regulations or terms of reference.

(e) In the interest of staff, volunteers and public safety the Glastonbury Information Centre will be closed to the public. The town councils desk at the rear of the premises will remain operable as it is possible to work safely in isolation of others.

(f) In line with government advice, staff will be encouraged to work from home.

(g) Should the Clerk be unable to perform his duties, **the Clerk is to explore alternative arrangements to ensure the continuity of the proceedings of the council.** (*Subsequent to the meeting, Jane Czorinj has agreed that she would step up to act temporarily as the Town Clerk if required*)

(h) The Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, may incur expenditure from the financial reserves to the maximum of £500 for each request where such expenditure will help the community's efforts to support those in need of assistance or prevent social isolation.

(i) Should government allow councils to meet virtually (**either online or telephone conferencing**), the council will take all reasonable steps to facilitate this.

The emboldened additions to the original motion were added and the motion was unanimously **AGREED**.

200. FORMALLY SUSPEND ALL COUNCIL MEETINGS UNTIL TUESDAY 14TH APRIL 2020

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Barnet, seconded by Cllr Tucker and unanimously **RESOLVED** to suspend all council meetings until 14th April and to review this decision at the time when agendas would normally be compiled and distributed.

201. DISCUSS THE APPROPRIATE WAYS THAT SUPPORT CAN BE PROVIDED TO THE WIDER COMMUNITY

The Clerk informed the meeting of the tremendous amount of work the community volunteers have put into supporting residents of Glastonbury. In particular, Tanya Moore, Mark Swann and Karma McKenzie who have led a support programme which has been very well received. The Town Council so far has:

1. Provided funding to cover the costs of printing the recently distributed Covid 19 information leaflet.
2. Purchased and assembled Personal ID together with lanyards for volunteers to be appropriately recognised.
3. Agreed to lend a vehicle and driver to distribute medicines and shopping.
4. Entered into discussions on the future use of the Town Hall kitchen and other facilities in support of the community volunteers.
5. Liaised with the police to assist where possible that community safety is upheld.]

Cllr Tucker suggested a number of initiatives which were discussed and actions recorded, including:

- a. Making available the electoral roll to the community volunteers to assist them in planning the distribution of services. (*The clerk has subsequently been informed that this information is already known and access to the electoral roll is not required.*)
- b. Using a coloured card system of window display, each day at a specific time, a volunteer could walk defined streets and if a red card was showing, make contact with the resident. *Subsequently, this idea has been discussed with the Police, Somerset Community Foundation and the Glastonbury Covid-19 voluntary organisers. Each have recommended that this suggestion is not introduced for a number of reasons including:*
 - i. *The proposal is for volunteers to walk the street each day, a crisis may happen at any time.*
 - ii. *Displaying a red sign could invoke a response from someone who is seeking to scam the resident during their time of need*
 - iii. *It was felt that every residence now has a contact number, email address of local volunteers who can support if required.*
- c. SW in Bloom having been cancelled, Cllr Tucker suggested that the flower beds and troughs continue to be planted out, not the hanging baskets. In the event that we are committed to the plants, residents are to be invited to apply for plants to beautify their own gardens, which can later possibly be judged. (*Awaiting outcome of discussions between the Bloom committee chair and Sweetacre Nurseries*)
- d. Glastonbury Festival has access to numerous sink units, sufficient in number to place at strategic location throughout the town. Cllr Tucker considered that a sink unit at the entrance to each supermarket would provide a means for everyone entering the store to wash their hands. The Clerk was asked to contact each supermarket to determine their enthusiasm for this initiative.
 - a. (*It has proved incredibly difficult to manage a conversation with each store manager. Of those who have been contactable, there was no enthusiasm for this initiative, stating that they are focussed on distribution. Interestingly, concerns have been raised about the cleanliness of the ATM's and the handles of the trolleys used by shoppers, something that as a council, we may be able to address this concern*).
 - b. *Subsequently, the Clerk has been informed that if any infrastructure is put in place that is considered more than temporary, there may be a requirement to retain that facility in the long-term. Bristol Water have advised the use of bowsers to provide temporary water supplies.*
- e. A newsletter will enable the sharing of information. Items that are to be considered for inclusion in the first edition include:
 - i. Endorsement that the first correspondence was legitimate and not a scam (as some have thought)
 - ii. Information on how to recognise a legitimate community volunteer
 - iii. Information from the police on new Covid 19 scams.
- f. Information on Glastonbury's Care homes, particularly key contacts, email addresses etc is to be collated by the GTC admin staff.
- g. The closure of most of the free food distribution points has left a void in support for this section of the community. The clerk was asked to explore ways of identifying the organisers of each food distribution point and hopefully be able to compile information on those who are most in need.
- h. Mark Swann from the Glastonbury Covid 19 Community Voluntary group submitted a number of points which the Town Councillors considered including:
 - i. Outreach to difficult to reach people. *The GTC admin team are contacting each of the organisations that provide prepared food in Glastonbury in anticipation of identifying those who are most vulnerable.*

- ii. Remove benches. Having discussed this and concluded that the benches are owned by Mendip DC and with the concern of displacement, this suggestion was not supported. *(subsequently, the Police have instructed the benches be removed, which extended to the GTC owned benches near the bus stop.*
- iii. Provision of facemasks – There is a world shortage of appropriate face masks. Where possible, the council will seek to obtain a supply.
- iv. Disposable gloves – *A supply has been identified and gloves purchased*
- v. Disinfection of ATM's *Subsequently, the Clerk has arranged the purchase of a knapsack sprayer and street furniture, including bus stops, bins, remaining seats and ATM's are being regularly disinfected.*
- vi. Disinfection of high transit areas – see above
- vii. Signs of appropriate distancing – *These have been produced and given to the police for distribution and display*

202. OTHER ITEMS OF REPORT

1. Cllr Barnet requested that regular briefing notes were distributed to all councillors. The Clerk informed that he intends to update councillors on the activities of each committee. As there are now no formal meetings, the Clerk was asked to also distribute these to all councillors.
2. The Clerk informed that he has studied the recently announced legislation regarding the reimbursement of furloughed workers. It is considered that as part of the activities of the council include hospitality and meeting room hire, we may qualify for 80% government refund for salaries for two staff. Proposed by Cllr Henderson, seconded by Cllr Tucker and unanimously **AGREED** that the Clerk be asked to inform the Responsible Financial Officer of the opportunity and to discuss with staff.
3. SW in Bloom event has been cancelled for the year. The Clerk is to inform those who have purchased hanging baskets that they will not be displayed this year. Refunds will have to be arranged. Further, the Clerk is to contact the Chairman (Gerald Morgan) asking him to liaise with Sweetacre Nurseries.
4. Cllr Barnet informed that she has some experience of administering aid in times of emergency and asked that either Sarah Marks, or Sarah Hallam contacts her for a discussion on items that may prove helpful.
5. Cllr Henderson informed that he was aware that the Post Office is to close on Thursday 26th March. He was asked to visit the PO and speak with the proprietor to understand where the next nearest facility is located.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

Signed _____

Worshipful Mayor