

# **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 Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2005.

**PRESENT:** Councillor D J Nash – Mayor (arrived 7.05 p.m.)  
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  
Johan Newman – Personal Assistant

In the absence of the Mayor, a Prayer was read by the Deputy Mayor, who Chaired the early part of the meeting.

**190.05 APOLOGIES**  
Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs B A Potter.

**191.05 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
Councillor Mrs S A Alexander declared a personal and prejudicial interest with regard to Minute No. C213.05 - Norman Arch Cottage.

**192.05 MINUTES**  
**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> December be approved as a correct record subject to Minute No. 180.05 - Kingshill Lane Sports Development Site – Paragraph 9, which should be substituted with the following: -  
*"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."*  
**and signed by the Mayor subject to Minute Nos. C185.05 and C186.05 to be considered under confidential matters.**

**193.05 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

- a) 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.)
- b) **RESOLVED that Councillors J B Leicester and N E Whereat be appointed as reserves to the Planning Committee.**  
Councillor D J M Sankey, Chairman of the Planning Committee, advised that the Planning Committee was to be more proactive, starting on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2005 at 2.30 p.m., when Members will be walking around the town. All Members are welcome to attend.

**194.05 POLICY COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Policy Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2004 be approved (a copy of which is appended to the signed Minutes).**

Councillor Mrs S A Alexander, Chairman of the Policy Committee, advised that there had not been as many Councillors volunteering for the working groups as she had anticipated but hoped to get the same underway in the near future. Councillor Mrs Alexander accordingly advised that she did not think it would be possible for the recommendations of the working groups to be reported back to the Council on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2005.

**195.05 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor drew the Members' attention to the Newsletter and to the visit to the Corinium Museum on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2005. The Mayor commented that those Members who were unable to attend the Museum missed a wonderful opportunity to see and enjoy a facility of which the Council should feel proud. The Mayor accordingly recommended that if Members had not visited the Museum then they should buy a ticket and enjoy an experience that has been achieved with the involvement of this Council.

The Mayor advised that the freedom to the 29 Regiment Royal Logistic Corp was to take place on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2005 and that he would provide further information when it was available.

The Mayor also referred to the correspondence he had received from Chisamba in the Zambia and to the Community Safety Workshops being organised by the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council identifying in so doing the meetings at Northleach on 26<sup>th</sup> January, Coates on 31<sup>st</sup> January and Fairford on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2005.

**196.05 QUESTION TIME FOR ELECTORS**

No questions were received.

**197.05 QUESTION TIME FOR MEMBERS**

The following question was received from Councillor R Bourne on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2005: -

Question: At what stage was it "identified that the pursuit of that ambition [to install an athletics track] was not viable". And at what stage in the project were the costings for such a track developed?

Answer: During the progress of the ground works, this Council was concerned to identify the viability of the athletics track. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk attended upon Ged Roddy, Director of Sport at Bath University, through the introduction of the then Chief Executive of Cotswold District Council. The requirements of an athletics track and the fact that Bath University could not finance the track with 70,000 users a year, raised concerns with the Council.

The Council, through its Officers, discussed the issue with the local athletics club, who confirmed that they did not have a field section and could not guarantee that league meets would be able to take place in Cirencester. By December 2000, Officers were able to advise Members that the provision of an athletics facility at Kingshill would not achieve sufficient public support to justify the cost of approximately £500,000.

Before the issue could be considered in great detail, the area of land that had been allocated for the proposed athletics track fell into consideration by the Cotswold District Council for the location of its new leisure centre. The Town Council were not able to

discuss this issue publicly for a number of months owing to the fact that Cotswold District Council was dealing with the leisure centre as a confidential item.

When Cotswold District Council indicated that it was expecting an investment of £1 million by the Town Council, in addition to the provision of the site and existing infrastructure, the Town Council offered a long lease without investment. This was turned down and Cotswold District Council pursued alternative plans.

No supplementary question was raised.

A further question was raised by Councillor R Bourne and was taken under confidential matters (please see Minute No. C212.05)

**198.05 RESOLUTIONS MOVED ON NOTICE – STANDING ORDER NO. 19**

None were received.

**199.05 GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

The following question was received from Councillor B D Hudson on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2005:-

Question: What was the cost of refurbishing the lights at The Whiteway/ Abbey Road intersection please?

Answer: The Clerk has been advised that the costs could best be broken down into 3 parts: -

Signal Equipment	-	£ 34,500
Civil Works (carriageway, planing out & re-surfacing)	-	£ 85,000
Consultancy and Design Fee	-	£ 12,000
Approximate Total	-	£131,500

The civil works were undertaken as it was prudent to carry those out at the same time as the signal works. The final figure has not yet been identified as the outcome of the safety audit is awaited.

No supplementary question was raised.

**200.05 COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL**

No questions were asked of this authority.

**201.05 BUDGET REPORT – 31/12/04**

Members received the Budget Report as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2004 (a copy of which is appended to the signed Minutes).

One Member suggested that the Non Budget Items could be sub-totalled.

Members noted the Budget Report in the sum of £334,326.

**202.05 PRECEPT 2005/6**

The Responsible Finance Officer referred Members to the Draft Estimates that had been discussed at an informal meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2005 and advised of the following amendments to the same: -

Due to recent information received from Gloucestershire County Council regarding the actuarial valuation of the fund, the Superannuation figure of £20,590 has been reduced by £6,000. This allowed for a sum of £2,300 to be reinstated to the Council Allowances resulting in a revised precept total of £491,630.

**203.05 RESOLVED that a precept be set in the sum of £491,630.  
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 would progress matters in respect of the Market Towns Healthcheck.

**204.05 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL AND ITS STAFFING**

**a) Code of Conduct Working Group**

Councillor B D Hudson, Chairman of the Working Group referred Members to the recommendations made in the report of 6<sup>th</sup> January 2005 (a copy of which is appended to the signed Minutes).

Members noted that the following resolutions required changes to the Standing Orders.

**RESOLVED that this Council: -**

- a) accepts the principle of its Committees having some delegated authority and thus making decisions that currently are made by the full Council.**
- b) requests the Chairmen's Working Group to work with Officers to develop detailed proposals for a three committee structure (Finance, Policy and Planning, Environment & Amenities) with some delegated authority. These proposals to be brought to the March Council Meeting so that, when approved, the new structure can be put in place for the 2005/6 Council Year.**

Members also noted that Chippenham Town Council would not be providing the Town Council with its Committees' Terms of Reference. The Clerk of Chippenham believed that each Council needs to formulate its own Standing Orders and Terms of Reference to suit its requirements. Cirencester Town Councillors were invited by the Town Clerk of Chippenham Town Council to attend any of its Committee Meetings.

**b) Staffing Working Group**

Members received a copy of "A Protocol for Member/Officer Relations" as approved by the Officers and the Staffing Working Group held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2005 (a copy of which is appended to the signed Minutes).

**RESOLVED that "A Protocol for Member/Officer Relations" be approved.**

Councillor Mrs M T Eccles, Chairman of the Staffing Working Group, drew Members' attention to the notes of the Group Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2005 (a copy of which is appended to the signed Minutes).

The Clerk advised that he was happy to be appraised before the receipt of benchmarking arrangements that are being introduced by the Society of Local Council Clerks and the National Association of Local Councils in respect of terms and pay.

**RESOLVED that the notes of the Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2005 be approved.**

**205.05 INVU DATA RETRIEVAL SYSTEM**

The Clerk advised that approximately two thirds of the live files had been scanned on to the above system and that it would assist in the location of documents.

The Clerk was hopeful that all files would be scanned in by mid February 2005.

## **206.05 REQUIREMENTS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

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

The Mayor advised that a letter had been received into the office from Mr D S P Clifford advising of his resignation.

**That the Council RESOLVES that: -**

- a) **due to the requirements of Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, Mr D S P Clifford has ceased to be a member of Cirencester Town Council owing to his failure to attend a meeting since 14<sup>th</sup> June 2004;**
- b) **a suitable letter be written to Mr D S P Clifford by the Clerk;**
- c) **the Clerk notify the Returning Officer at Cotswold District Council of the vacancy.**

## **207.5 KINGSHILL LANE SPORTS DEVELOPMENT/FOUR ACRES – PITCH ALLOCATION**

Members received a report from the Clerk relating to the use of Four Acres Playing Field and the football pitches at Kingshill Lane Sports Development Site.

It was recommended by the Officers that the pitches at Kingshill Lane Sports Development Site should not be made available for use by any other team in the season 2004/5, due to the advice given by specialists that the pitches should have very light use until the pitches were established.

**RESOLVED that Stratton Utd be invited to send one team up to play at the Kingshill Lane Sports Development Site for the remainder of the season 2004/5.**

## **208.05 BINGHAM HOUSE COUNCIL CHAMBER**

Members received a report from the Clerk regarding the request from The Bingham Library Trust to utilise the Chamber as a gallery (a copy of which is appended to the signed Minutes).

**RESOLVED that: -**

- a) **this Council accepts the request to surrender part of the demised premises contained within the lease made between the Trust and the Council insofar as relates to the Chamber (Bingham House);**
- b) **the Clerk be authorised to enter into further negotiations with regard to the lease and report back to the Council.**

## **209.05 REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES**

Reports were available from Councillor G T Adams regarding the New Kemble Airfield Development held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2005 and Councillor Mrs R A Leicester with regard to a meeting of the Corn Hall Joint Management Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2005.

## **210.05 MATTERS IDENTIFIED FOR CONSIDERATION AT FUTURE MEETINGS**

Councillor Mrs S A Alexander requested that an item be added to the next Council Meeting Agenda relating to the footpath/cycleway running from Beeches Road to Victoria Road.

Councillor R Bourne requested that an up-to-date schedule of earmarked reserves be added to the next Finance Committee Meeting Agenda for the purpose of review.

**PART TWO**  
**CONFIDENTIAL**

**C211.05 MINUTES**  
**C212.05 QUESTION TIME FOR MEMBERS**  
**C213.05 NORMAN ARCH COTTAGE**

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 9.30 p.m.

Councillor D J Nash  
Mayor