

MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday 11 February 2018

At 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall

Present:

Councillor B J Churchill (Chairman)

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

Officers: Mrs Sharon Groth - Town Clerk
Mrs Nicky Cayley - Democratic Services Officer
Mr Adam Clapton – Office Manager

Others: 2 members of the public (from 7.10pm)

065 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for their absence were received from Cllrs Doughty, Dorward and Temple.

Subsequent to the meeting apologies for their absence was received from Cllrs McMahon and Woodward.

066 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

067 **MINUTES**

The Council received and considered the minutes of the Council meeting held on 10 December and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 17 December 2018.

a) **RESOLVED:** to confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 10 December and 17 December 2018 for signature by the Chairman.

b) **MATTERS ARISING:**

There were no matters arising to be discussed at the meeting.

068 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public present at this point in the meeting.

069 **WITNEY COMMUNITY POLICING ISSUES**

Whilst the police had been invited to attend, unfortunately they were not present.

070 **AN UPDATE FROM WITNEY OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLORS AND WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Toby Morris

Cllr Morris provided an update on the LGA Peer Review that had just been completed and WODC had done well. The review stated that there were strong political and officer leads, that the council was ahead of the curve and that finances were sound. There was an ambitious programme for the future after the recent changes. The key recommendation was for the District Council Plan to proceed. The budget would shortly be going to cabinet and the recommended increase in council tax was £5.

Cllr Laura Price

Cllr Price advised that the following day would be budget setting at the County Council. It had been prepared in the context of a reduction in funding. 2021 was considered a year of high risk for funding as there was an increasing demand for services. It was possible that the Council would be looking at a cuts agenda. The County Council was also preparing for the LGA Peer review. There would be some restructuring of departments.

Post budget she would provide an update on what had been passed. All three proposals had youth provision in them. The County Councillor funding pots were now available for bids.

071 **REPORT BACK FROM COUNCILLORS ON THE WORK WITH EXTERNAL BODIES WHERE THEY SERVE AS THE TOWN COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVE**

Cllr Brenda Churchill

Cllr Churchill informed the Council that several stakeholders including the CCG and WODC were working together on a scheme to make Witney "Healthy Witney".

2 members of the public entered at 7.10pm.

Cllr Jim King

Cllr King expressed disappointment that the County and District Officers were not always present at the Traffic Advisory meetings. The DSO would e-mail dates to all members and remind them that substitutes were acceptable if they could not attend.

072 **MINUTES OF COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES**

a) **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 18 DECEMBER 2018, 15 JANUARY AND 5 FEBRUARY 2019**

The Chairman of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

A member queried if the Town Council has seen a specific planning application at Manor Road as it had been through the District Council which had no objections to it although it looked as though the land was not in the ownership of the applicant. He asked if the Town

Council had seen this application. The Chairman of the Planning and Development Committee advised that the Town Council did not always know who owned the land that applications were made on. The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council would be able to check this from now on at a small charge, and suggested the Councillor forward her the details of the application he was concerned with.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee of 18 December 2018, 15 January and 5th February 2019 as detailed, be received and any recommendations therein approved.

b) ESTATES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 7 JANUARY 2019

The Chairman of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

A member referred to the decision taken not to loan out the stage in line with Council Policy and remarked that she would have liked to see a record of the discussion in the minutes. She thought that it would be a good way to raise money and also to lend to the neighbouring Langdale Hall.

The Chairman explained that a full report had been brought to the meeting and she would ask the Town Clerk to send this to the member. The Town Clerk advised that all members would have had this report via e-mail.

Another member referred to the Corn Exchange Phase 2 Working Party and asked if the membership had been agreed. The Town Clerk explained that as the remaining time for the current Council was limited it would fit better with the new Council after May. Another member commented that the idea was to compile the thoughts of current members who may not be re-elected in May.

The Town Clerk added that the Corn Exchange would be a topic in the annual satisfaction survey and this may help to provide guidance.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Estates Management Committee of 7 January 2019 as detailed, be received and any recommendations therein approved.

c) SPORTS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE – 14 JANUARY 2019

The Chairman of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Sports and Recreation Committee of 14 January 2019 as detailed, be received and any recommendations therein be approved.

d) COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – 21 JANUARY 2019

The Chairman of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

A member referred to the infrastructure project as detailed in minute no. C035 of the minutes and asked for any progress on refreshing the bus stop art.

The Town Clerk informed the Council that there had been 2 entries for the competition and to supplement these, some of the Town Council's own photos of the 2018 Commemorations would be used. The refreshing process would take place later in the year.

Another member referred to minute no. C034 and the decision to allow the use of glyphosate on Council land. She had been shocked to learn of this. A member replied that this would be under constant review and another member said that the application was a very targeted process of use on individual weeds.

A member referred to minute C037 and asked that "Edwards" be changed to "Steptoe" as a matter of accuracy.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Community Services Committee of 21 January 2019 as detailed, be received and any recommendations therein approved, with "Edwards" being changed to "Steptoe".

e) POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 28 JANUARY 2019

The Chairman of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

The Chairman referred to minute no.F047 and commented that he had wanted it to be noted that the Music Festival must have all their paper work in order and submitted in time.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee of 28 January 2019 as detailed, be received and any recommendations therein approved.

073 **CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Council received and considered the Mayor's report of engagements undertaken as circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

074 **MOTION FROM CLLR DUNCAN ENRIGHT**

The Council received and considered the following motion from Cllr Enright:-

Witney Town Council welcomes the adoption of a formal definition of antisemitism by the Government in response to the work of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), congratulates the IHRA and its 31 member countries for adopting the definition; notes that the definition has been officially adopted by the Government, the Labour Party, the National Union of Students, the London Assembly, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and a number of local councils; welcomes the Government's update report on antisemitism, including progress made in ensuring wider adoption of the definition; and adopts the definition in full as a benchmark in handling such issues as part of its existing equalities policy.

The Council commits to using it to better understand and act against anti-Jewish hatred.

The definition is spelt out at

<https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/working-definition-antisemitism>

Cllr Enright spoke in support of his motion and explained that he felt that it was especially important as many Holocaust survivors were coming to the end of their lives. He felt that the definition was an appropriate codicil to the Town Council's equality policy. He commended his motion to the Council.

Another member thanked him for bringing this to the Council as a standalone motion. He was happy to accept the motion with the following amendment in the last sentence:-

The Council commits to using it to continue to better understand and act against anti-Jewish hatred.

RESOLVED: that the motion be passed unanimously with the amendment as detailed above.

075 **ARMED FORCES DAY SUB COMMITTEE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Democratic Services Officer, which explained that previously it was recommended that the World War 1 Working Party be transformed into a Working Party for the annual Armed Forces Day. It was agreed to defer the decision to the Annual Council meeting in May.

RESOLVED: that the idea is revisited at the Annual Council Meeting in May.

076 **OXFORDSHIRE TOGETHER**

The Committee received and considered the consultation from Oxfordshire County Council.

A member asked if a group could be formed to discuss collaborative working – she felt this was a great document.

The Chairman asked if copies could be available for the public at the Annual Town Meeting but the Town Clerk pointed out that this was a consultation for Town and Parish Councils.

Members continued to discuss the consultation and the issues surrounding it. Members agreed that the response should be that the Council was interested in engaging in discussions.

RESOLVED: that the consultation be noted and that the Town Council's reply is that it is interested in engaging with future discussions.

077 **OXFORDSHIRE PLAN 2050 – SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL SCOPING REPORT**

The Council received and considered the consultation from Oxfordshire County Council. There was some confusion over the closing date as on the e-mail this was 18 February but on line it was 25 March. If the later date was the closing date then this should be put on the next agenda for the Planning Committee on 26 February. If the closing date was 18 February the Planning Committee should respond immediately.

RESOLVED: to delegate the response to be made in an appropriate timescale to the Planning and Development Committee.

078 **COMMUNICATION FROM THE LEADER**

There were no communications from the Leader.

079 **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Town Clerk advised that she had received some “Ask Angela” posters, an initiative being publicised by West Oxfordshire District Council. These would be displayed in the public halls.

There had also been a request from the Watch Manager at the Fire Station to have use of an electrical socket and the toilets in the Corn Exchange for a 24 hour charity fundraising event on the curtilage of the hall. Members had no objections to this.

RESOLVED: that the correspondence be noted and that the Watch Manager at the Fire Station be informed that the request for the use of a socket and toilets at the Corn Exchange for their charity event was granted.

080 **QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER**

There were no questions to the leader.

081 **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

There were no documents to be sealed.

082 **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.

083 **STATEMENT FROM THE TOWN CLERK**

The Council received a confidential statement from the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED: that the statement be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Chairman