



**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON 22nd DECEMBER 2021
AT 7.30PM AT THE RUFUS CENTRE & VIA VIRTUAL ACCESS**

Present

Cllr J Dann (Chairman)
Cllr I Blazeby
Cllr R Shaw
Cllr H Hodges
Cllr J Gleave
Cllr D Toinko
Cllr M Platt
Cllr J Roberts
Cllr P Earles – attended remotely
Cllr G Mackey – attended remotely

Also present:

Rob McGregor – Town Clerk & Chief Executive - attended remotely
Stephanie Stanley – Corporate Services Manager

Members of the public - 0

5186. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted for the following Councillors:

Councillors Snape and Badham – unwell
Councillor Dodds – shielding
Councillor Thompson – attending a prior commitment
Councillor Lutley – had an operation the previous day

5187. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none declared.
- (b) Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none declared.

5188. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No items.

5189. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

(a) Scheme of Delegation – Town Council

Members were asked to consider the Town Council Scheme of Delegation. There were some concerns that due to the current situation with Covid that a lockdown of some form may be introduced in the New Year. The Scheme of Delegation had been amended to include a temporary addition which would allow the Council and its Committees the flexibility to conduct business should any lockdown be imposed.

The Chairman advised that he had spoken to the Mayor offline about the proposed amendments to the Scheme of Delegation as he thought the wording required the changes to be implemented, rather than allowing them to. He added that his view was to progress with face-to-face meetings if there were sufficient Councillors for a quorum and an Officer to service the meetings. The Chairman thought the suggested wording was too prescriptive. Councillor Shaw agreed that meetings should be held in person wherever possible.

The Town Clerk advised that guidance had been received from NALC and SLCC that as of last week, Officers should not attend meetings in person. This was guidance rather than an imposition. Members were informed that it would be straightforward for a slight amendment to be done to the proposed wording to say that remote meetings 'could' be done rather than 'should'.

Councillor Gleave asked what the mechanism was for judging when the Council could return to in person meetings. The Town Clerk stated this was a consensus that was required rather than to attend a meeting.

Councillor Toinko commented that he felt staff should not attend the in person meetings if there was guidance saying this and he mentioned their safety at work. He added that staff could be left in a position where they felt compelled to come to meetings in person if Councillors were quorate.

The Chairman believed that Committee Chairmen should be able to investigate holding meetings in person, but the current wording suggested on the Scheme of Delegations precluded this from happening.

The Council were advised that meetings needed to take place in person however there was an option to meet virtually and make recommendations, which would go to the first in person Council meeting for approval. The downside of this was that some decisions would be pending action.

It was **resolved** to accept the proposed changes to the Town Council Scheme of Delegations with a slight amendment to allow in person meetings to go ahead, should all factors allow this to happen.

The Chairman thanked Officers and Members for their hard work during the year.