

Town Council Meeting
15 July 2021

Present: Councillors Dodson, G Eccles, J Eccles, Hardacre, Hird, Hirst, Kenyon, Middleton, Mitchell, Pringle, A Westmorland, G Westmorland, Wilson, Womersley and the town clerk.

10 members of the public were in attendance.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting a minute's silence was held in memory of those who have lost their lives during the pandemic.

117 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All members were in attendance.

118 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations other than those already stated in members' respective register of interests.

119 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Members of the public raised the following matters:

- The number of meals delivered by the council during the pandemic, to which the chairman replied approximately 11,000.
- That council meetings should also be held on Zoom, to which the chairman replied that the matter is on the agenda for this meeting.
- Whether the youth club will re-start, to which the town clerk confirmed that it would re-start in September.

120 TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

Resolved that the respective minutes of the council meetings held on 20 May and 17 June 2021 and the extraordinary council meetings held on 26 May, 10 June and 8 July 2021 be approved.

121 COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Resolved that the minutes of the following meetings and their respective sub-committees be adopted:

Committee	Date
Leisure and Recreation	17 June 2021
Finance	1 July 2021
Policy and Planning	8 July 2021

122 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Resolved that the payment of accounts as approved at the Finance Committee meetings held on 22 April and 1 July 2021 be approved.

123 CASUAL VACANCY

The town clerk confirmed the casual vacancy in the Hemsworth south ward due to the resignation of Cllr Bugge.

124 YLCA REPRESENTATIVE

Resolved that Cllr J Eccles be a voting representative to the Yorkshire Local Councils Association.

125 LIVESTREAMING COUNCIL MEETINGS

Resolved that a trial of livestreaming via Facebook take place for the next council meeting on 19 August 2021, after which a review will be held.

126 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME - REVIEW

Resolved that the formal, dedicated public participation part of council meetings will remain in place but members of the public will be allowed to address committee meetings via the chair.

127 SUB-COMMITTEES

Resolved that the Finance sub-Committee will remain in place but it will meet at 7pm prior to scheduled council/committee meetings.

128 DAYTIME COUNCIL/COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Resolved that further to minute no. 127, all council/committee meetings will take place in the evenings with the earliest start time being 7pm.

129 NO CONFIDENCE MOTION - CHAIRMAN

Cllr Hird requested a recorded vote on her motion of no confidence in the chairman.

For:

Cllrs Dodson, Hardacre, Hird, Middleton, Mitchell and A Westmorland.

Against:

Cllrs J Eccles, G Eccles, Hirst, Kenyon, Pringle, Wilson and Womersley.

Abstentions:

Cllr G Westmorland.

Resolved that the motion of no confidence failed.

130 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR – HEMSWORTH PRECINCT

Resolved that Cllr Womersley will look into this matter.

131 DIGITAL MEDIA SUPPORT – VOLUNTARY GROUPS

Resolved that a community links page be added to the council's website and community groups be invited to provide their contact information for publication on the page.

132 RAIL STRATEGY

The town clerk reported on correspondence from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority which confirmed it has no plans in its strategy for a railway station in Hemsworth.

Resolved that the information be noted.

133 HEMSWORTH FESTIVAL 2022

Resolved that the festival go ahead but with further details to be confirmed in due course.

134 PLANT MACHINERY

Resolved that this item be deferred.

135 HEMSWORTH WATER PARK

a) Putting the park into charitable trust

Resolved that legal advice be sought regarding a possible covenant.

b) The 'A' gate between the two lakes

Resolved that the gate be widened to enable motorized scooter access.

c) Request to hold a funfair

Resolved that the request to hold a funfair on the top field/overflow car park be approved.

136 COVID – GENERAL REVIEW OF COUNCIL OPERATIONS

Resolved that semi-permanent measures such as Perspex screens remain in place but all other restrictions have been lifted in accordance with government guidance, save for common sense social distancing.

137 HUMAN RESOURCES ADVISOR

Resolved that the services of Park Square Barristers and the Yorkshire Local Councils Association be retained for human resources advice.

138 SOCIAL MEDIA

Resolved that the matter of online vitriol be kept under review.

139 CODE OF CONDUCT TRAINING FOR COUNCILLORS

The town clerk confirmed that code of conduct training with the Yorkshire Local Councils Association has been arranged for 10 August 2021.

140 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

Resolved that in view of the confidential nature of business to be transacted, it is advisable, in the public interest, that the public and press be excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.

141 KIRKBY ROAD SPORTS COMPLEX

Resolved that:

- Decisions pertaining to the sports complex can only be taken by the council but updates can be reported at committee meetings.
- A briefing note outlining the potential outcomes be requested from Richard Buxton Solicitors.
- The advice of Richard Buxton Solicitors and Matthew Hutchings QC continue to be accepted and approved, and that they continue to be instructed accordingly.

142 STAFFING MATTERS

a) Online abuse of staff via social media

Resolved that the services of Lofthouse Solicitors be procured.

b) Three months' probationary review

Resolved that the three months' probationary review of the member of staff concerned be approved.

c) Sickness absence

The town clerk reported generally on the number of staff currently on sickness absence.

Resolved that:

- The town clerk's report be noted and approved.
- A referral be made to WMDC's occupational health unit.

143 HEMSWORTH WATER PARK

Resolved that the dumped rubbish investigation be discontinued.

The meeting closed at 21:05.