

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF
THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICHESTER HELD
ON WEDNESDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 2.00PM**

PRESENT: The Mayor (Councillor Plowman)
Deputy Mayor (Councillor J Hughes)
Councillors Apel, Bell, Bowden, Dignum, Gaskin, Gershater, Harry,
C Hughes, Joy, Lishman, Scicluna, Sharp and Turbefeild

APOLOGIES: Councillor Barrie, Carter and K Hughes

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Mayor's Chaplain,
Mayoral/Administrative Assistant and Member Services Support Officer
West Sussex County Councillors Simon Oakley and Jamie Fitzjohn
Joshua Powling, Chichester Observer

49 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

As recorded above.

50 MINUTES OF COUNCIL

RESOLVED that the minutes of the virtual Meeting of Council held on 2 December 2020 (pages 132-136)) and the virtual Special Meeting of Council held on 4 February 2021 (page 179) having been printed and circulated, be approved, adopted and signed as a correct record at a later date,

51 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (i) The Mayor made special reference to the City Council's Annual Awards Ceremony held on 10 February 2021 which, although it had been held differently due to the pandemic, had been very well received.

The Mayor explained that the ceremony would take the form of three parts, the first part already held on 10 February via zoom, the second part later that week when he had presented the recipients personally with their award and commemorative photographs had been taken and thirdly, a reception to be held at a later date. He said the recipients had been delighted to receive their awards and he thanked everyone for their work with the arrangements.

- (ii) He mentioned a previous Civic Award winner, Alan Green, who would receive a Personal Achievement Award from the British Association For Local History. The Mayor said that this was a well-deserved award and commended Alan for this achievement.
- (iii) The Mayor mentioned the Freedom of the City being conferred on Philip Jackson, who although has an international reputation, has supported Chichester in many ways. Mid-April was the planned time for the award ceremony to be arranged.

- (iv) He was particularly pleased to see the opening of the Westgate Leisure Centre as a Covid-19 vaccination hub and thanked everyone who had helped to make this happen, namely the NHS and, in particular, local residents who had campaigned tirelessly.

52 QUESTIONS

There were no questions from members of the public.

Councillor Sharp, referring to the Council minutes of 2 December 2020 (minute 41) raised a question about details of the Neighbourhood Plan being circulated to all Residents Associations. The Mayor said that this would be addressed at the appropriate time.

53 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(a) Planning and Conservation Committee

10 December 2020	(pages 137-140)
17 December 2020	(pages 141-142) Special meeting
7 January 2021	(pages 143-149)
4 February 2021	(pages 180-184)

It was moved by Councillor Joy, Chairman of the Committee, that the minutes of the meetings held on 10 December 2020, 17 December 2020, 7 January 2021 and 4 February 2021 be approved and adopted.

Minute 106 – Street Naming and Numbering

Councillor Scicluna drew members attention to the discussion about Gill Close which had taken place and that the new name proposed of “Chagall Close” could be misinterpreted. Therefore a suggested new name of “Pether Close” was considered to be more appropriate and would now be the proposed name.

It was RESOLVED that the original motion put by Councillor Joy that the minutes of the meetings held on 10 December 2020, 17 December 2020, 7 January 2021 and 4 February 2021 be approved and adopted.

(b) Finance Committee

19 January 2021	(pages 163-178)
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It was moved by Councillor Scicluna, as Chairman of the Committee that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2021 be approved and adopted.

Councillor Scicluna drew the City Council’s attention to the following recommendations:

Minute 109 – Model Code of Conduct for Councillors

it was RECOMMENDED to Full Council held on Wednesday 17 February 2021, that the Model Code of Conduct as included in the report with the meeting Agenda be adopted as the Chichester City Council Code of Conduct.

(i) Property Sub-Committee

3 February 2021

Minute 14 refers

The Sub-Committee RESOLVED to proceed with the second stage of the Litten Gardens paving replacement

Post meeting note: In order to expedite the paving replacement, it was agreed to RECOMMEND to Full Council on 17 February 2021 that an order be placed with Crown

Civil Engineering in the sum of £5,876 for the replacement of the existing paving slab paths around the War Memorial with compacted Breedon gravel; to be funded from the Public Realm budget.

It was RESOLVED that the original motion put by Councillor Scicluna that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2021 be approved and adopted.

(c) Community Affairs Committee

11 January 2021 (pages 150-162)

It was moved by Councillor Apel, as Chairman of the Committee, that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2021 be approved and adopted.

Minute 46 – Discretionary Grants Working Group
Councillor Apel referred to the comprehensive papers recently sent out and hoped members were happy with them.

Minute 50 – Postal Deliveries in the Chichester Ward
Councillor Apel said that postal deliveries had been delayed but were improving.

It was RESOLVED that the original motion put by Councillor Apel that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2021 be approved and adopted.

Councillor Bell wished to express thanks to the minute takers on the quality and accuracy of the minutes. This was re-iterated by the Mayor.

54 REMOTELY HELD MEETINGS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The Town Clerk said that he was encouraged to note the Prime Minister would be guided by “data” not “dates” regarding any easing of lockdown.

The Town Clerk referred to his report previously circulated. He reminded members that the regulations brought in to address the Coronavirus pandemic were due to expire on 6 May 2021. He then drew members attention to the law relating to Local Authority Meetings and said that The Larger Local Councils Forum Legislation (1972) did not preclude from holding remote meetings.

The Town Clerk emphasised that guidelines were changing all the time and that there could be a last-minute change to any arrangements put in place. He referred to Remembrance Sunday in particular where the Government guidelines on social distancing had been changed two days prior to the event.

The strong feeling was that remote meetings could still be held even if the Government Advice was to return to face-to-face meetings. The Town Clerk also said that the Annual Meeting of Council could be brought forward one week if necessary.

The Town Clerk had set out the advice of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) guidelines on holding face-to-face meetings and said that this guidance could be in place for some time to come. He referred to hybrid meetings and that this had been explored by the Member Services Support Officer but that there were some instances where this was not possible due to room capacity and layout. The Member Services Support Officer had also looked at the desk top microphone system as acoustics could sometimes be an issue. He said there was an investment required for this.

The Mayor said that there had been some discussion and although getting back to full meetings was preferred, a pragmatic approach was needed, and guidance would be followed.

Councillor Scicluna thanked the Town Clerk for his report but added that she hoped that it would be possible to try to avoid hybrid meetings where possible.

Councillor Gershater and Councillor Bowden added their support for holding hybrid meetings. Councillor Joy said that to have the opportunity to hold a meeting with flexibility was welcomed.

The Town Clerk would update members accordingly.

The Mayor thanked the Town Clerk and Member Services Support Officer for their work.

55 REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Apel as a representative on the Chichester Welfare Trust and St Wilfrid's Trust mentioned their generosity in giving funds towards the Mayor's Hardship Fund.

Councillor Scicluna, as a representative on the Friends of Valletta, mentioned a talk being given by Vincent Zamit about Neolithic Temples of Malta via Zoom from Malta on 23 February and said that all members were very welcome to attend.

Councillor Bowden, as a representative on the Friends of Ravenna, said he had been actively having meetings, not only in the UK but with the Amici de Chichester in Ravenna, via zoom, which had proved very successful in dual-language meetings.

The Mayor said that he was not now a Trustee of the Old Dears Trust. He mentioned the completion of four new almshouses and that in order to manage the system they had now merged with the St Mary's Trust.

Councillor Apel asked if it was possible to view the houses and the Mayor confirmed that this could be arranged.

56 WARD REPORTS FROM CHICHESTER CITY COUNCILLORS

Councillor Bell, as a Central Ward representative, endorsed the Mayor's comments on the opening of the Westgate Leisure Centre as a vaccination hub and paid special tribute to the Chichester Observer on their campaign. He also acknowledged the support of Councillor Eileen Lintill, the Leader of Chichester District Council and the Chief Executive, Diane Shepherd. The Mayor commended the organisation and the hard work of all those who had made this possible.

57 REPORTS FROM CHICHESTER DISTRICT AND WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL'S WARD MEMBERS

Councillor Bell said that whilst the opening of the new vaccination centre at Westgate was very much welcomed, he commented on the excellent service at the Tangmere vaccination centre and in particular the volunteers and the NHS staff. The Mayor, who had attended Selsey vaccination centre, endorsed this.

Councillor Oakley mentioned the wide range of services provided by West Sussex County Council. He commented on the Council Tax increase and said that the costs of providing Adult and Children's services had been the greatest spend. He said that it would be extremely difficult to maintain the services without the Central Government's financial contribution. He mentioned the Council Tax support.

Councillor Oakley commented on the effect of ash die back and the WSCC tree strategy. The locally controlled parking zone extension into Baxendale and Swanfield areas were mentioned.

He said that the Westhampnett household waste recycling site would not be included in a booking system due to traffic management issues. He mentioned the Swanfield bus shelter Section 106 Agreement and the Lidl cycle and footpath. He said it was important for residents to report any issues that needed to be addressed.

Councillor Fitzjohn wished to thank the Mayor personally on behalf of all Chichester South residents for all his efforts in helping with the opening of the Westgate Leisure Centre as a vaccination hub.

Councillor Fitzjohn said that the A27 was an innovative and sensitive subject but must be taken into consideration. He mentioned the creation of a Stockbridge link road and said that displacement of traffic through the city was an issue. Noise, air, and light pollution were of also of concern. He said the Local Plan was due to be published in March and he said it was important to look after the residents and their health; he therefore hoped that views would be expressed.

The Mayor thanked Councillors Fitzjohn and Oakley for their work.

Councillor Apel thanked the Property Manager and his Team for lighting up the Council House in purple for Holocaust Memorial Day and also lighting up the City Cross and Council House in blue to commemorate the NHS and key workers.

The Mayor thanked the frontline workers and said that the blue lighting up would take place every Thursday in recognition of them.

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS ACT 1960)

It was proposed, seconded put to the vote and RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded from this meeting for the next Agenda item (10) because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted namely commercial and financial matters.

58 THE MARKET HOUSE – UPDATE FROM ORION (SOUTHERN) LTD

The Deputy Town Clerk introduced this item, referring to her report appended to the agenda and explained the rationale to members.

The Council expressed sympathy for Orion Developments (Southern) Ltd and appreciated the difficulties experienced during the pandemic but felt that the Council had also experienced a large reduction in income and was not prepared burden the taxpayer further. Therefore, after discussion, it was agreed that they were not prepared to share the income loss that had been experienced by the leaseholder of the Market House.

It was therefore proposed, seconded, put to the vote and RESOLVED that the City Council were not prepared to share the income loss that had been experienced by the leaseholder of the Market House.

Councillor Bell abstained from voting.

59 QUESTIONS

There were no questions from members of the Council pursuant to Standing Order 8.

60 COMMON SEAL

The meeting closed at 3.23pm.