

CIRENCESTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of a Meeting of Council held in the Bingham Gallery, 1 Dyer Street, Cirencester, at 7.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 12th February 2008.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs S A Alexander – Mayor
Councillor G T Adams – Deputy Mayor

Councillors: P A Braidwood
A N Curry
H G C Gray
W Helm
R Hughes
Mrs J Hincks
A Lichnowski
D J Nash
Mrs B A Potter
Mrs M S Rickman
Ms K M Yarrow

Andrew Tubb - Town Clerk
Clive Sherwood – Deputy Town Clerk
Johan Newman – Personal Assistant

The Council's pledge was read by the Mayor.

162.08 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Mrs C Braidwood (personal) and Mrs S A le Noury (personal).

163.08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor D J Nash declared a personal interest in Minute No. 172.08 – Project Board (Methodist Church at Ashcroft Road), as he is a member of the Church.

164.08 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 8th January 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

An update was provided by the Clerk in relation to the Pop-in at Akeman Court, Cirencester (Minute No. 158.08 refers). He advised that he had written to the Fosseway Housing Association requesting further information on the current situation and a response was awaited.

165.08 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor advised that she had attended the following: -

Meetings of the Twinning Working Group regarding the arrangements for the visit in April 2008, noting that the Bingham Gallery will be used for the official ceremony.

A meeting of the Vision Project Board held on 21st January 2008.

A NALC conference in London on 30th January 2008 (a copy of the speakers PowerPoint presentations were circulated at the meeting).

The Mayor also advised that she and the Clerk would be visiting all schools in the town during February to promote community engagement and the work of the Council in line with the recommendations of the Councillors Commission.

166.08 QUESTION TIME FOR ELECTORS

None were received.

167.08 QUESTION TIME FOR MEMBERS

None were received.

168.08 RESOLUTIONS MOVED ON NOTICE – STANDING ORDER NO. 19

RESOLVED that this item be taken together with Item No. 19 (Post Office Network Change Programme in Gloucestershire).

a) Resolution submitted by Councillor D J Nash

The following proposed resolution was submitted by Councillor D J Nash on 5th February 2008: -

“This Council notes with concern the latest round of post office closures proposed by Post Office Ltd. In particular it deplores the proposals to close Beeches and Stratton post offices and regrets the harmful impact that these closures will have on Cirencester and on these communities in particular.

Council **RESOLVES** to: -

Write to the Rt. Hon John Hutton MP, Secretary of State for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform and to Mark Partington, Network Development Manager, National Consultation Team at the Post Office to express our concern and anger about the proposed cuts to post office services in the town following, as they do, on the closures of post offices in Chesterton and Watermoor.

Contact representatives of other parishes affected to determine and agree a plan of mutual support in a campaign to stop post office closures in the Cotswolds.

Request an urgent meeting with Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP to confirm his support for this campaign and explore ways in which Council can work with him to protect these vital services.”

An amendment to the above resolution was proposed by a Member. It was accordingly agreed that Councillors D J Nash and P Braidwood consider the amended resolution for submission to the Council; they left the meeting at 7.30 p.m.

Councillors D J Nash and P Braidwood returned to the meeting at 7.34 p.m. and proposed the following resolution, which was accordingly **RESOLVED**: -

“This Council notes with concern the latest round of post office closures proposed by Post Office Ltd. In particular it deplores the proposals to close Beeches and Stratton post offices and regrets the harmful impact that these closures will have on Cirencester and on these communities in particular.

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Contact representatives of other parishes affected to determine and agree a plan of mutual support in a campaign to stop post office closures in the Cotswolds.

Undertakes to do everything possible to save the Beeches and Stratton Post Office branches.

Support the call by Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP that all elected representatives work together to achieve the best possible outcome for their communities.

Note that a number of public meetings have been held and more are arranged in the affected areas, in particular for the Beeches and Stratton Post Offices and we urge all members of the public to attend these meetings.”

b) Post Office Network Change Programme

Members received a report from the Clerk relating to the post office network change programme in Gloucestershire. Supplementary information relating to population statistics was tabled.

RESOLVED that: -

- i) the report be noted;**
- ii) a response to the proposed post office closures in Gloucestershire be prepared for consideration at its meeting on 11th March 2008.**

169.08 GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

No questions were asked of this authority.

170.08 COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

No questions were asked of this authority.

171.08 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that the recently considered applications and decisions, under delegated authority, of the Planning Committee, made at meetings held on 17th and 31st January 2008, be noted.

172.08 PROJECT BOARD

Members received a report from Councillor D J Nash, Chairman of the Project Board, relating to a meeting of the Project Board held on 14th January 2008 and subsequent information.

Councillor D J Nash declared a personal interest in relation to the request for a litter bin in Ashcroft Gardens, as he is a member of the Methodist Church in Ashcroft Road.

It was noted that bins with sections for recycling should be installed wherever possible.

RESOLVED that: -

- a) the report be noted;**
- b) a maximum of £2,000 be set aside from the Earmarked Reserves budget for Environment Improvements towards interpretation signage relating to both the Roman and Medieval walk;**
- c) a maximum of £4,000 be used from the Earmarked Reserves budget for Environmental Improvements towards the replacement of 5 gateway signs;**
- d) a litter bin be provided at Ashcroft Gardens subject to the District Council including the bin as part of their litter collection.**

173.08 CORPORATE GROUP

Members received the Notes of the meeting of the Corporate Group held on 4th February 2008.

The Clerk drew attention to Item No. 5 - Orders and Regulations Relating to the Conduct of Local Authority Members in England Consultation, which identified responses to the questions raised in the consultation document.

The Clerk also referred to the Town Council's Newsletter, which was to be circulated to the residents of Cirencester at the end of March. He advised that a draft of the same had been tabled and welcomed comments from Members.

RESOLVED that: -

- a) the report be noted;**

- b) **the responses to the questions raised in the “Orders and Regulations Relating to the Conduct of Local Authority Members in England Consultation” be approved and submitted by 15th February;**
- c) **A Town Council “Our People, Our Place” Open Day take place on Saturday, 5th July 2008 between 10.00 a.m. and 12 Noon at the Bingham Gallery.**

174.08 WORKING GROUP UPDATES

Members received updates on the following working groups: -

a) **Recreation Areas Working Group**

Councillor G T Adams, Chairman of the Recreation Areas Working Group, advised that the revised scheme for the Abbey Grounds Play Area has been drawn up by the contractors, Playdale. This scheme will then form part of the Management Plan to be submitted to English Heritage for approval. A meeting is also to be arranged with the contractor and the Working Group in the near future.

The final budget is to be considered when approval has been received from English Heritage, in case there are any revisions required.

b) **Personnel Working Group**

Councillor Mrs J Hincks, Chairman of the Personnel Working Group, advised that the outstanding job evaluations have been sent off to South West Provincial Employers and it was hoped that the results would be returned in time for the Group's meeting in March.

175.08 NORMAN ARCH UPDATE

The Clerk updated members on the current position concerning the lease negotiations with The Vivat Trust.

The Clerk drew attention to an updated timeline produced by The Vivat Trust, which was circulated at the meeting. The timeline identified that the Trust was still looking for funds but hoped to be able to start work to the premises in the summer of 2008. This would accordingly mean that the tenant currently in occupation would need to be given notice.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

176.08 TOWARDS A VISION FOR CIRENCESTER

Members received a report from the Clerk relating to consultations being undertaken by Cotswold District Council with respect to the Draft Cirencester Town Centre

Supplementary Planning Document, draft action plan for priority projects/tasks and Conservation Area appraisals relating to Cirencester.

It was noted that informal briefings on the above documents would take place at 1.00 p.m. on 14th and 28th February 2008.

RESOLVED that: -

- a) **the report be noted;**
- b) **delegated authority be given to the Planning Committee to prepare responses in relation to Cotswold District Council's consultations on the Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document and the Conservation Area Appraisals for Cirencester, for consideration and approval by Council at its' meeting to be held on 11th March 2008.**

177.08 OUR FUTURE CIRENCESTER – MARKET AND COASTAL TOWNS INITIATIVE

Members received a verbal update on the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative from Councillor A Lichnowski and Dr Andrea Pellegram.

Councillor A Lichnowski, Chairman of the Management Group and Steering Group, reported that the work programme had been agreed, and that funding had been secured on the basis that the final draft of the Community Plan is available by the end of June.

Dr Pellegram, the Community Agent, advised that the Community Plan, entitled "Our Future Cirencester" would set out a number of community development projects that the Town Council, local volunteers and organisations would use as a blueprint for the future and would be the basis for funding bids. It was hoped that the Community Plan would be officially launched in the autumn.

The following themes would be the focus of discussion; a Member for each theme was sought: -

- A sustainable market town (Councillor Mrs J Hincks)
- A good place to grow up (Councillor A Curry)
- An attractive place to visit and explore (Councillor Mrs S A Alexander)
- A better place to do business (Councillor R Hughes)

Dr Pellegram believed that it was essential that a Town Centre Manager be employed for Cirencester and that more people are brought into the debate for the benefit of the town.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

178.08 VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION OF LAND – DIGITAL MAPPING SOFTWARE

Members received a report from the Clerk relating to the voluntary registration of land – digital mapping software.

RESOLVED that: -

- a) the report be noted;
- b) the Council endorse the voluntary registration of its land and property holdings and as Phase 1 of this process mapping software be purchased from within existing resources, as allocated within the 2008/9 budget, for the cost of £1,795 with an annual charge for technical support and software updates at £175.

179.08 CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY

Members received a report from the Clerk relating to climate change and biodiversity, which included information on the Severn Wye Neighbourhood Project.

The Clerk advised that ideas on tackling climate change are to be sought from the community following the inclusion of an article in the Newsletter, which was due to be circulated to residents at the end of March.

Councillor A Lichnowski, who represented the Town Council at meetings about the Severn Wye Neighbourhood Project, outlined the project's aims and hoped that the Town Council would contribute to the same.

The cost of implementing the project was calculated at £3,500 per neighbourhood payable by April 2010.

RESOLVED that: -

- a) the report be noted;
- b) the Corporate Group considers ways in which the Council can deliver on the principles set out in the Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006 and reports to Council at a future meeting;
- c) the Council endorses working in partnership with local organisations to promote environmental awareness;
- d) the Council agrees in principle to signing up to the Severn Wye Neighbourhood Project subject to further consideration by the Corporate Group;
- d) the Council endorses its approval to work in partnership with a local Explorers Scout Group to environmentally enhancing an area of land in the Council's ownership.

180.08 POST OFFICE NETWORK CHANGE PROGRAMME IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Members received a report from the Clerk relating to the post office network change programme in Gloucestershire.

Please refer to Minute No. 168.08 for further information.

181.08 NALC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Members received a report from the Clerk relating to the NALC Annual Conference.

RESOLVED that: -

- a) the report be noted;
- b) Councillors Mrs S A Alexander and D J Nash represent Cirencester Town Council at the NALC Annual Conference in May 2008.

182.08 REPRESENTING THE FUTURE – THE REPORT OF THE COUNCILLORS COMMISSION

Members received a report from the Clerk relating to “Representing the Future – The report of the Councillors Commission”.

Members were concerned at a number of the recommendations made and noted that comments should be submitted to the Clerk or direct to NALC by 18th February 2008.

RESOLVED that: -

- a) the report be noted;
- b) delegated authority be given to the Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor, to respond on behalf of the Council to the consultation being undertaken by NALC in respect of the report of the Councillors Commission on the understanding that all Councillors have the opportunity to comment on each of the 61 recommendations.

183.08 CODE OF CONDUCT AND STATEMENT OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Members received a report from the Clerk relating to the Code of Conduct and Statement of General Principles.

RESOLVED that: -

- a) the report be noted;
- b) the adoption of paragraph 7 and paragraph 12(2) of the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007, including the adoption of the Statement of General Principles as a non-enforceable annex to the code, be affirmed.

184.08 SECTION 137 INDEXATION FOR 2008/9

Members received a report from the Clerk relating to Section 137 Indexation for 2008/9.

RESOLVED that: -

- a) the report be noted;
- b) the Section 137 limit for 2008/9 be noted.

185.08 OPTIONS FOR STRENGTHENING BUS PASSENGER REPRESENTATION

Members received a report from the Clerk relating to Options for Strengthening Bus Passenger Representation.

It was noted that comments from members of the public were being sought and that Councillors should submit their comments to the Town Clerk for submission to the Department of Transport.

RESOLVED that: -

- a) **the report be noted;**
- b) **a response to the consultation on options for strengthening bus passenger representation be prepared for consideration by Council at its meeting on 11th March 2008.**

186.08 TWINNING VISIT – APRIL 2008

Members received a verbal update from the Mayor on arrangements for the twinning visit to Cirencester in April 2008 and considered a request for twinning administration funding to be used for the visit in April; as set aside in the 2007/8 and 2008/9 budgets.

RESOLVED that the request for administration funding to be used for the visit in April, as set aside in the 2007/8 and 2008/9 budgets, be approved.

187.08 BUDGET REPORT TO 31ST DECEMBER 2007

Members received the Budget Report for the period 1st April to 31st December 2007.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

188.08 SCHEDULE OF ACCOUNTS PAID 1ST DECEMBER 2007 TO 31ST JANUARY 2008

Members received a copy of the Schedule of Accounts Paid for the period 1st December 2007 to 31st January 2008.

RESOLVED that the payments for the period 1st December 2007 to 31st January 2008 be approved and authorised.

189.08 REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES

Reports from Members:

Councillor A Lichnowski attended the Gloucestershire County Council "Protecting your Community" conference on 25th January 2008, along with Councillors P Braidwood and D J Nash and the setting up of the neighbourhood schemes.

Councillor P Braidwood attended the South Cotswold Police and Community Neighbourhood Area Meeting in Tetbury on 10th January 2008. He noted that there was an increase in violent crime but that this was due to the re-designation of crimes by the Home Office.

Councillor G T Adams attended the Open Swimming Pool Association's Annual General meeting, the details of which were identified on the notice board and referred to the setting up of the "Friends of the Pool".

Councillor Mrs S A Alexander attended a meeting of the C & S A Bowly Almshouse Charity, at which ethical investments were discussed. A lunch was also being arranged for the Trust's beneficiaries.

190.08 MATTERS IDENTIFIED FOR CONSIDERATION AT FUTURE MEETINGS

No matters were identified.

191.08 EXEMPT INFORMATION – KINGSHILL SOUTH AND NORTH DEVELOPMENTS

Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 section 1 extended by the Local Government Act 1972 section 100.

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

192.08 OPEN SESSION – KINGSHILL SOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Item No. 30 was taken in confidential session as it included information relating to negotiations for the transfer and future maintenance of open spaces between the developer and Town Council.

RESOLVED that the proposed commuted sums for the transfer and future maintenance of open spaces and the local equipped area of play (LEAP) be approved subject to agreeing the type and specification of play equipment, surfacing, fencing, bin provision and any other related provision at the LEAP; and agreeing a pre-transfer period of maintenance for both the LEAP and local areas of play.

193.08 OPEN SESSION – KINGSHILL NORTH DEVELOPMENT

Item No. C31 was taken in confidential session as it included information relating to negotiations for the transfer and future maintenance of open spaces between the developer and Town Council.

RESOLVED that the report and update relating to negotiations be noted.

The meeting closed at 9.02 p.m.

Councillor Mrs S A Alexander
Mayor