



Wallingford Town Council

MINUTES
of an extraordinary meeting of the
FULL COUNCIL
held on Wednesday 26 October 2022 at 7.00 pm
at Wallingford Town Hall

Present

Members

Cllr Dan Beauchamp
Cllr Giles Cattermole
Cllr Marcus Harris (The Mayor) (Chairman)
Cllr Sue Hendrie
Cllr Steve Holder
Cllr Katharine Keats-Rohan
Cllr Michael Kidley
Cllr Rosslyn Lester
Cllr George Newcombe
Cllr Christian Sinkinson
Cllr Deborah Whelan

Officers:

Michelle Taylor, Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
Jacqui Coker, Local Government Officer

Others:

District Councillor Jo Robb (SODC Thames Champion)
4 members of the public
0 members of the press

353/22

MEETING PROTOCOL

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised those present of the meeting protocols that would be followed.

354/22

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Beatty, Gibbon, Holford, Hughes and McGregor.

355/22

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No interests were declared at this point in the meeting.

356/22

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Two members of the public attended and spoke to the item minuted as 357/22, including a volunteer who had worked with the Riverside Working Group and District Councillor Jo Robb, the designated Thames Champion of South Oxfordshire District Council.

357/22

RIVERSIDE/WALLINGFORD BEACH – APPLICATION FOR CLEAN WATER BATHING STATUS

This extraordinary meeting of the Full Council had been called by the Mayor to clarify the Town Council's position regarding the application made to the Department of the Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

DEFRA had received an application in the name of Wallingford Town Council that most councillors believed had not been authorised and had also not been signed by the Town Clerk. The Mayor explained that this had been submitted by Councillor Cattermole without reference to the Town Clerk who had had no sight of the final version.

A further difficulty was that the submitted document referred to the support of Wallingford Bridge Estate Charity and the South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC). Letters of concern from both bodies had been received by the Town Clerk.

Councillor Cattermole raised a point of order that the Council was operating outside of its standing orders in reversing a decision it had made within the previous six months. This claim, which had first been made by Councillor Cattermole at the Full Council meeting on 17 October 2022, was again contested.

Councillor Cattermole again challenged the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council on 26 September 2022, a meeting at which he believed the Council had approved the document. This understanding was challenged by other Members who pointed out that the document at that point had been incomplete, largely comprising photographs. Councillor Beauchamp responded that the accuracy of the minutes had been fully debated at the last meeting and they had been approved as a correct record.

Councillor Cattermole stated that he was personally recording the meeting because he believed that the Council Office's recording of the meeting of 26 September 2022 had been 'tampered with'.

The letters of concern from SODC and the Wallingford Bridge Estate Charity about the document that Councillor Cattermole had submitted to DEFRA were read out by the Mayor.

Wallingford Bridge Estate Charity had requested that their name and the names of any of their trustees be removed from the document submitted in the name of the Town Council. Whilst they did not object in principle to an application for clean bathing water status, their main concern was signage.

The letter from SODC expressed various concerns with the submitted document including the use of data which was the intellectual property of SODC and which had been expensive to acquire. Some of the information belonging to SODC and used in the apparent WTC submission appeared to have been screenshot at a private meeting.

SODC had advocated for a joint application – which they believed stood a much greater chance of success – and District Councillor Robb restated this position at the meeting. They believed separate applications would be weaker and cause confusion, some of which was already being realised.

Responding to questions, Councillor Cattermole explained why he believed the joint application was not the correct approach, including the focus on a wider stretch of river than 'Wallingford Beach'

District Councillor Jo Robb took questions from Members and addressed the concerns expressed by Councillor Cattermole.

The Town Clerk confirmed that any data that had been collected by the Riverside Working Group belonged to the Town Council.

The Chairman reminded all members that the application needed to be finalised by the end of this month, October 2022.

It was proposed by Councillor Beauchamp, and seconded by Councillor Lester, and

RESOLVED that the application that has been made incorrectly in the name of Wallingford Town Council must be withdrawn and that the Town Council lends its support to the joint application with South Oxfordshire District Council which is supported by data from Thames 21 and which includes the contribution of the Riverside Working Group.

Councillors Beauchamp, Harris, Hendrie, Holder, Keats-Rohan, Kidley, Lester, Newcombe and Sinkinson voted in favour of the resolution.

Councillors Cattermole and Whelan voted against.

The meeting ended at 7.43 pm

Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the
Full Council held on
26 October 2022,
signed as a correct record

Chairman

2022-10-26 FCX minutes PUBLIC