

Tuesday 22nd November 2022

The Trinity Centre

7:00pm

Present

Cllrs Cairns, Allan, Allen, Briggs, Cooper, Cummins, Griffin, Hatton, Mackey, Millichope, Mosson, Parkin, Parmar, Perks, Pocock, Puri, Raut, Roberts, Scott and Yip.

In Attendance

Olive O'Sullivan—Chief Executive Officer and Mary Watkins-Finance Manager.

There were 5 members of the public and 1 member of the press present.

Three questions had been submitted for public question time.

Marje Bridle asked what progress the Town Council were making in setting up a public facing office in the Town Centre to allow the public to access information and signposting.

The CEO responded that the Town Council is registered with estate agents and in discussions with Birmingham City Council (BCC) to try and identify suitable office accommodation but had not yet secured appropriate accommodation. The CEO also noted that Town Council staff already respond to a large amount of queries from residents in relation to services provided by BCC, including; highways, street services, refuse collection, housing, benefits, schools etc. and that any Town Council office in the town centre would not seek to replace the function of the previous BCC Neighbourhood Office that provided signposting and support for residents for BCC services.

Jay Chan asked if the Town Council would actively work with bus companies, BCC and the West Midlands Mayor to raise attention that bus services and public transport, needs to be massively improved.

Cllr Parkin responded that delivery of the Sutton Coldfield Masterplan is being led by the Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Regeneration Partnership, which is led by the Town Council and includes Birmingham City Council and West Midlands Combined Authority amongst others. The ongoing transport commission, managed through the partnership, is actively considering public transport and active modes access to the town centre, and how it needs to be improved to meet the needs of the Town as a whole. He also noted that the West Midlands Mayor, Andy Street was working to re-open the Sutton Park railway line, and is working with National Express West Midlands to freeze fares until 2025 and that there is a scheme called WorkWise which offers free bus travel to newly employed people and apprentices.

Mike Phillips asked what pressure the Council has put on BCC to get the Boldmere Gate car park opened up, as it was promised as a legacy on conclusion of the Commonwealth Games and asked if the car park was lying idle awaiting BCC's push for parking charges to be installed.

The CEO confirmed that she had contacted BCC and they had responded that, "Work on the installation of infrastructure and items not needed during Games-time has been carried out and is continuing. We also continue to work with Birmingham 2022 on the handover of the car park. We apologise for any inconvenience this is causing, but in the long-term these works will bring significant benefits to the Park and also provide the infrastructure that will enable other major events to be staged in future."



60 Apologies for Absence

The CEO reported apologies from Cllrs Pears, K Ward, S Ward and Wood.

Resolved to accept the apologies

61 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were declared.

62 Mayors Announcements

The Mayor reported her attendance at the official opening of Hamilton Medical warehouse in Minworth, opening this year's Sutton Coldfield Society of Artists Autumn Art Exhibition at the Town Hall, attending a tour of Ark Community Church in Mere Green, visiting Sutton Coldfield United Reformed Church to mark Occupational Therapy week and attended the Boldmere Christmas Light Switch On to deliver a Christmas message.

The Mayor also reported her attendance at the Remembrance Service at Holy Trinity Parish Church and parading to the War Memorial to lay a wreath and remember the contribution of British and Commonwealth military and civilian serviceman and woman.

63 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18th October 2022 be signed as a true record.

64 Matters Arising

In response to a question from Cllr Pocock, the CEO confirmed that the Community Engagement Officer had commenced discussions with the Youth Vision Network and an update on the Youth Panel will be brought to Council in spring next year.

65 Questions from Members

Cllr Pocock asked the total amount of interest that had been received from the Town Council's investments over the most recent 12 month period.

The CEO responded that interest received is reported to Strategy and Resources Committee on the 'Performance against Budget' reports each quarter. There had been £2,572 received in 2021/22, as reported on the annual return and £19,753 had been received this financial year to date, between April - October 2022.

66 Minutes of Committees

a) Planning and Highways held on 1st November 2022

Resolved that:

The Stage one study on the development of a Vision and Active Travel Strategy for the Town be approved as a basis for progressing the necessary further work;



- The study be formally sent to Birmingham City Council (BCC) and the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) requesting that both of those authorities support the Strategy and its further development;
- A working group of Councillors be set up to consider and make recommendations on the short, medium and longer-term priorities for delivery for inclusion in the next stages of the work;
- That further local public consultation be undertaken as appropriate as schemes are identified and worked up in more detail West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) requesting that both of those authorities support the Strategy and its further development.

Resolved to approve a maximum contribution of £32,018 towards the total costs of improving crossing facilities at the Boldmere Gate entrance to Sutton Park from the Town Council's Road Safety Measures Budget.

Resolved to approve a financial contribution of £8,107.45 from the Vesey Ward Community Infrastructure Levy funds towards the total costs of improving crossing facilities at the Boldmere Gate Entrance to Sutton Park.

b) Amenities, Leisure and Community Services held on 9th November 2022

Resolved to approve the Health and Wellbeing Roadmap.

c) Strategy and Resources held on 15th November 2022

Resolved to approve that idverde be appointed to deliver the Town Ranger Service for the next two years at an annual cost of £245,758.95, with a proposed start date of 3rd February 2023.

Resolved to approve that idverde be appointed to deliver remedial work to the perimeter planting and provision and planting of spring and summer bedding at Vesey Gardens at an annual cost of £22,680, on completion of the transfer of Vesey Gardens from Birmingham City Council.

67 Members Allowances

Resolved to approve the recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel, namely:

- a) A Basic Allowance of £1,100 per annum should be made for all Sutton Coldfield Town Councillors in order to cover necessary expenses. The allowances should be applied with effect from May 2022.
- b) A Town Councillor should be entitled to claim a mileage allowance or a reimbursement of actual travel expenses outside the Sutton Coldfield area, wholly and necessarily incurred when undertaking the approved duties as set out in Section 5 of the Panel's report.
- c) The mileage rates paid should be in line with those applicable to officers in Birmingham City Council and receipts should be provided to support any claim for directly incurred expenses unless they would ordinarily not be available or their provision was disproportionate to the amount claimed.
- d) A Town Councillor should be entitled to claim reimbursement of reasonable subsistence costs that were wholly and necessarily incurred when attending as the authorised representative of the Council at a meeting, conference or seminar that was held outside the Sutton Coldfield area.



- e) A Town Councillor should be entitled to claim reimbursement of reasonable carers' expenses wholly and necessarily incurred when undertaking the range of approved duties specified in Section 5.

Resolved to approve that the basic allowance of £1,100 should remain in place for four years.

Resolved to approve that there is no change to the allowance of £6,215 that is paid to the Mayor, as a contribution towards the expenses incurred as Town Mayor and for travel expenses outside of the Parish, subsistence and carers costs to be reimbursed as per the recommendations set out in section 2.1 (b), (c), (d) and (e) above.

Resolved Council is recommended to approve that the CEO, in consultation with the Leader, be delegated to make appropriate arrangements for payment of members' allowances in line with His Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC) Rules & Regulations.

68 Use of Chief Executive Officer's Delegated Powers

No use of delegated powers was reported.

69 Accounts for Payment

Resolved to note the delegated payments, approve the accounts for payment and appoint Cllrs Allan and Raut to complete authorisation.

70 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 14th December 2022.

The meeting ended at 7:28pm.