

Present: Councillor Sue Burke (*in the Chair*),
Councillor Bill Bilton, Councillor Alan Briggs, Councillor
Chris Burke, Councillor Bob Bushell, Councillor
Liz Bushell, Councillor Geoff Ellis, Councillor
Gary Hewson, Councillor Ronald Hills, Councillor
Rosanne Kirk, Councillor Jane Loffhagen, Councillor
Rebecca Longbottom, Councillor Ric Metcalfe, Councillor
Neil Murray, Councillor Donald Nannestad, Councillor
Lucinda Preston, Councillor Hilton Spratt, Councillor
Edmund Strengiel and Councillor Ralph Toofany

42. Mayoral Announcements

The Mayor welcomed members to the first virtual meeting of Council, which was held via telephone conference due to the restrictions in place as a result of the coronavirus outbreak.

The Mayor reported that she had been unable to attend the 35th anniversary of the fire at Bradford City Football Club where a number of supporters had tragically lost their lives at a fixture against Lincoln City Football Club. She had therefore sent a recording on behalf of the city of Lincoln.

Similarly, the Mayor had sent recordings to care homes in the city due to being unable to visit them in person as she normally would throughout her civic year.

43. Confirmation of Minutes - 3 March 2020

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2020 be confirmed, subject to the inclusion of the words 'about what the Council had agreed to do' at the end of Councillor Christopher Reid's comment under minute number 39(d) so that it read:

"Councillor Reid was also of the view that more work needed to be done on the sustainability section of the Council's website by way of offering suggestions and help to residents rather than solely providing information about what the Council had agreed to do".

44. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

45. Receive Any Questions under Council Procedure Rule 11 from Members of the Public and Provide Answers thereon

No questions were received.

46. Receive Any Questions under Council Procedure Rule 12 from Members and Provide Answers thereon

No questions were received.

47. Council Procedure Rules Relating to Remote Meetings

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that the Council Procedure Rules relating to remote meetings, covering meetings of Council held on or before 7 May 2021, be approved.

48. Covid19 - City of Lincoln Council Position Statement

Councillor Ric Metcalfe, Leader of the Council, presented the report and took the opportunity to place on record his thanks and pay tribute on behalf of all members to the Council's staff who had ensured that essential services continued to run during the coronavirus outbreak, whilst supporting communities, in particular the most vulnerable in the city, and protecting future jobs and employment in the city by supporting local businesses. Many staff had continued to provide these services in difficult circumstances whilst working from home, working overtime or being re-trained to undertake duties completely different to their usual role at the Council. Councillor Metcalfe said that the response from staff had been magnificent and that this was an extraordinary example of 'One Council'. Councillor Metcalfe also paid tribute to the outstanding leadership of the Council's Chief Executive and Town Clerk, Angela Andrews, supported by her excellent Corporate Management Team together with other managers and staff throughout the organisation.

Councillor Hilton Spratt, Leader of the Opposition, associated himself and his group with the Leader's sentiments and said that the Council's response to the crisis had been magnificent.

Councillor Jane Loffhagen, who had been working with the Council's befriending service, asked whether this service could be extended in order that it could offer support to those who were bereaved following the loss of a loved one during the coronavirus outbreak.

Councillor Metcalfe agreed to investigate this suggestion further, acknowledging that the staff currently deployed as part of the befriending service were not currently trained to provide this level of support.

Councillor Chris Burke had attended a virtual meeting with church groups and other external organisations yesterday, at which significant praise was given to the way in which the Council was supporting communities.

Councillor Donald Nannestad, Deputy Leader of the Council, added his thanks to everyone at the Council for the work they had done in response to the coronavirus outbreak. He added that lots of people were doing different jobs and had been very flexible, the outcome of which was fantastic.

Councillor Lucinda Preston had recently spoken to the owner of a small business in Lincoln who had commented as to how impressed they had been with the Council's processing of government grants to support businesses. The business owner had been contacted directly by the Council and with the grant paid much quicker than expected, which at this difficult time was of substantial importance to small businesses.

The report was noted.

49. Proposed Amendment to the Constitution - Financial Procedure Rules

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that a revised section 7.1.5 of the Financial Procedure Rules as set out in the report, for a period of 6 months, be approved.

50. Application of 'Remission' to Council Tax Charges for Long Term Empty Properties During Covid19

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that the Council's determination be amended regarding the imposition of additional charges for long term empty properties in accordance with Section 11B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 by inserting the following wording after paragraph 3(a)(iii) of the Council's respective policy:

(iv) Subject to sub-paragraph (e), the Council is satisfied that the that work required to make the property habitable and bring it back into occupation has not been completed as a consequence of delays attributable solely to the outbreak of Covid-19 in the United Kingdom.

51. Annual General Meeting

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that the Council does not hold its Annual General Meeting in May 2020 and that current appointments will continue until the Annual General Meeting in 2021.

52. Committee Membership Changes

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that Councillor Bill Mara be appointed to replace Councillor Ronald Hills on all committees to which he was previously appointed.

53. Equality Objectives

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that the Council's Equality Objectives, as set out in the report, be approved for a four year period from April 2020 to March 2024.

54. Extension of the 6 Month Attendance Rule for Councillors

It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that a dispensation be granted for Councillor Yvonne Bodger and Councillor Andrew Kerry from attending meetings of the Council in order to avoid both Councillors potentially ceasing to be a member of the authority under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.