

## Full Town Council

**Present:** Cllrs Slade (Chairperson), Banks, Bolanz, Chapman, Collins, Cooper-Marsh, Dundas-Todorov, Dunford, Goodman, Hitchin, Johnson, Kumar, Macnab-Grieve, Mascarenhas, Maslen, Pitt, Simonis.  
**Absent:** Cllrs Crompton, Johnson, Kumar and Terry  
**In attendance:** Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk

**Minutes** of the meeting of St Neots Town Council held on **Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024** at **7.15pm** in the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, St Neots, PE19 2BH.

### Public Participation

There were 7 members of the public present.

### ACTIONS

#### 180 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and noted from Cllr Johnson and Terry.

Admin

#### 181 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

#### 182 Council Minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024 subject to amending these to confirm Cllr B Banks was present at the meeting and that a recorded vote had been taken on a resolution regarding the policy on pre-purchase of burial plots for council operated cemeteries.

#### 183 Reports from District and County Councillors

CCC/HDC Cllr S Ferguson and HDC Cllr A Jennings addressed the Council.

Cllrs Ferguson (CCC/HDC), Seeff (CCC) and Jennings (HDC) reported as follows;

- The Market Square project was on track and regular bulletins were released by the District Council on the relevant stages and progress of work.
- The District Council have reached a positive point with the owner of the Old Falcon in developing a plan for the site which respects its heritage and is likely to be successful in a planning process. Planning submission for the building is expected to be submitted in May.
- The proposed Market Square stage is to be further developed and taken for consultation; it will require the submission of a planning application.



- Locations of Saturday freighters for green waste collection are being announced. Riverside Park and One Leisure will be used as points in St Neots from 27<sup>th</sup> April with collection every 4 weeks.
- A pay award has been agreed with HDC staff for the year.
- HDC has launched a new support service for startup businesses and entrepreneurs. Will be a free service delivered by Dayton Bell.
- HDC DMC and Licencing Committees had met but the agendas did not include anything related to St Neots.
- HDC Grant panel made an award of £1,000 to Money Advice St Neots.
- Members were made aware that CCC Cllr G. Seeff was continuing to pursue section106 funding that should have been allocated to St Neots.

Members asked the following questions;

- *Is the boat house incorporated into the plans for the Old Falcon?* It was confirmed it was and would be an essential part of the design. It was commented that plans were still under development and the owner still needed to agree final proposals.
- *Will green bins not used by residents as part of the new scheme be collected by HDC?* It was stated you can request to have an unused green bin picked up and this would be done in July. However, residents can keep the bins to use for compost if they wish.
- Holding proposed central collection points for green waste on Saturday mornings seems counter intuitive as many people will do their gardening work at the start of the weekend. It was explained garden waste could also be taken to household waste centre. The provision was intended to provide an alternative option for residents, but this may well be open to change in the future if it was unsuccessful.
- A bus shelter at Eaton Ford Green requires repair, Cllr Jennings commented that he was aware but establishing who was responsible for repairs had proved difficult. A Councillor queried whether the removed bus shelters from the Market Square could be used to replace broken ones. The Clerk commented that the Town Council had the bus shelters. Cllr Jennings said he would investigate as to whether these could be used as replacements for broken shelters.

### Committee minutes

Members received and noted the draft minutes of meetings of the following committees and sub-committees and (if applicable) approved recommendations therein which do not arise elsewhere;

184 i) Members received and noted minutes of the Planning Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

185 ii) Members received and noted minutes of the Environment & Emergency Committee held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

186 iii) Members received and noted minutes of the Operations and Amenities Committee meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

Members received and considered a recommendation from the committee that the Council approve a tender document for museum repair work costs and that the Clerk initiate the tender process.

187 **RESOLVED** that the Council approve the Museum Repair Work tender and that the Clerk initiate the tender process subject to further liaising with the museum trustees.

188 iv) Members received and noted minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

Members received and considered recommendations from the committee and resolved as follows;

189 **RESOLVED** that the Council approve earmarking unspent funds as at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 from the following budgets;

Cost Centre	Budget Code	Budget Heading
102	4318	Youth Council and Youth Worker
105	4365	Carbon Neutral Budget
230	4119	The Cage / Lock up
210	4128	Street Scene Improvements
240	4346	Armed Forces Day (for 2024 event)
240	4346	Armed Forces Day (for vibrant community funding)
301	4123	Highways Improvements
301	4503	Noticeboards
400	6703	Capital Building Major Repairs
400	4902	Capital Ops ride on mowers and vehicles
400	4911	Capital IT Hardware

**190 RESOLVED** that the Loves Farm Earmarked Reserve of £117.00 be reallocated to the Community Building Fund.

**191 RESOLVED** that the Council confirms it will continue funding of counselling for young people with the Young Persons Counselling Service at a cost of £11,000 per year as budgeted for 2024/25. That the Council approve the proposed agreement for provision based on 286 hours.

*Cllr Chapman left the meeting at 19:39*

**192 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils**

**RESOLVED** to renew membership with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils for 2024/25. That the cost of affiliation comes from the Council's subscriptions budget for 2024-25.

*Cllr Chapman re-joined the meeting at 19:41*

**193 Election of Environment & Emergency Committee Chairperson**

The Chairperson asked for nominations for the position of chairperson of the Environment & Emergency Committee for the remainder of the Council year.

Cllr Bolanz was nominated and seconded.

**RESOLVED** that Cllr Bolanz is elected to serve as Chairperson of the Environment and Emergency Committee for the remainder of the 2023/24 Council year.

**194 Priory Centre Business Development Group (BDG)**

Members received and considered membership of the Priory Centre Business Development Group (BDG) and the Clerk's recommendation that an additional member be appointed to the group to help strengthen the group in the event of appointed Members being unable to attend. It was explained that the BDG was intended as a discussion and feedback group to represent the Town Council in the redevelopment of the Priory Centre and that meeting times varied. Meetings were both in person and on Teams.

Cllr Macnab-Grieve who was previously appointed to the BDG stated that if more than one Councillor wanted to join the group she would step down as the timings of the meetings made it difficult for her to attend.

Cllr Macnab-Grieve's resignation from the BDG was accepted and the Chairperson asked for nominations from Members to fill the vacancy created and the recommended additional appointments.

The following Councillors expressed interested in being appointed to the BDG;

- Cllrs Collins, Johnson, Goodman and Hitchin.

Members would be required to vote on appointment to the group and a candidate would require a majority of votes to be selected.

The Chairperson called for a vote to appoint the first Member to the BDG.

**RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Hitchin to the Priory Centre Business Development Group.

The Chairperson called for a vote to appoint the second Member to the BDG.

**RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Goodman to the Priory Centre Business Development Group.

#### 195 Members on Outside Bodies

- RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Dunford as a second Member to act as a council representative on the East West Rail Stakeholder Group.
- The Chairperson invited Members to provide any verbal reports from outside bodies on which they act as Council representatives.

Cllr Maslen informed the Council that the Eatons Community Associations May Day celebration was due to take place on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

#### 196 Date of Next Meeting

Members noted the date of the next Council meeting will be 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

*Cllr Dundas-Todorov left the meeting at 19:52 having an interest in the following items as a Council appointed trustee on the St Neots Aquatic and Leisure CIO.*

*Cllr Bolanz left the meeting at 19:54.*

#### 197 Committee In Private Session

**RESOLVED** that in terms of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment or contractual matters and it is, therefore, **RESOLVED** that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

#### 198 St Neots Swimming Pool

The Chairperson summarised the situation and the advice from the solicitor.

- Members received and noted correspondence received from the Charity Commission in relation to St Neots Swimming Pool land. The correspondence set out the Charity Commissions position on the past transfer of the asset.

- ii) Members received and noted communication from a solicitor engaged by the Council in relation to correspondence from the Charity Commission and the solicitor's interpretation of that communication.
- iii) Members received and considered legal advice in relation to the previous transfer of the former swimming pool land and other assets. Legal due diligence as part of considering any grant funding for a splash park highlighted matters related to the transfer of the asset from the Former Swimming Pool Trust to the CIO which needed to be considered and addressed. The advice provided the Council with options on actions available to it and the risks and benefits associated with those actions.
- iv) Members discussed the advice from the solicitor at length and the implications of actions open to the Council.

It was proposed and seconded that the Council resolve to follow option 3 as set out in the solicitor's advice.

A recorded vote was requested.

**RESOLVED** that based on communication received from the Charity Commission and advice provided by a solicitor the Council resolves to approve and action 'option 2' as set out in the legal advice, seeking to ratify the Vesting Declaration dated 30th November 2017 with St Neots Aquatic and Leisure CIO when acting as trustee of St Neots Swimming Pool Trust. That, as advised by the solicitor the CIO be asked to indemnify the Council in respect of any liabilities that may have arisen since the date of the original Declaration.

For	Against
Cllrs Maslen	Cllr Banks
Cllr Hitchin	Cllr Chapman
Cllr Pitt	
Cllr Smith	
Cllr Collins	
Cllr Mascarenhas	
Cllr Dunford	
Cllr Slade	
Cllr Simonis	
Cllr Macnab-Grieve	
Cllr Cooper-Marsh	
Cllr Goodmand	