

## Yateley Town Council

Minutes of the Emergency Action Committee on Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021, 12.03pm  
held virtually by videoconference

### Present (virtually) - Councillors:

Gerry Crisp (Chair)  
Stuart Bailey  
Greg Easterbrook  
Tony Spencer

### In attendance (virtually) - Councillors:

Jenny Cole  
Adrian Collett (arrived during item 177)  
Mark Griffin  
Bob Harward  
Gill Hennell  
Bob McSorley  
Maria Pierce

Rochelle Halliday (Town Clerk)

**The meeting was called under YTC Standing Order 81 to discuss the following agenda item:**

Council hall hire policy for the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

#### **175 Apologies**

All Committee Members were present.

Apologies were received from Cllr. Pam Phelps-Jones.

The meeting was held by videoconference due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

It was agreed that Cllr. Gerry Crisp would Chair the meeting.

#### **176 Declaration of Interests**

Cllr. Stuart Bailey declared an interest, as he is a Trustee at Hart Voluntary Action. Cllr. Mark Griffin declared a personal interest, as he is a volunteer with Hart Voluntary Action.

#### **177 Council Hall Hire Policy for the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme**

Members discussed the hall hire fees being charged by the Council for the COVID-19 vaccination programme. Hart Voluntary Action (HVA) requested use of the Monteagle Community Hall, on behalf of the Clinical Commissioning Group, to support volunteers helping with the vaccinations. Bookings were made for late December and early January, as well as mid-January.

The Council received confirmation that HVA would be able to reclaim all hall hire fees from the central Government funds that were made available for the vaccination programme. The Council's standard charging policy was, therefore, applied.

Cllr. Adrian Collett arrived at 12.25pm.

The Council learnt today that the reimbursement of hall hire from central funding is now not certain. In light of this information, Members were keen to continue supporting this vital vaccination effort and provide whatever support is required for the roll out.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council will waive all hall hire fees in respect of the COVID-19 vaccination programme for Hart Voluntary Action, the local GP surgery or any associated voluntary organisation, where the cost of hire cannot be fully reimbursed from central Government. In addition, the hall will be available for bookings 7 days a week, to support the vaccinations, whilst no other regular hirers are using the facility.

Meeting closed at 12.36pm.

Addendum: After the meeting, a small group of Members agreed the following statement for publication online:

In response to social media comments this morning, Yateley Town Council would like to clarify some of the concerns that have been brought to our attention. Yateley Town Council will not, and at no time has ever intended to, charge the local surgery, HVA or local voluntary groups for hall hire in respect of COVID-19 vaccinations. The hall is available 24/7 at no cost to HVA or the local surgery for delivering the vaccines.

Our understanding is that the hall hire costs are being met by central Government, through the local health bodies, as part of their national vaccine roll out strategy. If this is not the case, then no charge will be made. All Councillors and Officers realise the importance of the vaccination programme and are proud to offer our continued support to this incredibly successful vaccination campaign.

We have received the following comments from Caroline Winchurch, CEO of Hart Voluntary Action, 'Firstly, we want to thank Yateley Town Council for accommodating our requests at such short notice immediately before and after Christmas to hire the Monteagle Lane Community Centre for use by volunteers assisting with the Covid-19 vaccinations. As a local community we all had to respond very quickly and the response has been fantastic.

We very much appreciate that we have been able to have the charity rate for hall hire, and that we have this as a continued offer whilst we are asking the Town Council at short notice to accommodate our requests for use of the Community Centre, as and when vaccine is made available for the local population. The staff team at Yateley Town Council have all been fantastically helpful.

We can confirm that our direct costs are being reimbursed by the local health bodies responsible for the roll out of surgery-led vaccinations, so we are obviously sad to hear rumours to the contrary on social media and can only apologise for any distress caused to Town Council Staff and Town Councillors'.