

ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

A

Minutes Council

Time and date

7.00pm on Wednesday 30 January 2013

Place

Upper Guildhall, Andover

Details of Attendance:

Cllr D Drew (Chairman) (P)

Cllr G McBride (Vice-Chairman) (P)

Cllr K Bird (P) (arrived at 7.10pm)

Cllr Z Brooks (P) (left at 8pm)

Cllr B Carpenter (A)

Cllr A Cotter (P)

Cllr J Evans (P)

Cllr A Fitchet (P)

Cllr K Hamilton (P)

Cllr S Hardstaff (P)

Cllr S Hawke (P)

Cllr K Hughes (P)

Cllr M Kerley (A)

Cllr B Long (P)

Cllr C Lynn (P)

Cllr P North (P)

Cllr B Page (P)

Cllr V Pond (P)

Cllr R Shukri (A).

Officers Present: Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk) (taking the minutes)

Members of the Public: 6

Prior to the start of the meeting, Councillors received a presentation from Mr Carl Whatley, accountancy Manager at Test Valley Borough Council on the Andover Levy.

Members of the Public and Councillors asked Mr Whatley questions in relation to the Levy. A copy of the presentation by Mr Whatley is available at the Town Council office.

The Chairman confirmed that the Town Council would work closely with Test Valley Borough Council when the Levy was reviewed in 2014/2015.

C 70/12 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillors Barbara Carpenter, Marion Kerley and Roy Shukri.

C 71/12 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

C 72/12 Minutes

It was proposed by Councillor North and seconded by Councillor Hamilton that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 22 November 2012 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council meeting dated 22 November 2012 be approved and adopted.

C 73/12 Public Participation

The Chairman explained that a series of questions had been received from Mr Len Gates regarding allotments and charges within the Andover Levy. Cllr Geoff McBride, Chairman of the Allotments Sub-Committee provided Mr Gates with answers to his questions.

Mr Tony Hook asked whether the Town Council would request that the local MP return to Andover to assist with rejuvenating the town. He suggested that the town needed clear political leadership.

The Chairman explained that Hampshire County Council, Test Valley Borough Council and Andover Town Council were working in partnership to make improvements and rejuvenate the town.

Cllr P North further explained that Test Valley Borough Council has held a Town Centre Summit to assess the needs of the Town and set up working parties to carry out the improvements.

The Chairman confirmed that he would keep Mr Hook up to date with the latest developments.

C 74/12 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the first Andover Town Council meeting in 2013.

He congratulated Cllr Marion Kerley on becoming an Honorary Alderman of Test Valley along with Mr Rod Bailey for sterling service to the community of Test Valley.

He reported that he had represented the Town Council at a recent meeting held with Test Valley Borough Council and Hampshire County Council called the Town Centre Summit. He explained that working parties had been set up with interested people to facilitate improvements to the town centre.

The Chairman reminded Members that a Ward Budget Scheme had been set up by Test Valley Borough Council. Each Ward Member had been allocated £1500 to give grants to local causes within their Ward.

He reminded Members that on the advice of the monitoring officer at TVBC, dispensations would need to be given to allow them to vote on the Town Council Precept.

C 75/12 Committee Minutes

The following Minutes were received and noted:

14 November 2012 – Amenities and Town Development Committee

12 December 2012 – Policy and Resources Committee

12 November 2012 – Planning Committee

3 December 2012 – Planning Committee

7 January 2013 – Planning Committee

C 76/12 Dispensations

Having received legal advice from the TVBC monitoring officer, under the new Localism Act 2011 all Councillors residing in the Parish of Andover had to apply for a Dispensation to vote on the setting of the Andover Town Council Precept.

The reason for the dispensation was as follows:

The number of Councillors who had an interest in the matters was such that without a dispensation being granted the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of business (Localism Act 2011 section 33 (2)(a)).

RESOLVED: That the Councillors of Andover Town Council, residing in the parish of Andover be given a Dispensation to vote on the setting of the Town Council Precept while they continue to be a Councillor or until the next election, whichever is the sooner (Localism Act 2011 section 33(3)).

C 77/12 Town Council Budget and Precept 2013/2014

Members considered the recommendations of the Policy and Resources Committee for the Council Budget 2013/2014. The Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee gave the following speech in support of the Budget:

"It is an honour to once again present to you the budget for Andover Town Council. I want to thank, my vice-chairman, Cllr Katherine Bird and all members of the Policy & Resources Committee for helping to put together our financial plan for 2013-14.

Last year was an unprecedented year with the Diamond Jubilee and the phenomenal Olympics in London. The Town Council played its part by celebrating the Jubilee by allocating £5,000 to the events budget which allowed us to put on a painting competition for local schools, the best dressed window competition in the high street, a plague recreating the scene of the 1953 Coronation outside the Guildhall and of course the fabulous best of British concert in the lights. Thanks go to Cllr Long who led the panel and Cllr Pond for supporting. Special thanks should also go to former Councillor Tony Raper who also served.

As we look ahead to this coming year it is clear the Town Council needs to play its part in reinvigorating our high street. We have therefore taken the decision to put aside the same amount of money that we allocated to Jubilee activities last year, and create a new budget heading – ‘Development of the Town centre’ which will be funded to the tune of £5,000.

It is important we work with alongside TVBC on this and the Chairman of the Amenities and Town Development Committee, Cllr Lynn is driving this project forward. Town Council committees are currently looking at how we can promote entertainment in the high street, maximise tourism and improve the general environment.

We will also retain £1,000 in our budget for high street events following the successful community days, organised by Cllr Hamilton last year.

Talking of cross authority working the budget also proposes £500 this year to spend on grit bins and a list of proposed sites will come to the Policy & Resources Committee in February. We have already worked with Hampshire County Council to get additional grit bins installed across the town.

The Town Council will continue to provide the Christmas Lights and have budgeted to continue contributing towards the successful switch on event enjoyed by almost 10,000 residents. Having signed a 3 year deal with a contractor we have managed to reduce the budget by £2,000.

The Allotments committee continues to be led by Councillor McBride and Cllr Evans and we will shortly be publishing a list of maintenance work on the website that the Town Council has completed in the last year along with a list of future projects. The budget put aside for Allotments has risen again this year by £2,000 to £20,000.

Once again the budget contains provision for £1,000 of grant funding in which Andover model railway club and Test Valley Brass benefited from last year. The grants are designed to help organisations with small capital projects.

We have also budgeted £1,000 to continue to support the development of a Youth Council that Cllr Fitchett is taking forward.

Councillors will be aware of the changes made to the Council Tax Benefit this year which has had implications on our Council Tax base. Test Valley have agreed to provide us with a one off grant of £18,236 to compensate for this. Test Valley have indicated that their policy will be looked at again next year so the benefit will become more self sufficient.

Because of this uncertainty some Town & Parish Councils have decided to increase their precept. But I have some good news for you.

For the 3rd year running this budget proposes a freeze in the council tax. Will still live in difficult times and there will be no increase from us.

The Policy and Resources Committee have recommended a budget of £132,440 for the year 2013/14 with a precept of £115,717. This equates to a Band D equivalent of £9.85p. The same as last year.

This budget ensures there is enough money to fulfil the Town councils functions and aspirations over the coming year including focusing on our town centre. Our aim is to provide the funds necessary for the Council to be effective whilst keeping the tax as low as possible. I believe this budget does that.

We are complying with audit requirements of maintaining half of our precept in reserves and in fact this budget proposes we add another £1,500 to our reserves.

We have enough funds to allow the Council to continue to grow, we have set a level of reserves which meets recommended guidance, we have recognised the difficult times on hard pressed tax payers and despite inflationary pressures have delivered a freeze in Council tax.

I urge all Councillors to support the budget."

Cllr North proposed and Cllr Bird seconded that the Town Council Budget for 2013/2014 should be £132,440 that the Precept for 2013/2014 should be £115,717 and the grant from Test Valley Borough Council should be accepted leaving an estimated Reserve of £72,945.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council Budget for 2013/2014 should be £132,440 that the Precept for 2013/2014 should be £115,717 and the grant from Test Valley Borough Council

should be accepted leaving an estimated Reserve of £72,945.

Councillor Brooks left the meeting at 8.00pm

C 78/12 Town Council Policies

Members considered the recommendations of the Staffing Sub-Committee to adopt a Flexible Working Policy. It was proposed by Councillor Janet Evans and seconded by Councillor Andy Fitchet and
RESOLVED: That a Flexible Working Policy be adopted by Council.

C 79/12 Dates of Council and Committee Meetings 2013

Members considered the dates of the Council and Committee meetings for 2013.
RESOLVED: That the dates of the Council and Committee meetings for 2013 be approved and adopted.

C 80/12 Finance

Members received and approved the list of payments up to 28 January 2013.

Supplier	Payment Details	Amount (£)
Mrs M Bayes	December 2012 salary	722.14
Miss W Coulter	January 2013 salary	1959.49
H M Revenue & Customs	January 2013 TAX	926.71
DMJ Butler Country Services	Removal of dangerous tree (VR) padlock repair (BL)	420.00
Viking Supplies	Stationery	79.63
Southern Water	AW water charges	89.31
Test Valley Borough Council	Hire of Guildhall 30.01.2013	42.00
Blachere Illuminations	Installation of Lights	6548.10
Blachere Illuminations	Hire of Christmas Lights	7644.83
Baxter Confidential	Collection and recycling of confidential paper	78.00
ACE Liftaway	Toilet provision on allotments	406.25
Danwood Working Solutions	Quarterly rental for photocopier	187.54
Noticeboard Company	3 bay noticeboard for Council offices	2968.80
Viking Supplies	Stationery	22.09
DMJ Butler Country Services	Fix toilet to ground at CW	119.36
Blachere Illuminations	Removal of Christmas Lights	2601.30
Spencer Architecture	Planning Application for Christmas Lights	882.50
Custom Studio Ltd	Monthly Website hosting & email provision	35.94
Southern Water	Water charges CW	28.99
Mrs M Bayes	January 2013 salary	762.74
Miss W Coulter	February 2013 salary	1959.49
H M Revenue & Customs	February 2013 TAX	954.39
Miss W Coulter	January 2013 expenses	144.01
Viking Supplies	Stationery	164.16
Danwood Working Solutions	Photocopying charges to January 2013	42.58
British Telecom	Telephone charges to 12 December 2012	75.49
British Telecom	Telephone charges to 17 January 2013	75.50
TOTAL		29,941.08

C 81/12 Questions from Councillors

There were no questions from Councillors.

C 82/12 Motions – Standing Order 4

There were no Motions under Standing Order 4.

C 83/12 Reports from Councillors

Cllr McBride reported that the second meeting of the Andover Youth Advisory Group had taken place. Jess Elliott had been elected as Chairman of the Group and the Group was working towards a Plan for the formation of a Youth Council.

C 84/12 Reports from Borough and County Councillors

Cllr Bird reported that she had attended a Residents event at Picket Twenty just before Christmas. It was good to see new communities being formed.

She also reported that she had attended the Town Centre Summit as a Test Valley Borough Council Ward Member. She assured Members that things were happening and ideas were being taken forward.

Community Projects were being undertaken by Test Valley Borough Council, as an example, the new path

at Admirals Way, the official opening would take place on 9 March 2013.

Cllr Lynn reminded Members that St Mary's Church needed to raise £200,000 for repairs to the roof. The next fundraising event, Young Musician, would take place on 7 February 2013.

Cllr Nigel Long reported that in St Mary's Ward free sports sessions would be provided for 7 – 16 year olds from February to October 2013.

Cllr Brian Page left the meeting at 8.20pm.

Cllr Iris Andersen asked whether the Youth Group Fusion had stopped meeting.

Cllr Andy Fitchet confirmed that Fusion was no longer running.

County Cllr Pat West reported that the Andover Birthing Centre was going from strength to strength and that since December 29 births had taken place, home births were being maintained and in total 109 women had been helped by the centre.

Cllr Sandra Hawke reminded Members that the Bus Station was being rebuilt and that Test Valley Community Services would be moving into the new building, which would provide better service for the local community.

County Cllr Pat West forwarded a report from County Cllr Pam Mutton regarding the Andover Access Plan. Hampshire County Council and Test Valley Borough Council were working in partnership to provide real time information for passengers, providing increased services. A full report would be sent to the Town Clerk.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

Chairman

Date