



Yeovil Town Council

Town House
19 Union Street
Yeovil
Somerset
BA20 1PQ

Mayor : Cllr M Lock, Locum Town Clerk : John Furze FILCM
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Minutes of the meeting of Yeovil Town Council held on Tuesday 6th October 2015 at 7.30pm in the Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil BA20 1PQ

Present: Cllrs M Lock (Chairman & Mayor), T Lock, P Lock, J Conway, G Freeman-Bell, P Gubbins, K Hussain, A Kendall, G Oakes, E Potts-Jones, W Read, D Ricardo, M Roper, A Smith, R Stickland. V Adampali, N Akkisetty, K Castle, P Chandler, T Cobb, T Ledlie, A Pugsley, D Shutler (Deputy Mayor),
A Smith,

In Attendance: S Freemantle (Asst Town Clerk), J Furze (Locum Town Clerk) and Rev J Pearce (Mayor's Chaplain).

There were five members of the public and no members of the press present.

7.30pm – The Mayor's Chaplain, Rev J Pearce led the meeting in Prayers.

Before the meeting started the Mayor of Yeovil (Cllr M Lock) presented grant-in-aid cheques to the following organisations:

Octagon Theatre Summer School - £1,000 received by Ms Kate Wigmore

Yeovil & District Chrysanthemum & Dahlia Society - £900 received by Christine Tomkins & Roger Downting,

Somerset Area CRUSE Bereavement - £1,000 received by John Brookes

South Somerset Association for Voluntary & Community Action - £1,000 received by Martin Ashby.

All recipients made statement thanking the Council for their support.

Public Question Time

No member of the public wished to address, or ask questions of the Council

Three members of the public then left the meeting.

7.45pm The meeting commenced

9/44 Apologies for absence and to consider the reasons given. Council to receive apologies for absence and consider the reasons given. [LGA 1972 s85\(1\)](#)

Apologies were received from Cllr S Lowery (Conflicting Engagement).

Resolved: To Accept the apology with the reason given.

Cllr Gubbins on a Point of Order made the statement that it was his intention to have an item included in the Agenda for the next meeting of the full Council (3rd November 2015) that this Council will install the Chairman of Policy, Resources & Finance Committee as the designated Leader of the Council.

Locum Town Clerk acknowledged receipt of the notification.

9/45 Declarations of interest. Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e). (*NB this does not preclude any later declarations*).

No Declarations of interest were made at this time.

9/46 Minutes of the last Meeting. To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 1st September 2015. [LGA 1972 Sch12 para41\(a\)](#)

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 1st September 2015 be signed as a true record.

9/47 Exclusion of the Press and Public To agree any items to be dealt with after the Press and Public have been excluded. [Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960 S1\(2\)](#)

Resolved: That Items 9/55 and 9/56 be heard with the Public & Press excluded.

9/48 Notification of the Conclusion of the Audit by External Auditors (Grant Thornton) of the Annual return submitted for the year ending 31st March 2015.

Members to review the report and comments of the External Auditor. [Account & Audit Regulations 2015 s16\(2\)a](#)

Locum Town Clerk explained he is required to bring to the Committee's attention the comment made by the External Auditor (Grant Thornton) of the absence of a report from the Internal Auditor. This changes the report from an 'unqualified' report (no omissions or errors) to a 'qualified' report. The statutory Notice of Conclusion of Audit has been displayed on the Council's Notice Board for the requisite time.

Locum Town Clerk addressed the Council that following representations by the previous Town Clerk (Alan Tawse) to the Senior Manager of Grant Thornton (the External Auditors) a telephone conversation between the Locum Town Clerk, Alan Tawse and the Senior Manager had taken place in which Grant Thornton confirmed the Council had not been given a 'qualified audit' but the letter referred to above was '*a matter affecting our opinion*'. Grant

Thornton also confirmed '*the implication in our audit report that this is what should happen is not correct*'. A copy of the email confirming the aforesaid was circulated at the meeting to all members. The Locum Town Clerk explained he was happy to report the Council had received an 'unqualified audit report' meaning the External Auditors had no concerns whatsoever concerning the Council's accounts.

RESOLVED: To note the report and later comments of the External Auditor for the Accounts ending 31st March 2016.

9/49 Review of Financial Regulations (FIN REGS). Members to review the existing Financial Regulations with a view to adopting new FIN REGS (Copy Attached) *Account & Audit Regulations 2015 s3, & s6(1)(a)*

Cllr Gubbins on a Point of Order said he was unhappy with some of the amendments in the FINAL Draft FINREGs and asked for the item to be deferred to the next meeting of Policy Resources & Finance (PR&F) Committee for further discussion. The item would then reappear on the Agenda for next meeting of full Town Council for consideration.

Resolved: This this item be referred back to PR&F Committee for further discussion and then to be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of this full Council for ratification or withdrawal.

9/50 Finance Report for Year To Date (YTD) with the period June/July 2015.

Members to review the Council's performance against its agreed budget for the Fiscal Year 2015/16 (Copy Attached). *Account & Audit Regulations 2015 s4(2) & (3)(a)*

Members drew the Locum Town Clerks attention that the agenda stated the report was 'attached' which it clearly wasn't. Locum Town Clerk apologised for the error and at members request gave a verbal report stating the Council's finance were in good shape with no item giving him, as Responsible Finance Officer, cause for concern.

Resolved: To note the verbal report of the Locum Town Clerk

NB. The report referred to was circulated to all members with the agenda for PR&F Committee on Wednesday 23rd September by first class post.

9/51 Mayor's Items of Note – The Mayor of Yeovil, Cllr M Lock will present any items of note for member's interest. (Extract of Mayor's Diary attached at Page 3)

The Mayor referred to the forthcoming Mayor's Ball on Saturday 24th October and asked Locum Town Clerk, with members support, that the Agenda and Minutes revert back to the style and form of presentation they were used to. Locum Town Clerk confirmed that would be done.

9/52 Report of Recommendations & Resolutions from Council's Committees

The Minutes of all of the following committee meetings are open for discussion but must be considered as 'draft' until signed by the Committee Chairman at the next meeting.

Grounds & General Maintenance Committee – 14th September 2015

Presented by Committee Chairman, Cllr M Roper there were no questions but Cllr Roper did refer to the Gold Award received by the Yeovil in Bloom Committee which would be mentioned in the next Agenda Item.

Promotions & Activities Committee – 15th September 2015

Presented by Committee Chairman Cllr D Recardo who was not present at the meeting which was chair'd by Cllr W Read. There were no questions or comments.

Planning & Licensing Committee – 21st September 2015

Presented by Committee Chairman, Cllr P Lock there were no questions or comments

Buildings & Civic Matters – 22nd September 2015

Presented by Committee Chairman, Cllr R Stickland there were no questions or comments

Policy, Resources & Finance Committee – 29th September 2015

Presented by Committee Chairman, Cllr T Lock. Cllr Stickland asked if he could seek clarification of a 'Staff in Confidence' item during Agenda Item 9/55. This was agreed.

9/53 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies. Members who represent the Town Council on Outside Bodies may wish to take the opportunity to report on any matter of interest.

Yeovil Twinning Association – meeting 10th August 2015

Members asked for the Minutes of the Association's last meeting to be circulated to all members.

Yeovil in Bloom Committee – 2015 – Gold Award

Cllr D Recardo gave a verbal report in addition to his written report already circulated to members. It was also confirmed that SSDC were arranging for new 'entry to the town' signs were being upgraded to reflect this latest Gold award. The Mayor of Yeovil Cllr M Lock asked that his congratulations be given to all members of the Yeovil in Bloom Committee in particular the staff at SSDC Nursery for the stunning quality of the flowers produced this year.

9/54 NALC Larger Councils Conference – Wednesday 2nd December 2015 –

Members to seek up to three Councillors and one Officer to attend this conference in London.

Following discussion it was.....

Resolved: That Cllrs Smith, Freeman-Bell and Pugsley attend the NALC Larger Councils Conference in London on Wednesday 2nd December 2015 and that their registration fee,

travelling expenses and out-of-pocket expenses are paid by the Council. The New Town Clerk would also be invited to attend if she wished.

There were two members of the public present who did not wish to make any comment and therefore no Public Question Time.

8.20pm - Members of the Public and Cllr Hussain left the meeting

9/55 In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (Item 9/47 above refers) – Staff in Confidence.

Council to ratify decision of Policy, Resource & Finance Committee to extend the engagement of the Locum Town Clerk until 29th January 2016 on the existing terms of engagement. LGA 1972 s112(1)

8.22pm - Locum Town Clerk left the meeting but before doing so made a statement to members making some points clear:

- Will not be here W/C 7th December for one week owing to prior engagement
- Will not be here between Christmas & New Year as not financially viable for either the Council or the Locum Town Clerk.
- Existing Terms of Engagement will apply.

9.15pm – Cllrs Adampalli and Akkisetty left the meeting.

9.18pm Locum Town Clerk returned to the meeting.

Resolved: (1) That the Locum Town Clerk be retained until Friday 5th December 2015 on the existing terms of engagement
(2) That the Town Clerk's Line Management Working Party (WP) meet before commencement of the new Town Clerk taking up post (1st December 2015) to work out a programme of handover.

9/56 In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (Item 9/47 above refers) – Commercial in Confidence.

Locum Town Clerk to seek ratification of decision taken at Policy, Resources & Finance Committee on Tuesday 29th September 2015 authorising him to progress the disposal of the Goldcroft Allotments Site to conclusion, subject to Council's final approval. LGA 1972 s101(1)(a)

Following discussion it was

Resolved: Not to ratify the decision of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee at their meeting on Tuesday 29th September 2015 but to instruct the Locum Town Clerk to investigate what the costs, if any, would be to cancel any arrangements made with the agent who was instructed to sell the Goldcroft site. Furthermore the council to reinstate the panel set up for the disposal of the Goldcroft site with a view to making a recommendation to full Town Council to either carry on with the present agent or to appoint a new agent to market both Goldcroft and the Ski Slope sites.

Following this item Cllr Stickland (as notified in Agenda Item 9/52) supported by Cllr Castle sought clarification on the matter of Cllr D Recardo being appointed by PR&F Committee to represent the Council on SSDC's Westland Leisure Complex Project Board. After discussion it was

Resolved: To ratify the decision taken at PR&F Committee that Cllr D Recardo represent the Council on SSDC's Westland Leisure Complex Project Board

Meeting closed at 10.06pm