

ST COLUMB MAJOR TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Full Council Meeting of St Columb Major Town Council, held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, St Columb Major, on Tuesday, 14th July 2020 at 7.00pm, and broadcast live on the Town Council's Facebook Page.

Present: Cllrs P Wills (Mayor), E Culley, B Daniels, Mrs F McLeod, S Allen,
Mrs F Fuery, K Roberts

In attendance: Mr M C Uren (Town Clerk)

318/19 Mayor's Welcome:

The Mayor, Cllr Wills, welcomed everyone to the Meeting.

i) Housekeeping:

The Mayor addressed Councillors, giving advice on emergency procedures, asking that all mobile 'phones be switched off, or turned to silent.

ii) Diary Report from Mayor and County Councillor:

Cllr Wills presented his report:-

"The pandemic continues to cause grave concern to all residents - the introduction of compulsory face mask wearing in shops from next Friday is very much welcomed. The virus has NOT gone away, and it is vital that all residents continue to observe social distancing, and wearing of face masks, where it is deemed necessary, to do so.

I am delighted that our Library is now open - albeit a different kind of Service, which is Click and Collect. The new system in place seems to be working. Sadly, there are no Group Meetings allowed at present in the Library, but the staff are thrilled to be back, as are those who use the Library. St Columb Major Town Council is committed to keeping this much-loved Service within our parish. Details of how the new Click and Collect Service, and how people without the internet can access books, is available in the foyer of the Town Hall, and of course on-line.

I have attended many Virtual Meetings and Webinars since our last Meeting. Weekly All Members' Briefing happens every Friday. Subjects covered have all been about the handling of the pandemic, Cornwall Councils responsibilities and actions, and Recovery Plans. We are still living in unprecedented times, and it is only by working together we will come out of this stronger, and better. It's a steep learning curve for us all, and that was evident during the first Full Council Meeting of Cornwall Council, which took place last week. The Chairman of Cornwall Council, Cllr Franks, did an outstanding job during the Meeting, and many lessons have been learnt. You can view the Meeting on-line at the Cornwall Council Website.

The Newquay and St Columb Community Network Panel has met weekly, with our Police Divisional Inspector, Guy Blackford, Phil Mason, Service Director, and Anna Druce, our Community Link Officer present. All have been most helpful answering questions raised by elected Members on behalf of their respective communities.

I attended a Virtual Meeting of the Cornwall Newquay Airport Consultative Committee, for which I am the Vice Chairman. We heard from the new MD at the airport, as well as Miles Cardon, Spaceport Director, and the Business Link Officer. It has been of course a tough time for the staff, what with Flybe collapsing two weeks before lockdown, and most flights grounded due to the pandemic. There have been layoffs of staff, but thankfully all those laid off have been offered other jobs within the Corserve Group of Companies, all solely owned by Cornwall Council.

The Clerk and I have continued between us to keep the Town Council ticking over, and dealing with residents' requests and calls. A lot of what we have been doing is on the Agenda for this evening, so I won't bore you further.

I would like to thank again all those within our community who have continued to help those most vulnerable within our parish. Your help and kindness has not gone unnoticed. Thank you also to all those shop workers, delivery drivers, bin men, and everyone, far too numerous to mention who have all done their bit during this crisis. Once again please bear in mind this is far from over - we all need to remain vigilant".

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Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Oath of Allegiance:

The Mayor, Cllr Wills proceeded to read and sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, followed by the Oath of Allegiance.

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Questions from the public:

- a) Mike Higgins – Is the Town Council responsible for cutting the hedge on Newquay Road, on the Highfield Avenue side, between the school path and the cul-de-sac off Newquay Road please? There are branches and stinging nettles growing out of the hedge, and it is dangerous for parents and young children who use that pavement to get to school. They are unable to avoid them due to the cars parked (legally) against the pavement. Action needs to be taken to avert injuries. If it is not the Town Council, would you please advise whoever has responsibility for that hedge that it needs cutting urgently.

Answer: It is Cornwall Council's responsibility – I will ask Highways to look at it, and if they won't do anything, we will. However, I should point out that Cornwall Council has, since the pandemic, brought in a new Verge Cutting Policy. I appreciate that this is a hedge, not a verge, but I have a feeling they will refer to this new Policy when I contact them, which I will. The Policy is long winded, but here is a flavour for you - "A new verge-cutting policy in our towns and villages aims to encourage wildflowers and pollinators to thrive, and allow more natural growth, without compromising road safety. The Council's Environment Service is responsible for the management of a massive 75 hectares of "urban verges" across Cornwall. These are the verges you see within 30 mph zones. Typically, these sites would be mown around eight times a year to a consistent countywide standard, starting in Spring. The pandemic meant that grounds maintenance operations on urban verges were held back, resulting in a flush of native wild flora, drawing in insects and other wildlife. In keeping with our aim to create a greener Cornwall, Cornwall Council has drawn up new plans which will see changes to the way we manage our verges from this point on. From now on the changes will be: Annual cuts will be more than halved from eight times to only two or three. Cutting will be done AFTER the flowers have finished and seeds are set. Environment Growth means creating the space and conditions for more abundant, productive and healthier habitats, species and natural systems. These, in turn, improve the lives of people. The Pollinator Action Plan manages the Council's assets and operations, to make sure they are more pollinator friendly. Geoff Brown, Cabinet Member for Transport said: "The Council has decided not to cut developing wildflowers and species-rich grasslands on our urban verges, but instead wait for the natural

rhythms of nature to allow the plants to set seed before cutting is reintroduced. This will allow grounds maintenance teams to change the regime for these urban verges to a more ecological approach. The current lockdown has allowed many of the verges to grow naturally and has created a wonderful display of wildflowers, which are of great benefit to pollinators and the planet in general". The Council will of course still be tidying path edges, cutting around benches and fixtures, ensuring visibility for safety reasons, and removing noxious weeds. And on the highway, cutting at junctions and bends already takes place only for reasons of safety and visibility. But in two towns – Liskeard and Redruth – when the grass is cut later in the year, the clippings will be collected using a special mower, to reduce the fertility of grass in these areas, helping to encourage greater biodiversity in the long term. Edwina Hannaford is the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Climate Change. She said: "The environment and ecological benefits of this new approach will be significant, and align well with the Council's Climate Change targets. Besides which, we've all been enjoying how many urban verges have become alive with colour. During the pandemic we have seen nature take back control and thrive". Cabinet Member for Environment, Rob Nolan, added: "This is the time of year where fast-growing grass and other vegetation can create road and footpath hazards within 30 mph zones. But we also understand that people appreciate the wild natural beauty of Cornwall, and want that reflected in its townscapes. Cornwall Council intends to strike that delicate balance between ensuring road safety, while leaving ecology and biodiversity undisturbed wherever possible.". The Council has adopted a Pollinator Action Plan, and an Environmental Growth Strategy, to look at how it manages its whole estate, maximizing biodiversity, and encouraging wildflowers and pollinating insects. It's an example that has earned an enthusiastic thumbs up from many partner organisations. Mayor of Liskeard, Rachel Brooks, said: "Like lots of people locally, I've really enjoyed seeing the wildflowers during lockdown, and knowing that bees and other pollinators are benefitting. I'm really glad we can build on this with a sensitive approach, which keeps most of the flowers, but also provides neat edges. I hope this will be one of many areas where we can learn from our lockdown experiences, and do things differently and better". Andrew Whitehouse, from Buglife, the organization devoted to the conservation of all invertebrates, said: "Reducing the cutting of road verges and green spaces can help create more space for wildlife to thrive within Cornwall's urban areas. Less grass cutting means more opportunity for wildflowers to flourish, and more food for bees, butterflies and other pollinating insects. There are some really spectacular blooms of wildflowers in Cornwall's towns right now".

- b) Neil Kirkland - At the Council's last meeting, the Mayor advised that the whole of the precept increase was to be invested in the Trekenning Car Park this year. He also advised that the costs of the works were expected to be about £100k. Given the precept increase amounts to 28k, and the 42 permits will generate 4k, and the parking charges for the other 18 spaces are likely to generate say 10k to 15k, is it the Council's plan to pay off the works cost over 3 years, even though the works are likely to last the best part of 15 years?

Answer: The cost of resurfacing came in at £102,727.31, which includes VAT. It is important for residents to know that although the precept did increase this year by 28K, since 2013, the amount you pay from your council tax to the Town Council has gone down six times in 8 years. In real terms the annual increase has been just over 1% per year since 2013. Yes, this year's increase will be wholly spent on Trekenning Car Park, and it is very likely there will be NO INCREASE in the precept next year, or even possibly a slight decrease. We don't know how much will be generated by the pay and display side of the car park yet! Again, it's important for residents to know that pay and display only operates from 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday, the car park is free at night from 5pm – 9am, and free at weekends, and all bank holidays. When you say is it the council plan to pay off the cost, we have already paid the bill. Sound fiscal management of the Town Council's finances has always been the bedrock of this administration. Doing the best we can, with the limited resources at our disposal. We have NO Public Works Loans, however we did inherit a sizeable loan from the pre-2013 administration, almost 35k of public works loans, which was used to pay for the concrete skate park in the Recreation Ground, which we paid off almost immediately after taking office.

The Mayor advised at the last meeting, that the reason there was not a referendum on charging at Trekenning, was because the Council had decided it did not want to hold one. Please could you now advise what Council Meeting that decision was made at, noting that all Council Decisions, with only 3 exceptions, are required to be made at public meetings?

Answer: It was always my idea to hold a referendum on Trekenning Car Park, and when I referred to this, I stressed that it was my idea. I put that idea to Council, who through the course of our discussions, reached consensus that they did not wish to hold one. Therefore, no proposal was put to Council, as it was obvious that any proposal would

be defeated. Council minutes are not verbatim! Only proposals which have been seconded, or put forward, are entered the minutes. Not all discussions or consensus decisions are recorded in the Minutes.

Please could you advise at what meeting the Council agreed to charge for car parking at Trekenning? In doing this it should be noted that all Council Decisions, with only 3 exceptions, are required to be made at public meetings, and that a failure to follow this regulation may mean the council is acting unlawfully in charging. The Council may also care to note in this regard, that it is having a valid Car Parking Order to cover charging, does not I understand invalidate the requirement to have made the original decision to charge in a public meeting.

Answer: A Working Party was set up to look at how we proceeded with Trekenning Car Park, that working party reported back to Full Council on the 17th of September 2019, Minute Number 125/19, which reads:

With regards to Trekenning Road Car Park, Cllr Wills advised that we will be receiving £12,500 from Cornwall Council, to help with the cost of resurfacing the Car Park. The Working Party has recommended that the Car Park should be free at weekends, and chargeable on weekdays from 9.00am to 5.00pm. There should also be 45 spaces for Permit Holders. The intention will be to have solar panel meters installed. He confirmed that the re-cycling bins will be removed at the end of March 2020. We have already obtained prices from two Contractors for the resurfacing work, but because of the cost, we will need a specification drawn up, and tenders invited. To this end, a price has been obtained from a firm who specialise in Building Surveying. The Town Clerk read out the breakdown of the costs. It was agreed that we would not require the Project Management, or Health and Safety area, or Structural Engineer input. The cost to carry out the necessary survey, plan and design the Car Park layout, prepare the specification, and undertake the tender process, will be £925. After some discussion, Cllr Wills proposed, Cllr Allen seconded, and it was agreed unanimously to accept this price. The drainage and resurfacing work will be undertaken in April 2020, as soon as the re-cycling bins have been removed. It is likely that the Car Park will be closed for about two weeks, while the work is undertaken. Mention was made about the cost of Car Parking Permits, and it was agreed that this needs some serious thought, and to bring suggestions to the next Full Council Meeting. In the meantime, a Parking Order can be initiated. Cllr Wills proposed, Cllr Mrs Warner seconded, and it was RESOLVED unanimously to approve the recommendations made by the Working Party.

At the meeting of the Town Council held on the 1st of October 2019, it was discussed and agreed and voted on, to introduce parking permits for Trekenning Car Park, Minute 142/19, which reads:

The current cost of Car Parking Permits is £70 per year. Currently we only have Permits issued for the Recreation Ground Car Park. As stated at the last Meeting, 45 spaces will be allocated to Permit Holders in Trekenning Road Car Park. A general discussion took place regarding what the charge should be. Eventually, it was agreed that the cost of all Car Parking Permits should be increased to £100 per year (4 voted for, 2 against, 1 abstention). This figure will be reviewed on an annual basis.

During that discussion it was also agreed on charges for Trekenning.

- c) Tony Roberts – Why are members of the public subjected to having to walk into the road, when cars and vans are parked outside Glanville's? There is now plenty of parking in this Town, and this practice has gone on far too long, so can something please be done?

Answer: I agree that vehicles parked outside Glanville's is of concern. However, the practice has gone on for decades. We will inform Parking Enforcement, and ask them to monitor that area.

Teen Shelter – I see that when the Town Council advertise a monthly Council meeting, it states that no member of the public can attend, due to social distancing, and Covid 19, so why on many occasions, when cleaning up the park, the Teen Shelter is rammed with children – no social distancing whatsoever. Surely can it be looked into like taking the seats out, or taking the sides off it. It is a place where they can drink alcohol, smoke, and use it as a toilet, due to them being closed.

Answer: Having the Teen Shelter gives our young people a place to go. Removing it, or part of it, would defeat the purpose of the Shelter. Our young people must be allowed to be young people. It's important to remember we were all young once. The Town Council has no plans to remove it.

Is it possible that two road signs be placed either end of the town, like the one in the photograph I am sending you, while this virus is still present.

Answer: We will investigate the cost of having these signs, as a matter of urgency.

- d) John Foley – This is with regard to the Hurlings field –
The standard of the grass cutting is gradually declining, although it is being cut regularly i.e. two weekly.

Answer: The Hurlings field is being cut fortnightly.

This past week there were no strimming done around the trees or the edges.

Answer: The weather turned really bad, and the Contractors ran out of time.

The children's playground wasn't cut, neither was the area opposite the town houses within the Cornish wall.

Answer: As above.

He also failed to clean up the tarmac paths, which were, and still are, covered in muddy grass.

Answer: As above.

We have noticed the big gate left open on a few occasions, not necessarily by the grass cutter, and feel this might be seen as an invitation for a travellers group to set up camp. It was originally kept locked with chain and padlock. Could this be reinstated.

Answer: Yes, a chain and padlock will be reinstated.

We also noticed that the grass banks are no longer cut, so could they be planted with wild flowers to improve the appearances.

Answer: The grass banks are cut monthly.

If there is any funding available for a seat or two to be placed here (there is already a base for one, which never materialised). I am sure the residents and visitors would be appreciative.

Answer: The Town Council will look into this matter.

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Report from County Councillor and Police:

The County Councillor's report had already been presented.

There was no Police presence, and no Report had been received.

322/19 Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for Absence were received from Cllrs Mrs Warner, Cllr Mrs Rogers, and Cllr Mrs Jiggins (all unwell).

323/19 Members Declarations of Interests:

i) Declarations of Interest, in accordance with the Agenda:

None

ii) Declarations of gifts to the value of £25:

None

324/19 To confirm Minutes of the Full Council Meeting, held on 11th June 2020:

The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting, held on 11th June 2020, were presented by the Mayor.

Cllr Wills proposed, Cllr Allen seconded, and it was RESOLVED that the Minutes be accepted. There were two abstentions, as neither Cllrs Roberts or Culley were present at the Meeting.

325/19 Payment of Accounts – Members to Approve the Payment of Accounts to the end of June 2020:

The Mayor presented the Accounts, to be paid up to the end of June 2020.

A number of questions were asked, and answers provided, about cheques paid, monies received, and Standing Orders/Direct Debits paid.

Cllr Wills proposed, Cllr Mrs McLeod seconded, and it was RESOLVED unanimously, to approve the payment of accounts up to the end of June 2020.

326/19 Planning Matters:

PA20/04180 – Replacement raised roof and general alterations to existing garage and hobbies room within part of first floor – Kendra, Newquay Road, St Columb, Cornwall – Mr Parkyn

Cllr Wills proposed, Cllr Daniels seconded, and it was RESOLVED unanimously to support the Application.

PA20/04260 – Works to trees namely – Copper Beech (T10) – Beech (T7) subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) – Springfield House, Trekenning Road, St Columb TR9 6RS – Dr Richard Keedwell

Cllr Wills proposed, Cllr Daniels seconded, and it was RESOLVED unanimously to support the Application.

327/19 Resurfacing of Trekenning Road Car Park:

Cllr Wills was pleased to advise that Trekenning Road Car Park was opened on 1st July 2020. The Contractors (E Roberts) had undertaken an excellent and professional job. It is now a wonderful asset for the town. On average during the day, there are about 25 cars using this Car Park. The Town Clerk advised that there were problems with the Building Surveyor Consultant. He prepared the specification, but we really have not seen him since. He stated that, in reality, the Mayor and himself had “project managed” this project. The final cost was also reduced by about £14,000 from the original tender.

328/19 Neighbourhood Development Plan:

Cllr Wills advised that he had contacted the Chairman of the Steering Group. The Chairman stated, that an executive decision was taken by the himself and the Secretary, to hold no further meetings until September 2020. They still have use of the website. The Questionnaire is ready to be distributed.

329/19 Standing Orders 2020, Financial Regulations 2020, Statement of Internal Control, General Risk Assessment, Fire Risk Assessment:

Cllr Wills proposed, Cllr Daniels seconded, and it was RESOLVED unanimously to adopt the following documents – Standing Orders 2020, Financial Regulations 2020, Statement of Internal Control, General Risk Assessment, and Fire Risk Assessment. Cllr Wills commented that amendments can be made to any of the documents, as and when required.

330/19 Annual Governance Statement 2019/20:

The Town Clerk spoke about the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20. Members had previously received a copy of this Statement. The Internal Auditor has confirmed that all items were acceptable, and have, therefore, been ticked “yes”.

Cllr Wills proposed, Cllr Roberts seconded, and it was RESOLVED unanimously to accept the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20.

331/19 **Accounting Statements 2019/20:**

The Town Clerk took Members through the Accounting Statements 2019/20, explaining how the figures had been arrived at. Thompson Jenner had again carried out a very thorough, and in-depth examination of the Town Council's finances. He explained the variances, as an explanation has to be given where the variance is over 15%. The Internal Auditor has undertaken two audits. He read her findings and recommendations, which have since been "taken on board".

Cllr Wills proposed, Cllr Roberts seconded, and it was RESOLVED unanimously to accept the Accounting Statement 2019/20.

332/19 **Operation London Bridge:**

No amendments have been made to this document, which was presented to Members prior to "lockdown".

Cllr Wills proposed, Cllr Allen seconded, and it was RESOLVED unanimously to accept the Protocol for the Death of a Senior National Figure.

333/19 **Social Media Policy:**

Some slight amendments have been made to this document, which again was presented to members prior to "lockdown".

Cllr Wills proposed, Cllr Culley seconded, and it was RESOLVED unanimously to accept the amended Social Media Policy.

334/19 **St Columb Major Football Club:**

We have received a number of questions and comments from the Football Club, asking for the Town Council's responses.

Could the rent be waived for this year? Members agreed unanimously to do so. Proposed by Cllr Wills, seconded by Cllr Mrs Fuery.

Cllr Wills also suggested, and it was agreed unanimously, that we should also waive the rent for the Bowling Club.

The Club would like to apply for a grant of up to £10,000, which they are eligible for. Council agreed.

The Club has received £1,500 from Foundation Football, to have groundworks carried out on the pitch. Could catering be provided during the work? As long as the catering is the same as on "match days", no problem, but the Council will not agree to any commercial venture.

Would the Council support the provision of a 3g pitch at the rear of the Fire Station, in conjunction with the school. It was pointed out that this

area of land is privately owned (by the Powell Estate), and the Town Council therefore has no input.

335/19 **Cutting of Allotment Boundary Bank/Hedge:**

A number of Plot Holders have requested that the Allotment Boundary Bank/Hedge be cut back (as in previous years). It is becoming overgrown, and is looking very untidy. It was pointed out that back in December last year, it was agreed that we should not undertake any more work on this bank/hedge for twelve months. After quite a lengthy discussion, it was agreed to cut back the bank/hedge forthwith. There were two abstentions.

336/19 **Install new Street Light in Higher East Street/Hillcrest Close:**

It was stated that we have received a request for a street light to be provided, to light an alleyway between Hillcrest Close and Higher East Street. Cllr Daniels advised that this footpath has never been adopted by Cornwall Council. We have received a quote from SSE to undertake the necessary work, in the sum of £4,102.69. After some discussion, it was agreed not to proceed with this work – five against, and one abstention.

337/19 **Provision of additional CCTV cameras:**

Cllr Wills gave some information, about the possible provision of additional CCTV cameras around Trekenning Road Car Park. Three properties have been suggested as locations, and the homeowners have all agreed to have cameras erected on their properties. The Town Council will contribute £10 towards electricity to each property. Basically, we need to be able to “keep an eye” on what is going on in this newly refurbished Car Park. We have obtained a price from CDA to install three cameras, and ancillary work, in the sum of £2,112.00. Members agreed unanimously to approve this quotation, and to have the work undertaken as soon as possible.

338/19 **Renew, redesign and rebuild current Council Website:**

The Town Clerk gave a background to this item. The website was created about ten years ago. It is now in desperate need of an upgrade. We also need to have Accessibility Provision in place by September 2020. The quotation document seems very comprehensive, and the price reasonable for what is required (£1,595.00). Cllr Roberts agreed that the quote appears to be very acceptable and, in his opinion, we should accept it and move forward. Cllr Daniels requested that “Firefox” be added to the list of compatible networks.

Cllr Wills proposed, Cllr Roberts seconded, and it was RESOLVED unanimously to accept SeaDog IT's quote of £1,595.00 to renew, redesign, and rebuild the current Council Website.

339/19 Donation Request from CHICKS:

We only sent a donation to CHICKS in March of this year (£50). It was unanimously agreed not to send another donation at this time.

340/19 Correspondence:

The following items of correspondence had been received:

- a) Cormac – Town and Parish Council – Highways and Environmental Update – 16.06.20
- b) CC – Town and Parish Council COVID-19 Update – 19.06.20

341/19 Any Other Business:

- a) Cllr Culley spoke about car parking in the two town Car Parks, and asked whether they could also become “all day” parking areas, as is available in Trekenning Road Car Park. We will look into the matter, and probably, in the not too distant future, make all three Car Parks the same.
- b) Cllr Mrs Fuery passed on comments from Cllr Mrs Jiggins, asking if our Street Cleaner could sweep up opposite Co-op, and down by the Lychgate. The drains by the Lychgate also need clearing. We will contact Cornwall Highways regarding the latter point.
- c) Cllr Mrs Fuery commented on the parking situation in Halveor Close. It appears that people are leaving their vehicles in Halveor Close, and going into the Childrens’ Play Area in the Recreation Ground. Halveor Close is supposed to be “Residents Parking Only”. Signs are needed to be displayed accordingly, similar to Trethewey Close. We will refer the matter to Ocean Housing.
- d) Cllr Allen spoke about the Teen Shelter, and the fact that he has had a number of complaints about “illicit activities” taking place. We need to request the Police to visit, and monitor the situation.
- e) The Town Clerk advised that he had received, from Wesley Place (St Columb) Limited, a letter regarding an increase in rent, in accordance with the retail price index prevailing on 1st January. The new amount is £12,858 per annum. The increase is due with effect from the quarterly payment due on 25th June 2020.
- f) The Town Clerk advised that our Handyperson has now made two new windows, for the upstairs toilet, and on the side of the Youth Club building. We are awaiting a price for scaffolding, and then the work will be carried out.

- g) The Town Clerk advised that he will speak to the relevant people regarding the current, and future, position on the Smallseum Project.

342/19 **Date of Next Full Council Meeting:**

The date of the next Full Council Meeting is scheduled for 1st September 2020.

343/19 **Resolution:**

To consider the following Resolution: That the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972)

Cllr Wills proposed the Resolution, seconded by Cllr Mrs McLeod, and RESOLVED unanimously that we now go into Closed Session.

This part of the Meeting ended at 8.25pm

Dated: 1st September 2020

Signed: