

**WALLINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

MINUTES

of the

Meeting of Council held in the Town Hall, Wallingford on  
Monday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018

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PRESENT

The Mayor, Councillor Lee Upcraft

Councillors Baroni, Beatty, Cripps, Dolton, Hughes, Kidley, Lester, Lloyd, McGregor, Norton,  
Titchener, Whelan and Wilder

The Town Clerk, Mrs Paula Lopez  
Officer in Attendance: Barbara Atkins (Minute Taker)

***Before the start of the meeting and the formal business of the agenda is transacted,  
there will be a period of quiet reflection led by The Mayor***

**305. APOLOGIES**

*Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Davidson.*

**306. ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC**

*There were no admissions of the public.*

***1903 Hours Councillor Titchener arrived.***

**307. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

A Councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in our Council's Standing Orders Code of Conduct (Item 13) in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under code of conduct and his right to participate and vote on the matter (guidelines are available at the meeting and all Councillors have received a copy prior to the meeting) Information for each Member was available at the meeting.

*There were no declarations of Interest*

*It was Proposed by Councillor Lloyd, Seconded by Councillor Norton and*

**RESOLVED: THAT due to the discovery of an agreement which the Town Council needs to fully understand item II (ii) Proposal to close the Bull Croft Recreation Rooms is deferred.**

**308. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – NOTIFIED AND IMPROMPTU (Total 15 Minutes)**

(i) **Mr Stewart Davies of Sportswize** – Mr Davies reported that he was diversifying into selling clothing in his shop and that he hoped to sell Wallingford branded merchandise in Sportswize. He hoped that the Council would agree to Wallingford Town Council's Portcullis logo being used on the examples of merchandize (sweatshirts) that he had brought along to the meeting. Mr Davies stated that he would like to give the Town Council a percentage of the sales that could then be fed back into the tourism and economic development budget. Councillors were grateful to Mr Davies taking this initiative and it was agreed to discuss this further at the Tourism and Economic Development Committee.

(ii) **Mrs Katie Guyatt, Chairmen of Rainbow Pre-School representing the tenants of the Bull Croft Recreation Rooms (Pre-School, Citizens Advice Bureau, Food Bank and Bell Ringers)** – Mrs Guyatt stated they had a briefing meeting with the Town Clerk and The Mayor regarding the repairs and the expense of maintaining the building. However, Mrs Guyatt urged the Town Council to consider what was at stake in that 4 core services used this building and that the pre-school had 50 children from the age of 2 that attended along with a number of staff. All the tenants had independently looked, to no avail, for alternative premises. Mrs Guyatt believed that Oxfordshire County Council's hands were tied. A valid capital funding agreement between Rainbow Pre-school, the Town Council and Oxfordshire County Council has been discovered which means if the pre-school's lease were to be terminated by the Town Council they may be liable to repay in full/part of the funding. Mrs Guyatt asked the Town Council look at the bigger picture and felt that the Neighbourhood Plan and the Regal Public Consultation responses may have been different if the public had known that the Bull Croft Recreation Rooms might be closed.

(iii) **Jill Willisen of the Citizen's Advice Bureau** – stated that Mrs Guyatt had covered everything and therefore she did not need to speak.

(iv) **Mrs Cooper of the Bell Ringers** – Mrs Cooper stated that they had 15 members some of who were in their eighties. The Bell Ringers educate their members and the group provides a community service by playing at town events and in care homes. In addition they have represented the UK in various countries. It was very difficult to find new premises that would allow them to permanently store their equipment.

**309. MAYORS COMMUNICATIONS**

- The Mayor reported to Councillors that a very positive thank you letter had been received from a couple who were married in the Town Hall.
- Remembrance Parade and Service – Councillors have received their documents for Remembrance which takes place on the 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018.
- Town Green Registration – Bull Croft – Closes on the 26<sup>th</sup> November.

- The Responsible Finance Officer will be leaving the Town Council to progress her career and the replacement Finance Officer starts on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2018.
- Public Event – Ex Portcullis Site – 6<sup>th</sup> November 6.30pm to 8pm in George Hotel, Wallingford.
- The High Steward, Ken Lester is launching a new award to recognise exemplary community service in town. Nominations should be sent to the Town Council Offices and the deadline is the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018.

### **310. MINUTES**

(i) To sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on the 29<sup>th</sup> August 2018 as set out on pages 82-92 of the Minute Book.

**Proposed by Councillor Lester, Seconded by Councillor Kidley and RESOLVED: THAT the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 29<sup>th</sup> August 2018 as set out on pages 82 - 92 of the Minute Book be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.**

(ii) To sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on the 24<sup>th</sup> September 2018 as set out on pages 113 to 117 of the Minute Book.

**Proposed by Councillor Dolton, Seconded by Councillor Lloyd and RESOLVED: THAT the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 24<sup>th</sup> September 2018 as set out on pages 113 to 117 of the Minute Book be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.**

### **311. TO ADOPT THE FOLLOWING MINUTES**

The Town Clerk asked Councillors to adopt the minutes of the following committee meetings in 2018, copies previously signed as a correct record:

Parks, Gardens, Allotments and Open Spaces	09.07.18	62 - 66
Planning	13.08.18	78 - 81
Planning	03.09.18	93 - 98
Finance and Properties	06.08.18	72 – 77
Planning	17.09.18	106 – 112

**Proposed by Councillor Titchener, Seconded by Councillor Norton and RESOLVED: THAT the Minutes of the committee meetings as previously circulated to Councillors and listed above be adopted.**

### **312. FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**

The following recommendations to be resolved:

(i) External Report: The Responsible Finance Officer appraised Councillors of the outcome of the 2017/2018 external audit and the auditor's recommendation "The council are to continue to review their procedures bearing in mind their responsibilities, under the Audit and Access Regulations 2015 for effective systems of internal control". It was Proposed by Councillor Whelan, Seconded by Councillor Wilder and **RECOMMENDED: THAT** contents of the External Auditors report are noted and the recommendation is implemented.

*Councillors discussed the above recommendation and it was Proposed by Councillor Titchener, Seconded by Councillor Norton and RESOLVED: THAT the contents of the External Auditors report are noted and that the recommendation is implemented.*

(ii) Town Hall: Following an update from the Town Clerk regarding her meeting with the Conservation Officer and Planning Officer of the District Council, Members of the Finance Committee discussed and it was Proposed by Councillor Upcraft, Seconded by Councillor Wilder and **RECOMMENDED: THAT** Councillors Dolton and Wilder, working with the Town Clerk, lead a project to look at future options for usage and ownership of the Town Hall and establish what grant funding and/or capital money is available for any upgrading and alterations to the building.

*The Town Clerk gave an overview of the meeting which she and Councillor Lloyd had with the Conservation Officer and Planning Officer of the District Council, Councillors discussed stating that the broader pictures plus repairs needed to be looked into along with ways to increase community use. Councillor Kidley expressed an interest in joining the working party. Proposed by Councillor Norton, Seconded by Councillor Whelan and RESOLVED: THAT Councillors Dolton and Wilder form a working party and working with the Town Clerk, lead a project to look at future options for usage and ownership of the Town Hall and establish what grant funding and/or capital money is available for any upgrading and alterations to the building.*

### **313. TOWN COUNCIL'S FINANCES**

(i) Councillors to review the reserves (Report attached). Councillors had previously attended a briefing meeting on the reserves and had no further questions for the Town Clerk.

#### **1930 Hours Councillor McGregor left the meeting**

(ii) Councillors to review the Town Council's property assets, report attached, and to propose that the Council initiate work to consider the long-term interests of the Town Council and to consider whether selling some of the Town Council's property would be in the best interests.

### **1934 Hours Councillor McGregor returned to the meeting**

*Councillors had received the report on the property assets and agreed after a brief discussion that the properties need to be looked at as a whole and they should have a brainstorming meeting prior to making any decisions/resolutions at formal Council. The Town Clerk was asked to set a date for the meeting.*

(iii) To consider future options for the Town Hall, if considered appropriate at this meeting, following the Minute 312 (ii) above.

*This item was fully covered in Minute 312 (ii) above.*

(iv) Infrastructure Development Plan - *The Mayor asked Councillors to consider an infrastructure development plan for future CIL money as potentially there could, particularly if the Neighbourhood Plan is in place, be a substantial amount available to the Town Council. The council needs to draw up and adopt a plan showing its assets and decide what infrastructure it needs and then justify how CIL money should be spent. The Mayor stated that this would need a Councillor to volunteer to lead this project.*

***It was Proposed by Councillor Upcraft, Seconded by Councillor Lloyd and RESOLVED: THAT Wallingford Town Council needs to have/adopt an Infrastructure Development Plan in place to facilitate/justify how CIL money should be spent.***

### **314. THE FUTURE OF THE BULL CROFT RECREATION ROOMS**

(i) Following the structural engineer's report Councillors received an outline of the expected cost of repairs.

*The Town Clerk reported that Councillors had been appraised of the structural engineer's report and that although the roof had sagged, guttering needed to be replaced, the outside required recladding the most expensive work was due to water damage to the sole plates. Each sole plate could cost £1,250 to £1,600 and the number was unknown. Total cost of repairs is estimated at £35,000 to £50,000. Councillor Lloyd reported that the water damage was extensive and the cost of final repair was an unknown factor. The building is safe but some money would have to be spent in order to reopen the toilet area. Any repair work would have to come from general reserves and Councillors should remember that there are a number of council owned buildings including listed buildings which would require money being spent on them. Therefore it would be prudent to consider how much is spent on the Bull Croft Recreation Rooms. Councillor Cripps reported that today's Budget mentioned support for village halls and Councillor Titchener offered to report back to the council on this point once she had studied the Budget report.*

(ii) Proposal to close the Bull Croft Recreation Rooms and give notice to the current tenants to vacate in July 2019. **This item was deferred.**

(iii) Proposal to amend the outline concept design brief of a replacement building, if appropriate, for generic community use.

*Councillors discussed and decided that it was premature to make a decision before the next item is discussed.*

### **315. THE BULL CROFT TRUST**

(i) **Summary of the Discussions with the Solicitor** – The Mayor outlined the discussions that the Town Council had with the solicitor and asked Councillors to agree that the solicitor liaises with the Charities Commission to establish a scheme document to modernise the trust on behalf of the Trustees. This solicitor's costs and new scheme document may cost a few thousand pounds. **It was Proposed by Councillor Lloyd, Seconded by Councillor Dolton and RESOLVED: THAT The Town Council instructs the solicitor to engage with the Charity Commission with the view to producing a modern scheme document for the Bull Croft Trust Charity.**

Councillors discussed Minute 314 (iii) above in respect of whether the outline concept design brief of a replacement recreational room building be amended for generic community use. **It was Proposed by Councillor Upcraft, Seconded by Councillor Lloyd and RESOLVED: THAT The Town Council instructs the architects that the concept design brief for the replacement Bull Croft Recreation Rooms should be for a multipurpose community building. Councillors Dolton and Norton abstained.**

(ii) To consider whether renovation of Bull Croft Lodge is appropriate in order to re-let the property whilst the new scheme for the Trust is being negotiated. Councillors discussed various options for the Bull Croft Lodge and concluded that The Town Clerk is to obtain quotations for getting the Bull Croft Lodge ready to re-let and also a more substantial repair for possibly selling. Councillor McGregor to look into the feasibility of renting the property out on a commercial basis along with what is required in respect of planning permission for change of use. The results of these enquiries will be taken back to the finance meeting.

(Bull Croft Trustees to be appraised at the next meeting of the Bull Croft Trust).

(iii) The Mayor gave an update on Site E Section 106 (leisure) money in relation to proposals for the pavilion. The Mayor and Councillor Baroni had met with District Council Officers and the Developer recently and the outcome of the discussions is below:

#### **2015 Hours – Here Councillor Beatty left the meeting**

The developer has now established that a football pitch at Site E would not be possible as this area is likely to flood. The amount available is £409,000 although this is not guaranteed. The developer has agreed with the District Council that it may be transferred to sports pitches and the pavilion in the Bull Croft Park.

During the discussions it transpired that a school may not now be required on Site E and that maybe this Section 106 allocation could be transferred to community use such as health provision. Councillor Norton is assisting the local surgery with discussions regarding the possibility of a new health centre.

### **316. REGAL CENTRE**

(i) Following Councillors’ discussion regarding finances and property assets Councillors to resolve whether to proceed with redevelopment or to review in more detail with the property assets. The Mayor stated that it had been suggested that The Regal could be sold and he would like to hear what Councillors thought. Councillors discussed and concluded that they had made a conscious decision to demolish the Regal and build a new community centre which incorporated the town council offices. **It Proposed Councillor Lester, Seconded by Councillor Whelan and RESOLVED: THAT the Town Council continues with its plans for the Regal, that is to demolish and rebuilt subject to the detailed design enabling costings to be provided, and that a suitable business case (to be prepared once costs are known) be developed which is acceptable to the Town Council.**

(ii) The Mayor gave an update to Councillors on the Oxfordshire County Council’s procurement process. Following further meetings with the Procurement Officer and the only company to tender, Watts, the Mayor was satisfied/comfortable with the procurement process. The Mayor asked Councillors to resolve that Watts project manage the redevelopment of the Regal. Councillors discussed in detail and concluded their discussion. **It was Proposed by Councillor Lloyd, Seconded by Councillor Dolton and RESOLVED: THAT that Watts project manage the redevelopment to the design and build stage subject to the Town Clerk clarifying the terms of the contract including payment and break clauses.**

(iii)The Mayor outlined the possible costs and the challenge of securing funding for the site. This illustration was noted and discussed by Councillors. It was also noted that the Neighbourhood Plan needs to be in place and the Mayor asked all Councillors to support this.

(iv)Councillors considered if the Regal should be demolished at this stage because it costs £10,000 a year to run even though it is empty. Councillors thought that the Regal should be demolished along with the site being made safe. Watts to look to demolish the site prior to rebuilding and whether an additional cost would be incurred. What will happen to the waste? **It was Proposed by Councillor Upcraft, Seconded by Councillor Cripps and RESOLVED: THAT Watts be instructed to look at the costs, practicalities and implications of demolishing the Regal now.**

### **317. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

<b><u>Committee</u></b>	<b><u>Lead</u></b>	<b><u>Anticipated Agenda</u></b>
<b>Council</b> County/District Councillors		Rolling

Site B and Infrastructure Sand and Gravel Site E and Infrastructure Promoting the Town Hall Mooring Projects Proposals Air Quality Management Community Speed Watch Telephone Boxes – Use of Co-Option Town Councillor	Suzanne Symons Cllr Lloyd Councillor Lloyd Councillor Lloyd Town Clerk	Rolling Rolling Rolling  2018 Deferred from 24/9 Deferred from 24/9 Deferred from 24/9 Deferred from 24/9
<b>Parks</b> Wilding Road and Radnor Road Play areas Bull Croft Working Party	Councillor Baroni  Councillor Baroni	
<b>Tourism</b> Use of the Town Hall for Events and refreshments that could be provided Residents Packs Twinning		
<b>Finance</b> Investment Policy Community building on the parks yard Draft Income/Strategy Policy Spreading Treasury Stock Grants, as required Next year's budget Precept new housing 85 properties Possible engagement of an estates/asset manager next year. Charges – to include open spaces		
<b>Personnel</b> Full Evaluation of all job roles		October 2018
<b>Planning</b>		
<b>Working Party Updates</b> Neighbourhood Plan Civic & Ceremonial Bull Croft Trust Communications Regal	Cllrs Lloyd/Norton The Mayor Cllr Baroni The Mayor The Mayor	Deferred from 24/9 Deferred from 24/9 Deferred from 24/9 Deferred from 24/9 Deferred from 24/9