**HALEWOOD TOWN COUNCIL**

A Meeting of the Town Council was held on Thursday 15th October 2020 (7.00 pm), the following Members were present:

PRESENT

COUNCILLORS

Cllr B Swann

(Chairman)

 Cllr K Dalton Cllr C Rose

 Cllr F Martin Cllr B Dunn

 Cllr Y Graves Cllr D Samuels

 Cllr A Lucock

**Also in attendance:**

G. Allen – Town Manager

Members of the public – 4.

**48. APOLOGIES**

None

**49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

None.

**50. PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no questions at Public Forum.

**51. MINUTES**

Agreed.

**It was unanimously RESOLVED:** That,

1. The minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 10 September 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

**52. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER**

The Town Manager gave a written update on the following items:

1. Town Council response to the Covid-19 Crisis:
2. Staffing
3. New Photocopier and contract
4. Community Engagement Working Group
5. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
6. Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)
7. Imminent Meetings

**Covid-19**

The Town Manager focused on the Covid-19 challenges faced by the council. He advised that the council is now in direct contact with Knowsley Public Health regarding its activities after the Liverpool City Region has been moved into the Tier 3 ‘High Risk’ category. This will determine whether some or all current activities at Hollies Hall and the Arncliffe Centre should cease.

**Remembrance Sunday**

The Town Manager updated the meeting on plans for the commemoration of Remembrance in Halewood. The challenges wrought by the pandemic mean this will be limited everywhere in the UK in 2020 and Halewood will be no different. As with 2019, the council has purchased a white poppy wreath to be laid by a member of the Halewood public in addition to the traditional red poppy wreath to be laid by the Mayor.

**CiLCA**

On behalf of Councillors, **Cllr C Rose** congratulated the Town Manager on achieving the CiLCA qualification. She emphasised this was an achievement given it was completed during the Coronavirus pandemic.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the report be noted.

**53. POWER OF COMPETENCE**

Members’ received a report from the Town Manager and considered recommendations.

The Town Manager outlined the rational for presenting the report: this is to affirm that, with the Town Manager’s achievement of passing the CiLCA qualification, Halewood Town Council is free to utilise the power of competence in its decision-making. **Cllr B Swann** advised Councillors that Halewood hadn’t necessarily ‘lost’ the power of competence as it had been reaffirmed in 2019 via the previous Town Manager, Mr. George Mackenzie. However, it is clearly useful to formally note that the council possesses the power under the management of its new clerk.

The recommendation required Councillors to note the report and to formally minute their understanding and acceptance of the council’s ability to use the power of competence.

**It was moved by Cllr C Rose** and **seconded by Cllr B Dunn** and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that,

1. The report be noted,
2. The council formally confirms and understands that it meets the eligibility criteria and intends to use this Power of Competence.

**54. CO-OPTION INTO COUNCILLOR VACANCIES**

Members’ received a report from the Town Manager and considered recommendations. The Town Manager outlined the delays to the process since the advertisement was posted for the vacancies, the challenges to conducting a meeting using Zoom which would require a change to the Co-option Policy and issues of predetermination related to several Councillors around the table.

**Cllr S Harvey** stated her preference for the recommendations within the Town Manager’s report to proceed with agreeing a date for a Co-option meeting and dealing with the policy and predetermination issues ahead of that meeting in as rapid a way as possible. **Cllr Harvey** stated that the public and the applicants have waited long enough to deal with this issue.

**Cllr C Rose** and **Cllr D Samuels** broadly supported the views shared by Cllr Harvey and supported the recommendation to move to a Co-option Meeting as soon as possible.

**Cllr B Dunn** and **Cllr Y Graves** expressed concerns about the issue of predetermination. They felt this needs to be addressed before a Co-option meeting can be scheduled. As Leader of the Labour Group, **Cllr C Rose** accepted the need to seek clarification from the Labour Party regarding this issue.

Several Councillors expressed concerns about the use of Zoom as a method to deal with the Co-option of applicants.

To move the debate forward, a resolution was proposed by **Cllr B Swann** and seconded by **Cllr T Lucock** for the Town Council to not fill the three Councillor vacancies currently on the council and to operate with 9 Councillors through to the next ordinary elections in 2023. Before this was put to Councillors, **Cllr C Rose** requested a recorded vote.

RECORD OF VOTE

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **For the resolution** | **Abstaining** | **Against the resolution** |
| Cllr. B SwannCllr. T Lucock | Cllr. F MartinCllr. Y Graves | Cllr. S HarveyCllr. K DaltonCllr C RoseCllr D SamuelsCllr B Dunn |

The proposal to not fill the vacancies until 2023 was therefore defeated.

Further debate ensued. Cllr C Rose advised that the council clearly requires a response regarding predetermination before a date can be set for a Co-option meeting. If possible, Cllr Rose will seek to get this clarification before the agenda for the next Town Council Meeting is agreed. It could then be considered at that meeting if the Mayor and Town Manager are in agreement. If not, at the next available Town Council meeting. She further advised that no decision should be made as to how the Co-option meeting should be conducted (i.e. via Zoom or Teams), as such a decision would have to stand for a further 6 months before it can be revisited.

**Cllr B Swann** and **Cllr C Rose** formed the discussion into clear resolutions which had the agreement of all Councillors present.

**It was moved by Cllr C Rose** and **seconded by Cllr K Dalton** and,

**RESOLVED** that,

1. The report be noted.
2. That no decision on holding a Co-option can be made at tonight’s meeting due to the issue of predetermination.
3. That Cllr Rose seeks clarification from the Labour Party regarding the issue of ‘predetermination’ for the Labour members on the Town Council.
4. On receipt pf this clarification, Cllr Rose will share the advice with the Mayor and Town Manager which will then allow a further agenda item on Co-option at an imminent Town Council meeting.
5. The decision as to how the eventual Co-option Meeting should be conducted is deferred until the issue of predetermination is resolved. This will allow the council to more fully explore the options for using systems like Zoom or Teams

**55. IT UPDATE**

Members’ received a report from the Town Manager and considered recommendations. The Town Manager advised Councillors that the current necessity to conduct meetings using systems like Zoom will continue for many months. In addition, the council has been reliant on Councillors to provide their own IT equipment (i.e. phones or tablets) and broadband to attend meetings which is commendable given Halewood Councillors receive no allowance of expenses for their roles. The proposal is therefore to equip Councillors with a device and headsets to enable their participation in meetings on at least an equal footing.

**Cllr K Dalton** in supporting the proposal advised that, as a former IT professional, his recommendation was to purchase the Lenovo Tablets.

**Cllr C Rose** advised the necessity for the Town Council to consider devising a new ‘fair usage’ policy to ensure Councillors are clear on how the tablets should be used and what happens with the devices when a Councillor’s terms comes to a conclusion.

**It was moved by Cllr B Swann** and **seconded by Cllr Y Graves** and,

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that,

1. The report be noted.
2. The Town Manager and staff are instructed to purchase the Lenovo Tablets for Councillors at a current cost of £1,739 for 12 devices, and headsets.
3. The Town Manager considers the development of a ‘fair usage’ policy once the devices are acquired.

**56. HALEWOOD COMMUNITY GRANT FUND APPLICATIONS**

Members’ received a report from the Town Manager and considered recommendations.

1. Application 20/21:4 – Halewood Apollo FC

An application was made for financial support to sporting goods and running costs for this local football team

1. Application 20/21:5 – Apollo Sports Club CIC

An application was made for financial support to the start-up costs and purchase of athletics equipment for this new Halewood-based initiative.

After some debate among Councillors, it was resolved to proceed with the funding recommendations that emerged from the matrix scoring system for Community Grants.

**It was moved by Cllr D Samuels** and **seconded by Cllr C Rose** and,

**RESOLVED** by a majority of Councilors that,

1. The report be noted.
2. In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, a Town Council a grant of £375 be awarded to Halewood Apollo FC.
3. In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, a Town Council a grant of £300 Apollo Sports Club CIC

**57. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVE BODIES**

**Cllr K Dalton** reported on his attendance at the recent (virtual) national conference for the Co-Operative Councils Innovation Network (CCIN).

**58. CORRESPONDENCE**

1. *Letter received from the Chair of the Merseyside Alliance for Racial Equality and Halewood resident, Chantelle Lunt*

The Town Manager provided a proposed response to be made to Chantelle and her organisation. After some discussion, it was agreed that the Town Manager should proceed with this response and the other actions that are required. **Cllr D Samuels** reminded Councillors that it’s not enough to simply not be non-racist, people must be truly anti-racist and stressed his support to the proposed response of the Town Manager. He further moved that Chantelle should be invited to address a future meeting of the Town Council.

**It was moved by Cllr C Rose** and **seconded by Cllr B Swann** and,

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that,

1. That the Town Manager writes to Chantelle outlining the council’s intention to be as welcoming and accessible as possible to BEM residents and to take her up on the suggestion of a meeting to assist the council with this ambition.
2. As per the proposal from Cllr Samuels, to invite Chantelle to address a future meeting of the Town Council.
3. The Town Manager will work with colleagues in the Equality & Diversity team at Knowsley MBC to ensure a coordinated approach.
4. *Planning Applications*

The following Planning Applications were considered:-

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Application Number** | **Applicant** | **Location** | **Comments** |
| 20/00526/TCA  | Greene King Brewing And Retailing Ltd  | Reverend Plummer Pub, Church Road, Halewood  | None |
| 20/00508/FUL  | Callum O'Connor  | 5 Elwyn Drive Halewood L26 0UU  | None |
| 20/00352/FUL  | Mr Mike Molyneux  | 5 Westbury Close Halewood L25 9GE  | None |
| 20/00499/FUL | James Farrell | 7 Fir Close Halewood Knowsley | None |
| 20/00509/FUL | Mr Stuart Parkinson | 76 Woodland Road Halewood L26 1XF | None |
| 20/00410/FUL | Plus Dane Housing | Site of Mackets Primary School, Arncliffe Road, Halewood | None |
| 20/00537/FUL | Barry Smith | 4, Elworthy Avenue, Halewood Knowsley | None |

Councillors discussed applications number 20/00426 and 20/00410. There were no comments about the other applications.

**It was moved by Cllr C Rose** and **seconded by Cllr B Swann** and,

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that,

1. That the planning applications be noted.
2. That the Town Council writes to Knowsley Council planning department regarding application number 20/00526 (Reverend Plummer) objecting to the removal of the trees at the site\*.

*\*(On October 16th, Cllr Dunn advised Councillors by email that the trees scheduled for removal were ‘dead trees’ and this has been confirmed by the Arborologist of Knowsley MBC).*

Meeting closed at 9.22 p.m.

Signed ………………………. Date…………………….