

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE MOOT, THE PRIORY CENTRE, ST NEOTS
ON MONDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2010

PRESENT: Cllr G Thorpe – Chairman
Cllr B Chapman
Cllr Mrs D Collins
Cllr Mrs K Cooper
Cllr A Cummings
Cllr D Harty
Cllr Mrs J Hayward

Cllr O Reynolds
Cllr L Roberts
Cllr S Van de Kerkhove

64. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs B Arnold (work commitments), Cllr Mrs J Bird (prior engagement), Cllr R W Eaton (unwell), Cllr D Giles (holiday), Cllr Mrs L Ottolangui (holiday), Cllr D Terry (unwell) and Cllr P Ursell (prior engagement).

Cllr J Cooper-Marsh was not present.

65. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

66. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor reported that he and the Mayoral team had attended 37 engagements, declined three due to illness, and had 15 planned events before the next Council meeting in January.

The Mayor informed members that Cllr R Eaton was in hospital but responding to treatment. He wished him a speedy recovery.

The Mayor thanked all staff who had worked during the Christmas Lights Switch On and also Cllrs Collins, Cummings, Cooper and Van de Kerkhove for their support on the night.

The Civic Carol Concert will take place on Saturday 11 December at St Mary's Parish Church, St Neots. The Mayor reminded members that they were all invited to attend the small Civic reception prior to the Concert at 5.30pm and the public reception following the event, both would be held in the Priory Centre.

*Meeting of St Neots Town Council
Thursday 29 November 2010*

The Mayor informed members that a new Community Centres Manager had been selected by the Personnel Committee and interviews would take place this week for a new Responsible Finance Officer.

67. MINUTES

- (i) The Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 7 October 2010 were **APPROVED**;
- (ii) The Minutes of the Operations & Amenities meeting held on 20 October 2010 were **RECEIVED**;
- (iii) The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 20 October 2010 were **RECEIVED**;
- (iv) The Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 21 October 2010 were **RECEIVED**;
- (v) The Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 21 October and 18 November 2010 were **RECEIVED**;
- (vi) The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 25 November 2010 were **RECEIVED**;
- (vii) The Minutes of the Operations & Amenities Committee meeting held on 25 November 2010 were **RECEIVED**.

68. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Three members of the public were in attendance. Mr Fradin said that he understood members were considering the budget for 2011/12 and may be proposing to increase the amount of grant aid available to local community groups over the next three years. He commended this in view of the fact that other local authorities were considering cutting their grant funding and hoped that this would be approved for the final budget.

69. CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

The Town Clerk asked members to consider Christmas closure for the Council Offices. It is intended to close the Office from mid-day on Friday 24 December, reopening on Tuesday 4 January 2011. The Operations Team would provide cover during this period for cemetery emergencies and an office contact telephone number would be supplied to local Funeral Directors.

*Meeting of St Neots Town Council
Thursday 29 November 2010*

Members **APPROVED**

the closure of the Civic Centre at mid-day on Friday 24 December, re-opening on Tuesday 4 January 2011.

70. FORWARD PLAN

The latest version of the draft Forward Plan had been reviewed at the recent Operations & Amenities and Finance & General Purposes Committee meetings and amendments put forward for consideration. Members considered the recommendations made at these meetings.

The Forward Plan would be issued in January once the budget for 2011/12 had been approved and figures could be included in the document.

71. BUDGET

The Responsible Finance Officer presented the proposed budget for 2011/12. This was a baseline budget and would result in a Band D property tax of £81.25 (£84.22 for 2009/10).

The Responsible Finance Officer asked members to decide whether the £45,000 she had allocated for capital projects was sufficient or, alternatively, the additional £31,000 resulting from the additional properties that were now part of the town, could be used for capital expenditure.

Capital projects which would need to be carried out within the next 1-2 years included the boiler and heating system in the Priory Centre and repair or replacement of the tiered seating.

The budget would result in a proposed decrease in Central Administration costs of approximately £52,926 against the projected expenditure of £257,024 for 2010/11.

Members thanked the Responsible Finance Officer for her preparation of the budget.

It was **RESOLVED** to

- (i) accept the baseline budget prepared by the Responsible Finance Officer with the recommendations put forward by the Finance & General Purposes Committee, and to continue to seek best value for the residents of the town.

*Meeting of St Neots Town Council
Thursday 29 November 2010*

- (ii) that the rent on Council owned properties be increased to levels recommended by the District Valuer with proportionate increase in grants currently funded.

72. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 – EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To resolve that, in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and by reason of the confidential nature of the remainder of the business, the press and public be excluded from the meeting.

73. BURIAL PLOTS

The Town Clerk reported that Eynesbury and Eaton Socon Cemeteries had now reached capacity and that the new Lawn Cemetery would be used for all future interments.

74. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

There were no items for information.

The meeting closed at 10.19pm

.....
CHAIRMAN
29.11.10