

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**OF ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL**  
**HELD IN THE MOOT, THE PRIORY CENTRE, ST NEOTS**  
**ON WEDNESDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2010**

**PRESENT:** Cllr G Thorpe – Chairman

Cllr Mrs B Arnold	Cllr D Harty
Cllr Mrs J Bird	Cllr Mrs J Hayward
Cllr B Chapman	Cllr Mrs L Ottolanguì
Cllr Mrs D Collins	Cllr L Roberts
Cllr Mrs K Cooper	Cllr D Terry
Cllr J Cooper-Marsh	Cllr G Thorpe
Cllr A Cummings	Cllr S van de Kerkhove
Cllr R W Eaton	

County Councillors B Farrer and D Harty addressed the meeting during the Open Forum.

Cllr Harty advised members of the latest developments concerning St Neots and Longsands Community Colleges. St Neots College was under special measures due to its financial deficit and falling pupil numbers and a radical change was required. At the recent Cabinet meeting, they had accepted the option to form a federation to govern both Colleges as a single body, which would be led by Longsands Community College. This would secure the development of long term planning for schools across St Neots. Cllr Harty hoped that Council would support the proposal.

Cllr Farrer gave an update on closure of the Kings Head public house. He informed members that it would be at least another nine months before the venue could reopen as consideration of the proposed licensing arrangements could take that long.

Cllr Farrer also informed members of his offer to make good the surface of the Eaton Socon village green/car park at his own expense. He would do this by filling in the potholes and respraying the tarmac surface. He asked members to be aware that any more extensive work would require planning permission and may be a problem as this is a conservation area.

Concerning the proposal by Huntingdonshire District Council to introduce parking fees at the Riverside Car Park, Cllr Farrer confirmed his objection to this.

**158. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ms F Birks (family commitment) and Cllr D Giles (holiday). Cllr P K Ursell was not present.

**159. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## 160. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor informed members of the sad death of the Deputy Mayor of Wisbech Town Council, Cllr Leslie Sims. He had sent a letter of condolence on behalf of St Neots Town Council and would be attending the funeral as a representative of the town. A minute's silence was held in respect of Cllr Sims.

The Mayoral Team had attended 7 engagements during January and had 8 confirmed engagements so far for February.

The Mayor reminded members that he would be holding his End of Term Meal at the Hong Kong Restaurant on 17 March. Tickets were available from the Town Council offices. Any raffle prizes would be gratefully received.

## 161. MINUTES

- (i) The Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 6 and 20 January 2010 were **RECEIVED**.
- (ii) The Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 6 January were **APPROVED**.
- (iii) The Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 7 January 2010 were **RECEIVED**.
- (iv) The Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 12 January 2010 were **RECEIVED**.
- (v) The Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee presented the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2010. Members **APPROVED** the following Recommendations:

### Land Between Priory Centre and Library

Members **RESOLVED** to renew the lease for three years and for the Responsible Finance Officer to ensure that the Council are in compliance with the terms of the lease.

### Service Level Agreement – Coffee Bar Youth Provision

The Recommendation made by the Policy & Resources Committee not to enter into the proposed Service Level Agreement and to transfer the allocated monies in the 2010-11 budget to a separate budget heading under the Council's Grant Aid scheme for youth provisions in the town, was **NOT APPROVED**.

Members were informed that a meeting had been held on site with the Acting Town Clerk and Operations Manager to inspect the Coffee bar building. The Locality Manager at Cambridgeshire County Council has assured the Town Council that they will go in and clear up the coffee bar as soon as possible. Members considered a further meeting with the Locality Team before adopting a Recommendation of the P & R Committee.

Members **APPROVED** the Recommendation that the Acting Town Clerk, Town Mayor and Cllr S van de Kerkhove hold a meeting with the Locality Manager and Cllr Harty to discuss the Coffee Bar and the wider issue of youth provision within St Neots.

#### Gate House Lodge

Members **APPROVED** the Recommendation to consider the five year lease as proposed by Barker Storey Matthews.

#### Finance Officer's Report

The Responsible Finance Officer's report on the detailed income and expenditure to 31 December 2009 was **NOTED**.

#### Sidney Banks Field

Members **APPROVED** the Recommendation that the Acting Town Clerk formulate a response to Huntingdonshire District Council to protect the Section 106 monies and the provision of the Sidney Banks field users to use the changing room facilities for many years to come.

#### (vi) Audit Committee – 20 January

Cllr Chapman declared a personal and prejudicial interest on this item and left the room.

The Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 20 January 2010 were deferred.

### **162. EATON SOCON GREEN**

The Chairman reminded members that Cllr Farrer had put forward a proposal at the Open Forum to take on the repair of the village green.

The Acting Town Clerk reported that she had received a letter from Tesco offering £9,000 towards the cost of resurfacing the area.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept Councillor Farrer's offer to make good the surface of the Eaton Socon Green as an interim measure and the Acting Town Clerk to take advice from Huntingdonshire District Council on a planning application within the conservation area for the car park surface to be tarmac.

### **163. PASSION PLAY**

Cllr Mrs Bird informed members that arrangements were progressing with this event. Due to traffic management constraints, the route had been changed and the procession would now start at the Riverside, progress to the Market Square and on to the car park in Bec Road. The resurrection would now be held in the Riverside Park.

The organisers had recently attended a meeting with Huntingdonshire District Council to coordinate the traffic management required and Cllr Mrs Bird thanked the Acting Town Clerk for her input at that meeting.

A major problem would be the closure of the public toilets on 31 March. Cllr Mrs Bird said that it was vital for the Priory Centre to be open on this day for access to toilets and for the elderly/disabled to have somewhere to rest. The Community Centres Manager had previously informed the Passion Play Committee that he could not open for this event due to staffing costs.

The Acting Town Clerk said that members had already given their support for the Play but that this was not financial support and if they decided to offer support in the way of opening the Priory Centre for the day, funds would be required to pay staff.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Responsible Finance Officer be instructed to look at staffing in the Priory Centre and to allocate funds to enable the Centre to be open for approximately five hours on Easter Sunday.

### **164. STREET NAMING**

The Acting Town Clerk reported that Huntingdonshire District Council had invited suggestions for the naming of a new cul de sac in Eaton Socon. Any name suggested would be given consideration when naming the new street.

Members **APPROVED** that the name of Bath Farm Court be put forward to Huntingdonshire District Council.

### **165. GRANTS COMMITTEE**

The Acting Town Clerk reported that a vacancy existed on the Grants Committee due to a resignation.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Leigh Ottolangui be elected onto the Grants Committee.

### **166. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

A vacancy had arisen on the Planning Committee due to a resignation.

Members **RESOLVED** that Councillor Derek Giles be elected onto the Planning Committee.

**167. CEMETERY EXTENSION**

The Acting Town Clerk asked members to consider the requirement for the new Cemetery Extension to be fully or partly consecrated. The preliminary financial costs for this would be £750 and, if consecrated, the land would come under the jurisdiction of the Church.

It was **RESOLVED** that 50% of the cemetery extension be consecrated.

**168. LAWN CEMETERY TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

This item was deferred as the cemetery extension was now being consecrated.

**169. NOTIFICATION OF TAX**

The Responsible Finance Officer reported that, in order to reclaim the tax on the Eatons Community Centre build, the Town Council must opt to tax the land and buildings and advise H M Revenue and Custom of this. This would mean that output tax would have to be declared on the Eatons income.

Members **APPROVED** the signing of the H M Revenue and Custom notification to opt to tax the new Community Centre and the Mayor duly signed on behalf of the Town Council.

**170. EATONS COMMUNITY CENTRE PRE-SCHOOL**

The Acting Town Clerk updated members on the situation with the Eatons Community Centre Pre-School. The tender process had been completed but the successful tender had withdrawn their bid.

The majority of the pre-schools in St Neots and neighbouring counties had now been invited to tender and unfortunately the response had been very low.

Members **NOTED** the report and asked the Acting Town Clerk to continue with her efforts to fill the rooms.

**171. FREEDOM OF THE TOWN**

This item was deferred until the March meeting.

**172. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

Huntingdonshire District Council had advised that the public conveniences in St Neots would be closed on 1 April 2010. If the Town Council wished to reconsider their decision not to take on the responsibility of these

conveniences, Huntingdonshire District Council would be willing to enter into further discussions.

Cllr Thorpe and Cllr Harty would contact Huntingdonshire District Council to discuss the situation.

The Acting Clerk had received notification that the Swine Flu Mass Vaccination Programme had been put on hold due to the decline of the infection.

Huntingdonshire District Council had notified the Council that they would be renewing the bus shelter in Longsands Road.

**173. 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.

**174. STAFFING STRUCTURE REPORT**

The Chairman of the Personnel Committee presented a report on the deliberations of the Personnel Committee regarding the Staffing Structure Review. The report considered Pay Scales, Staff Structure and Recruitment of vacant posts.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) No change be made to the Council Pay Scales in the short term.
- (ii) The Posts of Deputy Town Clerk and Town Centre Manager be combined into one full time post, reporting to the Town Clerk.
- (iii) A full time RFO post be created at Accounting Technician level with a part time Accountant.
- (iv) That the Acting Town Clerk be confirmed as Town Clerk, subject to agreement on terms and conditions.
- (v) The Personnel Committee approve the selection of the RFO.
- (vi) A new Town Council Structure be adopted.

**175. ZURICH INSURANCE**

Members were advised of a claim concerning an alleged incident in a play area in 2008.

Members **NOTED** the report.

The meeting closed at 10.35pm.

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**CHAIRMAN**  
**03.02.10**