

Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council Held in the Community Office at 8pm on Tuesday 8th March 2011

Present:

Councillors:

Ian Hill - Chairman
Angie Paterson – Vice-Chairman
David Tindale
Rhian Woods
Barry Adby
Ted Backhouse
Di Tolan
Tony Williamson
Roger Beattie
Charles Rowton-Lee

Officer:

Kristina Tynan

Press:

Jennifer Maxfield – Henley Standard

Members of the Public:

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33/11 Apologies for absence

Neil Boddington, Nick Greaves, Rodney Mann(District Councillor), Roger Belson (County Councillor), Sgt Steve Hookham (Thames Valley Police)

34/11 Chairman's Remarks

There were none.

35/11 To receive Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations on interest from Councillors relating to items to be considered at the meeting, in accordance with the provisions of the Councils Local Code of Conduct.

Age Concern Grant – Tony Williamson declared an interest in this item as he is a Director of Watlington and District Age Concern. He signed the 'Declaration of Interest' book and left the room for this item.

36/11 Minutes of the Full Council Meeting on the 8th February 2011 to be signed as a correct record

Resolved: That these minutes were a correct record on this meeting and that they be signed by the Chairman.

37/11 Matters arising from the Minutes

Speeding at Christmas Common (Minute 24/11 refers) Ian Hill has produced a report on this which has been sent to the Watlington Times. He has written a longer report which will go to the next Strategy Committee meeting.

38/11 Public Questions

There were no public questions notified.

39/11 District Councillors Report – Angie Paterson

Refuse Collection – TW asked about the smaller vehicles for small roads and streets. He said that he had been told that Verdant have returned these vehicles which were leased without informing SODC. Angie Paterson said that she would ask the Strategic Director for a formal report on this issue and will report back.

SODC Council Tax At the Council meeting on 24th February it was agreed once again to hold the District Council element of the Council Tax at the current rate for the coming year (This is the 4th year running that there has been a 0% increase)

Polling Station at Christmas Common – This will not be used in May for the Elections. All residents will be formally written to and will be sent postal votes. It was noted that the cost for this station is very high and the usage very low.

Concessionary Fares - From 1 April 2011 responsibility for concessionary fares will transfer to Oxfordshire County Council in line with Government policy. Because of this change in responsibility SODC will no longer be issuing national travel tokens to customers in lieu of a bus pass. Letters are being sent to existing travel token customers this week advising them of this change and enclosing a bus pass application form for them to complete should they wish

Community Investment Fund - The Community Investment Fund is now open for grant requests for 2011/12. A provisional £500,000 has been set aside to allocate to the community. The fund will only support capital expenditure, such as spending on building, extensions or equipment and will not fund revenue expenditure. Any community-based organisation, including Parish and Town Councils can apply.

Midsomer Murders Trail - Two new trails have been unveiled in the drive to attract fans of the popular TV series Midsomer Murders to South Oxfordshire. The Northern Trail includes a visit to Dorchester Abbey Museum (Midsomer Newton Museum) and Watlington Library (Causton Library). The Southern Trail takes in the Wallingford Corn Exchange and Rotherfield Peppard Primary School, better known to millions as Causton Playhouse and the Badgers Primary School. Both trails also include numerous other buildings and landscapes featured in the show. It was noted that there is a link to this site on the new watlington.org website.

40/11 County Councillors Report

There was no report. Roger Beattie expressed his concern that the County Councillor has not attended a meeting since November 2010. Angie Paterson stated that he has been very unwell.

41/11 Thames Valley Police Report

Sgt Steve Hookham had hoped to attend the meeting and give the Police report but was needed to attend an incident at short notice. PC Ian Kent will send a report to the Clerk.

42/11 To receive the Balance of Accounts and approve the list of Payments

Tony Williamson read out the Balances of the Accounts and proposed that the List of Payments be settled.

Resolved: That the Balances of Accounts be agreed and the List of Payments be settled and that both reports be signed by the Chairman.

43/11 Committees:

A: FINANCE – There has been no meeting

B: PLANNING – 1/3/2011- David Tindale

Planning Award - Confidential Recommendation to be taken at the end of the Meeting.

P11/E0106 Boundary Cottage, North End, Watlington - Erection of wall to front boundary of dwelling. The Committee unanimously objected to this application for the following reasons: Totally inappropriate boundary in both materials and design, at odds with the rural character of the site within the Chilterns AONB and contrary to the Chiltern Design Guide. In conflict with statements accompanying the Planning Application P09/E0683. We would wish to see the re-instatement of the original native hedgerow which was removed contrary to assurances. The additional planting does not overcome the original objections. We have asked our District Councillor to take this to SODC Planning Committee if the Officer Recommendation is to approve.

C: STRATEGY – 22/2/2011 – Ian Hill

Watlington.org website – The new combined website will be going live in the next few weeks. Notices of this have been sent to the Watlington Times and the Parish News.

Disciplinary/Grievance Procedure

Resolved: That Council approve the Disciplinary/Grievance Procedure and that it be signed by the Chairman.

Complaints Procedure

Resolved: That Council approve the Complaints Procedure and that it be signed by the Chairman.

Procedure for Annual Parish Meeting 14/4/2011

Resolved: That we keep the same format for the Annual Parish Meeting as last year.

Watlington Distinctiveness/Website

There was much discussion on this issue especially regarding the point d. It was suggested that WPC could make more money from advertisements than the WBA will be giving. It was thought a review in 6 months would be essential.

Vote: 6 in favour, 4 against

Resolved: That regarding the Business Directory part of the Watlington.org website:

- a. WBA to have control of Business Directory part of the website
- b. Site to include a free one-line entry for every business in Watlington
- c. WBA members to be entitled to a 3cm (or 4cm) x 17cm advertisement
- d. There would be no paid for advertisements on the website
- e. WBA to pay the Parish Council £5 per year per WBA member (who pay £30pa in membership fees). WBA's present membership of 33 would provide £165 for the Parish Council. WBA expect that this will enable their membership to increase, bringing further income for the Parish Council.
- f. WBA to pay £100 as a website start-up donation.
- g. WBA (Caroline Lye and assistant) to be responsible for up-dating Businesses on the Website and all website requests from businesses would be referred to them.
- h. WBA is investigating shop sticker and car sticker
- i. WBA and WPC to review website arrangements in October 2011.

Review of the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit

The main role of the Internal Auditor is to check all the financial and accountable records that the Clerk must keep. This is done soon after the end of the financial year and involves all the financial transactions and both the legal authority and procedural authority for such transactions - eg the signed minutes of all meetings. Once the Internal Auditor is satisfied with the accounts and records, the Clerk prepares the relatively brief submission to the External Auditor. During the year the Clerk occasionally seeks his advice - eg in transferring the Receipt and Payment accounts, operated through the year, into Accrual accounts needed for audit. Were the Clerk to leave or become temporarily unavailable, the Internal Auditor would assist a new or acting clerk.

Resolved:

1. That the Council is satisfied that the internal audit system is effective.
2. That the Council is of the opinion that the current internal controls are adequate. All Accounts for Payments are authorised at each Full Council Meeting and that the Finance Committee are charged with conducting a half yearly view of the accounts at the annual budget meeting normally held in November/December each year.
3. The scope of the annual internal audit is satisfactory, the internal auditor is entirely independent of the Council, and the testing is comprehensive; the internal audit is effective. The Parish Council considers that the internal audit is satisfactory and effective.
4. That Roger Symes is appointed to continue to be our Internal Auditor in 2011/12.

D. OPERATIONS – 16/2/2011- Barry Adby

New Benches donated by Residents in the Town

Resolved: That Council consider any request that they receive from residents. Each request to be determined according to pre-determined criteria that needs to be agreed. Definition of criteria eg design, location needs to be done.

The Operations Committee to look into this at a future meeting. It was noted that the repair and maintenance future costs would need to be taken into account as any new benches would become the responsibility of the Parish Council.

August British Legion Fete

Resolved: That we organise a display at this showcasing our new website and other Parish Council information and that the Operations Committee be responsible for the organisation of this.

Hill Road Car Park – The Strategy Committee has asked Operations Committee to look into conducting a Survey of the Car Park. They will discuss this at the next meeting on the 16/3/2011. Tony Williamson has done a preliminary survey of how many cars are in the car park at various times and days. It was noted that morning seem to be the busiest time. This will be looked at in the next meeting.

E. ALLOTMENTS

There is no report.

F. PAVILION AND SPORTS FIELD – There has been no meeting

It was noted that the Sports Club had their EGM last Sunday and have appointed a new Treasurer and Secretary. Mick Lloyd is the Chairman. It was also noted that bookings are now being done through the Parish Office.

44/11 Request from Age Concern for payment of the £2000 grant agreed by WPC on 13th March

2007 – letter attached to agenda. (Accounts have been provided)

This issue was discussed. It was noted that the £2000 has been in the Parish's Earmarked Accounts since 2007, for Age Concern.

Resolved: That we give Age Concern the grant for £2000 subject to:

- a) All other funding being in place.
- b) Confirmation letter from SODC Planning stating that Planning Permission is not needed.
- c) Confirmation that OCC have terminated the lease at 33 High Street.
- d) Copy of the Business Plan.

It was also agreed that we should look into how long the Parish Council should keep grant money for. It was suggested that any grants should be only available for 2 years from date of allocation. This issue to be looked into when the next review of Standing Orders is considered.

45/11 Correspondence for Information - List Attached to Agenda

Letter No 738 – Sally Rawstron –re Church Hall – Ian Hill has responded to this.

Letter No 760 – Alan Craddock – Shirburn Street traffic – Noted that these comments will be considered at the six month review meeting with Malcolm Bowler

46/11 Representation on other bodies – To note reports that have been received

Age Concern – Tony Williamson reported that the County Council has started looking for alternative users of 33 High Street (previously the Drop-In) and to this effect

Mouchel is mailing a number of organisations. They are asking interested parties to register their interest by 28 April. Particulars are available in the Parish Office and the Drop In.

47/11 Other Matters for Discussion at the discretion of Chair

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.20PM AND WENT INTO CONFIDENTIAL SESSION TO DISCUSS THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE REGARDING THE PLANNING AWARD FOR 2011 WHICH WAS AGREED

According to: Confidential Items EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: THAT under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for items of business of the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 7,8 and 9 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act.

