



**ATTLEBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL**

Town Hall, Queens Square, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 2AF  
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**Minutes of the Virtual meeting of the Attleborough Town Council  
Held on Monday, 11 January 2021 at 7.00 pm**

**Present:**

Cllr P Leslie - presiding  
Cllr K Montague      Cllr B Bulmer      Cllr J Ellis      Cllr V Dale  
Cllr T Taylor      Cllr E Tyrer      Cllr A Westby      Cllr Grave  
Cllr W Loades      Cllr J Roper      Cllr A Busk      Cllr B Cousins  
Cllr T Crouch

In attendance – Anne Willett – CEO's Assistant (minute taker)

**104.20) Mayor's Welcome** - Cllr Leslie welcomed and wished everyone a Happy New Year and stated how unfortunate it was to be in yet another lockdown. A huge thank you was extended to all involved in the vaccine rollout.

**105.20) Apologies for absence** - None received

**106.20) Declarations of Interest**

**a) To receive and consider declarations of interest in items below –**

Cllr Taylor and Cllr Ellis - Agenda item 7a payment - Christmas Lights  
Cllr Roper - Agenda item 7a payment - Councillor training health & well being

**b) To receive and consider dispensations in respect of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests –**

Cllr Taylor declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 13b Judicial Review

**107.20) Resident's Questions**

**RESOLVED** that the meeting be adjourned to allow the Mayor to address questions submitted from various residents. (See Resident's Questions Notes attached.)

**108.20a) Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 7 December 2020**

On the motion of Cllr Taylor, seconded by Cllr Grave, it was

**RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council meeting held on 7 December 2020.

**108.20b) Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 14 December 2020** – noted for information

**ACTION: CEO**

**109.20) Planning Matters –**

**109.20a) Planning Applications –**

On the motion of Cllr Westby, seconded by Cllr Montague, it was

**RESOLVED** to approve and accept the following recommendations already agreed and submitted prior to meeting: -

### **110.20) Financial Matters**

#### **a) To authorise payments –**

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Bulmer, it was **RESOLVED** to accept and approve the following payment list dated 11 January 2021 Total £11,746.47

#### **b) To agree direct debits –**

On the motion of Cllr Loades, seconded by Cllr Cousins, it was **RESOLVED** to approve and accept the direct debit list dated January 2021 Total £ 24,532.78

#### **c) To receive Income –**

On the motion of Cllr Bulmer, seconded by Cllr Montague, it was **RESOLVED** to approve and accept the income list for December 2020 Total £180.00

#### **d) Petty Cash payments –** Noted for information

#### **e) Income & Expenditure Report November 2020 –** Noted for information

**ACTION: CEO**

### **111.20) Precept Request for 2021/22 -** for resolution

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Bulmer, it was **RESOLVED** that we do not increase the precept for the Year 2021/22

**ACTION: PL**

### **112.20) Correspondence**

#### **a) Residents proposal for Decoy Common, provide gate or stile to improve access for dog walkers –**

As Decoy Common is owned by the Charities Commission and the Town Council rents from the Church Cllr Tyrer will contact Revd Jackson and report back. In the long term could become part of the ANP and be community led. In short term suggest Grounds staff look at the ditches and Cllr Westby will look to see what can be done now to improve access.

**ACTION: ET/AW**

#### **b) Larry Gray's funfair annual visit request Tuesday 4 May – Monday 10 May 2021-**

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Cousins, it was **RESOLVED** to approve providing the relevant Covid restrictions are applied at the time of event

### **113.20) Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent**

- Coronavirus National Lockdown - A reminder to residents the Corona Virus Help Line 01953 686538 is still active for the vulnerable there is no need to put themselves at risk there are plenty of volunteers helping out. Cllr Leslie passed on thanks for all that do the excellent work.
  - Breckland Council have grants available on their website for regenerating local business
  - Concerns regarding Lidl not controlling numbers of people allowed in Attleborough store, Cllr Leslie will make representation on this to Breckland.
  - Councillor Co-Option Procedure is about transparency, if members of the public would like to apply for the Councillor vacancy, information will be posted on our website under News section and on social media
- On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Grave, it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the new Councillor Co-Option Procedure and proceed to advertise the vacancy with the closure date of Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

**114.20) Public Participation**

Members of the public may now participate in the meeting and speak in this item. The registration details will be available on the website.

<https://attleboroughtc.org.uk/>

**115.20) Exclusion of Press and Public**

On the motion of Cllr Leslie, seconded by Cllr Ellis, it was

**RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting under Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 given the sensitive nature of the business to be discussed.

Member of staff left meeting

**116.20) Update from Investigation Committee**

**a) Investigation Report**

Cllr Leslie gave an update

Cllr Taylor declared her pecuniary interest in the Judicial Review Item 13b and left the meeting.

**b) Judicial Review**

Cllr Leslie gave an update

Meeting closed at 8:42pm

### **Notes of Residents' Questions**

The Chairman read out questions, previously submitted and responded as below: -

It was agreed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Participation to provide to list the full questions sent to the council as some had only been particularly raised in the meeting. See below:

#### **Question 1**

Can ATC get information on where Covid vaccinations will take place? I have only seen distant Poringland referred to earlier on the Attleborough Surgeries website. This is a nonsense with much closer (time/distance) hubs at Thetford, Cringleford, Bowthorpe or N & N. And why not Attleborough? The flu jabs system for us oldies worked brilliantly.

A) Cllr Leslie confirmed he had been in communications with Breckland Council and a site in Attleborough should be finalised shortly

#### **Question 2**

Thank you for getting back to me. I would like to ask a question, or rather for your help. I witnessed a very upsetting situation for the second time recently. As the shop is in our town I wanted to bring it to your attention. Shopkeepers demanding for customers to wear lanyards to say they are exempt from wearing masks in their shop and when not proved, removed from the shop. One customer rightly said she doesn't need to wear a lanyard to show my disability, she is quite right, but was still asked to leave the shop. I have double checked on this and the doctor say you don't have to have proof of this. In this day and age, I think it's difficult and degrading that I witnessed this going on, not just once but twice. Could you please look into this to stop this discrimination?

A) There is a recommendation to wear a lanyard where possible to be easily identified but it is not law. As a Town Council we cannot instruct shops but we can report back to Breckland Council. We realise there are anxious members of the public who see people without a mask or lanyard but we also want to prevent discrimination, it is a delicate balancing act.

#### **Question 3**

Should Mr Crouch attend this evenings meeting I would like to direct the questions contained below to him and would ask that he makes a verbal response during the meeting.

As these questions will be raised during public participation, I would say that I am making these representations as an Attleborough resident and not as a councillor.

#### **(1) Is it true that Mr Crouch's only intention behind attending this evening is to block his seat from becoming vacant?**

Mr Crouch has shown no interest in Attleborough, it's residents, community or council since losing the role of Mayor back in July 2020. To my knowledge he has not attended any council meetings, he has not represented the council in any way and he has not engaged in any council correspondence or decision making.

It is my understanding that Mr Crouch also maintained his absence by falling silent through the investigation process and ghosted any attempts made to contact him in relation to this matter, despite being one of the key instigators and leading the council down a path that has resulted in tens of thousands of taxpayers pounds being spent.

**(2) In what way does Mr Crouch therefore believe he has shown accountability to the public he serves?**

It is well known that if a councillor fails to attend meetings without adequate apologies (for instance serious ongoing illness) for a period of six months they are automatically disqualified from holding their position.

I personally find it extremely coincidental that during his term as Mayor Mr Crouch did not miss a single full council meeting and yet he instantly became absent following the election of a new chairman in July and furthermore, that he is coincidentally back again and able to attend, on what would be the last opportunity to avoid disqualification.

This seems to be a clear, undeniable attempt to block a seat from becoming vacant, by a "councillor" who has failed to represent his constituents and community in any way for a period of six months, and who clearly has no interest in the role and that has abandoned the town entirely in its greatest moment of need.

**(3) As a result will Mr Crouch kindly consider handing in his resignation to allow someone committed to the role the opportunity to fill the seat that he has left empty for so long?**

A) Cllr Crouch stated he had not attended previous meetings as they clashed with his treatment.

Question 4

Cllr Crouch has not attended any meetings of Attleborough Town Council since he lost his position as Mayor on Monday 20th July 2020. On the 20th of this month, he will have been absent from his duties for a whole 6 months. He was elected to represent the community and for the last six months has failed to do so. What procedures are in place to ensure Cllr Crouch either meets his responsibilities as a Councillor or steps aside for someone who is willing to do so?

A) Cllr Crouch stated he had already given his reply.

Question 5

With the tender tab not working on the town council's website, how does the town council decide who should be approached for a quotation.

A) Cllr Leslie feels the Council is exposed as it does not have a robust transparent tendering process, this will be addressed and hope to have for next Council meeting being held in February.