

Minutes of the meeting of the Oakham Town Council held on the 14th September, 2016 in the offices of the Town Council, Victoria Hall, High Street, Oakham, Rutland County

Present: Cllr Martin Brookes
Cllr Tracy Carr
Cllr Michael Haley
Cllr Jasmine Hopkin
Cllr Peter Ind
Cllr Adam Lowe Chairman of the Council
Cllr Stan Stubbs
Cllr Sally Ann Wadsworth
Mr Malcolm Plumb Acting Town Clerk

(No members of the public or press was in attendance)

220/16 Apologies for absence.

The meeting received and accepted apologies for absence from the following

Cllr Vince Howard
Cllr Joyce Lucas BEM.

221/16 Declarations of interest

Cllr Stan Stubbs and Cllr Sally Ann Wadsworth declared pecuniary interests in agenda item 10 (Oakham Photographic Competition). They would take no part in the discussion and voting under this item of business.

222/16 Minutes

A) Cllr Brookes recorded a number of views concerning the accuracy of the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on the 10th August, 2016 which were noted by the meeting. Cllr Michael Haley then proposed that the draft minutes for this meeting be accepted as a true and accurate record, without any changes. Cllr Stan Stubbs seconded the proposal. There being no further proposals, the motion was put to the meeting and was approved by 7 votes for and 1 against. The Chairman then signed the minute's record.

B) The Acting Town Clerk reported for information/noting purposes the following action taken arising from the August, 2016 Town Council meeting.

1. Minute No 199/16. He had written to (former) Cllr Michael Elliott expressing the Town Councils sincere gratitude for his past distinguished services to both the Town Council and the Community of Oakham and, on the Councils behalf, expressed best wishes for his future happiness and health
2. Minute No 210/16. The Assistant Town Clerk, Alison Greaves had advised the Tennis Club of the Councils decision.
3. Minute No 211/16. The Rutland County Council had been advised of the Town Councils decision.

4. Minute No 214/16. A letter, requesting further clarifications in relation to the payment received from RCC (in connection with the Hawksmead development proposals), had been sent to the County Council's CEO. No response had been received as at the date of the meeting. Councillors held a preliminary discussion upon what further action might be considered from now on
5. Minute No 216/16. The Assistant Town Clerk Alison Greaves had advised the RCC of the Town Councils decision in relating to the parking review.

223/16 Members Reports

The Chairman, Cllr Adam Lowe reported the following

- He had attended the East Midlands in Bloom (Awards) event and confirmed that Oakham had received a "Silver" award for its floral displays. Uppingham had received the "Gold" award for its floral displays. This was a real achievement for this area of the East Midlands
- He had recently been appointed as the Local Councils Representative on the RCC's Code of Conduct Panel

Both reports were noted by the meeting.

224/16 Acting Clerks Report

The Acting Clerk reported the following

- Following the cancellation of the Oakham (May) Fun Fair (due to heavy rain), the Organisers had indicated a wish to hold a similar event in 2017. The meeting agreed to consider a written request for this, when received.
- Following complaints from eight Town Councillors, the Assistant Town Clerk, and himself, a formal complaint under the Councils Code of Conduct against a Council Member had been made to the RCC Monitoring Officer. This had been acknowledged and consideration of the complaint would now begin.

The meeting noted both reports.

225/16 Deputations by the Public

No members of the public being present, no items were brought up or discussed under this item of business.

226/16 Working Groups and Steering Groups reports

The meeting received a detailed report (appendix B) providing full details of all action taken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group between January and September 2016. After discussion, the meeting noted the report.

227/16 Working Groups/Committee's Structure and Membership.

The meeting received a report specifying the current membership on the Town Council's Working Groups and Committee's. The Chairman went through each group during which the meeting confirmed the following membership appointments for each Group.

Ongoing Working Groups

Finance working group.	Cllrs Michael Haley, Peter Ind, and Jasmin Hopkin. Acting Town Clerk or Assistant Town Clerk.
Policies and procedures.	Cllrs Michael Haley, Stan Stubbs, and Peter Ind. Acting Town Clerk.
Events/Publicity	Cllrs Vince Howard, Tracy Carr, Sally Ann Wadsworth, Jasmin Hopkins and Assistant Town Clerk.

Task/finish Working Groups

Cemetery	Cllrs Peter Ind, Stan Stubbs, Joyce Lucas, Adam Lowe and /or Michael Haley.
Neighbourhood Planning	Cllrs Michael Haley and Jasmin Hopkin.
Oakham Community Centre	Cllrs Michael Haley, Jasmin Hopkin, Vince Howard and Assistant Town Clerk
HLF Bid	Cllr Adam Lowe.

Committee's

Staffing	Cllrs Adam Lowe, Michael Haley, Stan Stubbs, Joyce Lucas and Assistant Town Clerk.
Planning	Cllrs Vince Howard, Jasmin Hopkins, Stan Stubbs, Peter Ind and Assistant Town Clerk.

228/16 Cutts Close. Outside Tap

The meeting received and considered a report for the provision of an outside tap on the Cutts Close Main Park, principally but not exclusively, for supervised dogs. A quotation had been received from a Plumber to supply and fit a BIB tap to the front of the shed for £295. The Assistant Town Clerk had noted that there would be no additional standing charge only for water consumption and that the water supply was approved for public consumption. After discussion, by a vote of 7 for and 1 against, the meeting approved the provision of the tap, together with an appropriate notice to members of the public.

229/16 Oakham Photographic Competition.

The meeting received and considered a request from the Oakham Town Partnership for a contribution to the Competition Prize funds for this event. Competitors will be expected to agree that any photographic images of "Scenes in Oakham" may be used on the OTC Web Site. During the discussion, a debate was held concerning whether the expenditure (suggested £50) was an appropriate item under the Council's General Power of Competence. The Acting Clerk was satisfied that since the cost towards the cost of the Competition, and that the beneficiary involved could not be known at this stage, the expenditure involved was lawful.

The meeting finally approved the contribution of £50 by 5 votes for, one against and two abstentions (declared interests).

230/16 Castle Benches

The meeting received and considered a quotation for the provision of two recycled plastic picnic benches for the cost of £509 each plus VAT

After discussion, the expenditure was approved unanimously.

231/16 Amendments to the Town Council's Standing Orders

The Council's Vice Chairman, Cllr Michael Haley and the Acting Town Clerk submitted a detailed review of the Town Council's existing Standing Orders, with proposed amendments and the addition of two new Standing Orders. These related to "Social Media Policy" and "Recordings of Meetings of the Town Council – location of recording equipment"

Cllr Brookes expressed his opposition against various proposed amendments which were noted by the Meeting. After a full and detailed discussion, the meeting agreed as follows

- Section A. Amendments to existing Standing Orders. Agreed 7 votes for, 1 against
- Section B. Social Media Policy. Agreed unanimously.
- Section C Location of recording equipment. Agreed. 6 votes for, 2 against.

232/16 Schedule of Payments

In response to a question from a Councillor, the Acting Clerk agreed to look into payments under voucher codes 109 and 120 and to provide further details to the Councillor concerned. Voucher No's 134/135 are in respect of "exempt" items (employment information) available to Councillors under conditions of confidentiality (not for publication) and would be provided to the Councillor concerned direct.

After discussion, the meeting agreed by 7 votes for and one abstention, to approve the full schedule of payments, voucher No's 105 to 141 inclusive, for a total cost of £38,499.11p (inc. VAT).

233/16 Statement of Accounts.

After discussion, the meeting noted and approved the following statements (7 votes for, 1 abstention)

- Bank reconciliation as at 31/08/16 with supporting papers.
- Receipts and payments schedules.

The Acting Clerk reported that the external Auditor had requested confirmation that the observations contained in the audit reports (internal/external) for the 2014/15 financial year had been addressed and where appropriate had been noted by the Town Council. The Acting Clerk had examined the minute records for the period involved and whilst this action may well have been taken, an appropriate record specifically confirming this could not be found. The Acting Clerk therefore read out to the meeting all the Auditors comments and gave details of action already taken or were being taken to address the issues concerned. After discussion it was resolved to NOTE the Acting Clerks report, and to advise the external Auditor accordingly.

234/16 Co option of new Members of the Town Council

After a full and detailed discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Michael Haley and seconded by Cllr Tracy Carr, that the following action be taken.

1. To co-opt two new Members of the Town Council to fill the casual vacancies in the South West and North East wards of the Town.
2. To advertise, on the 14th October 2016, the two vacancies in the local Press with an agreed budget of £300, in addition to Public Notices on Notice Boards and on the Councils Web site.
3. To apply a closing date for the submission of applications for co-option, of 21st October 2016.
4. To invite Candidates to an interview by an appointed Panel on the 31st October 2016
5. To appoint a selection Panel comprising Cllrs Tracy Carr, Michael Haley and Stan Stubbs, with the Acting Town Clerk in attendance to verify qualifications and to record the Panel's recommendations.
6. The recommendations of the Selection Panel to be referred to the Full meeting of the Town Council in November 2016.

The proposals were put to the meeting and were agreed by 7 votes for and one abstention.

235/16 Christmas Tree 2016

The meeting received an appendix report concerning the supply of a 25 feet Christmas tree, which included the only quotation which could be obtained. After a full discussion Cllr Michael Haley proposed that the quotation from LITE be accepted to supply, install and subsequently remove and satisfactorily dispose of, a 25 foot Christmas tree at a cost not exceeding £1,600 plus VAT. Cllr Stan Stubbs seconded the proposal. Upon the proposal being put to the meeting, it was carried by 7 votes for and one against.

236/16 Events Management. Organisation and procedures

The meeting received a Council Working Groups report (K) from Cllr Michael Haley and Adam Lowe recommending new procedures for risk management, financial control, marketing and

advertising. The procedures specified twelve actions required and allocated these actions amongst Working Group members, Council Officers and the full Town Council.

After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Stan Stubbs and seconded by Cllr Martin Brookes that the procedures be approved by the Town Council. Upon the proposal being put to the meeting, it was so resolved unanimously.

237/16 Planning Applications

The meeting received and considered the details of a planning proposal to demolish existing garages and erect 6 no. dwelling houses at the Beech Road Car park, Oakham (Planning ref. 2016/0813/FUL).

During the discussion, Councillors expressed concern at the reduction in car parking spaces in an area where there is already inadequate parking. A further question arose concerning the level of demand for properties in the area and the overall design of the proposed properties.

It was finally agreed that these reservations be expressed to the RCC Planning officers from the Town Council by 6 votes for and two against.

238/16 Exempt Items

After discussion, the meeting (formally) resolved to exclude public and press for the remaining two items of business under the provisions of section 1 of the Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960. The reasons being the first item involves a contractual matter and the second item involves confidential matters (conditions of employment for employees).

Meeting note

The two exempt items are recorded on a separate confidential minutes page for Town Councillors information ONLY (NOT for publication).

Chairman
12th October 2016