

MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday 13 September 2014

At 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall

Present:

Councillor J S King (Chairman)

Councillors:	A K Beames	P J Dorward
	N Buckle	H B Eaglestone
	Mrs B J Churchill	C Holliday
	Ms M J C Curry	D A Snow
	R F N Curry	B J Woodruff
Officers:	Town Clerk	Democratic Services Officer
	RFO	Facilities Supervisor

Also present: Acting Sergeant Matt Gamble

450. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for their absence were received from Cllrs Mrs J C Baker, D S Enright, A D Harvey, T J Morris and C K Woodward.

451. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

452. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meetings held on 4 August 2014, 9 September 2014 and 29 September 2014 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman with the following amendment:-

9 September 2014 - P3, item 7, paragraph 3 – remove “as” at the end of the sentence.

453. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS**

Minute 366 - 4 August 2014 - A member advised Witney Mills Cricket Club were still pursuing the Town Green application and it would be helpful if they could look at Council archives. The Town Clerk said she expected the Club to get in touch to do so. She also commented that she had recently attended a legal briefing from what she understood, the Club would be hard pressed to prove the case for Town Green Status because they had permission via a lease. The Town Clerk agreed to try to locate any relevant paperwork and contact the Club direct.

454. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public present for this item.

455. **WITNEY COMMUNITY POLICING ISSUES**

The Chairman welcomed Acting Sgt Matt Gamble from Thames Valley Police. Sgt Gamble explained that there was a new member of the Neighbourhood Team – PC Giles – who would be assisting whilst he was Acting Sgt.

Acting Sgt Gamble updated the Council on campaigns against anti-social behaviour, and a community clean up targeting The Crofts and Highworth Place. There had also been a meeting with the Allotment Association to set up a link with the police. The police had also taken action against vehicles behaving in an anti-social manner. A new power would come into force on 20 October allowing the police to issue dispersal orders without alcohol being involved.

A member who had been re-elected as the NAG Chairman commented that they had raised the issue with reporting vandalism and it seemed as though the Council was reporting vandalism in 2 ways. She said that everything should be reported through 101. The Town Clerk confirmed that this was in fact being done. Acting Sgt. Gamble explained that if officers attended, the issue was given a “URN” number and if they did not attend, it was given a “Crime Reference Number”. The Town Clerk gave the list of reported issues to Acting Sgt. Gamble who promised to follow them up.

A member asked about police presence at The Leys. Acting Sgt. Gamble said that the police did regular patrols in this area. The member was concerned about speeding cars and asked how he should report them. Acting Sgt. Gamble replied that if it was an emergency he should ring 999 and if a non-emergency ring 101. Another member agreed that speeding cars were a problem and asked for the possibility of speed bumps being installed to be raised at the next Traffic Advisory Committee in January 2015.

RESOLVED: that speeding and speed humps on the Leys be referred to the next Witney Traffic Advisory meeting

456. **VANDALISM REPORT**

Members received and considered a report on vandalism from the Facilities Manager. The Council had also received a response to a letter sent to the Right, Hon. David Cameron M.P. The Town Clerk felt he had somewhat missed the point as he referred to crime reporting and not the youth justice system, which the Council had complained about.

A member said the Council should write to the Police Commissioner. The Town Clerk said a letter had been sent and she intended to follow this up by sending him a copy of the letter to the Right. Hon David Cameron M.P.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

The Chairman thanked Acting Sgt. Gamble for attending. *Acting Sgt. Gamble left the meeting at 7.25pm.*

457. **CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Committee received and considered a report from the Mayor on events she had attended since the last meeting.

The Chairman drew members' attention to the fact that the Town's Fairtrade status was up for renewal, notification of which had only been received that morning. As there was a lengthy document for consideration he suggested it be circulated to members and put on the next Council agenda.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

458. **MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

a) Planning and Development Committees of 12 August, 2 September and 23 September 2014

In answer to a Members question the Chairman confirmed that the address 'The Courtyard' referred to in the minutes of 2 September 2014 had been adopted by the District Council.

The Committee Chairman confirmed that the Burford Rd application was due for consideration by the principal planning authority on 19 November. Several members confirmed they would be attending this meeting. A member pointed out that the minutes incorrectly stated on p3 that she had advised an "Environmental *Pollution* Study" should be undertaken and this should read an "Environmental *Health* Study".

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee as detailed be received and any recommendation therein be approved.

b) Amenities Committee of 8 September 2014

The Council received and considered the minutes of the Amenities Committee of 8 September 2014.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Amenities Committee as detailed be received and any recommendation therein be approved.

c) Recreation Committee of 15 September 2014

The Council received and considered the minutes of the Recreation Committee of 15 September 2014.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Recreation Committee as detailed be received and any recommendation therein be approved.

d) Public Halls Committee of 22 September 2014

A member questioned recommendation H424(4)(c) and whether Oxford Inspires was still operating. The Town Clerk explained the situation and the relationship between OI, Jacqui Ibbotson and Euton Daley and their continued involvement on the Corn Exchange Advisory

Board. A member commented that the Council had not agreed to anything yet as the Council had not yet received the proposal mentioned on the recommendation.

A member commented that the Council had agreed to employ a fundraiser in the past and she still felt this was the correct way to go. The Town Clerk pointed out that this was covered in the Public Halls minutes. The member asked if the Council could therefore still employ a fundraiser and the Town Clerk reiterated that no decisions had been made, so this could be considered at the appropriate time.

The Chairman asked the Town Clerk for an update on the sale of the Langdale Hall. She had been advised there were 11 interested parties and some viewings had taken place. The agent would request best offers by the end of the month and was confident of a capital receipt before Christmas. She mentioned that she had ascertained that previous interested parties, who had in the past made offers directly to the Council, were still interested.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Public Halls Committee as detailed be received and any recommendation therein be approved.

e) Policy and Finance Committee of 29 September 2014

A member asked if the Town Clerk, Cllrs Baker and Roger Curry had met with Ridge to raise questions in relation to the tenders yet. The Town Clerk confirmed a meeting had taken place where they had gone through the full tender report analysing the two lowest tenders. She advised that the issues had been resolved and the Council would be proceeding with the lowest tender. A contract was in the process of being drawn up.

The Town Clerk took the opportunity to highlight the financial implications if the Council had not proceeded at this time. She had been advised that the lowest tender was competitive.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee as detailed be received and any recommendation therein be approved.

459. **CONCLUSION OF AUDIT FOR 31 MARCH 2014**

The Council considered the report of the Town Clerk and that of the Auditors BDO LLP Southampton as circulated with the agenda. The report confirmed that the information in the annual return was in accordance with proper practices and no matters had been highlighted giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met.

The Town Clerk explained that she had disputed the content of the auditors' report on 'Other Matters (not affecting their opinion)' as the S106 money referred to had been treated in the same way since receipt in 2008.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

460. **CHAIRMEN'S UPDATE REPORT**

The Council received and considered the report of the Facilities Manager updating members on the progress of projects and outstanding matters since the last meeting. She had included a project sheet.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the project sheet and report be noted
- 2) that the outstanding matters from this year's committee visions be brought back to the relevant committees in the new cycle of meetings, to be prioritised and included in the works project plan in line with the capacity of the team.

461. **HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE**

The Council received and considered the report from the Facilities Manager to update members on the progress of various health and safety items, as circulated with the agenda.

A member commented that a letter had been sent from Madley Park Hall confirming that all outstanding items had been dealt with. A member queried the status of the plant equipment at the Windrush Cemetery. The Facilities Supervisor explained that some items now had log books and much of the required work had been done, in fact there were only a few outstanding items.

The Chairman noted that the boat house at the Country Park had been vandalised and the suggested replacement was a lockable steel container at £1725 plus £280 delivery charge. Members discussed this and wondered if a simple shipping container would be a cheaper solution. The Facilities Supervisor was unsure that the access would be suitable for an articulated lorry to deliver a shipping container.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the report be noted
- 2) that the Facilities Manager undertakes further research on a container for the boat up to a maximum cost of £1725.

462. **WORKING PARTIES**

The Council received and considered the report of the Town Clerk as circulated with the agenda.

- a) Grounds Maintenance Working Party

RESOLVED: that Cllrs B J Churchill, M J C Curry, P J Dorward and J S King be appointed to the working party.

- b) Sports Facilities Working Party

The Council considered the future of the working party.

RESOLVED: that the Sports Facilities Working Party be dissolved and all related matters be referred to the Recreation Committee.

463. **APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Council received and considered the correspondence from the Clerk to the Trustees of the Witney Town Charity as circulated with the agenda. Councillors Beames, Churchill, and King put themselves forward. A vote was therefore taken

RESOLVED: that Cllr Jim King be elected as trustee to the Witney Town Charity.

464. **"FLY A FLAG FOR THE COMMONWEATH"**

The Council received and considered the report of the Town Clerk and correspondence from NALC on behalf of the Pageant Master who had been invited Town Councils to raise the Commonwealth Flag on 9 March 2015. The cost of a flag was £58 which would come from the Civic Budget.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and the invitation to fly the Commonwealth Flag on 9 March 2015 from the Pageant Master be accepted.

465. **SNOW PLAN**

The Council received and considered a report of the Town Clerk and Facilities Manager as circulated prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

466. **CORPORATE COVENANT**

The Council received and considered correspondence on the Oxfordshire Corporate Covenant as circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED: that the Council supports the Corporate Covenant.

467. **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

There were no documents to be sealed.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Chairman