

CIRENCESTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of a Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber, Bingham House, No. 1 Dyer Street, Cirencester, at 7.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 20th July 2004.

PRESENT: Councillor D J Nash – Mayor

Councillors: G T Adams
Mrs S A Alexander
Dr P A Hedges
B D Hudson
Mrs R A Leicester
R G Lock
Mrs B A Potter
Mrs M S Rickman
D J M Sankey

Andrew Rennie Crook – Town Clerk
Libby Hughes - Receptionist

A Prayer was read by the Mayor.

47.05 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs M T Eccles (Deputy Mayor), R Bourne, D S P Clifford and N E Whereat, Mr C Sherwood (Deputy Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer) and Miss Johan Newman (Personal Assistant normally responsible for minute taking).

48.05 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were received.

49.05 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 8th June 2004 and the Special Council Meeting held on 14th June 2004 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor, subject to Minute Nos. C35.05, C36.05 and C37.05 to be considered under confidential matters.

Members noted that with regard to Minute No. 26.05 (Requirements of the Local Government Act 1972) the closing date for requests for an election was 23rd July 2004.

50.05 PLANNING COMMITTEE

- a) **RESOLVED that the availability of recently considered applications and decisions be noted (the files being available for inspection both at the meeting and at the Council Offices.)**
- b) **RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs B A Potter be appointed to the Planning Committee.**

51.05 POLICY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Policy Committee Meeting held on 8th June 2004 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman at their next meeting.

52.05 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor referred to the newsletter in the possession of Members and the display on the notice board.

The Mayor drew Members' attention to a Charity Football Match on Saturday, 24th July 2004 at 11.30 a.m. at Cirencester Town Football Club between the Wilts and Glos Standard and friends versus the Licensed Victuallers Association, with monies raised going to the Cirencester Hospital Scanner Appeal.

The Mayor read to Members a letter he had received from Mrs Mavis Marshall and paid tribute to her as an individual and for all the work she had done as a Councillor.

53.05 QUESTION TIME FOR ELECTORS

No questions were received.

54.05 QUESTION TIME FOR MEMBERS

No questions were received.

Immediately following Item 8 (Question Time For Members), the Mayor exercised his discretion to alter the order of the Agenda as follows: -

10. GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
11. COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
14. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL AND ITS STAFFING
9. RESOLUTIONS MOVED ON NOTICE – STANDING ORDER NO. 19
13. MEMBERS/OFFICERS PROTOCOL
12. KINGSHILL LANE SPORTS DEVELOPMENT SITE – SKATEBOARDING

55.05 GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

No questions were asked of this authority.

56.05 COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

No questions were asked of this authority.

57.05 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL AND ITS STAFFING

Members received a report from the Working Group on the Review of the Council and its Staffing (a copy of which is appended to the signed Minutes).

Councillor Dr P A Hedges, as Chairman of the Working Group, presented the report and recommended that all recommendations be accepted.

Following a short debate, it was **RESOLVED that the report be accepted.**

1. Working Groups

- a)** Working Groups will normally be set up by Council but exceptionally may be established by a Committee. They will have specific tasks and should, wherever possible, be time limited;
- b)** normally not more than two or three Working Groups should be formed at any one time;
- c)** Working Groups may include Officers (who will have an equal voice and not be simply advisers or "note-takers") and others who are not Members, especially when such a person can add a particular expertise;

2. Purpose Statement

- a) the Purpose Statement, as set out in the Evaluation Report, should be adopted;
- b) a Working Group should be formed to progress draft Objectives for the Council. These Objectives should be clear, specific and time bound;
- c) this Working Group should report to Council on 14th September 2004;

3. Code of Conduct

- a) Council adopts a Protocol for Members and Officers;
- b) a Working Group be formed to recommend ways to modernise the Conduct of Meetings and Council business and the associated necessary changes to Standing Orders and procedures;
- c) the final report be presented to the November 2004 Meeting of Council on the clear understanding that this should not preclude the presentation of earlier reports.

4. Councillor Induction, Mentoring and Professional Development

- a) further training, both specific and general, for all Members should be encouraged through the courses offered by the various training and development agencies. A record of such training and any qualifications gained should be maintained;
- b) a system of mentoring by pairing new Members with more experienced colleagues for the first few months of service be established;
- c) a course of Induction be developed for new Members elected in 2007 and that this should be updated regularly.

5. Staffing

- a) a Working Group be formed to recommend a process for the Performance Management of Staff;
- b) following the adoption by Council of the Objectives, a Working Group be formed to:
 - i) design an administrative organisation that will meet the future needs of the Council;
 - ii) develop appropriate job descriptions.

Pursuant to these Resolutions, Councillors Mrs S A Alexander, Mrs M S Rickman and D J M Sankey were appointed to the Working Group preparing the Purpose Statement.

Councillors B D Hudson, Mrs R A Leicester, R G Lock and the Mayor were appointed to the Working Group reviewing the Code of Conduct.

Councillors Dr P A Hedges, B D Hudson and the Mayor were appointed to the Staffing Working Group.

RESOLVED that those Members not present at the Council Meeting be invited to put their names forward for whichever of the Working Groups would be of greatest interest to them.

Having established the Working Groups, the Members then discussed Paragraph 6 of the report "Other Matters".

RESOLVED that whilst these matters should not deflect the Working Groups from their principal objectives: -

- a) **the creation of a positive "can do" culture in which Members decide what they would like to do and try to find a way in which it could be achieved be considered by the Working Group considering the Code of Conduct;**
- b) **the improvement of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Members and the provision of facilities and equipment to enable Members to perform**

their duties be considered by the Working Group dealing with the Code of Conduct;

- c) consideration be given by the Working Group dealing with Staffing to the appropriateness of the current Council offices in pursuing the efficient conduct of its business.**

58.05 RESOLUTIONS MOVED ON NOTICE – STANDING ORDER NO. 19

Notice in accordance with Standing Order No. 19 was received from Councillor G T Adams on 26th May 2004. It was considered by Council on 8th June 2004 and deferred to the Council Meeting in July. The notice moved the following resolution: -

“That all Minutes of Council and Committee Meetings are prepared and distributed to members within TEN working days of the meeting being minuted.”

The mover of the Resolution agreed that in view of the establishment of the Working Groups (see Minute No. 57.05), the Resolution be deferred for consideration by the Working Group considering the Code of Conduct.

59.05 MEMBERS/OFFICERS PROTOCOL

Members received a report from the Clerk together with draft form of protocol (a copy of which is appended to the signed Minutes).

RESOLVED that the consideration of the draft protocol and report be considered by the Working Group considering Staffing (see Minute No. 57.05).

60.05 KINGSHILL LANE SPORTS DEVELOPMENT SITE – SKATEBOARDING

Councillor Dr P A Hedges presented a report indicating that a meeting had taken place with the Ramp Users Group (RUG) and expressed his concern that the RUG wished to identify their own form of design and equipment. This was notwithstanding the fact that the Officers had presented graphic designs from approved skateboard equipment suppliers that would fall within existing costings. The RUG indicated that they wished to pursue the original designs, however, this equipment did not comply with the relevant standards.

In the circumstances, Councillor Dr Hedges was very concerned that the matter was at a standstill. As it was understood that a new Youth Officer at the Impact Youth Centre had been appointed, it was to be hoped that progress might now be achieved.

The Clerk advised Members that the RUG is not in favour of the design presented by GBH (an approved company) and that the RUG had accordingly been asked to obtain alternative quotations from companies that produced equipment that meets the necessary standards. The Officers were currently awaiting the RUG.

The Clerk further advised that he had some while ago forwarded information that would have enabled the RUG to apply for a grant and thus increase the availability of funds through the Council (£17,000) by £5,000 or more.

RESOLVED that the report presented by Councillor Dr P A Hedges be noted.

61.05 DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT 1995 IN RELATION TO PLAY AREAS

Members received a report prepared by Councillor G T Adams from the Play Areas Working Party (a copy of which was circulated at the meeting and is appended to the signed Minutes).

The report was presented by Councillor Adams as a first step, owing to the shortage of time that had been available to prepare the same.

The Clerk stressed that whilst the report had many good and fair observations, there were a number of issues on which the Officers and staff took issue.

62.05 BINGHAM HOUSE COUNCIL CHAMBER

The Clerk reminded Members of the problems that are being experienced in effecting insurance to protect certain users of the Council Chamber.

The Clerk reported that following correspondence with Zurich Municipal, there were ways in which they would be able to cover most of the situations. In the circumstances, the Clerk was continuing his discussions and negotiations in this respect.

63.05 GLOUCESTERSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS – PROPOSITIONS FOR DEBATE AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Members received a letter from Mr R Belliss of the Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils regarding the three submitted propositions from Redmarley, Stoke Orchard and Quedgeley Parish Councils.

RESOLVED that the letter be noted and that no observations/comments in relation to the three propositions be made.

64.05 PARISH APPOINTMENTS TO CONSERVATION BOARDS IN THE CHILTERN AND COTSWOLD AONBS

The Clerk reported on a letter received from the Countryside Agency and asked if any Members were interested in being a parish representative on the Conservation Boards in the Chilterns and Cotswold AONBS. Members were asked to let the Clerk know if they were so interested.

65.05 RURAL WHITE PAPER AND MARKET TOWNS HEALTHCHECK

The Clerk confirmed that this report was brought forward at the request of Members following the initial publication of the Rural White Paper in 2000. The work undertaken in pursuing the Market Towns Healthcheck for Cirencester and its hinterland was identified with the Clerk expressing appreciation of the fact that it had given rise to the establishment of the Cirencester Partnership. Following earlier events, there had been rumours that the Healthcheck would not proceed, however, the Clerk was endeavouring to ensure that all the good work that had taken place should not be lost. In the circumstances, the Clerk had attended upon Councillors G T Adams and D S P Clifford, together with Mr Dan Judges of the Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum. The two Councillors, subsequent to a briefing on the aims and objectives of the Healthcheck, indicated that they would like to attend future meetings as observers and would then determine whether they wished to make a full commitment. The Clerk stressed that the events earlier in the summer had set back the Healthcheck but he was still hopeful that the Cirencester Partnership would prove to be a success.

In elaborating on the objectives of the Healthcheck, the Clerk referred to his attendance at the University of Gloucestershire Summer School in the previous week. The Members were informed that a number of interesting presentations had been made and that there was some lively discussion and a substantial amount of networking. In referring to the Summer School, the Clerk advised that one of the most telling comments had been made by David Drew MP who stressed that the processes in the local communities were important on the basis of the enthusiasm that they generated and the involvement of individuals who had the community at heart. On the basis that human resources were the most valuable asset, Mr Drew had stressed that with the enthusiasm and will, the processes would work and that one should not worry about the money as this will follow the enthusiasm and the wishes of the community.

66.05 REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES

- a) Written reports were received from Councillor Mrs R A Leicester relating to the Corn Hall and Councillor G T Adams relating to Kemble Airfield.
- b) **RESOLVED** that Councillor N E Whereat be nominated as the Council's representative on The C and S A Bowly's Almshouse Charity and on the St John's Hospital and Other Almshouse Charities.
- c) **RESOLVED** that Councillor N E Whereat be upgraded from substitute to that of Council representative on Age Concern and St. Lawrence's Hospital.
- d) **RESOLVED** that Councillor D J Nash with Councillor Mrs B A Potter as his deputy be nominated as the Council's representative on the Steering Group being set up to celebrate Cirencester Deer Park School's Fortieth Anniversary in 2006.

PART TWO
CONFIDENTIAL

C67.05	MINUTES
C68.05	ABBEY GROUNDS W.C.'S
C69.05	KINGSHILL LANE SPORTS DEVELOPMENT SITE
C70.05	FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

See Confidential Minute Book.

RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest, that the public and press be excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

The meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.

Councillor D J Nash
Mayor