

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 7.30 PM

Present: Councillors S Rahman
 C Palmer (Chair)
 D Bowater (Vice-Chair)
 A Brandham
 S Cotter
 A Dodwell
 K Ferguson
 T Morris
 C Perham
 G Perham
 E Wallace

Also in attendance: S Sandiford (Head of Democratic and Central Services)
 Ian Haynes, (Head of Grounds and Environmental Services)
 V Cannon (Head of Cultural and Economic Services)
 M Jahn (Committee Officer)
 M King (People and Places)

Members of the Public: 0

259 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received and were accepted from Councillors J M Freeman, R Berry, K Cursons, S Ward, S Jones, D Perham, C Chambers, F Kharwala and B Spurr and the Town Clerk.

260 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests, and the nature of those interests, that they might have in any of the items under consideration at the meeting.

No declarations were made and no dispensations had been requested.

261 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor C Palmer advised Council that he had attended 25 engagements since the last Council meeting in June including the Carnival, Charity Meal, Schools Golf Competition, McMillian Cancer morning, Ramblers Walk and Afternoon Tea and had raised approximately £1,400 so far. Forthcoming

Charity events included the Charity Ball in October, Rock of Ages concert in November and a Coffee Morning and Carol Service in December, which he hoped Councillors would support.

262 LEADERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor E Wallace thanked the Mayor for his continued work and attending events on behalf of the Town Council. He also thanked all concerned for their work in promoting the Youth Promise Grant and hoped this would achieve sustainable returns for the community and organisations involved.

Congratulations were also given to Councillor Palmer, Rosie Palmer and the volunteers for their hard work and achievements in Anglia in Bloom and the on-going transformation of Linslade Recreation Ground which would continue to evolve and improve to the benefit of the community.

Looking forward to the future and the refurbishment of Pages Park which would be the next project to reap benefits for the town and community.

263 QUESTIONS

(a) There were no questions from members of the public.

(b) No questions had been received from Councillors

264 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Council received the draft minutes of the previous Council meeting held on 25 June 2018 for consideration.

Minute reference 254 – it was confirmed there would be no permanent repair to the canal bridge in the autumn as the temporary repair was holding up at present. It was anticipated the canal bridge and Vimy Road roundabout would be repaired in the new financial year.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 June 2018 be approved as a correct record and were signed accordingly.

265 TOWN BENCHMARKING REPORT

By invitation, Mike King of People and Places gave a summary presentation on the second town benchmarking report which included information on car parking, vacancy rates, footfall and how much people spend on average when visiting the town centre. One thousand two hundred survey forms had been returned within Leighton Buzzard and showed that over 66% recommended a visit to the town centre and business performance had grown. The negative comments included anti-social behaviour within the town, lack of car parking and the mix of retail businesses especially the lack of clothing shops.

The functionality of town centres would need to change to continue to attract customers, with a greater leisure and cultural offer as well as retail shops. Members agreed that leisure and culture would be a driver for town centres in future to ensure continued growth.

Members thanked Mike King for his presentation.

266 COMMITTEE MINUTES

Council received the draft minutes of Committee meetings held since the Council Meeting on 25 June 2018.

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the following meetings:

- (a) Planning & Transport Committee 11 July 2018
- (b) Cultural & Economic Services Committee 23 July 2018
- (c) Policy & Finance Committee 30 July 2018

Minute reference 389/PF: Council gave consideration to the recommendation made by Policy & Finance 30 July 2018 in respect of approval of a Document Retention Policy.

RESOLVED to approve the Document Retention Policy.

- (d) Planning & Transport Committee 1 August 2018
- (e) Planning & Transport Committee 22 August 2018
- (f) Cultural & Economic Services Committee 3 September 2018
- (g) Partnership Committee 6 September 2018

Minute reference 236/LLP(b) – a request was made that the minutes include reference to the request made of Central Bedfordshire Council: to ensure that development of the land south of the High Street be kept as a priority, with the development coming forward comprehensively rather than in piecemeal fashion.

- (h) Grounds & Environmental Services Committee 10 September 2018
- (i) Planning & Transport Committee 12 September 2018
- (j) Policy & Finance Committee 17 September 2018

Minute reference 399/PF: Council received a recommendation made by Policy & Finance 17 September 2018 to endorse the Unauthorised Encampment Policy.

RESOLVED to approve the Unauthorised Encampment Management Policy –

- i) **The Town Council will by way of appropriate and measured target hardening take all reasonable steps to avoid the potential for future unauthorised encampments to take place on Town Council**

- land.
- ii) **That delegated powers be afforded to the Town Clerk in respects of dealing with unauthorised encampments should and when they occur.**
Minute reference 410/PF: Professional Fees - it was noted that the recommendations would be considered later in the meeting as a separate agenda item.

267 2017-2018 YEAR END ACCOUNTS

Council received the Auditor's Certificate and Opinion on the Annual Return for 2017-2018. One very minor issue had been identified by the External Auditor and this was simply the ticking of a box in section K Internal Control Objective but no other cause for concern raised.

RESOLVED to approve and accept the Auditor's Certificate and Opinion on the Annual Return for 2017-2018.

268 QUARTERLY UPDATE

A brief presentation was given to Council by Heads of Service, highlighting the events of the previous quarter including organisational and technical developments, Mayoral fundraising, the commencement of a residents' survey to help inform future objectives, events including the summer Band Concerts and Best Bar None awards, the success of the Grounds Team and volunteers in gaining 12 gold awards in the 2018 Anglia in Bloom campaign, a highly successful social media campaign for the market and activities undertaken by the young people at TACTIC. It was also noted that the Youth Promise Grant monies were almost entirely committed in support of local organisations who provide facilities for young people within Leighton-Linslade.

Forthcoming projects and events included Living History Day, Remembrance Sunday and the Christmas Festival, as well as the commencement of the new three-year Christmas lighting contract.

RESOLVED to note the information.

269 REPORT FROM CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCILLORS

No new information was available from Central Bedfordshire Councillors. However a question was raised requesting that the Central Bedfordshire Councillors listen and offer support to a local Village Focus Group who would be attending a Central Bedfordshire Council Meeting to raise their concerns regarding traveller problems within the surrounding villages.

RESOLVED to note the information.

270 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no changes or announcements made regarding outside bodies.

271 APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

There were no changes required to appointments to Committees

272 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded on the grounds of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. The public and press to withdraw from the meeting during consideration of detailed discussion regarding Town Council Matters.

273 TOWN COUNCIL MATTERS

Minute reference 410/PF Professional Fees – having received a report and supporting documentation, the Council gave consideration to the recommendation made by the Policy & Finance Committee on 17 September 2018 in respect of professional fees.

RESOLVED:

- (i) to contest the Judicial Review lodged with the High Court in respects of Town Council consultation of market traders on the use of long-service discounts.**
- (ii) that the Town Council draws down £20,000 from Town Council reserves to meet a likely shortfall in the Professional Fees Budget.**

The meeting closed at 9.06 pm.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER 2018.

Chair

28 JANUARY 2019