

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday 12 March 2018

At 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall

Present:

Councillor B J Churchill (Chairman)

Councillors: A K Beames C Holliday
 C Brown J S King
 H W Chirgwin T J Morris
 H B Eaglestone L M Price
 D S Enright D Temple

Officers: Town Clerk Responsible Financial Officer
 Democratic Services Officer

117 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for their absence were received from Cllrs Bartington, Dorward, Doughty, Reynolds and Woodward.

118 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

119 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

120 CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT

The Council received and considered the report of the Town Clerk and the Corporate Risk assessment as along with the Risk Management Policy for 2018.

A member commented that employment of staff was a significant issue but this would be discussed later in the meeting. He also wondered if the Langdale Hall may be able to be booked in future to provide improved accessibility to meetings.

RECOMMENDED: that the Corporate Risk Assessment and Action Plan as presented be approved and the Chairman of the Council be authorised to sign it.

121 CONSULTATION ON FURTHER MODIFICATIONS TO THE SUBMISSION DRAFT WEST OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN 2031

The Council received and considered the further modifications to the submission draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031. Members agreed that they would like to see more included on health provision and also that infrastructure was vital before further development.

The Leader of the Council commented that if the small changes that had been asked for were made to the draft plan then the Inspector was minded to approve it. He still had concerns on the Witney North strategic development, but the reason this was included was to increase the viability of the West End Link Road.

Whilst members agreed that infrastructure needed to come before development, the Council agreed that it supported the Local Plan in its current draft form.

RECOMMENDED: that the District Council be informed that the Town Council supports the local plan in its current form.

122 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS: STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION**

The Council received and considered the consultation from the Committee for Standards in Public Life.

A member commented that the standards board had been abolished but there was still a process which did work, and there was the monitoring officer at WODC. He saw no reason to change this. If a standards board was brought back, it should be non-political and independent. The Council agreed with this and this was proposed and agreed as a response to the consultation.

RECOMMENDED: that the response to the consultation is that Witney Town Council sees no reason to change the current system of monitoring ethical standards on public life. However, if a standards board was brought back, it should be non-political and independent.

123 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: that in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

The RFO and DSO left the meeting

124 **TOWN CLERK'S CONFIDENTIAL REPORT**

The Town Clerk tabled a confidential report regarding the staffing situation brought about by long term sickness and recent resignations and asked the Council for delegated authority to proceed with recruiting to vacant positions. Members supported the Town Clerk and considered it was important for her to have the resources she needed to ensure minimal disruption to Council run services and its administration.

RESOLVED: that delegated authority to the Town Clerk be agreed in order proceed with the recruitment of vacant positions as a matter of urgency.

The meeting closed at 7.05pm

Chairman