

HUNTINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

A meeting of Huntingdon Town Council was held in the Town Hall, Huntingdon, on Thursday 8th November 2018 at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors A Beevor; A Blackwell; P Brown; C Doyle; S Gifford (Town Mayor); V Hufford; P Kennington; B Luckham; S McAdam; P Pearce; T Sanderson; A Sedgwick, T Shrapnel; S Sweek; C Wayment and K Webb

Absent: None

In attendance: District Councilor John Morris, 3 members of the public.

46. **WELCOME**

The Mayor welcomed those in attendance and invited the Mayor's Chaplain, Revd Jon Randall, to say a prayer.

47. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors J Cole, A Diaz and P Kadewere

48. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

49. **MINUTES**

Members had before them copies of the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 30th August 2018 (M3) and the Extraordinary Town Council meeting held on 15th October 2018 (M4). Cllr V Hufford noted that she had been recorded as absent at meeting M4 but had submitted apologies to the office. It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to approve and adopt these minutes subject to the above amendment and they were duly signed by the Mayor.

50. **PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEE**

Members had before them the minutes of the following meetings:

- (i) Finance Committee – 27th September 2018 (M3)
- (ii) Leisure & Community Services Committee – 13th September 2018 (M3)
- (iii) Planning Committee – 25th October 2018 (M2)

The Mayor asked whether Members were happy to accept the recommendations contained within the minutes of the above Committee meetings and it was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to do so.

51. **PUBLIC ADDRESS/ADDRESS FROM OTHER COUNCILLORS TO COUNCIL**

Members of the public indicated that they wished to speak and it was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to adjourn the meeting.

Amanda Norton wished to express her objections to agenda item 56 – Community Centre Tenders. Ms Norton felt that the cost of the new centre was too much, and noted that the refurbishment option was significantly cheaper. It was questioned why the Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) loan could not be used to refurbish the current centre, and where the additional funding was coming from as the figures quoted from the sale of the existing centre and the loan was not enough for the new building. It was also pointed out that the figures for the estimated cost of refurbishing the building were out of date as they had been produced in 2016. Ms Norton also suggested that the information provided to Members was not detailed enough to make an informed decision. It was questioned whether legal permission to build on the land had been received from HDC in addition to the planning permission, in line with the requirements of the covenant on the land. The Town Clerk noted that these queries would be addressed under agenda item 56.

John Morris informed Members that a new campaign group was being launched in the new year to improve conditions for cyclists and pedestrians in the area. The group aimed to improve the cycling infrastructure around the town, particularly providing safer routes for students to cycle to school, in order to encourage more people to cycle. The group also wished to encourage the separation of cycle and pedestrian routes to make the areas safer for all users. It was requested that the Town Council support the group's upcoming projects. The Town Clerk noted that this could be discussed at the next joint town forum, as well as the next Planning Committee meeting on 24th January 2019.

Members thanked the residents for their comments and it was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to reconvene the meeting.

52. **REPORTS FROM COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Sanderson reported that HDC had approved a new parking strategy, and agreed not to introduce charges for parking on Sundays. Discussions with Highways England would be taking place regarding the detrunking of the A14 and traffic around Hinchingsbrooke and Brampton. The Local Highway Improvements at Sapley Road and California Road would soon be taking place, and consultation would be beginning on the upcoming projects at Hinchingsbrooke and Percy Green Place, Stukeley Meadows. It was also noted that nothing had been heard regarding the right turn at Lidl.

District Councillor John Morris also discussed the proposal to detrunk the existing A14 road and noted that the current proposal would not make any improvements to the traffic issues at Hinchingbrooke. Cllr Morris also reminded Members that HDC had CIL funding that was yet to be allocated, and encouraged the Town Council to submit bids for the funding, especially for projects to improve infrastructure in the area.

53. **TOWN CLERK'S UPDATE**

The Town Clerk informed Members that a meeting with the HDC CIL officers had been scheduled for Monday 19th November 2018. It was also noted that the crematorium plans would be seen at the HDC Development Management Committee meeting on Monday 17th December 2018.

The Town Clerk and Head Groundsman had attended the Anglia In Bloom seminar at reported that the feedback was very positive, and that only 2 negative points had been raised.

It was also reported that the launch of the Cromwell Appeal had taken place at the Speakers House at the House of Commons. It was noted that the curator of the museum felt positive about the event and had received verbal interest in funding opportunities for the museum.

The Town Clerk also reminded Members about the morning and evening services taking place on Remembrance Sunday.

54. **ROLLING PROGRAMME**

- (i) Members had before them copies of the rolling programme of work.
- (ii) Members had before them copies of the civic events rolling programme.

The Town Clerk also informed Members that the date of the Mayor's Charity Ball would now be 16th February 2018, and the Civic Service would take place on 24th March 2019 in order to avoid Mothers' Day on 31st March.

Members noted both rolling programmes of work.

55. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reminded Members that the next fundraising event would be bingo at the Medway Centre on 17th November 2018. The Mayor also encouraged Members to attend the Civic Carol Service on 12th December 2018.

56. **COMMUNITY CENTRE TENDERS**

Members were provided with an updated report containing up to date estimates for the cost of refurbishing the existing Medway Centre. It was explained that the proposed new centre would have a larger floorspace which would allow for more functions than the current centre. It was also noted that the refurbishment option would mean closing the centre for 12 months, leaving the current user groups without a venue.

A Member noted that the new centre would allow more space for a wider variety of bookings, as well as providing additional facilities such as changing rooms for those using the football pitches on Coneygear Park. It was noted that the quote for the new community centre was good value for the type of building, and would also have much lower running and maintenance costs than the existing building.

Another Member requested clarification on the points raised under Public Address. It was explained that the funds from the HDC loan could only be spent on a new building, not on refurbishing the old centre. It was also noted that the figure for the sale of the existing centre was likely to be significantly higher than the valuation initially provided by the District Valuer. The Council had also been investigating a number of additional grant funding opportunities.

It was explained that HDC legal team had already approved the building, but the formal paperwork was unlikely to come through before building works started.

It was also noted that the full cost of refurbishment of the existing centre would not be known until a full paid for survey was undertaken, as the full extent of work required couldn't be predicted without further investigation, and the estimates provided were for the 'best case scenario' and would be much higher.

It was then proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to appoint Timberworks Europe as the contractor to build the new community building at Coneygear Park, and the contract was signed by the Mayor.

One Member voted against.

57. **CASTLE HILL**

Members had before them a report providing an update on the Castle Hill encampment. The Town Clerk explained that the site was now clear, and the Estates Team had been working to clean up the area. It was noted that costs incurred had included legal fees, skip hire and additional sharps boxes. The money for this had been taken from general reserves.

Members thanked the Estates Team for their work in clearing the site. It was also questioned how the Town Council could prevent this from happening again. The Town Clerk explained that HTC was looking into legislation to install a 'no overnight camping' sign to be installed.

A Member also questioned if more could be done to assist those who were living at Castle Hill, as well as other homeless people in the area. It was explained that the Housing Officer at HDC has visited the encampment and tried to provide housing for the people at the site, which some had accepted, and some had refused. It was also found that some were not eligible for housing due to being in the country illegally.

It was then proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to note the report.

58. **WYKENHAM HOUSE**

Members had before them a report regarding the proposed acquisition of Wykenham House. One Member stated that they were unsure if the acquisition was a priority for CIL funding, and questioned if it would be better used for projects such as the Priory Road Cemetery wall.

Other Members supported the proposed acquisition, and felt the building was an asset of the town. It was noted that the proposal to turn the building into a museum/heritage centre would boost tourism in the town, and was also in line with HTC's strategy.

It was also pointed out that the current Council office was already cramped, and the additional building would allow the possibility to house additional staff in the future if needed.

It was then proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to note the report, and

RESOLVED to support the ongoing feasibility study with a view to applying to HDC for CIL funding.

Two Members abstained.

59. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was noted as 4th January 2019, Town Hall, Market Hill, Huntingdon.

MAYOR