



ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

A

Minutes Council

Time and date

7.00pm on Thursday 14 January 2016

Place

The Upper Guildhall, High Street, Andover

Details of Attendance:

Cllr V Pond (Chairman) (P)

Cllr B Long (Vice-Chairman) (P)

Cllr C Bartholomew (P)

Cllr C Ecclestone (P)

Cllr K Hughes (A)

Cllr G McBride (P)

Cllr A Fitchet (P) (Co-opted at item 5)

Cllr K Bird (P)

Cllr L Gates (P)

Cllr R Hughes (P)

Cllr J Msonthi (P)

Cllr B Carpenter (P)

Cllr L Gregori (P)

Cllr M James (P)

Cllr M Mumford (P)

Cllr A Cotter (P)

Cllr S Hardstaff (P)

Cllr D Marriner (P)

Cllr R Rowles (P)

Officer: Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk) (P) (Taking the minutes)

Members of the Public: 8

C114/15 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr K Hughes

C115/15 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

C116/15 Minutes

The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 18 November 2015 were deferred to the next meeting of the Council to be held on 25 February 2016.

C117/15 Public Participation

Mr Long – Andover Resident

1. This council states that it wants members of the public to attend its meetings and get involved, ask questions etc.

I do wonder if this is in fact the case. At your full Council meeting on 18th November plus the previous full council I had asked questions but did not receive a reply until

the 5th January 2016 from the Chairman as the reply from the Clerk was sent to a defunct email address, cut off eight months ago. I am still waiting for a reply, promised by your Cllr McBride from the same meeting.

Maybe you should have a policy in place to guarantee a time limit on responses to the public?

2. There is a regular audit done by TVBC on street furniture in our town, did this council not involve itself in this? So somewhat perplexed by the motion by Cllr Ecclestone tonight. Will be interested to hear if the Town Council will put their hand into their pocket to pay for this antique Victorian/Georgian style that he seems to want to replace it with.
- 2a. Similarly I would like to see some facts and figures on how much the Town Council thinks it would cost for its right to bid for the Andover Golf Club. Where would the money come from? Any idea roughly, how much this would push up the Andover Levy/Precept to residents? In fact if it ever came up for sale.

Borough Councillor David Drew

1. At a previous meeting I asked if the ATC might consider appointing a councillor (or team of councillors) to keep an oversight on the roads in Andover. I explained that this happened in Longparish – which your vice-chairman came to visit on 11 January – and seems to work well. The principle also applies to local footpaths. Has any consideration been given to this?
2. A motion tabled at the meeting spoke about reviewing street furniture in the High Street as well as referring to ‘inappropriate installations’. Is the Town Council aware of the Street Audit carried out as part of the Andover Summit; and which of the current installations are considered inappropriate? (n.b. details of the Andover Summit Environment group were sent to the Clerk by me following the meeting.)
3. A further motion used the term Green Belt. I reiterated the fact that there is no Green Belt in Hampshire and wondered if the use of the term ‘Green Lungs’ (as in the green lungs of Andover) might be adopted to describe the local green spaces, parks and pocket parks, including the local gaps?
4. May I also ask if it is now your policy to answer all public questions at some point subsequent to the meeting? I recall that previously, questions from the public were, whenever possible, answered at the meeting.

Mr Maurice Sweeney – Andover Resident

1. Mental Health is a serious issue. Andover has experienced such sad suicides in recent months. The Town Council has such a small budget, can I ask why you have put focus on an Andover Mayor and minuted that you are not discussing that with Andover Residents?
2. Why do we need an extra Mayor when funds would be better spent on helping the people of Andover that have mental health problems?

Mr Marcus Burns – Andover Resident

What is the amount of Budget you have left for Andover residents, after Building Costs and Wages are spent?

Borough Councillor Jan Lovell

I’m speaking to the agenda item, on the motion concerning the Andover Golf Club. I hope the following will clarify a few things and help inform the debate.

Firstly the process for registration of an Asset of Community Value, is the first step for the Town Council, in securing a Right to Bid a statutory procedure under the Localism Act, should the said asset subsequently be offered for sale.

To exercise the Right to Bid, the Town Council needs to have formally registered the Golf Club, with Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) as an Asset of Community Value.

1. A statutory process, with TVBC being the authority responsible for agreeing and holding the register in Test Valley, in the first instance, the registration of the Andover Golf Club, specifically as an Asset of Community Value to Andover, is actually what is being proposed

as an outcome from this motion, as the start of this process. Therefore any instruction to the clerk should reflect this.

2. Having successfully made the registration, a charge is then lodged with the Land Registry, which, should the Asset be offered for disposal or sale, triggers a notification to the Town or Parish Council, giving a time limited period for consideration of the options at the time, including whether or not to lodge a bid. It should be noted though, ultimately, there is no obligation to do so.
3. Should however the council notify an intent to proceed, whilst this does not necessarily mean a bid will be submitted, it does stall the sale, giving six months period of grace for the Council to both consult with the community and explore any available options for funding the proposal.
4. It is important to understand that the Right to Bid can only be invoked when the asset is offered for sale or disposal. This applies to any asset registered and not purely in the ownership of other statutory bodies i.e. it could be a pub or shop.
5. Finally it is important to understand although the community has the Right to Bid under Legislation, it does not have an automatic Right to Buy. This of course means that bids on assets offered to the open market are potentially in competition with commercial organisations.

I hope that is helpful.

Mr Andy Pomphrey – Andover Resident

Identify the focus of this Council – specifically what are the three priorities of this council within the next financial period?

The Chairman confirmed that answers would be sent via email and requested that the questions be given to the Town Clerk along with email addresses or postal addresses.

C118/15 Co-Option of New Member

Members considered the Co-option of a Member to Andover Town Council following the resignation of Mr Roderick Pond.

Members noted that an Election was not called following due process with the Electoral Authority, Test Valley Borough Council. Therefore the Town Council had a duty to co-opt another Member.

Members noted that applications had been received from the following candidates:

Mr Andrew Fitchet

Mrs Linda Gates

Mr Richard Kidd

Mr John Smith

The Chairman informed Members that Mr John Smith was not present at the meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor V Pond and seconded by Councillor B Long that all the applicants be nominated as candidates by a single resolution.

RESOLVED: That the following applicants, namely; Mr Andrew Fitchet, Mrs Linda Gates and Mr Richard Kidd be accepted as candidates for Co-Option to Andover Town Council.

The Candidates were invited by the Chairman to make a two minute presentation to the Members of Andover Town Council.

It was proposed by Councillor V Pond and Seconded by Cllr B Long that Standing Orders be suspended to allow for a vote via blind ballot.

RESOLVED: That the co-option of a Member to Andover Town Council be voted upon via blind ballot.

The vote was taken by ballot and Mr Andrew Fitchet received a majority vote of councillors present and was therefore co-opted on to the Town Council.

It was proposed by Cllr V Pond and seconded by Cllr B Long that the Standing Orders be reinstated to Co-opt Councillor Fitchet onto the Town Council.

RESOLVED: That Standing Orders be reinstated to allow for the Co-option of Cllr Fitchet onto the Town Council.

Mr Fitchet signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office before taking his place at the Council table.

RESOLVED: That Mr Andrew Fitchet, having received the majority vote, be co-opted on to Andover Town Council, having signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

C119/15 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced that she had attended the following events since the previous meeting of the Town Council:

The Switch-on and Christmas Lights Event

A Lantern Parade in Romsey

A Service at Romsey Abbey for the Jane Scarth House.

C120/15 Youth Council Update

Cllr G McBride presented the Youth Council update.

He gave the sad news that Mrs Sarah-Jane Smith nee. Partner had passed away on 31st December 2015. Mrs Smith had been a strong supporter of the Andover Youth Council and had assisted a great deal in setting it up at the start.

Cllr McBride acknowledged Mr Long's question regarding the admittance of the public to Youth Council meetings. He confirmed that a Youth Council meeting would be held on 27th January 2016 and Mr Long's question would be put to the Youth Councillors then.

C121/15 Committee Minutes

The following Minutes were received and noted:

10th December 2015 – Policy and Resources Committee

16th November 2015 – Planning Committee

7th December 2015 – Planning Committee

21st December 2015 – Planning Committee

C122/15 Motions from Town Councillors

Motion proposed by Cllr C Ecclestone.

Cllr Ecclestone requested that his Motion be amended to the following:

Consistency in Planning in the Conservation Zone

Motion:

This council calls firstly upon Hampshire County Council to prepare, in consultation with ATC, a plan to replace all the inappropriate fixtures on Highways land in the Conservation Area with mutually agreed replacements that are historically in keeping with the architectural periods which predominate in the town centre. Secondly this council calls upon TVBC to consistently and fairly enforce the regulations as they pertain to Internally illuminated Signs in the Conservations Area.

We request the Town Clerk to advise the appropriate authorities of the Town Council's concerns.

The Amended Motion was seconded by Cllr R Hughes.

Members considered and discussed the Motion. Some Members were in favour of the motion whilst others were concerned that the Town Council should concentrate on other matters within the Town.

A vote was taken, 10 in favour, 5 against and 2 abstentions. The Motion was carried.

RESOLVED: That Andover Town Council calls firstly upon Hampshire County Council to prepare, in consultation with Andover Town Council, a plan to replace all the inappropriate fixtures on Highways land in the Conservation Area with mutually agreed replacements that are historically in keeping with the architectural periods which predominate in the town centre. Secondly this Andover Town Council calls upon Test Valley Borough Council to consistently and fairly enforce the regulations as they pertain to Internally Illuminated Signs in the Conservations Area.

The Town Clerk is instructed to advise the appropriate authorities of the Town Council's concerns.

Councillor C Ecclestone's 2nd Motion

Councillor Ecclestone requested that his Motion be amended to the following:

Register of Community Right to Buy/Bid interest in Andover Golf Club

Motion:

That this council register the property known as the Andover Golf Club as a Community Asset under the provisions of the Localism Act in and that the Town Clerk shall advise TVBC using the nomination form on the TVBC website that this interest is being registered.

Cllr R Hughes seconded the amendment.

Members considered and discussed Cllr Ecclestone's second motion. Most members were in favour of registering the Golf Club as a Community Asset.

A vote was taken 16 for and 2 abstentions. The Motion was carried.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council register the property known as the Andover Golf Club as a Community Asset under the provisions of the Localism Act and the Town Clerk shall advise Test Valley Borough Council using the nomination form on the Test Valley Borough Council website that this interest is being registered.

Motion from Cllr L Gregori

Cllr M Mumford requested to speak on the Motion.

He was concerned that the Town Council was not educated enough to make a decision on the Motion. He suggested that the CEO of MIND come and speak to the Council prior to any decisions and asked Cllr Gregori to postpone his motion until the Town Council had heard MIND make a presentation.

Cllr L Gregori confirmed that he would be happy to hear what MIND had to say but suggested that MENCAP may also be invited to speak.

Cllr J Msonthi seconded the Motion

MOTION ON MENTAL HEALTH

Motion:

Andover Town Council to act as the local champion for mental health;

Andover Town Councillors and officers to work through both council activities and partner organisations such as the Town Centre Partnership Group to provide effective provision for clients with mental health issues as appropriate such as dementia friendly services.

Members considered and discussed the Motion. There was a great deal of debate. Concern was raised that the Town Council did not have the power to provide Mental Health support, however members agreed that the Town Council could support other Mental Health organisations. Members were concerned that they did not have enough information to make a decision on the motion.

It was proposed by Cllr M Mumford and seconded by Cllr McBride that the Motion be deferred until the Town Council had more information and MIND and other such organisations gave a presentation to the Town Council.

A vote was taken, 10 for, 6 against and 1 abstention. The deferment was carried.

RESOLVED: That the Motion on Mental Health in Andover be deferred until the Town Council receives more information on Mental Health from MIND and related organisations.

C123/15 Town Council Budget and Precept 2016/2017

Members considered the recommendations of the Policy and Resources Committee for the Council Budget 2016/2017. The Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, Cllr Steven Hardstaff gave Members the following information in support of the Budget:

"The Budget and the Precept must be considered in two separate parts. Firstly Members are asked to consider and agree the Budget.

Once the Budget has been agreed, it is the Council's duty to agree how the Precept should be funded.

Following amendments made during the Policy and Resources Committee meetings the Town Council's proposed budget is £284,033 for 2016/2017. Leaving a deficit of -£261,683.

£63,000 has been set aside in Earmarked Reserves for the elections in 2019, as this is what it would have cost in 2015 however, this still will not be sufficient to cover the costs so the Budget for the elections has been increased to £16,000.

The Town Council will potentially be taking on the Bus Shelters in 2016, monies are required to run these therefore a new Budget has been created to cover this cost of £10,000.

The Budget for Events had been increased for 2016/2017 to allow for events to cover the Holocaust Memorial Day, Health and Wellbeing and World War One Events.

We will be taking on a new member of staff to assist with the increasing number of committees and responsibilities, therefore the Staffing Budget had to be increased to £65,000.

Larger and more equality compliant premises are needed for the Town Council therefore monies have been set aside to assist with the rent/purchase of new offices, Budget for rental increased to £14,000 and a new building fund of £56,000.

The Reserves that the Town Council holds are recommended to be at least half a year's running costs, Andover Town Councils are well below this level and we have a duty to ensure that the reserves are adequate, therefore monies have been set aside for Reserves.

Finally, due to the poor uptake of allotment plots and ever increasing costs for services as well as compulsory Health and Safety Work that must be carried out, the Allotments are costing the Town Council in excess of an extra £12,00 this next year. This is a one off cost and allotment costs should return to normal next year.

The figures for the Tax Band D income have been received from Test Valley Borough Council. The Tax Band D household's level is: 13,063

The Town Council currently has General Reserves of £42,000".

Cllr Hardstaff further informed Members that the average Town Council Precept rate across the country is £54.12 per Band D Tax household.

The Chairman Cllr V Pond proposed that the Standing Orders be suspended to allow Members to discuss the item in full. This was seconded by Cllr G McBride.

RESOLVED: That Standing Orders be suspended to allow for discussion of the Town Council's Budget and Precept.

Members asked Cllr Hardstaff what the Precept would be increased to cover the cost of the Budget in 2016/2017 at the rate of £284,033. Cllr Hardstaff confirmed that the Town Council Precept would increase from £10.83 to £20.03.

Members discussed the Budget in detail including the facts that the Town Council was low on Reserves, more responsibilities were being handed to the Town Council. Members agreed that the Town Council was very 'good value for money' in that the Precept would still be well below the average rate of £54.12.

Cllr R Rowles proposed to reinstate Standing Orders to allow a vote on the Budget and Precept, this was seconded by Cllr L Gregori.

RESOLVED: To reinstate Standing Orders to allow for a vote on the Budget and Precept for 2016/2017.

Cllr Hardstaff proposed and Cllr R Rowles seconded that the Andover Town Council Budget for 2016/2017 should be £261,683.00.

A vote was taken, 17 for and 1 abstention. The vote was carried.

RESOLVED: That the Andover Town Council Budget for 2016/2017 be £261,683 (Two Hundred and Sixty One Thousand, Six Hundred and Eighty Three Pounds).

It was proposed by Cllr S Hardstaff and seconded by Cllr R Rowles that the Precept for 2016/2017 be £261,651.89 or £20.03 per Band D Tax household.

A vote was taken, 17 for and 1 against. The vote was carried.

RESOLVED: that the Precept for 2016/2017 should be £261,651.89 (Two Hundred and Sixty One Thousand, Six Hundred and Fifty One Pounds and Eighty Nine Pence).

C124/15 Town Council – Revised Standing Orders

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Town Council to be held on 25 February 2016.

C125/15 Town Council – Media Policy

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Town Council to be held on 25 February 2016.

C126/15 Finance

The following list of payments up to 12 January 2016 were approved.

The Bank Reconciliation up to 30 November 2015 were received and approved.

The Bank Reconciliation up to 31 December 2015 were received and approved.

BACS/Cheque No	Date of Inv	Description	Supplier	Amount (£)
351678201	30.12.2015	3 mths service charge – recycling	Baxter Confidential	78.00
329813586	01.01.2016	Hosting website & emails	Custom Studio Ltd	35.94
DDCITJan-Mar16	16.12.2015	Rental of photocopier 01.01-31.03.2016	CIT Vendor Finance	308.53
587238110	21.12.2015	Toilet Hire for Allotments Dec 15	Convenient Hire Ltd	614.39
796930177	17.12.2015	Legal fees – transfer of Allt Land	Hedleys Solicitors	370.80
DDMainDec15	31.12.2015	Call charges 01.12-22.12.2015	Mainstream Digital	6.97
411301672	28.12.2015	Cleaning services 30.11 -31.12.15	Moore's Cleaning Services	130.00
156364382	04.01.2016	Postage & Franking machine rental	Pitney Bowes	181.94
980212398	19.11.2015	Hire of Guildhall 18.11.2015	Test Valley Borough Council	60.00
223826119	12.01.2016	Norton Anti Virus for Work Laptop	Town Clerk	49.99
TOTAL				1849.73

C127/15 Questions from Councillors

There were no questions received from Town Councillors.

C128/15 Questions from Town Councillors to Borough and County Councillors

Cllr Andy Fitchet asked County Councillor Zilliah Brooks to confirm whether Hampshire County Council was intending to cut 400 jobs from Children's Services. Cllr Brooks explained that she had not received the full report and could not comment at the current time.

C129/15 Reports from Councillors

Cllr J Msonthi reported that an Older People's Forum would be taking place on 21st January 2016 and that she would be attending.

Cllr L Gates confirmed that he would be attending the same meeting.

Cllr B Long reported that the Test Valley Local Plan would be considered for approval by Test Valley Borough Council at its full Council Meeting. She had also attended a recent Town Centre Partnership Meeting.

Cllr G McBride confirmed that he had recently organised a workshop meeting, with the help of Cllr R Rowles and D Mariner for grant funding for A-Fest 2016.

C130/15 Reports from Borough and County Councillors

The Chairman read a report from County Councillor T Rolt, regarding his investigations to the flooding situation in the High Street. He also confirmed that he would be happy to assist the Town Council with regard to improving the street furniture on the High Street,

Borough Councillor I Andersen thanked the Town Council for deferring the item on Mental Health issues, she confirmed that the Town Councillors needed to know as much as they could about the subject before making a decision.

Borough Councillor D Drew confirmed that 7 Borough Councillors had attended the Town Council meeting. He further offered to circulate to the Town Councillors the Town Summit notes on street furniture and notes from a Mental Health Meeting organised by the local MP, Kit Malthouse.

He urged Members to get involved with other parish councils with regard to Fracking issues in Andover.

He reported that there were new parking meter machines in the Chantry Centre Car Park. He asked whether the reports from the Borough and County Councillors could be moved forward on the Town Councils agenda.

County Councillor Z Brooks reported that she had been a County Councillor for 11 months, and covered 11 other parish councils. She had noted that all the parish councils had the same problems and officers had been bombarded with enquiries. She reported that the parishes would all have their say and Hampshire County Council would be organising meetings so that the parish issues could be addressed. She wanted to ensure that the parish councils were being listened to.

C131/15 Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the date of the next full Council meeting was Thursday 25 February 2016 at 7pm in the Upper Guildhall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.05pm.

Chairman

Date