

# **CIRENCESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES** of a Meeting of Council held in Cotswold District Council's Chamber, Trinity Road, Cirencester, at 7.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> August 2006.

**PRESENT:** Councillor N E Whereat – Mayor

**Councillors:** G T Adams  
R Bourne  
Mrs M T Eccles  
Dr P A Hedges  
Mrs S A le Noury  
J B Leicester  
Mrs R A Leicester  
J D Leigh  
R G Lock  
D J Nash  
Mrs B A Potter  
Mrs M S Rickman

Andrew Rennie Crook - Town Clerk  
Sally Mason - Secretary

A Prayer was read by the Mayor.

## **48.07 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs S A Alexander, and B D Hudson, and Clive Sherwood, Deputy Town Clerk.

## **49.7 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None were received.

The Clerk drew Members' attention to the requirements of the Code of Conduct and having taken advice from the Monitoring Officer, informed Members that they should enter into all debates with an open mind. If they have made comments publicly or to the press that would indicate the way in which they are going to vote, then such Member is advised to declare a prejudicial interest and leave the meeting for the agenda item in question.

The Clerk advised the meeting that it is contrary to both the Cotswold District Council's Rules and the Cirencester Town Council's Standing Orders to use recording equipment in the Chamber. The Clerk added that it was also possible that recording the meeting could be in breach of the Human Rights Act. It was accordingly requested that any recording equipment should be turned off immediately.

## **50.07 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2006 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor subject to Minute Nos. C44.07, C45.07, C46.07 and C47.07 to be considered under confidential matters.**

## **51.07 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor advised that he had the privilege of entertaining the Mayor and Town Clerk of Itzehoe. During the meeting it was confirmed that Itzehoe is proposing to celebrate 25 years of the Charter in Itzehoe in 2007, and that the Town Clerk is in discussions with the Cirencester Twinning Association over arrangements that are to be made for the 25 year celebration in Cirencester in 2008.

On the 24th of July, he attended the formal opening of the skateboard park at Kingshill together with Councillor Nash, and advised that it was a sheer joy to meet up with a group of enthusiastic youngsters at an event that had been arranged by the County Council Youth Officer and the Youth Impact Group.

The Mayor announced that he would waive the requirement of Standing Order 32 that Members stand when speaking, but that the microphones should be used in order that they may be clearly heard.

**52.07 QUESTION TIME FOR ELECTORS**

None were received.

**53.07 QUESTION TIME FOR MEMBERS**

None were received.

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

None were received.

**55.07 GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

No questions were asked of this authority.

**56.07 COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL**

No questions were asked of this authority.

**57.7 NORMAN ARCH**

Members received a report from the Clerk (a copy of which is appended to the signed Minutes), so that Members had all relevant information in order that they may consider the facts when making their determination in respect of the proposed viable alternative to the sale as presented by and on behalf of the Norman Arch Working Group.

The Clerk outlined his report which was presented at the meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2006, together with updates, some of which contained confidential information.

The Clerk stressed the importance of item 3. of his report, with particular reference to:

3.2 Members will appreciate that the issue this evening is not about winners and losers. A well reasoned and justified decision as responsible Members is what is being sought.

The Clerk commended Councillor Dr Hedges for his sterling work as Chairman of the Norman Arch Working Group and for the report presented, Appendix A1.

The Clerk referred the Members to Page 30, Appendix A2, and also advised that he had a telephone conversation at 3.30pm that afternoon during which he was informed that the Vivat Trust are not agreeable to providing an income stream relating to the Norman Arch. The Clerk said that Members should identify whether or not they were seeking a capital receipt. If so, the choice would be to sell the Norman Arch. If the alternative was to be considered by Members they needed to discount income, but recognise that the Vivat Trust would remove the liability of the Norman Arch from the shoulders of the Council Tax payers. At the same time, it could be argued that the book value of the asset retained by the Town Council would appreciate.

Councillor Dr Hedges presented the report by the Norman Arch Working Group (Appendix A1), and thanked his fellow members of the Working Group. He referred to a number of options available for consideration, but felt that the Norman Arch would be in safe hands if the Members decided on the option of leasing to the Vivat Trust, and recommended that the Town Council pursue that option.

A Member advised of the disappointment to receive the news that the Vivat Trust had withdrawn the stream of income, but felt that the principal remained the same.

Councillor Dr Hedges gave a brief background to the matter and advised that the decision to accept the Vivat Trust as it currently stands is an issue that needed to be considered very carefully.

The Members then gave their thoughts on the options available together with their reasons for deciding on the option they would be voting for.

Councillor Nash wished to place on record his personal appreciation to all those involved in the protracted involvement during this very long process.

The Mayor thanked the working party, and the Town Clerk for their hard work. He also thanked the Town Clerk for sacrificing his holidays to cover for the Deputy Clerk's absence due to sickness, and expressed his appreciation for the work done by him.

The Mayor called for a vote to pursue the Vivat Trust proposal.

A recorded vote was taken on the following resolution: -

FOR

Councillors: G T Adams  
Mrs M T Eccles  
Dr P A Hedges  
Mrs S A le Noury  
J B Leicester  
Mrs R A Leicester  
Mrs B A Potter  
N E Whereat - Mayor

AGAINST

R Bourne  
J D Leigh  
R G Lock  
D J Nash  
Mrs M S Rickman

**RESOLVED That the Council: -**

- a) pursue the proposal by the Vivat Trust to manage the Norman Arch;**
- b) propose and finalise the terms of the lease**

Councillor Dr Hedges announced his resignation from the Norman Arch Working Group for personal reasons. It was suggested that the Working Group continue, possibly until June 2007. The Clerk requested that Members consider whether they wish to volunteer to sit on the Working Group and give their decision at the Town Council Meeting in September.

## **58.7 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The Clerk requested that this matter be addressed with considerable seriousness. Members received a report from the Clerk (a copy of which is appended to the signed Minutes).

The Clerk stated that Councillor Mrs Alexander indicated via e-mail that decisions by the Planning Committee should not be delegated to officers.

The Clerk advised that around 500 planning applications were received each year, and that it is an important role for the Council to undertake. It was important, therefore, that those who are required to attend do attend the Planning Committee meetings.

The Members discussed the timing of the Planning Committee meetings and their availability to attend.

**RESOLVED That the Planning Committee continues to meet fortnightly, on a Thursday, at 2pm at Suite 3, Dyer House, Cirencester, or at such other venue as may be identified on the summons.**

## **59.07 RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER**

The Clerk advised that Clive Sherwood would not be returning until at least September 2006, and in the circumstances he requested that he be appointed as Acting Responsible Finance Officer during the absence of Clive Sherwood, Responsible Finance Officer.

The Clerk further advised that a Sage Accounting package (Version 12) has been acquired.

**RESOLVED That the Clerk be appointed to act as Responsible Finance Officer during the absence of Clive Sherwood, the Responsible Finance Officer**

## **PART TWO** **CONFIDENTIAL**

### **C60.07 MINUTES**

### **C61.07 NORMAN ARCH**

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 8.45 p.m.

Councillor N E Whereat  
Mayor