

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the **TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil on **Tuesday 3 September 2013**

(7.30pm – 9.15pm)

Present:

Manny Roper – Mayor	Peter Gubbins
Martin Bailey	John Hann
Peter Brock	Andrew Kendall
Bridget Dollard	Mike Lock
David Dollard	Tony Lock
Tony Fife	Wes Read
Jon Gleeson	David Recardo
Dave Greene	Alan Smith

Also present:

Alan Tawse	Town Clerk
Emma Baker	Empty Property Officer - South Somerset District Council
Jim Riley	Technical Services Manager – Somerset Care and Repair Ltd
Richard Needs	Service Manager (Engineering Design) - Somerset County Council

(Prior to the start of the meeting, the Mayor's Chaplain led those Members of the Council in attendance in prayers on behalf of the Townspeople of Yeovil).

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from members of the public.

8/349 MINUTES

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 August 2013, copies of which had been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

8/350 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from J Vincent Chainey, Philip Chandler, Clive Davis, and Darren Shutler.

8/351 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Dave Greene and Tony Lock both declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6 (Yeovil Eastern Corridor Study – Progress Update) by virtue of their membership of Somerset County Council.

8/352 MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S RECENT AND FORTHCOMING ENGAGEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Details of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's recent and forthcoming engagements and announcements were attached to the Agenda.

8/353 **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Town Clerk reported receipt of the following item of correspondence:

- International Tree Foundation Newsletter – August 2013

8/354 **EMPTY PROPERTIES IN YEOVIL**

Emma Baker and Jim Riley gave a joint presentation on work that was being undertaken in Yeovil to bring empty properties into occupation (Agenda item 7 refers).

(A copy of the slides used during their presentation is attached to these Minutes).

Emma drew attention to the partnership approach that was being taken to address the issue, and the availability of Government funding - which was linked to local performance and delivery.

Jim referred to the training opportunities that the initiative provided – particularly for young people who gained valuable knowledge, experience and qualifications in a range of practical skills.

Examples of properties that had been brought into occupancy in Yeovil were given at the meeting, and photographs shown of their improvement. Details of further properties that were due to be improved in the near future were also outlined.

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to ways by which the scheme was promoted and landlords were encouraged to take part in the initiative. This included guaranteed rental income in return for the granting of long leases to tenants of improved properties.

Attention was drawn to the operation of the scheme and the importance of ensuring that the allocated budget was carefully managed.

The Mayor thanked Emma and Jim for their interesting and informative presentation, and it was

RESOLVED

that the matter be noted.

8/355 **YEOVIL EASTERN CORRIDOR STUDY – PROGRESS UPDATE**

Richard Needs gave a presentation of proposals drawn up by the County Council for improving Horsey Roundabout, Hospital Roundabout and the Tesco Footbridge in Queensway as part of the Yeovil Eastern Corridor study (Agenda item 6 refers).

Copies of the plans were attached to the agenda and were displayed at the meeting and a position statement/cost summary had been circulated to all Members.

Richard explained all of the proposals in detail outlining the anticipated benefits that each would bring in terms of reducing traffic congestion, increasing capacity and improving access for pedestrians and cyclists.

He added that options for Fiveways Roundabout were still being evaluated by the County Council, and that views on the proposals that emerged would be similarly sought.

Members were invited to comment on these proposals as part of an informal consultation process.

Horseley Roundabout

Concern was expressed at the proposal to remove the existing right-turn from Brunswick Street up Hendford and to signalise this junction. It was felt that this would lead to the greater queuing of traffic from Horseley Roundabout. Reference was also made to the proposed relocation of the pedestrian crossings on Hendford Hill and on Brunswick Street, which it was felt would also lead to additional congestion.

Richard indicated that these proposals aimed to improve pedestrian safety and that their viability had been tested by the appointed consultants using surveys and traffic modelling - which took into account future growth forecasts. He added that works were planned to start in January 2014 and that discussions were ongoing with South Somerset District Council regarding vehicular access to the nearby Goldenstones Leisure Centre.

Hospital Roundabout

Richard indicated that the planned reduction in the number of lanes coupled with enhanced alignments and deflection would improve the flow of traffic and safety. He added that the existing short-section of bus lane would be removed, and the size of the roundabout increased. Greater use of the underpasses by pedestrians would also be encouraged, and the proposed works were scheduled to start in April 2014.

During the ensuing discussion, Members' drew attention to the need to ensure that the previously agreed proposal to install a vehicular exit from the nearby Tesco Store Car Park onto Clarence Street was implemented at the same time as the proposed work to the Hospital Roundabout was carried out. It was noted that these works were the subject of a S.106 agreement between the Planning Authority and the Store, and that a commuted sum had been paid by Tesco to cover the costs involved.

It was pointed out that this scheme would have a significant impact on the level of vehicle movements on Queensway and would lead to a substantial reduction on the number of vehicles using Horseley Roundabout – with less congestion, lower mileage and improved journey times.

Richard acknowledged the merits of undertaking these works at the same time and agreed to investigate ways by which they could be simultaneously delivered using available funds.

Members also expressed concern at the planned layout of the exit road from the upgraded roundabout onto Reckleford, which it was felt would cause

tailbacks. Richard reiterated his earlier comments that the viability of the proposals had been tested by the use of surveys and traffic modelling.

Tesco Footbridge

Richard indicated that the proposed replacement of the existing footbridge would improve access for pedestrians and cyclists. He explained that its condition was deteriorating and that he was seeking views on the design of the trusses that would be installed on the faces of the new bridge.

During the ensuing discussion, Members considered the merits of the proposed works, which it was felt would have little impact on improving access for pedestrians and cyclists.

It was strongly felt that the County Council should carry out any necessary repair work to the existing bridge, and ensure that a proper system of bridge maintenance was put in place with adequate funding. It was further felt that the £1.8m estimated costs of the new bridge would be better spent on implementing the Market Street/Reckleford junction enhancement works which formed an important part of the Yeovil Eastern Corridor Study and would deliver significant improvements in traffic flows and the economic regeneration of the Town Centre.

Richard indicated that the Market Street/Reckleford junction had not been included in the proposals as it was assumed that this particular scheme would be delivered in the future with the help of financial contributions from the developers of nearby sites.

He concluded by indicating that the views expressed at the meeting would be taken into account by the County Council as part of its ongoing consultation on the proposals.

The Mayor thanked Richard for his contribution to the meeting, and it was

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that consideration be given to the proposals for the Fiveways Roundabout when available.

8/356 **REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES AND OTHER MEETINGS**

The Chairmen of the various Committees of the Council presented the Minutes from the previous cycle of meetings, drawing attention to specific references to Council, any matters of particular interest and answering any questions.

Planning and Licensing Committee

29 July 2013

8/357 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Minutes of the following meetings of Outside Bodies were attached to the Agenda and Members were given an opportunity to raise matters relating to them:

Yeovil Twinning Association

23 May 2013

Members who represented the Town Council on outside bodies were given an opportunity to report on any matters of interest.

David Recardo drew attention to the planned inward visit by members of the Taunnustein Twinning Association later that month.

8/358 PUBLIC COMMENT

Vivian Cornelius referred to the earlier discussion on underpasses and the proposed replacement of the Tesco footbridge, and drew attention to the need to take into consideration the needs of other users – including people using pushchairs and mobility scooters.

8/359 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

8/360 AWARD NOMINATION

The Council considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 10 refers).

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that no action be taken in this matter.

Mayor