



ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes Council

Time and date

7.00pm on Thursday 30 January 2014.

Place

The Rendezvous, Union Street, Andover

Details of Attendance:

Cllr G McBride (Chairman) (A)
Cllr A Fitchet (Vice-Chairman) (P)

Cllr K Bird (P)	Cllr Z Brooks (P)	Cllr B Carpenter (P)	Cllr A Cotter (P)	Cllr D Drew (P)
Cllr K Hamilton (P)	Cllr S Hardstaff (P)	Cllr S Hawke (P)	Cllr K Hughes (P)	Cllr M Kerley (A)
Cllr R Khuman (A)	Cllr B Long (P)	Cllr C Lynn (A)	Cllr P North (P)	Cllr B Page (A)
Cllr V Pond (P)	Cllr R Shukri (A).			

Officer Wendy Coulter (Town Clerk(A))

Members of the Public: 5

C 67/13 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Lynn, McBride and Shukri.

C 68/13 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

In the absence of the Town Clerk, the meeting formally delegated powers to Cllr Veronika Pond to take the Minutes of this meeting.

C 69/13 Minutes

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 21 November 2013 were signed by the Vice Chairman after the correction to Page 3, C61/13 Town Centre Manager. Changing the words "Cllr North confirmed that Budgets could be altered prior to recruitment." to "Cllr North confirmed that it is a fixed amount of money."

C 70/13 Public Participation

Cllr Nigel Long – Test Valley Borough Councillor asked four questions:

1. The Youth Council is paid for from the Town Precept, when will the Council allow it to be a public meeting?
2. The Precept increase – How can the Council justify the sponsorship of flags on the lamp posts to the tune of £300/£400 per lamp?
3. Allotments – Can the Council confirm how much has been spent on maintenance in the last 12 months and how this compares to income from rents. Plus does the Council

- get more than one quotation for major purchases and if not, why not?
4. Will the Council be publishing an attendance list for the Councillors, covering the last 12 months?
- Answer Q1 - Cllr Andy Fitchet responded with regard to the Youth Council. At the end of every meeting the Youth Council issues a Press Release. There is currently no plan to make this a public meeting, The Youth Council is currently producing a video explaining the workings of their group.
 - Answer Q2 – Cllr Phil North advised that Policy and Resources had made no decision with regard to the funding of the flags
 - Answer Q3 – Cllr David Drew confirmed that any single purchase over £1,000 needs three quotations. The exception arises when a number of allotments all need the same work carrying out at the same time and each quote although less than £1,000, when added together would breach the £1,000 threshold.
 - Answer Q4 – Cllr Fitchet confirmed that as in past years, an Attendance record would be published.

C 71/13 Chairman's Announcements

The Vice Chairman hoped that the Town Clerk Wendy Coulter would soon be back to full health. He thanked Cllrs Barbara Long and Veronika Pond for all their hard work in the Town Council offices.

C 72/13 Dispensations

Voting was carried out at the last Policy and Resources Committee and Council meetings ref.C59/13. Last year all Councillors signed a document and if after taking legal advice that it is necessary for this year it will be carried out at the next Council Meeting.

RESOLVED: That if it is necessary to sign a form for 2014/2015 it will be carried out at the next full Council Meeting.

C 73/13 Town Council Budget and Precept 2014/2015

In putting together this year's budget Policy and Resources Committee have:

- Ensured there is enough money to fulfil the Town Council's function and aspirations over the coming year.
- Set a level of reserves.
- Recognised the difficult times for hard pressed tax payers. The recommended budget is £152,370 for 2014/2015 with a precept of £127,499.58, which equates to a Band D equivalent of £10.58, a rise of less than one and a half pence per week.

Cllr North thanked his Vice Chairman Cllr Katherine Bird and all members of the Policy and Resources Committee in helping to put together the financial plan for 2014/15.

Difficult decisions have had to be made. Last year Test Valley Borough Council provided a grant of £18,000 to cover the shortfall following changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme. There is no grant available from TVBC for this year.

An unnecessary by-election cost £7,500, when it would have been possible to co-opt a community minded individual.

The Town Council's portion of the Council Tax has been frozen for the last three years. For the reasons outlined above it is not possible to do so again this year.

In the coming year the Council will continue to support the tri-partite agreement to fund a Town Centre Manager to re-invigorate the town.

Retain the £1,000 in the budget for local events.

Play a full role in the commemorations to mark the 100 years since the outbreak of the First World War.

Continue to provide the Christmas Lights. Due to a three year contract the cost of putting up the Christmas lights has been frozen, there is £20,000 in the budget for 2014/15, which is the same as last year. Thanks go to Councillor Long for all her hard work.

Retain the £1,000 allocation to fund the Youth Council.

The allotments budget is £24,000 the majority of which is paid for by allotment holders in their rent.

The budget also contains provision of £1,000 of grant funding for small capital projects.

C73.1/13 To approve the recommendations of the Policy & resources Committee for the

Council Budget 2014/2015. Proposed by Cllr North and Seconded by Cllr Bird.

RESOLVED: That the Budget of £152,370 be accepted for 2014/2015.

C73.2/13 To agree the Council Precept. Proposed by Cllr North and Seconded by Cllr Bird.

RESOLVED: That the Precept of £127,499.58 be accepted for 2014/2015.

C 74/13 Neighbourhood Plan

At no additional cost the Planning Committee have requested that the whole area of Andover Parish be registered with Test Valley Borough Council as the area for the Neighbourhood Plan. Proposed by Cllr Steven Hardstaff and seconded by Cllr Alan Cotter.

RESOLVED: To register the whole area of Andover Parish with Test Valley Borough Council as the area for the Neighbourhood Plan.

C 75/13 Questions from Councillors

There were no questions from Councillors.

C 76/13 Reports from Councillors

Cllr Zilliah Brooks advised that the Christmas lights were a great success. Due to incorrect guying and high winds, there were problems with the Christmas tree so the decision was taken to have it felled.

Cllr Pond attended a meeting in January on Working Together with Hampshire County Council. As the topics were so large and so relevant to the current weather that is being experienced a report has been written, which will be circulated to all Councillors.

Cllr Barbara Carpenter commented on her visit to the refurbished bus station. She asked that the Town Council issue a Press Release stating that the refurbishment was paid for by a Hampshire County Council grant.

Cllr Long advised that the draft revised Core Plan can now be viewed in the Council offices only. Plus that Graham Smith has been invited to the next Planning Meeting on 10 February to discuss the Local Plan and Green Space Strategy,

Cllr Cotter thanked Cllrs Long, Pond and Hardstaff for their hard work on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Hardstaff advised that the survey on street lighting on Micheldever Road has been released to residents.

Cllr Drew confirmed that the next round of meetings was soon to be held on the Town Centre Manager. Also the Heritage Railway Group has had its first meeting and the next meeting will be in six to eight weeks time during which time two key areas need to have been addressed – Talks with the Ministry of Defence regarding the use of their railhead and platform at Ludgershall to be handled by Ludgershall Town Council and Talks with Network Rail on the feasibility of using a small part of the Andover rail network and platform to be handled by Andover.

Cllr Karen Hamilton announced that following on from the success of King George's Road recreational facilities, talks would soon begin with Saxon Fields residents.

Cllr Fitchet advised that a new youth group has opened in Alamein, catering for 12 – 17 year olds and meeting at the Vineyard Warehouse.

C 77/13 Reports from Borough and County Councillors

County Councillor Rolt advised that HCC have already issued a Press Release on how happy they are with the work on the Bus Station and this at a time when other towns are closing theirs. Work is currently planned for the High Street in order to find a more permanent solution to the tripping by pedestrians on the stones.

The Vice Chairman closed the meeting at 7.35pm.

Vice Chairman

Date