

MINUTES OF THE **ADJOURNED SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL** HELD ON **WEDNESDAY 13<sup>th</sup> JULY 2022** AT 6.00 P.M. AT NEWTON'S PLACE, 43 WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT

Present: Councillors C Bunday (Mayor) Presiding  
L Sheffield (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors: P Bullivant M Hocking  
D Corney-Walker C Jenks  
K Crout R Jenks  
C Davieson A Jones  
A Hall M Joyce  
R Hall M Ryan  
R Hayes

Officers in attendance: Phil Rowe Town Clerk  
Samantha Scott Deputy Town Clerk & RFO  
Sally Henley Town Development Manager  
Linda McGuirk Principal Administrator

In attendance: Nigel Canham Communications Advisor  
Ethan Heppell Mid Devon Advertiser  
Three members of the public

By Invitation: A representative of Devon Audit Partnership

The Mayor, Councillor Carol Bunday welcomed members of the public, representatives of the press and a representative of Devon Audit Partnership (DAP) to the meeting.

**117. STANDING ORDERS**

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Mayor informed Members that since it was an adjourned Special Meeting of the Council conducted to consider specific matters of the Council; that under Standing Order item 34 she would suspend that part of the Standing Order 14 where it referred to 'Standing when Speaking' for the duration of the meeting only.

**RESOLVED** that under Standing Order 34; Standing Order 14 where it referred to 'Standing When Speaking' be hereby suspended for the duration of the meeting only.

**118. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Colin Parker (illness), Mike Pilkington (illness) and David Howe (busy). The reasons for absence were noted.

**119. INTERESTS**

None declared.

Prior to transacting the business set out in the agenda the Mayor invited the representative of Devon Audit Partnership to make a statement to Members regarding whistleblowing allegations which had been brought to his attention by Cllrs P Bullivant and R Jenks. The representative informed members that the matter was confidential

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

and detailed the method of investigation, timescales and the procedure if the Council were to commission the services of DAP.

120. **ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

Arising from the statement made by the representative of DAP, Members expressed concerns that the Council's Whistleblowing policy, as outlined in the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, had not been followed and noted that the policy is only applicable if the whistleblower is an employee or a Member of the Council, otherwise the issue should be treated as a complaint. Discussion took place regarding proper procedure for managing a whistle-blower according to legislation and the lack of information in regard to the issue raised.

Councillor Mike Hocking proposed that the Council:

1. Receive and note the Annual Internal Auditor Report 2021/22.
2. Approve the Annual Governance Statement, except for statement number 3 which should be answered with 'No'.
3. Approve the Accounting Statement.
4. That the Mayor to inform the Council's appointed external auditor, PKF Littlejohn, of the allegations made against the Council and to request a full investigation is carried out on the claims. A full report of their findings will be reported back to the Council.

Councillor Ann Jones Seconded the proposal.

The Town Clerk expressed concerns that if the services of DAP were to be employed Members were being asked to vote on something when they have not been provided with any details and confirmed the Council has operated in accordance with the law and that the correct process is to utilise the services of the Council's appointed auditors.

In accordance with Standing Order 5 (b) Voting; Cllr Mike Joyce requested a recorded vote takes place on the proposal. Councillors A Jones, D Corney-Walker, M Hocking, C Jenks and C Bunday all rose in support of the motion.

Accordingly, a recorded vote took place as follows

<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>	<b>ABSTAINED</b>
Cllr C Bunday	Cllr P Bullivant	Cllr L Sheffield
Cllr D Corney-Walker	Cllr K Crout	Cllr R Hayes
Cllr C Davieson	Cllr A Hall	
Cllr M Hocking	Cllr R Hall	
Cllr A Jones	Cllr C Jenks	
Cllr M Joyce	Cllr R Jenks	
Cllr M Ryan		

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

Arising from the recorded vote, it was:

- A. Governance and Accountability Return. In accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

**RESOLVED** that the Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/22, which formed page 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, be hereby received and noted; and be submitted to PKF Littlejohn.

- B. Annual Governance and Accountability Return. In accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

**RESOLVED** that Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, be hereby approved; and signed by the Mayor and the Town Clerk and be submitted to PKF Littlejohn.

- C. Accounting Statement. In accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

**RESOLVED** that Section 2 of the Annual Return, the for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, be hereby approved; signed by the Mayor and be submitted to PKF Littlejohn.

- D. **RESOLVED** that the Mayor to inform the Council's appointed external auditor, PKF Littlejohn, of the allegations made against the Council and to request a full investigation is carried out on the claims. A report of their findings to be reported back to the Council.

Meeting closed at 7pm

Chairperson (Mayor).....Date.....

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....