

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE MOOT, THE PRIORY CENTRE, ST NEOTS
ON WEDNESDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2008**

PRESENT: Cllr R W J Eaton – Chair
Cllr Mrs J Bird
Cllr Ms F Birks
Cllr B Chapman
Cllr Mrs D Collins
Cllr Mrs K Cooper
Cllr A Cummings
Cllr D Giles
Cllr D Harty
Cllr Mrs J Hayward
Cllr Mrs L Ottolangu
Cllr L Roberts
Cllr D Terry
Cllr P K Ursell

84. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chairman put forward a Notice of Motion to add a confidential staffing matter to the Agenda on the grounds of urgency, to be considered in Part II of the Town Council meeting.

It was **AGREED** that the item be added to the agenda under part two.

85. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs B Arnold (family commitment) and Cllr G Thorpe (unwell).

86. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

87. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor reported that he and his Deputy had carried out the following engagements during the month:

- Fenland District Council Charity Dinner
- 26th Anniversary of St Neots Farmers Market
- Ely Civic Service
- Mayor of Peterborough's Race Night at the Greyhound Stadium
- Royal British Legion Band Concert at the Priory Centre
- RAF Molesworth Dedication Service
- 5th Anniversary of Hunts Mind
- Opening of the new restaurant (Stripes) at the Old Kings Head, St Neots
- Eaton Socon Bowling Club Youth Section
- March Civic Service
- Huntingdonshire District Council Chairman's Civic Reception

The Town Mayor asked all Councillors to support at least one of the Remembrance Services on 9 November at St Neots Parish Church, Eynesbury Parish Church (both at 11am) and/or Eaton Socon Parish Church at 3pm.

88. MINUTES

- (i) The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 8 October 2008 were amended and then approved.

Cllr B Chapman asked that it be recorded on the Minutes when amendments had been made.

- (ii) The Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 8 and 22 October 2008 were received.

89. PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Chairman reported that, due to a resignation, there was a vacancy on the Planning Committee.

It was **AGREED** that Cllr Derek Giles would be elected onto the Planning Committee.

90. CHANGE TO SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Cllr Mrs Bird reported that the Personnel Committee required additional members as, when occasion arose to divide the Personnel Committee into two groups, the present number was insufficient.

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

91. REFRESHMENTS

Cllr Mrs Bird requested that refreshments be provided before the Planning Committee meetings when they were followed by Town Council meetings.

After a short debate, it was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council would provide refreshments for the Planning Committee meetings when followed by Council meetings. The Responsible Finance Officer to allocate this spend to the most appropriate budget heading.

92. ST NEOTS FESTIVAL AND BUDGET

The Town Centre Manager presented his report on the August Bank Holiday Festival and the outstanding £2,500 deficit. The sum of £1,590 was still outstanding from one of the contributors, a Mr Dunkley. The Town Centre Manager explained that the Council's regular fairground

operator, Mr Dean, had been ill through the summer and had brought Mr Dunkley in to help.

Mr Dunkley had provided the stalls for the Festival but his payment of £1,590 had not been made to the Town Council.

It was **RESOLVED**

- (i) that the Town Centre Manager would try to contact Mr Dunkley again for payment, by telephone and in writing, but that no further costs would be incurred to retrieve this money as no formal contract existed;
- (ii) that any shortfall from this event would be funded from the Town Centre Manager's budget in consultation with the Responsible Finance Officer;
- (iii) all future town events are to be budgeted and the budget be approved by a senior officer.

93. CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

The Deputy Town Clerk asked Members for confirmation of Christmas Closure for the Council offices.

It was

RESOLVED that the Council offices close at 12pm on Wednesday 24 December at 12pm and reopen Monday 5 January 2009.

94. OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr B Chapman reported that he had attended a meeting of St Neots in Bloom. He believed that last year the Town Council had agreed to give £2,000 to St Neots in Bloom and this had not been received yet.

The Deputy Town Clerk said that last year the Town Council agreed to put aside £2,000 to be spent on St Neots in Bloom and that this was not intended to be a donation.

Cllr B Chapman had attended a meeting of the Citizens Advice Bureau. They had asked him to raise the possibility of a more formal arrangement when applying for funding from the Town Council.

Cllr Eaton declared an interest in this item. Cllr P Ursell, as Chairman of the Grants Committee, said that the Council had a robust grant aid system and that the CAB should continue to use the existing process to apply for grants.

Cllr B Chapman reported that the cinema business team had met and suggested three options to take the project forward.

- (i) that the Town Council looked into putting in an outline planning application on the recycling/old fire station site;
- (ii) that the group tried to open discussions with Huntingdonshire District Council to “land swap”;
- (iii) to raise a peoples’ petition or parish poll

It was

RESOLVED that the Cinema Business Group be recognised as an Outside Body and that Cllrs D Giles, D Terry and another to be confirmed by the Conservative Leader be elected to represent the Town Council.

It was further **RESOLVED** that

- (ii) the Deputy Town Clerk would investigate the possibility of a land swap with Huntingdonshire District Council for the recycling site and Shady Walk ;
- (ii) the Deputy Town Clerk would apply for Outline Planning Permission for the site, to a maximum cost of £2,000;
- (iii) the Deputy Town Clerk to investigate the costs implications for a parish poll or a petition.

95. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The Deputy Town Clerk reported the following Items for Information:

- 1) Small Scale Environmental Improvement Schemes 2009 – HDC.
- 2) Gum Targets – HDC.
- 3) Street Naming and Numbering – HDC.
- 4) Bedford Development Framework, Allocations & Designations Development Plan Document – Bedford Borough Council.
- 5) Bedford Town Centre Area Action Plan Adoption – Bedford Borough Council.

96. 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.

97. NEW CEMETERY EXTENSION

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that she had met with the Council's solicitors and been informed that the piece of land next to St Neots New Cemetery was owned by Huntingdonshire District Council and we would need to apply to Huntingdonshire District Council for the Deeds to enable us to use the site as a burial ground.

It was **RESOLVED**

- (i) to instruct the Council's solicitors to negotiate with Huntingdonshire District Council to release the Deeds for the site to use as a cemetery; whilst
- (ii) continuing to find alternative sites, in consultation with HDC.

98. WALL AT ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD

The Deputy Town Clerk informed members of the quotes she had received for the repair of the wall.

It was **RESOLVED** that

the wall would be repaired this year if the budget allowed or that the work would be carried out in the next financial year.

99. BUS SHELTERS

The Deputy Town Clerk reported on the capital programme to replace/install bus shelters in the town. She recommended to members that the Council purchase cantilever shelters as the existing brick built shelters in the town caused problems for local residents as youths congregated in them.

After a short debate, it was **RESOLVED**

to purchase cantilever shelters for Sandfields Road and Bushmead Road and to work with Cllr Julia Hayward on securing a cantilever shelter in Hardwick Road

100. URGENT BUSINESS

Cllr J Bird briefed the council on an ongoing staffing matter and that the Personnel Committee felt that they need the assistance from an employment law solicitor to help with further negotiations.

Following a lengthy debate it was **RESOLVED** that

- (i) a Solicitor in employment law be engaged
- (ii) the employment law solicitor continue negotiation on the Town Council's behalf.

The meeting closed at 10.40pm.

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CHAIRMAN
05.11.08