Town Council Meeting
23 March 2023

Present: Councillors Dodson, J Eccles, Hardacre, Hird, Hirst, Kenyon, McGinnies, Middleton, Moran, Morton and the town clerk.

Thirty-three members of the public were in attendance.

This meeting was simultaneously livestreamed and recorded via Zoom.

391 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs G Eccles, Pringle, A Westmorland, G Westmorland and Wilson.

Resolved that the respective reasons for absence be approved.

392 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
Cllr J Eccles declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 16 – "Special motion – Internal audit" and a pecuniary interest in agenda item 20b – "Hemsworth Water Park – Offer from Wakefield Council."

Cllrs Middleton and Moran each declared a conflict of interest in agenda item 35 – "Complaint."

393 RECORDED VOTES
Cllr Hird requested recorded votes on all agenda items.

Resolved that all items have a recorded vote.

394 TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS
Resolved that the respective minutes of the council meeting held on 2 February 2023 and the extraordinary council meeting held on 9 March 2023 be approved (unanimous).

395 COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS
Resolved that the minutes of the following meetings and their respective sub-committees be adopted (unanimous):

Committee	Date
Leisure and Recreation	2 March 2023
Finance	9 March 2023

396 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT
Resolved that the payment of accounts as approved at the Finance Committee meeting held on 9 March 2023 be approved (unanimous).

397 CORRESPONDENCE
The town clerk reported on correspondence in respect of the following:

a) Email from West End Terriers FC thanking the council for the waiving of grass pitch fees for the 2023-24 season.

Resolved that the correspondence be received (unanimous).

398 COMMUNITY GRANTS AND/OR ASSISTANCE

a) West End WMC
Resolved that West End WMC be awarded a grant of £500 to assist with the procurement of a defibrillator and that the council acts as its custodian, in accordance with section 1, Localism Act 2011 (unanimous).

b) West End Terriers FC
Resolved that the request to move the defibrillator at Cemetery Road changing rooms so that it is available 24/7 be approved (unanimous).

c) Community Foundation Wakefield District
Resolved that Community Foundation Wakefield District be awarded a grant of £500 to assist with its fuel poverty campaign, in accordance with section 1, Localism Act 2011 (unanimous).

399 HEMSWORTH WATER PARK - FUNFAIR
Resolved that the request to hold a funfair in the park at Easter from 13 to 16 April 2023 be approved, with the same terms/conditions as previous occasions but with a charge of £220 (unanimous).

400 WANNEVILLE ALLOTMENTS
Resolved to continue with the planning application and that the fencing at the entrance area be brought forward and thus return to its former position (unanimous).

401 WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY
Resolved that the whistleblowing policy be amended so that all such referrals are investigated by an external, specialist investigator (unanimous).

402 ANNUAL MEETINGS 2023
Resolved that the dates for the annual council meeting and the annual town meeting are respectively 18 May and 23 May 2023 (unanimous).

403 MONTHLY BINGO NIGHT
Resolved that the monthly bingo night be reaffirmed and that prizes be procured for a total of £100 (unanimous).

404 INVESTMENT STRATEGY
Resolved that the council's investment strategy remain the same in that any surplus funds be placed/invested with the CCLA property fund and/or CCLA deposit fund (unanimous).

405 FORENSIC AUDIT
Resolved that:

- A forensic audit will take place (unanimous).
- In conjunction with the Finance Committee chair and vice-chair, the town clerk be tasked with appointing a forensic accountant (unanimous).
- The period concerned is May 2019 to May 2020 (unanimous).
- The audit to examine all payments of £300 and above (unanimous).
- The audit to have an emphasis on expenditure at Hemsworth Water Park (unanimous).

406 SPECIAL MOTION – INTERNAL AUDITOR

Resolved that the town clerk be tasked with appointing a different internal auditor and that the scope of internal audit for 2022-23 be reaffirmed as the adequacy and effectiveness of; accounting records, system of internal control, risk assessment and wider internal control arrangements (unanimous).

407 PLANNING APPLICATION – LAND OFF KIRKBY ROAD

The town clerk reported that the planning application for the land off Kirkby Road, Hemsworth (ref/08/00006/OUT) was awaiting a decision from the planning authority.

Resolved that the town clerk's report be received and noted (unanimous).

408 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Members of the public raised the following matters:

- Declaration of members' interests regarding quotes for CCTV work.
- Soft play area in the café bar.
- Bodycam.

409 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 (unanimous).

410 HEMSWORTH WATER PARK (including the café bar)

a) Tenders received for the path resurfacing

The four tenders received were opened.

Resolved that the tenders be deferred for the new council to consider in due course (unanimous).

b) Offer from Wakefield Council

Due to her pecuniary interest, Cllr J Eccles took no part in this item.

Resolved that in the absence of the vice-chairman, Cllr Moran assume the chair for this item (unanimous).

Cllr Moran proposed that the offer from Wakefield Council be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Hird.

For:
Cllrs Dodson, Hardacre, Hird, Hirst, McGinnies, Middleton, Moran and Morton.

Against:
None.

Abstentions:
Cllr Kenyon.

Resolved that the offer from Wakefield Council be accepted.

At this juncture, Cllr Eccles resumed the chair.

c) Security – including the patio gate
Resolved that this matter be deferred for the new council to consider in due course (unanimous).

d) Bonfire night incident
The town clerk reported on an incident from bonfire night.

Resolved that a warning be issued to the person concerned (unanimous).

e) Investigation into dumped rubbish
Resolved that the town clerk be tasked with appointing an appropriate environmental contractor to test the soil at the area concerned for contaminants, with a resultant report for the council to consider (unanimous)

411 STAFFING MATTERS

a) 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 (unanimous).

b) Probationary periods
Resolved that the two respective six months probationary periods be approved (unanimous).

c) Tenancy
Cllr Middleton proposed that the legal advice to offer mediation with minimum terms for negotiation be accepted and implemented and that those attending mediation on behalf of the council be Cllrs Hird, McGinnies, Morton and the town clerk. This was seconded by Cllr Moran.

For:
Cllrs Dodson, Hardacre, Hird, McGinnies, Middleton, Moran and Morton.

Against:
Cllrs Eccles and Kenyon.

Abstentions:
Cllr Hirst.

Resolved that the legal advice to offer mediation with minimum terms for negotiation be accepted and implemented and that those attending mediation on behalf of the council be Cllrs Hird, McGinnies, Morton and the town clerk.

d) Staff structure
Resolved that the recommendations from the independent report be accepted and implemented (unanimous).

e) Grounds maintenance - drivers
Resolved that driving lessons be procured but with a claw back agreement (unanimous).

f) Request regarding the coronation
Resolved that the café/park be closed on 6 May 2023 so that staff can watch the coronation but with the appropriate annual leave deduction (unanimous).

g) Feedback from staff
Resolved that the feedback from staff be accepted (unanimous).

h) Councillors conduct with staff
The chairman commented on councillors' conduct with staff.

412 CCTV
Resolved that a routine check be conducted (unanimous).

413 LAND AT CLUB TERRACE, FITZWILLIAM
Resolved that this matter be deferred for the new council to consider in due course (unanimous).

414 FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR STATEMENT
The chairman commented on a statement made by the Finance Committee chairman on 9 March 2023.

415 COMPLAINT
Due to their respective conflicts of interest, Cllrs Middleton and Moran took no part in this item.

Cllr Hird proposed that the report's recommendations be accepted and implemented and that the person concerned be banned from attending all council/committee meetings for a period of two years (with effect from 31 January 2023). This was seconded by Cllr Dodson.

For:
Cllrs Dodson, Hardacre, Hird, McGinnies and Morton.

Against:
Cllrs Eccles, Hirst and Kenyon.

Abstentions:
None.

Resolved that the report's recommendations be accepted and implemented and that the person concerned be banned from attending all council/committee meetings for a period of two years (with effect from 31 January 2023).

The meeting closed at 21:10.