

Minutes of the meeting of the Oakham Town Council held on the 14th December, 2016 in the offices of the Town Council, Victoria Hall, High Street, Oakham, Rutland. The meeting commenced at 7.00pm.

Present

Cllr Martin Brookes	
Cllr Michael Haley	
Cllr Richard Haynes	
Cllr Vince Howard	
Cllr Peter Ind	
Cllr Adam Lowe	Chairman of the Council
Cllr Joyce Lucas BEM	
Cllr Stan Stubbs	
Cllr Sally Ann Wadsworth	
Mr Malcolm Plumb	Acting Town Clerk
Ms Allison Greaves	Deputy Town Clerk

Also present One member of the public (Neighbourhood Planning Member)

274/16 Order of business

In accordance with standing order no 5a (vii), the Chairman of the Council, Cllr Adam Lowe proposed that agenda item no. 11 (Budget 2017-18) be moved to the final item of business for reasons of expediency. The proposal was seconded and approved by the meeting unanimously.

275/16 Apologies for absence

All Councillors being in attendance, no apologies for absence were made

276/16 Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were made by Councillors in respect of items of business specified on the agenda for this meeting.

277/16 Minutes

Subject to the following amendments, the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on the 9th November, 2016 were adopted as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

Minute 263/16 3rd bullet point, first line. Delete "Brooks" replace with "Brookes"

Minute 266/16 3rd line. Delete "Michael", replace with "Richard".

Minute 269/16. 3rd sentence, line 3. Delete entire sentence.

Minute 271/16. Add final sentence to second para. "Cllr Lucas mentioned the need to include a budget for plants provision in Princess Avenue".

Minute 272/16, 2nd para. 3rd line. Delete “Brooks”, replace with “Brookes”

Minute 273/16 first line. Delete “Stan Stubbs”.

278/16 Members reports

- Adam Lowe read a report from Alf Dewis the organiser of the RBL regarding remembrance service in November, which reported how well it was attended and went.
- Peter Ind reported on the Parish Council Forum working group, recommended Cllrs attend the Parish Forum on Monday 30th January 2017 at 7pm. Topics are the budget and funding for care.
- Peter Ind referred to an impending boundary review, presentation will be given at the Parish Forum.
- Vince Howard, apologised to Cllr Lucas for not resolving to arrange any event in the Chamber at late night shopping.
- Vince Howard approached by Robert Clayton at RCC in regard to April 1st 20th anniversary events being planned.
- Vince Howard presented a cheque of £285, for installation of Christmas lights for the area outside the library and at the top of Mill Street

The meeting noted these reports.

279/16 Clerks report.

- The Acting Clerk reported that he had pressed the Councils Solicitors for progress reports upon the OCC building lease and the request for advice upon the RCC draft lease for the Princess Avenue CCTV security column.
- The Acting Clerk reported that since the last meeting of the Town Council, Cllr Jasmine Hopkins had submitted her resignation as a Town Councillor on Oakham Town Council. The meeting noted, with regret, this report and Councillors expressed their sincere appreciation of Cllr Hopkins past work for both the Town Council and the Community of Oakham.
- The Acting Clerk reported that work will commence early in the new year upon a complete review of all the Councils contracts. The PAS contract has already been approved by the Council for a six month extension. Additionally all other outstanding policies of the Council need reviewing and this work will also be carried out early in the new year

The meeting noted these reports.

280/16 Deputations by the public

No deputations were made or discussed under this item of business.

281/16 Working groups and steering group's strategy assurance.

Cllr Michael Haley circulated to the meeting the following reports

Neighbourhood plan. Action taken and activity report up to December 2016 (Doc.B)
Cemetery Group. Action taken and activity up to December 2016 (Doc. B).
Finance working group. Preliminary preparations for the budgetary proposals for 2017/18.

The reports were received and noted by the meeting

282/16 Co-options

The meeting considered the arrangements and procedures for co-opting new Councillors into the current (2) vacancies. After discussion, it was agreed to commence public notices and advertising after the Christmas break, inviting expressions of interest from members of the Oakham community. The Acting Clerk reminded the meeting that Standing Orders required the appointment of a minimum of four Councillors to interview prospective candidates for co-option before making recommendations to the Town Council. The meeting therefore appointed the following to this role.

Cllr Michael Haley
Cllr Vince Howard
Cllr Joyce Lucas
Cllr Stan Stubbs
Mr Malcolm Plumb. Acting Town Clerk. (Advisory and recording).

283/16 Statement of accounts

The meeting received and considered the statement of accounts (agenda Doc. C) for the period up to 30th November 2016, showing total cash and bank balances of £265,702.38p as at this date.

After discussion, the meeting noted these statements of accounts.

284/16 Internal Audit 2015/16

The meeting received a further copy of the internal Auditors report for the year ending 31st March, 2016, in order to review, again, action taken to address matters raised in that report. The Acting Clerk then reported upon all actions completed for the majority of the points raised and upon action being taken upon the few remaining matters. The Acting Clerks detailed report was noted by the meeting. The Acting Clerk also referred to the many aspects of the Internal Auditors report which were classified as “satisfactory”, which, given the difficult circumstances arising during that financial year, can be regarded by the Town Council as a successful year of financial management.

285/16 Budget/precept for the financial year 2017/18

Note This matter was considered at the end of the Council meeting, in accordance with the Councils earlier decision under minute 274/16. This minute is recorded at this point simply in order of maintaining consistency with the published agenda.

The meeting received and considered the final report (TC 090016) of the Town Councils Finance Groups recommendations to the Town Council for the Budget/precept for 2017/18. The Town Council will need to make its final decision during the January 2017 Council meeting, but this report and draft budget is included at this time in order to give Councillors more opportunity to debate the issues involved.

After a long and detailed discussion, where many comments were made and noted, various budgets were amended. The final draft incorporating these changes will be presented to the January 2017 Town Council meeting for adoption, together with a review of the extent and purpose of the Town Councils reserve balances. By a vote of 8 votes for and 1 abstention, it was so agreed.

286/16 Green flag status. Cutts Close.

The meeting received and considered a report (No TC 090016) from Cllr Joyce Lucas BEM recommending that the Town Council again applies for the Green Flag Award for 2017, in respect of the Cutts Close Park. The cost of applying for this award is £314 (plus Vat) and the scheme is licensed by the Tidy Britain Group, an Environment Charity. Cllr Stan Stubbs seconded the recommendations.

After a full discussion, by a vote of 7 for and 2 against the proposal, the proposal was adopted by the Town Council

287/16 Neighbourhood plan. Community survey

The Vice Chairman, Cllr Michael Haley submitted a detailed report, with recommendations, (No TC 092016), as a Town Councils representative on the Steering Group. The Groups work had now reached a stage where a full and detailed survey of the views of all Residents was needed, together with a full and professional analysis of all the responses taken, from a professionally resourced organisation. The report gave details of the costs involved for carrying out this work from such an organisation. Three consulting Company's had been invited to submit quotations for this work, and two had done so. The Steering group, after considering both bids had unanimously recommended to the Town Council that the bid from the Rural Community Council (Leicestershire and Rutland) be accepted. (Details provided in the report).

After a full discussion, it was unanimously agreed to accept all the recommendations in the report with the following amendments.

Increase the NP budget in the current fiscal year from £5,000 to £6,000

The Acting Clerk is instructed to complete a Locality grant application for the sum of £3,000.00

288/16 Larkfleet Homes Development. Supplementary agreement

The meeting received and considered a report (No TC 093016) confirming that the final supplementary agreement between Hawksmead Ltd and the County Council had now been obtained by the Acting Clerk from the developers. This agreement included the amended wording of the criterion specifying how the grant of £62,500 should be used by the Town Council.

After discussion, the meeting unanimously agreed to “ring fence” this fund (currently listed in the Councils “reserve” balances), to be spent in accordance with the (now clarified) criterion. The meeting further agreed to consider ideas and suggestions from Town Councillors for the use of this fund, at an early meeting of the Town Council, in the new year.

289/16 CiCLA Training

The meeting received and considered a report (No TC094016) with recommendations from the Deputy Clerk to authorise training for her to obtain the CiCLA (Certificate in Local Council Administration) qualification. The report sought the Town Council approval to authorise this training and the associated costs. The Delegates attendance costs in the training sessions was £190 and a CiCLA registration fee of £250 was payable to the Society of Local Council Clerks. The successful completion of the course would result in the Deputy Clerk being awarded the full certificate in local Council administration which is a level 3 qualification of the National Qualifications Framework.

After discussion, the meeting approved the above proposals unanimously.

290/16 Advertisement for the appointment of a (permanent) Town Clerk/RFO

The meeting received and considered a report (No. TC 095016) providing detailed costings for advertising this vacancy in the local press, the NALC web site and the Government job site.

After a full discussion, it was agreed by a vote of 8 for and 1 abstention, to approve the advertising suggested at the end of January 2017, and, if possible, to economise upon the costings specified in the report.

291/16 Outsourcing payroll work

The meeting received and considered a report (No. TC 096016) from the Deputy Clerk in response to the earlier Town Council decision to look into the question of outsourcing the Councils payroll work to a local accountancy practice. The report gave details of the additional benefits of outsourcing this work without increasing existing costs. A practice in Spalding (Bulley Davey, Chartered Accountants) have submitted a quotation for taking on this work and if approved by the Council, would provide additional assurances that all HMRC regulations were being complied with.

After discussion, the meeting unanimously resolved to approve the recommendations in the report.

292/16 Planning Committee membership.

The meeting considered the current membership of this committee and the vacancy caused by a recent resignation from a Town Councillor.

After discussion, the meeting resolved to appoint Cllr Richard Haynes onto this committee. The committee would now comprise of the following.

Cllr Richard Haynes
Cllr Vince Howard
Cllr Peter Ind
Cllr Stan Stubbs

293/16 Representation on other Organisations

After discussion, the following Council Representatives were agreed for the Organisations specified.

- Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Cllrs Richard Haynes and Michael Haley
- Rutland Access Group. Cllrs Michael Haley and Joyce Lucas.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for the contributions and closed the meeting at 9.00pm.