

Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Oakham Town Council held on the 12th October, 2016 in the offices of the Town Council, Victoria Hall, High Street, Oakham, and Rutland County

Present	Cllr Martin Brookes	
	Cllr Michael Haley	
	Cllr Jasmine Hopkins	
	Cllr Vincent Howard	
	Cllr Adam Lowe	Chairman of the Council
	Cllr Joyce Lucas	
	Cllr Stan Stubbs	
	Cllr Sally Ann Wadsworth	
	Mr Malcolm Plumb	Acting Town Clerk
	Ms Allison Greaves	Deputy Town Clerk

(No Members of the Public or Press were in attendance)

241/16 Apologies for absence

The meeting received and accepted apologies for absence from the following

Cllr Tracy Carr
Cllr Peter Ind

242/16 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made at this stage by attending Councillors, in respect of items of business specified in the meeting's agenda.

243/16 Minutes

Cllr Brookes recorded a number of views concerning the accuracy of the minutes for the Town Council meeting held on the 14th September 2016, which were noted by the meeting. After discussion, Cllr Stan Stubbs proposed that the draft minutes of the September 2016 meeting be accepted, without change, as a true accurate record. Cllr Michael Haley seconded the proposal. The motion was put to the meeting and was approved by 6 votes for, 1 vote against and two abstentions. The Chairman then signed these minutes.

The Acting Town Clerk confirmed that action had been taken in respect of the following;

- Minute 230/16. Assistant Town Clerk confirmed that the Castle benches had been ordered and will be installed shortly.

- Minute 231/16. The Town Councils standing orders had now been fully amended in accordance with the changes agreed by the Council. The new standing orders had been printed and were circulated to all Councillors in attendance at this meeting
- Minute 232/16. Questions concerning two payments raised during the September 2016 Council meeting will be dealt with under agenda item 13, Statement of Accounts.
- Minute 234/16. Advertisements for co-option of new Town Councillors have now been placed.
- Minute 235/16. The Towns Christmas Tree has been ordered
- Minute 237.16. RCC Planning has been advised of the Town Councils observations.

244/16 Members reports

Cllr Vince Howard, on behalf of the Events/Publicity Group gave a verbal report updating members in relation to the following.

- 5th December 2016, Christmas tree Switch on event and late night shopping activity.
- A meeting with the High Sheriff relating to events and the financial aspects had been held.
- Band concerts. Positive feedback from the General Public has been received. Commencing work for a further event in 2017.

The meeting noted Cllr Howards verbal reports.

The next meeting of the Planning Committee has been arranged.

245/16 Clerks reports

The Acting Town Clerk reported upon the following

- He had written to the Company who installed the original Council chamber internal CCTV system some time ago, asking that, in view of considerable shortfalls of the system, they either replace the system with a fully operational one or refund the Councils payment. No reply has been received so far.
- He had written, again, to the Chief Executive Officer, RCC, requesting more detailed clarification of what the payment of £62,500 received from the Hawksmead development project, could be used for, and if the draft agreement between the developers and the RCC had been confirmed. A copy of the letter had been sent to the Developers for their information. The acting Clerk suggested that in the continuing absence of the clarification requested, the Town Council Planning Committee begin to formulate options for the use of this fund for the Town Councils consideration.
- The Annual Audit of Accounts for the financial year 2015/16 had now been completed by the external Auditors, Grant Thornton of Liverpool. The Auditor had, without qualification, confirmed his opinion "That no matter had been brought to their attention indicating that the financial regulations had not been satisfactorily complied

with". This certificate had been given despite a complaint from a person that some 140 items had not been satisfactorily complied with. In answer to a question from the meeting, Cllr Brookes confirmed he had made the complaint. The Auditor had drawn the Town Councils attention to two matters concerning the retention of all audit papers ("documentation") and the need for the Town Council to ensure that assertions 4 and 7 in the Annual Statement of Accounts are fully observed. Both observation are accepted and will be done in future. Neither observation affects the Auditors opinion given above.

The meeting, in recording its satisfaction with the outcome of the Audit, paid tribute to the work of Cllrs M Elliott, M Haley and J Hopkins and the Assistant Clerk for helping to ensure the accounts work was done, and reasonable standards of financial management were maintained, during the prolonged absence of the former Town Clerk.

The public notice advising the public of the completion of the Annual Audit would now be publicised.

246/16 Deputations by the Public.

None were made under this item of business.

247/16 Working Groups Reports.

- Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Cllr Michael Haley submitted a detailed written report (Doc B) of the Groups work/activities up to September 2016. After discussion, the report was received and noted by the meeting.
- OCC Building lease. Cllr Michael Haley submitted a detailed written report (Doc Bi) of progress in the leasing arrangements with the Ark Association up top September 2016 (into Oct.). In response to a question, Solicitors arrangements were explained. After discussion, the report was received and noted.

In response to a question concerning reports from the Finance and Cemetery Groups, it was confirmed that when the groups have met and have items to report to the Town Council, these reports will be forthcoming.

248/16 Single point of contact (Staff welfare)

Cllr Adam Lowe, Town Council Chairman circulated a written report (TC 077016) with the agenda papers proposing that, in order to protect Council Employees from threatening, insulting intimidating and bullying actions, the Town Council approves the establishment of a SPOC (Single point of Contact) facility. The Acting Clerk had already, as an emergency measure, introduced some controls relating to access to the Council office, and limiting contact with any individual identified as a vexatious complainant.

During a full discussion, explanations were given and debated upon clearly defining unacceptable incidents as described above.

After a full discussion, the proposals in the written report were put to the meeting and approved, unanimously. Any additional required controls will be reviewed by the Town Councils Policies and Procedures Working Group for further consideration by the Town Council.

249/16 Heritage Lottery Fund. Cutts Close Fencing and Pathways

Cllr Adam Lowe submitted a report, with recommendations to replace fencing and re surfacing/widening the pathways on Cutts Close (report no.TC078016) and to submit a HLF application for a supporting grant. The meeting considered the report in detail and after some discussion, by a narrow vote, agreed to appoint a Task and Finish Working group to deal with these and other matters concerning the Park. The Group to comprise of,

Cllr Vince Howard

Cllr Adan Lowe

Cllr Joyce Lucas

Ms Allison Greaves Deputy Town Clerk

250/16 General Power of Competence

The Acting Town Clerk submitted an information report concerning the Town Council continuing eligibility to operate under this power (Report no TC 07916). In view of the changed circumstances of the Town Clerks position (former Town Clerk has left the Council, Acting Town Clerk appointed), The Acting Town Clerk suggested that for the avoidance of doubt, the Town Council might re confirm its continuing eligibility under this power. The prime criteria of having two thirds of elected Councillors in office and a fully qualified Town Clerk were both met. The Acting Town Clerks qualifications and section 7 certificate were available for Councillors inspection during the meeting should they so wish. Finally the acting Clerk provided an explanation upon what can, and what cannot be done, under this power. After discussion, the meeting noted the report and confirmed the GPC criterion presently continues to be complied with.

251/16 Draft Agreement for the installation of a CCTV column at Princess Avenue.

The Assistant Town Clerk circulated a report (no. TC 080016) containing a draft agreement between the Town Council and the Rutland County Council, for the installation of a CCTV column at princess Avenue. During the discussion, the proposed term of the lease agreement (25 years) was questioned (a number of Councillors preferred a 10 year agreement) and the need for the Town Council to have its own Solicitor examine and advise upon the lease conditions. After discussion, and by a narrow vote, it was agreed to refer the draft lease to a Solicitor for advice/comments before the lease is signed.

252/16 Integrated Transport Capital Programme

The Assistant Town Clerk circulated a report (no.TC081016) concerning the County Councils current work for an integrated transport capital programme. The report included the Town Council suggestions of required work which had not been included in the previous year's

programme. (**Note.** Before the meeting commenced its discussion under this item of business, Cllr Vince Howard declared a none pecuniary interest in this matter, which was noted by the meeting). After a full and detailed discussion, the meeting agreed to put forward the following improvement schemes for inclusion in the RCC Capital Programme.

- Willow Crescent/Woodland View. Layby and road widening.
- Jules House (formally Pinewood), Cold Overton Road. Roadside railings
- Cold Overton Road. Footpaths extension and resiting the 30mph vehicular speed sign further outwards.
- Congregational Church, Oakham. Drop kerbs and layby.

253/16 Statement of Accounts

The meeting received and considered Statements of accounts, bank reconciliations, list of payments and detailed income/expenditure reports for the month of September 2016. After discussion, the meeting **noted and approved** the reports

The Acting Clerk referred to minute no 232/16, first paragraph, September Council meeting and reported (a) that voucher no. 109 was for soap for the public toilets. This was a “duplicated” purchase since soap is normally provided under “expenses” from the Town Councils Contractor. This duplication will not recur and the soap will still be used, therefore there is no loss to public funds. (b) Voucher no 120 was for the Chairman’s annual allowance as approved by the Council. This payment is for “expenses” (not “remuneration”) and the law specifies, this is none taxable.

254/16 Town Councils Web Site. Report

Cllr M Haley reported (report no. TC082016) that following numerous requests over a period of 3 months to the current web site provider to update and re activate the Town Councils web site, the Company had failed to respond or to meet these requests. The requests were finally made in person during a visit to the Company’s offices by the Vice Chairman and the Acting Town Clerk. The Company have now stated that additional charges are required before they carry out the required work. As a consequence, enquiries have been carried out to locate another web site provider. Three Companies have been approached and only one Company offered the degree of flexibility, presentation quality, and costs considered appropriate to the Town Council needs.

The meeting then held a full discussion in this case bearing in mind the urgent need to provide a new web site as soon as possible, preferably with a local web site provider. It was agreed by a vote of 6, for and two abstentions, that a 12 month contract be arranged with the one Company (Welland Creative) who has given a formal quotation (given in the report). The Acting Town Clerk is authorised to proceed with the setting up of the contract.

255/16 Condition of Royce’s Recreation Ground.

Cllr Joyce Lucas BEM circulated a detailed report (TC083016) upon various items on this popular and well used facility, which needs attention. These included tree work, replacement

of signage and replacement of (5 a side) goal posts. After a full discussion, it was unanimously agreed that a provisional cost of up to £1,000 be approved for the tree work and the goal posts replacement, and that quotations be obtained for this work. The replacement of the signs is considered in with other projects for signage, currently under consideration by a Works group.

256/16 Planning Applications

The meeting considered the details of a proposal to erect a class A 1 storage facility, including new access, parking and landscaping on Barleythorpe Road, Oakham. (ref. 2016/0756/MAJ). After a full discussion, it was agreed that the RCC Planning be requested to incorporate the following conditions in any (outline) planning consent.

- Deliveries/collections be limited to night time activity before 8.00am
- The nearby traffic island will need adapting and renovation.
- No further trees are removed from this area
- Final detailed proposals are provided for the Town Councils consideration in due course.

257/16 Exempt item

(For record purposes – given that no Members of the Public or press were present)

It was **resolved** that in view of the confidential nature of the remaining item of business, the Public and press would be excluded at this point under the provisions of section 1 of the Public Bodies Act 1960. The remaining item relates to conditions of employment for a Council Employee.

Note for minute records. The item referred to in the above resolution is recorded on a separate minute page for the information of Town Councillors **only**.

