

Council
22 APRIL 2020

Present: Councillors: Tony Bevis, John Blackall, Toni Bradnum, Alan Britten, Chris Brown, Peter Burgess, Jonathan Chowen (Deputy Leader), Philip Circus, Paul Clarke, Roy Cornell, Christine Costin, Michael Croker, Leonard Crosbie, Ray Dawe (Leader), Brian Donnelly, Ruth Fletcher, Billy Greening, Frances Haigh, Tony Hogben, Nigel Jupp, Liz Kitchen, Lynn Lambert, Richard Landeryou, Gordon Lindsay, Tim Lloyd, John Milne, Colin Minto, Christian Mitchell, Mike Morgan, Godfrey Newman, Roger Noel, Bob Platt, Louise Potter, Josh Potts, Stuart Ritchie, Jack Saheid, Jim Sanson, David Skipp, Ian Stannard, Diana van der Klugt, Claire Vickers, Belinda Walters, Tricia Youtan and James Wright

CO/72 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 12th February 202 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CO/73 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

CO/74 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Development announced that the Planning and Building Control Services were working through the Covid 19 lockdown period. Both Planning Committees had worked well remotely, and the public had been effectively engaged. The number of new applications that had been received had declined, and worked had temporarily halted on some existing projects.

She went on to say that the consultation period for the Local Plan had closed.

CO/75 **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No questions relevant to the business of the meeting had been received.

CO/76 **DECISIONS ARISING FROM THE COVID-19 EMERGENCY**

The Leader reported that the COVID-19 emergency and the subsequent lockdown and associated recession was having a devastating impact on the lives of residents and businesses. The Government had required councils to carry out emergency action at considerable speed. The impact on communities had generated issues which required other fast decisions.

Governance of local authorities, specifically how we hold meetings, was based primarily on the 1972 Local Government Act. This required Councillors to be present in a room in order to vote. The regulations which allowed remote meetings came into effect on 10 April 2020. The report outlined, for noting, decisions made between 11 March 2020 and 10 April 2020 that had been made under the Head of Paid Services' delegations for an emergency.

The report asked Council's permission for some decisions around the lockdown and its impact that need making now.

The report told Council about matters outside the Council's control that would impact its finances and its longer term financial viability.

RESOLVED

That:

- i) The decisions made by the Chief Executive under his Head of Paid Service powers outlined in section 3.1 be noted;
- ii) continued free access to the Council's car parks until such time as the effect of the COVID-19 lockdown became sufficiently reduced to allow charging to resume, be approved ;
- iii) the Director of Corporate Resources be delegated, in consultation with the Leader as Cabinet Lead for Finance and Assets, the approval of the changes to Council's Discretionary Hardship Scheme for Council Tax to allocate of the Local Council Tax Hardship scheme grant fairly.
- iv) the Director of Communities, in consultation with the Deputy Leader as Cabinet Lead for Leisure and Culture be delegated any payment holiday for Places Leisure created by the closure of Horsham District Council's leisure centres by the Government.
- v) the financial position the Council finds itself in and the actions it may need to take in the current financial year and in setting its 2021/22 budget be noted.
- vi) The following amendments to the Constitution from 22 April 2020 until the end of the COVID-19 emergency be agreed:

- a. To allow meetings of the Council to be conducted remotely in line with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No.392.
- b. To authorise the Chief Executive (and Directors if the Chief Executive is not available) to cancel and to call meetings of Council and meetings of non-executive committees and sub-committees in consultation with the Council Leader, including cancelling meetings where there would be insufficient business for a meeting to take place.
- c. To agree to suspend the six-month rule in relation to Members attending meetings of the Council and the Committees on which they serve, pursuant to Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

CO/77 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

There were no Member's questions.

CO/78 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at 7pm having commenced at 6pm

CHAIRMAN