

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF KINGSBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD REMOTELY VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING
AT 7.00 P.M. ON TUESDAY 12 JANUARY 2021**

Present: Cllr Mike Jennings (Chairman)
Cllr Anne Balkwill
Cllr Dena Bex
Cllr Philip Cole (Deputy Chairman)
Cllr Martina Edmonds
Cllr Barrie Fishman
Cllr Steve Mammatt
Cllr Chris Povey
Cllr Graham Price
Cllr Peter Ralph
Cllr Mel Rollinson
Cllr Paul Vann
Cllr Julia Wingate

In Attendance: County Cllr Julian Brazil
District Cllr Susan Jackson
District Cllr Denise O'Callaghan
Sgt James Timmis
Vanessa Woods, Office for National Statistics
Samantha Dennis, Candidate, Devon County Council
Martin Johnson (Secretary)

Cllr Jennings provided guidance on remote meetings via Zoom

20/115 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

Public Open Forum

Vanessa Woods made the statement at Annex A.

Vanessa Woods left the meeting

**20/116 REPORTS FROM POLICE, DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL AND
SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

116.1 Sgt Timmis reported that crime and policing incidents had been low in December given the winter weather/Covid-19 and this had continued into January due to the current Lockdown. There had been some Covid-19 second home breaches and people meeting inappropriately. In particular, people had been travelling into the area and some local councils were upset. Enforcement had been increased and visits made to enquire when people had travelled and their intentions; in rare cases people had been informed to leave and return to their main home and/or fined. The Police had attended a gathering of 50 people held remote from Kingsbridge on New Years Eve. There had been some minor anti-social behaviour

incidents involving a group of young people which the Police were working with. The overall message was that crime was low.

Sgt Timmis then replied to Members' questions:

- Vehicle stops were ongoing as normal.
- Police officers were in town however, there was nil resource for foot patrols as the Neighbourhood Team responded to job allocations. There were nil PCSOs on the street at present.
- He encouraged everyone to report potential Covid-19 breaches via the non-emergency 101 phone or email system. This way statistical information was collected, logs created and the matters investigated. If people were being put at risk then it was likely that the Police would attend. Encouragement was the first line of enquiry however, enforcement was an option.
- He noted the report of lots of people using West Alvington woods and reiterated that outdoor exercise should be taken in accordance with government guidance.

116.2 County Cllr Brazil reported that no second homes in East Prawle were occupied and few people were breaking Lockdown rules. He had forwarded an interactive map to the Town Council (KTC) which showed how many Covid-19 cases there were at a specific postcode; Kingsbridge had 8 cases in its postcode area, Salcombe 17, Stokenham 4 and Loddiswell & Dartington 18. Devon County Council (DCC) remained the main partner for local outbreaks. Vaccinations would be delivered to nominated health centres and there was potential for mobile units. He was aware of the poor condition of lower Church Street; South West Water was currently working on a water leak in the highway which could be related to several adjacent potholes. DCC had earmarked the location for full resurfacing in the next financial year however, the drains required sorting first. He had not been impressed with the recent temporary traffic light issue at The Promenade; DCC had refused an extension for the traffic lights however, BT then returned without permission on a Saturday morning to complete resurfacing works with new traffic lights in situ. He had reported this to the head of highways but had not received feedback to date. The A379 in Stokenham was closed due to works on a collapsed wall which was earmarked for 6 weeks duration; he was checking the works on a regular basis.

Cllr Brazil then replied to Members' questions:

- He noted that KTC wished to help vaccination logistics and suggested that the council contacted Norton Brook Medical Centre. South Hams District Council (SHDC) had Covid-19 compliant officers who would provide assistance to local communities.
- DCC and KTC would be informed when Church Street drains and resurfacing works would be programmed and he noted that it would not be welcomed directly after Lockdown but it was not in the capital programme for 2020/21 in any event.
- He was unsure of the protocol for vaccinations in care homes but would check.
- KTC's objection to a planning application in Bowcombe Road was noted; the planning case officer was likely to liaise with SHDC Ward Members.

- He acknowledged KTC's frustrations with recent temporary traffic lights in the town centre.

116.3 District Cllr Jackson reported the majority of staff had Torbay Hospital had received Covid-19 vaccinations and each appointment for the public took around 20 minutes due to the requirement to complete a questionnaire and downtime on completion. Therefore, there should not be traffic problems or related issues for local health centres. Another intensive care ward had been worked up for Torbay. She had met with SHDC's lead officer for electric vehicle charging points the previous day and a revised timetable for their introduction was being worked up; additional funding for all town car parks was subject to evaluation.

She then replied to Members' questions:

- Information on new government Covid-19 grants for the current Lockdown would be received shortly.
- Cllr O'Callaghan and herself were members of SHDC's Overview & Scrutiny Panel; KTC's views on specific matters could be raised via this route. Covid-19 had impacted on the interface between SHDC Members and the Executive.

116.4 District Cllr O'Callaghan underlined that major issues required liaison and true consultation between principal councils, local councils and the public. She had attended KTC's Planning Committee held on 5 January and was aware of KTC's recommendations. District Cllr Pearce, SHDC Leader, had agreed to meet with other local councils to discuss electric vehicle charging points. SHDC had given permission for a NHS mobile testing unit to be located at the Cattle Market car park but it would not be on site every day. She was conscious that demand for Kingsbridge Foodbank had surged due to family hardships. Finally, schools had been provided funding for the costs of broadband to facilitate remote learning.

Sgt Timmis left the meeting

20/117 URGENT BUSINESS

Cllr Jennings agreed to take the following items of urgent business at agenda item 20/128:

- Reopening High Streets Safely Fund – projects,
- Covid-19 Lockdown 3 – updates,
- Legal matter – request for KTC opinion (confidential matter), and
- Grant aid – consideration of award (confidential matter).

20/118 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

County Cllr Brazil left the meeting

20/119 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the council meeting held on 8 December 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

20/120 PLANNING COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt the Resolutions in the minutes of the Planning Committees held on 15 December 2020 and 5 January 2021.

20/121 PROPERTY COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt the Recommendations in the minutes of the Property Committee held on 22 December 2020.

District Cllrs Jackson & O'Callaghan left the meeting

20/122 FINANCE COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt the Recommendations in the minutes of the Finance Committee held on 7 January 2021 (public session).

The Precept for financial year 2021/22 was confirmed at £175,000, which was held at the same level as the current financial year, and would require a contribution from a Band D council rate at £82.08 (an increase from £80.70 of £1.38 at 1.71% due to a reduced Council Tax Base Rate).

20/123 DEVON CARBON PLAN

Members received the interim Devon Carbon Plan public “creating a net-zero carbon Devon where people and nature thrive” (www.devonclimateemergency.org.uk) public consultation which completed on 15 February 2021. It was reported that it was a huge and comprehensive document however, the questionnaire was daunting. It was **RESOLVED** for KTC to focus on matters previously raised in council i.e. electric vehicle charging, bus services, cycle routes and recycling etc. and to feedback to the Devon Carbon Plan accordingly including a copy to the DCC lead officer.

20/124 SEATING – AROUND THE HEAD OF THE ESTUARY/TOWN SQUARE

Members received a stocktake and options for new public seating alongside The Promenade/Embankment Road and Quay Car Park footways and in the Town Square. The majority of current seats were wooden (several different styles with some repairs required) and some recent recycled plastic replacements with a potential for 46 seats in total. To replace all seating to provide an overall house style could cost for recycled plastic seating circa £15k and for quality wood/metal seating circa £50k plus delivery and installation extra. SHDC policy was to replace wooden seats on an as-required basis with recycled ‘Tivoli style’ plastic seats and therefore it would take several years to achieve a similar style. It was **RESOLVED** for KTC to pursue a wood/metal design seat for the head of estuary civic spaces which should

match new seating to be introduced in Fore Street and to liaise with SHDC to achieve this ambition.

20/125 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

125.1 Flood prevention. Exjet was scheduled to clear around 50 surface water drains over 2 days during the following week; clear drains can effectively 'buy' precious minutes in a flood situation. Moreover, KTC provided 30 sandbags to the Fire Service on 5 January to prevent flooding from a burst water main in Belle Cross Road.

125.2 Town Square security. SHDC had invited comments from KTC regarding the ongoing nuisance/risk posed by the removable bollards at the 2 vehicular access points to the Town Square. This resulted in the bollards often left sprawling in the middle of the Town Square which were a hazard when dark and led to regular illegal car parking given the open access. SHDC intended to install swing barriers to replace them which was supported by Members.

125.3 Art installation/sculpture. Following Members' feedback a Facebook message would invite local artists to design a piece of artwork to be located at the grass verge in The Promenade atop the Victorian water fountain base currently in Quay House grounds. The location had received permission in principle from SHDC. The specification would include: history of the area, dimensions for the art, contemporary or traditional artwork, vandal/weather/salt air proof etc.

125.4 Police Catch-Up. The Town Clerk had met with Insp Nicky Baker via Zoom on 7 January to discuss: current crime figures, officer/PSPO resource and the policing of Lockdown 3.

125.5 Car Permits. District Ward Members had queried whether Members still wished to discuss SHDC's recent increase in costs for car parking permits given the decision had already been made. It was agreed that KTC had replied during the consultation and a letter to the Executive Member noting Members' disappointment would be sufficient.

20/126 REPORTS ON MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES AND AUTHORITIES/AGENCIES

126.1 Cllrs Jennings and Cole visit to the Foodbank 22 December 2020. The visit had underlined the outstanding work of the volunteers and the Western Power Distribution 'All This Together' grant for £750 was handed over.

126.2 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group 6 January 2021. Cllr Balkwill, Cllr Price and the Town Clerk had attended the meeting. KTC's feedback on the first draft report had been considered and was being progressed.

Cllr Jennings left the meeting and Cllr Cole took over as Chairman

20/127 FINANCE – PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Members received a schedule of payments due to date 12 January 2021. It was **RESOLVED** that the payments amounting to £38,146.03 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

20/128 BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIRMAN

128.1 REOPENING HIGH STREETS SAFELY FUND – PROJECTS.

Members received a listing of several potential projects suggested by a working group Zoom meeting held on 7 January and a local traders' group. Potential 2nd tranche funding at circa £6.5k had to be confirmed by SHDC whereupon the projects could move forward.

There was however, circa £1k remaining from the 1st tranche of £5k funds received. It was **RESOLVED** to:

- Revise the current Shop Safe Kingsbridge promotional boards at gateway entrances to town from a Christmas theme to a Spring theme with drawings of daffodils on a green background.
- Install 3 new cross-street banners in Fore Street with a similar Spring/green theme.
- Commence a Lockdown town art project to encourage local people of all ages to relate how they were coping and feeling during Lockdown. The art would then be used for future projects e.g. banners or in flower beds. Promotional banners for the project to be installed on hanging basket posts.
- Introduce a KTC Instagram page administered by Cllrs Bex, Rollinson, Wingate and Reception staff to 'show & tell' KTC and related business.

A member of public left the meeting

128.2 COVID-19 LOCKDOWN – UPDATES.

The following was reported:

- The Guardian Angels neighbourhood volunteer system was effectively running itself given relationships had been formed during the first Lockdown from March 2020. However, the Reception office still received sporadic requests for assistance and there was a good liaison with volunteers who often informed Staff of their actions.
- Norton Brook Medical Centre was likely to deliver vaccinations to local people and contact should be made to ascertain any help that KTC could deliver.
- KTC Staff were important and should be protected as best possible. The front door to the Council Offices was locked during opening hours however, Staff did react to calls for assistance. Protective visors would be ordered to supplement face masks.

Members agreed to suspend Standing Order to run over the 2.5 hour time limit for meetings

20/129 QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN

None.

20/130 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

There were no public and press remaining at the meeting therefore the agenda item was not received and the Zoom meeting was locked.

20/131 FINANCE COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt the Recommendations in the minutes of the Finance Committee held on 7 January 2021 (confidential session).

A £1,000 grant to be awarded to South Hams Area Wellbeing to enable a project at FSC Slapton Ley Field Centre.

20/128 BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIRMAN

128.3 LEGAL MATTER – REQUEST FOR KTC OPINION

SHDC had requested KTC’s knowledge regarding a potential legal matter at one of its assets involving a third party. It was **RESOLVED** to feedback to SHDC with background and KTC’s opinion on the issue.

128.4 GRANT AID – CONSIDERATION OF AWARD

Further to minute 20/131, it was **RESOLVED** for a £1,500 grant to be awarded to Kingsbridge Area Foodbank to enable the supply of emergency food supplies to local families in crisis due to the current Lockdown.

The meeting closed at 10.20 p.m.

..... Presiding ChairmanDate

Annex:

A. Public Open Forum.

Public Open Forum

Vanessa Woods, Office for National Statistics, presented information on the Census 2021 which would take place on 21 March 2021. The Census held every 10 years provided a snapshot of society. Chiefly, Census based information directed how funding was allocated to local services. Each household would be able to access an online questionnaire and support centres would be available with field teams to encourage people to fill in their questionnaire.

She requested South Hams' local councils to raise awareness and understanding of the Census in their communities and she could provide support via resources and advice to enable everyone to join in. It was particularly important to access hard-to-reach groups e.g. over 80s because Covid-19 and the current Lockdown 3 was a potential barrier. Approximately 10% of the South Hams would receive a paper questionnaire.

Census field team vacancies would be advertised shortly via the Census website and social media.