

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**OF ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL**  
**HELD IN THE MOOT HALL, THE PRIORY CENTRE, ST NEOTS**  
**ON WEDNESDAY 8 JUNE 2010**

**PRESENT:** Cllr G Thorpe – Chairman

Cllr Mrs B Arnold	Cllr S van de Kerkhove
Cllr Mrs J Bird	Cllr L Roberts
Cllr B Chapman	Cllr Mrs J Hayward
Cllr Mrs D Collins	Cllr Mrs L Ottolangui
Cllr Mrs K Cooper	Cllr O Reynolds
Cllr J Cooper-Marsh	
Cllr A Cummings	
Cllr R W J Eaton	

Cllr P Ursell was not present.

**9. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D Giles (holiday), Cllr D Harty (prior Engagement) and Cllr D Terry (Holiday).

**10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No Declarations of interest have been received.

**11. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Town Mayor reported that he and his Mayoral team had attended 16 engagements since the last Council meeting and had 14 planned so far for the next month.

He reminded members that the Civic Service would be held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2010 in the parish Church and afterwards at the Priory Centre for English Tea. He would be hosting another community coffee morning on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2010 which will take place at the Priory Centre at 10.30am.

**12. MINUTES**

- (i) The Minutes of the Annual Town Council meeting held on 11 May 2010 were **APPROVED**.
- (ii) The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 19 May were **RECEIVED**.
- (iii) The Minutes of the Personnel meeting held on 26 May were **RECEIVED**.

### 13. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

The Town Clerk presented members with a draft copy of the meeting dates for the ensuing year.

Three minor amendments were recommended by the Officers:-

- (i) the annual accounts would need a further week to be completed due to the new requirements under the FRSSE, therefore changing the Town Council meeting from 24 June to the 30 June 2010.
- (ii) Due to the move of the Town Council meeting, the Operations & Amenities Committee and the Finance & General Purposes Committee be moved from 15 June to 22 June 2010.
- (iii) A new Town Council meeting was proposed for 13 January 2010 to give final consideration to the Town Council budget for 2011/12.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the calendar dates with the proposed amendments for the ensuing year.

### 14. COFFEE BAR

The Town Council had previously allocated the sum of £10,000 annually to the Locality Youth Services towards the cost of running the Coffee Bar. It had become apparent that the Coffee Bar was being utilised infrequently and that this was not representing good value for money.

The internal ceiling is in a bad state of repair as is the flooring. The building will be undergoing a full clean down and the floor requires scrubbing to remove all the ground in stains, this work can be completed by the current employees.

The Coffee bar has a central point in the town and it is a great asset; this can be utilised by lots of different community groups. There is ample parking situated around the town and in easy walking distance to the Coffee Bar.

The Town Clerk advised members that a budget is required to bring the asset up to a high standard and this would allow local community groups to hire the facility from the Town Council at a low cost. The Mayors coffee morning could be run from the building as well as the Town Council holding surgeries in the building to enable councillors to meet with local residents. This would still give an opportunity for youth activities to take place during the evening.

It was **RESOLVED** that

1. A budget of £10,000 be allocated to the coffee bar for the first year to cover the indicative costs of the repairs and services
2. Small community groups can hire the facilities and collect the key from the Town Council offices. This will give the opportunity for small groups to have somewhere to meet at a low cost.

3. The Mayor's Charity to run coffee mornings to encourage a place for people to meet and for the councillors to hold surgeries if and when needed.
4. Youth activities can be run by different organisations and utilise the space in the evenings.
5. The Responsible Finance Officer to find appropriate funding

## 15. **OPERATION TEAM VEHICLE CONDITION**

The Responsible Finance Officer reported on the poor condition of the Operations Team Megatruck vehicle and asked members to consider the lease or purchase of a new vehicle.

The existing micro vehicle was purchased to carry out light tasks for the Council but has not stood up to the wear and tear imposed on it. The Town Clerk felt that the vehicle was no longer fit for purpose and due to the high vibration levels was a health and safety hazard.

If a lease option is approved, over a three year period the lease would cost £9,300, and the Town Council would be responsible for all maintenance, repairs and service costs. The vehicle would be returned to the agent after the three years.

If we purchased a Ford Ranger outright, we would be responsible for maintenance, repairs and service as per the lease and the vehicle could potentially, last the town council for approximately six to eight years if maintained correctly. This would cost the council in the region of £11,200.

It was **RESOLVED** to purchase a Ford Ranger. The Responsible Finance Officer is given delegated authority to purchase the vehicle and the funds to be drawn from either the Earmarked Reserves or the General Reserves.

## 16. **MAYORAL REGALIA**

The Town Council has very little history unlike other parish do and Town Councils around us. The town has no Town Charter and due to the Urban District Council being dissolved in 1974, very little civic heritage is found within the Town.

The Mayor's robe is a modern type of robe in a red lightweight cloth, trimmed with full length facings of fake fur. The sleeves are trimmed with magenta velvet. The Councillor's robes are generally black, but it has been the custom in some councils to entitle former Town Mayors to wear their red robes at civic and ceremonial events. The robes of the Mayor and Councillors play a much more important part than is generally supposed. The Mayors robe and chain of office signifies the delegation of authority from the Crown to raise local taxes.

The Mayoress Chain had a modesty chain fitted last year and is in need of being refurbished.

The Deputy Mayor's chain has an emblem pendant with a ribbon. This is a low standard and would be in need of a new chain to incorporate the current emblem pendant. It was **RESOLVED** that the Responsible Finance Officer make a virement from the General Reserves of £2,960 for the purchase of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor robes and accoutrements. The Mayoress Chain to be refurbished and a new deputy mayor chain to be purchased.

**17. JOINT FUNDED MINOR IMPROVEMENT SCHEME 2011/12 BIDDING ROUND**

Members considered the bidding round for the Joint Funded Improvement Scheme.

It was **RESOLVED** that members would submit their proposed scheme within St Neots by 22 June 2010. The submitted schemes are to be considered at the Town Council meeting on 30 June 2010.

**18. HUNTINGDONSHIRE CONSULTATION – LEADER OR MAYOR, THE CHOICE FOR HUNTINGDONSHIRE**

Huntingdonshire District Council is carrying out a consultation exercise on which form of leadership should be adopted next year and would welcome any views that the Town Council may have which will be taken into consideration in reaching a decision.

The District Council has had a leader and cabinet for almost 10 years, a recent change in legislation has resulted in local authorities such as Huntingdonshire having to move to an executive leader or elected mayor from May 2011.

Members **RESOLVED** that Town Councillors would submit their individual responses to the consultation.

**19. STREET NAMING**

The Town Council has received a letter from Taylor Wimpey requesting street names for the proposed development off Chapman Way, St Neots. A total of 7 different names are required for the development

It was **RESOLVED** that the Planning Committee consider the request and have delegated power to make the street name proposals. Councillors were encouraged to make submissions to the Planning Committee. This item is to be considered on the next planning committee meeting on the 1 July 2010.

**20. PARISH OF ST NEOTS (COUNCILLORS) ORDER 2010**

Members were asked to note that the Town Council will be increasing from 18 to 21 Councillors on 5 May 2011.

Members **NOTED** the Parish Order

**21. CEMETERY ROAD EXTENSION**

The cemetery extension was given to the town on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 1933, "for the purposes of a burial ground". The land has only become vested in Huntingdon District Council through the 1974 legislation

Huntingdon District Council has agreed that no planning permission would be required and the extension can be used for the purpose of a cemetery as stated in the conveyance document. Huntingdonshire District Council has approved the transfer of the title deed to the cemetery extension.

St Neots Cemetery has pathways prepared to access the land. The pathways on the cemetery extension are expected to be grass ways or gravelled walkways.

The funeral vehicle needs safe access and egress off the site and the new cemetery extension map incorporates the road way within the design.

It was **RESOLVED** that the responsible Finance officer be given delegated powers to vire the monies from the Earmarked Reserves or General Reserves to allow for a tender exercise to be undertaken for the installation of the road in the new cemetery.

**22. EATON SOCON CAR PARK**

The Car Park was created many years ago and has only received remedial repairs. This has left the car park in an unacceptable state.

The car parking facilities have been discussed at previous council meetings and the Town Council has completed remedial action which has a life span of two to three years. The Operation Staff then infill for a further two years and the cycle has been going around & around.

Tesco's, Eaton Socon store have very kindly donated £9,000 for a replacement surface of the site. Tesco have confirmed that the Car Park entrance does not form part of the delivery risk assessment and should not be used by their delivery vehicles.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk will contact the Conservation team of Huntingdonshire District Council and seek advice for the surface to be fully tarmac with a shrub border at the front. If approval

is given the Town Clerk contact Tesco to secure the funds before the work can go ahead.

**23. PROPOSED SWIMMING POOL SITE**

This item was **DEFERRED** without discussion as the Chairman of the Swimming Pool trust Committee was not in attendance at the meeting.

**24. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

County Councillor Bob Farrer has advised that that water drainage problem has been resolved.

A request has been received from Councillor D Harty for the consideration of grits bins in Culloden Road, this request will be considered by the operations and Amenities Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2010.

The meeting ended at 9.35pm.

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**CHAIRMAN**  
**10.03.10**