

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted on

Monday 23 January 2017 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors Mrs C Green Deputy Town Mayor (chairing the meeting)
A Armytage
S Bateman
D Collins
E Collins
G Corry
F Earl
P Matthews
B Newton
Dr I M Reay
G Stevens
G Yearwood

OTHERS PRESENT: Mrs J Mason, Town Clerk

FC 01/17 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr T Ritchie (Town Mayor), Cllr J Ashbourn and Cllr S Beardshaw.

FC 02/17 Declarations of Interest regarding items on the agenda

None

FC 03/17 To receive and approve the minutes of previous meeting held on 19 December 2016

The minutes were approved as a correct record and were duly signed as such by the Chair.

FC 04/17 Town Mayor's Communications

Rt Hon David Gauke MP's 12 January 2017 letter responding to the Town Clerk and Town Mayor's 21 December 2016 letter objecting to Herts Valley CCG's decision not to establish a new hospital had been received.

It was noted that Cllr Yearwood, in his capacity as a member of the New Hospital Patients' Campaign Group, would be making a presentation the following week within Three Rivers District about the need for new acute care facilities. It was suggested that Mr Gauke might be invited to that meeting as well as the leader and other members of TRDC. Berkhamsted Town Councillors could also be invited.

FC 05/17 Suspension of Standing Orders to enable public participation

Not applicable as no members of the public were present.

STANDING COMMITTEES

The following committee minutes were **received and adopted**:

FC 06/17 Town Planning Committee

Held on 3 January 2017

Cllr Armytage outlined the key aspects of those applications that had been objected to and advised that discussions regarding the introduction of paperless planning continue.

Cllr Armytage was thanked for the consistently high standard of comment recorded in Town Planning Committee minutes and for the accurate cross referencing of objections to specific planning policies.

FC 07/17 Finance & Policy Committee

Held on 16 January 2017

Cllr D Collins commented that the Committee had approved the draft budget and precept proposals which would now be discussed under items FC 08/17 and FC 09/17 below.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

FC 08/17 Estimates of Income & Expenditure 2017/18

The Budget for 2017/18 (FP 08/17 refers) was **approved unanimously**.

FC 09/17 Precept 2017/18

On the basis of the budget approved under item FC 08/17 above it was **agreed unanimously** to set a precept of £186,255 for the year 2017/18. Given a tax base of 8,405.60 this would result in a Band D equivalent tax of £22.16 for 2017/18; an increase of 74p on the 2016/17 Band D tax of £21.42.

Cllrs C Green, D Collins and G Stevens signed the Parish Precept form which the Town Clerk would return to Richard Baker, DBC's Group Manger (Financial Services) the following day.

FC 10/17 Investment Strategy 2017/18

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Investment Strategy set out in the paper circulated with the agenda be adopted by the Town Council, subject to £85,000 being invested with the Cambridge Building Society rather than £45,000 and increasing the amount invested with Santander by only £5,600. The Town Clerk will implement the proposed actions set out in paragraph 8 of the paper. A revised version of the document reflecting the changes and updated interest rates is attached to these minutes. (It was noted that interest rates are subject to change by the various institutions at any time.)

FC 11/17 Internal Audit

- i. The interim internal audit report arising from the auditor's 5 December 2017 visit was received and adopted (FP 09/17 refers).
- ii. Cllr D Collins and Cllr B Newton **agreed** to undertake a review of internal audit and report their findings at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council. (Paras 4.21 – 4.26 "Governance and Accountability – A Practitioner's Guide March 2016" refer.)

GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

FC 12/17 Cllr P Matthews proposed, Cllr G Stevens seconded and it was unanimously

RESOLVED

that the Town Council, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, Section 8, as set out in the Statutory Instrument Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, has met the following criteria:

- more than two thirds of the members of the Council have stood for election
- the Clerk holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) and

will use the Power of Competence to the next ordinary election in 2019, when it must resolve that it meets the eligibility criteria to continue to be an eligible parish council.

FC13/17 To **RESOLVE** that under Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded for the remainder of the meeting, because it is likely that publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business or for other special reasons stated in the resolution, arising from the nature of the business or proceedings.

Not applicable as no members of the public were present.

FC 14/17 Civic Centre Lease – January 2016 for a four year term

- i. The Town Clerk advised that DBC had clarified that clause 15 of the lease “Joint and several liability” (FC 121/16 refers) could not be enforced against a corporate body. Town Council members agreed therefore that DBC should be asked to strike out this clause;
- ii. The proposal that Cllr Green and Cllr G Stevens be authorised to sign the lease on behalf of the Town Council was discussed. Cllr D Collins proposed, Cllr P Matthews seconded and it was agreed unanimously that the lease should not be signed until an agreement had been reached on serious concerns about parking provision. These concerns had arisen following e-mail correspondence in the last week with DBC officers regarding the impact of the installation of the car parking barrier on parking spaces available to staff, Town Councillors and visitors.

It was unanimously

RESOLVED that

- (i) The Town Clerk should advise DBC of the Town Council’s concerns in writing and advise that the lease could not be signed until an agreement had been reached on parking;
- (ii) Cllr D Collins should discuss the matter with the appropriate DBC councillors.

FC 15/17 The meeting closed at 8.07 pm.

Signed.....

Date.....