

**WALLINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

MINUTES

of the

Meeting of Council held in the Town Hall, Wallingford on  
Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019

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PRESENT

The Mayor, Councillor Lee Upcraft

Councillors Beatty, Beauchamp, Davies, Dolton, Hughes, Keats-Rohan, Kidley, McGregor,  
Rennie, Sinkinson, and Wilder

The Town Clerk, Mrs Paula Lopez  
Officer in Attendance: Tracey Collins

Before the start of the meeting and the formal business of the agenda the Mayor asked for a short period of quiet reflection.

**393. APOLOGIES**

*Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cattermole, Lester and Whelan.*

**394. ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC**

Proposed by Councillor Upcraft, Seconded by Councillor Beauchamp and

**RESOLVED:**

**THAT** in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of the following items on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public's interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted: -

**Agenda items: 22 – Fastcentral Ltd, Lease on 10 St Martins**

**23 – OALC Lease Town Hall**

**24 – Staffing Support in Office**

**Confidential Minutes of Full Council 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019 as set out on pages  
137-138 of the minute book**

### **395. 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.

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

**Mark Brett – 1155, Firework event**, Mark thanked the Town Council for allowing the 1155 to use the Kinecroft for the event again this year, he also thanked the office staff for their support and the parks staff for ensuring the Kinecroft recovered properly. Mark also thanked the Corn Exchange for the effigy of Guy Fawkes, Illusion Fireworks and all the volunteers and organisations that helped set up, take down and for support on the night. Mark explained that the weather was awful which dramatically reduced numbers, this had an impact on the donations which were down by 40% and the worst in the 10 years he had been involved. Mark explained it cost around £17,000 to put on the event and normally able to give to charities between £15-£20,000 but this year it will only be around £4000. 1155 will be able to put on an event next year but it will be financially critical.

The Mayor expressed his thanks to Mark Brett and the 1155 Society for all their hard work and hoped for better weather next year.

**Claire Holford** – expression of interest for co-option

**Joe Quilter** - expression of interest for co-option

**Peter Sparry** – expression of interest for co-option

All candidates gave a brief introduction about themselves and why they wanted to be a Town Councillor. The Mayor thanked all the candidates and invited them to stay for the outcome agenda item 8.

### **397. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT**

District Councillor Sue Roberts gave a brief report on the local plan being withdrawn by the cabinet. No progress has been made and no timescale for plans.

### **398. MAYORS COMMUNICATIONS**

The Mayor made everyone aware of the Christmas Carols around the tree in the Market Place on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December, 6.30pm. Robes and hats to be worn by Councillors and these can be collected from 5.45pm in the Town Hall.

### **399. MINUTES**

To sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019 as set out on pages 127 – 136 of the Minute Book. Confidential Minutes to be approved later in the meeting.

**It was Proposed by Councillor Kidley, Seconded by Councillor Keats-Rohan and RESOLVED: THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019 as set out on pages 127 - 136 of the Minute Book, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.**

### **400. CO-OPTION OF A TOWN COUNCILLOR**

The Mayor noted that Councillors had read the statements from the candidates and thanked them all for publicly making a short presentation in person. A vote was taken by Councillors, once counting had taken place it was declared that Claire Holford was elected the new Town Councillor for Wallingford. Councillor Claire Holford signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.

The Mayor thanked all three candidates for putting themselves forward for co-option.

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

To adopt the Minutes of the following committee meetings held in 2019, copies previously signed as a correct record and circulated to Councillors:

Planning	14.10.19	139-143
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**Proposed by Councillor Hughes, Seconded by Councillor McGregor and RESOLVED: THAT the Minutes of the committee meetings as previously circulated to Councillors and listed above be adopted.**

### **402. COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES**

(i) To approve Richard Prunier as a non-councillor member to the Tourism & Economic Development Committee.

**It was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Beatty and RESOLVED: THAT Richard Prunier be approved as a non-councillor to the Tourism & Economic Development Committee.**

(ii) To appoint a representative to the Cholsey and Wallingford Railway Preservation Society Council to adopt the final document.

**Councillor Dolton would like to discuss with Councillor Kidley what commitment would be required for this committee. Defer decision to next meeting.**

(iii) To approve the re-elections of Pat Hayton, David Rice and Jackie Payne as nominative trustees to Wallingford Municipal Charities. (from November 2019)

**It was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Kidley and RESOLVED: THAT Pat Hayton, David Rice and Jackie Payne continue as Trustees for the Wallingford Municipal Charities.**

#### **403. CODE OF CONDUCT TRAINING**

The Mayor reported that the Town Clerk, Councillor Keats-Rohan and himself attended the Code of Conduct Training. Whilst much of the information was common sense, it was a useful briefing and he recommended that all Councillors attend. The Mayor reminded all Councillors that, although it is right and proper that they publicly take and defend positions on issues of concern to them, they must keep an open mind and judge the matter based on the evidence presented at Council meetings. They should not pre-determine outcomes and should be careful in publicly stating very rigid opinions as this could lead to decisions of Council being challenged.

#### **404. VOTING AT MEETINGS**

The Mayor raised the issue of voting at meetings as there had previously been some confusion on abstention. Voting should be by way of a show of hands and a motion should be worded clearly as to what is being voted on. Councillor Rennie suggested that all motions are worded such that the vote is taken for and against the motion. Councillors who wish to abstain should say so before the vote is taken – a non-raised hand is not an indication of abstention.

#### **405. RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER REPORTS**

##### **a) Internal Audit**

- i) To Receive the Internal Auditors report dated the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019 for the first interim. To discuss any recommendations.

**It was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Dolton and RESOLVED: THAT the Internal Auditors Report be approved.**

##### **b) External Audit**

- ii) Council to receive External Auditors Report and Certificate 2018/19.

**It was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Dolton and RESOLVED: THAT the External Auditors Report be approved.**

Cllr Hughes noted that the Responsible Finance Officer and the Office staff were also complimented in the report.

#### **406. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

The Mayor gave a brief update – the Steering Group is currently analysing the comments from the recent consultation and is updating the Plan. The comments are generally helpful and will result in the Plan being strengthened. In terms of content, there will be very few changes. The Mayor asked for approval that, providing the Steering Group were happy that the Plan was fit for purpose, it be submitted to SODC at the end of this year.

**It was Proposed by Councillor Dolton, Seconded by Councillor Hughes and RESOLVED: THAT the Wallingford Neighbourhood Plan be submitted to SODC as soon as possible.**

*7.45pm Councillor Wilder gave his apologies and joined the meeting.*

#### **407. WALLINGFORD SPORTS PARK**

The Mayor reported that the Sports Park had recently discussed their intent to develop a business plan aimed at securing major grant funding to improve their facilities. They have now obtained some funding from Sports England to help prepare this. The Mayor requested support from members to engage with and support the Sports Park to help develop their plans as both they and the Town Council will benefit if their plans are consistent with Council's for our open spaces – in particular we need to be mindful that our plans for the Bull Croft are complementary. It was discussed that Councillor McGregor (Chair of the Bull Croft Working Party) and Councillor Hughes (Councillor Representation for the Wallingford Sport Trust) should work together and take the lead on this.

**It was Proposed by the Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Keats-Rohan and RESOLVED: THAT the Town Council support the engagement with the Sports Park and that Councillor McGregor and Councillor Hughes should work together and take the lead on this.**

#### **408. REGAL WORKING PARTY**

The Mayor reported that there was a good attendance at the consultation and it had received much feedback. The most talked about rumour was that the Town Hall was being sold to pay for the Regal. This is absolutely NOT the case, the Town Hall is not being sold for any purpose, it is possible that members of the public are confusing the Town Hall with the Town Council Offices.

The most contentious issue raised in the consultation was the use of unisex toilets. Councillors recognised that were arguments both for and against but suggested that a final decision should wait upon the refined building design following an update by the architects based upon a full analysis of the feedback.

There will be another meeting with the architects on Friday 22<sup>st</sup> November to discuss the feedback.

The consultation material has been put on the Council website and the Regal page will be regularly updated to keep the public informed of progress.

#### **409. NEW HIRE RATES FOR THE TOWN HALL**

(i) To approve, if appropriate the new rates for the Town Hall proposed by the Events Manager and the Tourism, Business & Community Manager. Report previously sent to councillors.

**It was Proposed by the Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Davies and RESOLVED: THAT the Town Council approve the new rates for the Town Hall with immediate effect.**

(ii) To approve the policy for concession and community rate for the Town Hall. Draft policy previously sent to councillors.

**It was Proposed by Councillor Davies, seconded by the Mayor and RESOLVED: THAT the Town Council approve and adopt the policy for community and concessional users.**

#### **410. EXCURSIONS 2020**

A brief discussion took place to decide if Richard Prunier should attend Excursions 2020 at a cost of £50 plus expenses. Councillor Hughes asked that if Richard attended that he give feedback on the event.

**It was Proposed by the Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Wilder and RESOLVED: THAT Richard Prunier attend Excursions 2020 and report back his findings.**

#### **411. BUS SHELTER OUTSIDE THE OLD POLICE STATION**

The Town Clerk reported that the bus shelter is in desperate need of repair, currently the responsibility lies with Oxfordshire County Council which includes the ongoing commitment of insurance, maintenance and repairs. A quotation has been received for the immediate repairs at a cost of £2070 including VAT. The County Council would like to give the Town Council the opportunity to adopt the bus shelter and the ongoing responsibility for it and advised that the Council would receive S106 funding of £3,200 which is earmarked towards the upkeep of the shelter. A brief discussion took place with the decision that Council were not prepared to take on the liability of this shelter and that the Town Clerk should advise the County Council accordingly.

#### **412. VE DAY CELEBRATIONS**

Councillors discussed the opportunity to be a part of the VE Day Celebrations across the Country, the day will be marked as a bank holiday on Friday 8th May 2020. Wallingford Town Council were considering an event on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May and were asked to approve the estimated costs of £2,500, it was noted that some of this expenditure would fall into the next financial year. This is the same weekend as the Car Rally.

**It was Proposed by Councillor McGregor, Seconded by Councillor Beatty and RESOLVED: THAT a budget of £2,500 be made available for the VE Day Celebrations.**

#### **413. SUPPORT FOR ST MARYS AND ST PETER'S CHURCH**

The Town Clerk reported on a recent meeting of Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils, (OALC), Larger Local Councils which she attended. At the meeting a solicitor from the National Association of Local Councils, (NALC), gave a presentation on Church Property and he gave the advice from NALC on this. The Local Government Act 1894 section 8 precludes any works, including works of maintenance or improvement, from property relating to the affairs of the church or held for an ecclesiastical charity. When asked, the solicitor clarified that the continued support of the clock on St Marys church, which is the only support Town Council now gives to St Mary's, was therefore unlawful under the 1894 Act. The Town Clerk asked that Council consider whether they continue with this support given this advice from NALC and indeed whether the support given to St Peters Church for the flood lighting is also unlawful. The Town Clerk's advice was to follow the advice given by NALC.

A lengthy discussion took place, Councillor Keates-Rohan stated that she remembered something about the clock being owned by the Town Council, the Town Clerk responded that she was not aware of this and would look into it. The views of councillors were expressed with some councillors believing that funding should stop and although this appeared to be the general consensus overall after discussion no resolution or vote was taken on this.

In respect of the support to St Peters Church it was not known if the church is still consecrated. The Mayor stated he felt that illumination of the church as a means of promoting a key Wallingford landmark did not feel like "works for maintenance or improvement" of church property and questioned the relevance of the 1894 Act in this case. Councillor Keates-Rohan offered to look into the situation and any history behind this and the clock by consulting the museum and report back to Council. In the meantime no immediate action would be taken.

#### **414. ACTIVITIES ON BEHALF OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**

The Mayor: Meeting with Mr Marston, new headteacher of Wallingford school, Discussions with solicitors re 10 St Martin's Street, Town Councillors Surgery, Regal Working Party, Regal

