

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, 14th December 2004.

PRESENT: Councillor D J Nash – Mayor
Councillor G T Adams – Deputy Mayor

Councillors: Mrs S A Alexander
R Bourne
Mrs M T Eccles
Dr P A Hedges
B D Hudson
J B Leicester
Mrs R A Leicester
R G Lock
Mrs M S Rickman
D J M Sankey
N E Whereat

Andrew Rennie Crook - Town Clerk
Clive Sherwood - Deputy Town Clerk
Libby Hughes - Receptionist

A Prayer was read by the Mayor.

163.05 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs B A Potter and Miss Johan Newman (Personal Assistant normally responsible for minute taking).

164.05 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor B D Hudson declared an interest with regard to Minute No. 180.05 - Kingshill Lane Sports Development Site.

165.05 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 9th November 2004 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor subject to Minute No. C158.05 to be considered under confidential matters.

166.05 PLANNING COMMITTEE

That the availability of recently considered applications and decisions be noted. (These files are available for inspection both in the Council Office during the working week and at Council Meetings.)

167.05 FINANCE COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 9th November 2004 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman at the next meeting.

Councillor Dr Hedges, Chairman of Finance circulated a letter regarding the process for setting the 2005/06 Precept (copy of which are appended to the signed Minutes), The Chairman suggested that papers for the draft Budget for 2005/06 be circulated to Members before Christmas.

It was suggested that the Council has an informal meeting on Tuesday, 11th January 2005 instead of the proposed Council Meeting with the Council Meeting on Monday, 24th January 2005 to fix the Precept for 2005/06 and deal with other business.

RESOLVED that: -

- a) **papers for the draft Budget for 2005/06 be circulated to Members before Christmas in order that Members have an opportunity to review the options presented and to consider any further ideas that they may have;**
- b) **the draft Budget be presented to an informal meeting of Members on Tuesday, 11th January 2005 and receive final consideration at the re-arranged Council Meeting on Monday, 24th January 2005.**

Recorded Vote – Councillors G T Adams, Mrs S A Alexander, R Bourne, Mrs M T Eccles, Dr P A Hedges, B D Hudson, J B Leicester, Mrs R A Leicester, R G Lock, D J Nash, Mrs M S Rickman, D J M Sankey and N E Whereat - For.

168.05 POLICY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that the Recommendations of the Policy Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 14th December 2004, as identified by Councillor Mrs S A Alexander, be approved.

Recorded Vote - Councillors G T Adams, Mrs S A Alexander, R Bourne, Mrs M T Eccles, Dr P A Hedges, J B Leicester, Mrs R A Leicester, R G Lock, D J Nash, Mrs M S Rickman, D J M Sankey and N E Whereat – For, Councillor B D Hudson – Abstained.

169.05 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor drew the Members' attention to the Newsletter and particularly the reference to the appointment of the new Grounds Foreman, Mr Ian Muttitt. If Members wish to be introduced to Mr Muttitt they should contact the office to make an appointment.

He mentioned that the Advent Market was well supported and thanked everyone, especially the Town Clerk, for helping to make the day a great success.

On a down beat note, the Mayor expressed his disappointment over the lack of attendance on the part of non-Cotswold District Council Members at the Cotswold District Council's Budget Consultation Meeting for Cirencester. He stated that his disappointment was all the greater taking into account the discussions at the last Area Liaison Panel Meeting.

170.05 QUESTION TIME FOR ELECTORS

No questions were received.

171.05 QUESTION TIME FOR MEMBERS

The following question was received from Councillor B D Hudson on 9th December 2004: -

"The arrangements for agreeing the Council's Delivery Plans for 2005/6 and setting the Precept to enable this delivery are not clear. In addition, things seem to be running late this year. What are the key milestones for this process please?"

Response:

To be addressed and dealt with by the Chairman of the Finance Committee during the Council Meeting (it was confirmed by Councillor Hudson that his question was answered when the Finance Committee Minutes were presented).

172.05 RESOLUTIONS MOVED ON NOTICE – STANDING ORDER NO. 19

None were received.

173.05 GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

No questions were asked of this authority.

174.05 COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

No questions were asked of this authority.

175.05 RURAL WHITE PAPER AND MARKET TOWNS HEALTHCHECK

As per a previous resolution to refer to the above on a regular basis, the Clerk had nothing to report but hoped that the Working Group recommended by the Policy Committee and approved by Council should progress the Market Towns Healthcheck.

176.05 BANK MANDATE

The Clerk drew Members' attention to the Resolution passed in August 2003. In the light of this resolution still being in force, the Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer were seeking clarification from Lloyds TSB as to the reason for requesting a new mandate. In the meantime, the specimen signature sheet was circulated for Members to sign.

Members noted the situation.

177.5 CODE OF CONDUCT

In introducing this item, the Clerk drew attention to the obligation on the part of Members to comply with the Code of Conduct.

A Member drew attention to the apparent conflict between advice contained in the agenda item and that received from Counsel at another place. The Clerk advised that the Member raise this with the Monitoring Officer.

Members received and noted a letter received from the Standards Board for England relating to dual-hatted Members and the Code of Conduct (copies of which are appended to the signed Minutes).

178.05 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL AND ITS STAFFING

a) Code of Conduct Working Group

Members received a copy of the Notes of the Meetings held on 2nd and 18th November 2004 (copies of which are appended to the signed Minutes).

Councillor B D Hudson reported that a number of the Group had visited Chippenham Town Council and was very impressed by the way they conducted their meetings. The

visit to Witney Town Council was cancelled and there are no plans to re-arrange the visit in the New Year.

He advised that the Meeting of the Working Group arranged for Tuesday, 14th December 2004 was cancelled and that the next meeting was to be arranged after the Council Meeting.

b) Purpose Statement Working Group

Councillor Mrs S A Alexander advised that this Group had served its purpose and would cease to exist.

c) Staffing Working Group

Councillor Dr P A Hedges, Chairman of the Staffing Working Group, advised that the Group had not met and that he would like to stand down as Chairman. Additional Members were invited to sit on the Group.

RESOLVED that Councillors Mrs S A Alexander and Mrs M T Eccles be elected on to the Staffing Working Group.

The next meeting of the Group was to be arranged after the Council Meeting.

179.05

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS – IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL AGREEMENT ON SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

The Clerk advised that the paperwork circulated would be re-distributed when the amended documentation was received. The amendments had arisen at the meeting between the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks on 8th December 2004.

180.05

KINGSHILL LANE SPORTS DEVELOPMENT SITE

Members received a report from the Clerk relating to the above (a copy of which is appended to the signed Minutes).

The Clerk drew attention to paragraph 3 and added "Mr Mayor, Members, I refer to Item No 18 to Paragraph 3 of the report.

I believe that Paragraph 3 is self-explanatory, however, I feel that it is appropriate for me to repeat my apology in open forum. I apologise for an error that has been repeated on a number of occasions".

In response to a question, the Clerk outlined the events between November 1998 and July 1999 during which time the planning agreement was varied on a number of occasions.

The Mayor then stated "In asking Council to accept the apology today offered by Mr Crook I would wish to make it quite clear that since it was drawn to his attention he has at all times acted in a proper and honest manner and in good faith.

For myself I also wish to apologise unreservedly to members for my part in this issue. In retrospect, it was an error of judgement to delay this matter until it could be properly reported to this meeting, when I should have asked Council to suspend Standing Orders at the time.

Mr James Ellis, the Monitoring Officer, is fully aware of the situation and is satisfied that there has been no attempt to deliberately mislead the Council.

In the light if this new information members may wish to reconsider the actual allocation of pitches to the various football clubs. However at a meeting with Mr Coleman held yesterday, further information was received regarding the use of Four Acres. In order that this can be confirmed and a full report written on the changed circumstances I propose that this aspect is deferred until next month”.

In response to a question by a Member, the Clerk advised that unusually calm conditions over the past few weeks had exacerbated the problems with the lighting. All lights and batteries had been checked and re-charged where necessary. Members were informed that Officers were working closely with the suppliers in order to achieve a permanent solution to the long-standing problem.”

Councillor B D Hudson declared an interest.

A further question was raised in respect of the skateboarding facilities and the Clerk informed the Members that he was still awaiting a response from Mr Bernie Cox of the Youth Service.

RESOLVED that the Clerk’s apology be accepted and the report be noted.

181.05 CHARTER MARKET

Members received a report from the Deputy Clerk regarding the above (a copy of which is appended to the signed Minutes).

RESOLVED that:

- a) **the report be noted;**
- b) **that the stalls be occupied by the trader or his nominee, approved by the Manager, and that in the event of such trader or nominee attending for the first three weeks of the month during January, February and March 2005, they be allowed to have the fourth week free of charge.**

Recorded Vote – Councillors G T Adams, Mrs S A Alexander, R Bourne, Mrs M T Eccles, Dr P A Hedges, B D Hudson, J B Leicester, Mrs R A Leicester, R G Lock, D J Nash, Mrs M S Rickman, D J M Sankey and N E Whereat – For.

182.05 ABBEY GROUNDS – FOOTBRIDGE WORKS

Members received a quotation for works to extend the handrails at the footbridge over the end of the lake near Corinium Gate following requests received from members of the public. The quotation was received from E C Hall in the sum of £980.00.

It was suggested that the Council obtain alternative quotations but after consideration and the urgency for the works to be done, it was agreed to accept a single quotation.

RESOLVED that:

- a) **the quotation from E C Hall be accepted and that E C Hall be asked when and how long the works would take;**
- b) **at least two quotations be obtained on all future Council works.**

Recorded Vote - Councillors G T Adams, Mrs S A Alexander, R Bourne, Mrs M T Eccles, Dr P A Hedges, B D Hudson, R G Lock, D J Nash, D J M Sankey and N E Whereat – For, Councillors J B Leicester, Mrs R A Leicester and Mrs M S Rickman – Abstained.

183.05 REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES

Councillor Mrs S A Alexander provided a written report on a meeting of the Cirencester Temperance Trust.

184.05 MATTERS IDENTIFIED FOR CONSIDERATION AT FUTURE MEETINGS

None was received.

PART TWO
CONFIDENTIAL

C185.05 MINUTES

C186.05 KINGSHILL LANE SPORTS DEVELOPMENT SITE

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 9.00 p.m.

Councillor D J Nash
Mayor