

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE ROBING ROOM, THE CASTLE, HERTFORD ON
MONDAY, 31 MARCH 2008**

The Mayor, Councillor R A K Radford

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor N Wilson

Councillors S J Bright, Miss K P Darby, Mrs H P Durbin
Miss C J Geall, Mrs B S Haddock, J C Hedley, Mrs S M Newton,
D R Poole, Mrs L E Radford, P A Ruffles, Miss J C S Sartin
and Mrs B M Wrangles

P Butcher, former Interim Town Clerk
Rev A Stewart, the Mayor's Chaplain (for part of the meeting)
Mrs M E Aldrich, Administrative Secretary

Prayers - The Mayor's Chaplain, Rev Alan Stewart, led the opening prayers

292. The Town Council **RESOLVED** that minute 304 be moved into closed session.

293. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Councillors Mrs D M Hone (family commitments) and J F Cook (on holiday) and Ms N L Villa, Town Clerk (on holiday).

Members questioned the inclusion of "Apologies for Absence" on the agenda as attendance at the Full Town Council meeting was a summons.

The Town Council was advised that as part of gaining "Quality Status" apologies together with reasons for absence, needed to be included in the minutes.

Members felt that some compromise in the wording of the Town Council agenda and minutes should be investigated.

294. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors agreed that previously stated declarations of interest still applied.

295. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Forthcoming Events - The Mayor, Councillor R A K Radford thanked everyone who had expressed support for the "Fun Run" which was to take place on Sunday, 6 April 2008. So far £2,500 had been collected in sponsorship.

There was also to be an "Evening with Daley Thompson" at Castle Hall on Friday, 18 April 2008 in aid of the Mayor's charities. The commentator, Stuart Storey would be asking Daley Thompson questions and there would be an opportunity for the audience to ask him about his life as a sports personality.

The Mayor also reported that Dr Leslie Southwick, from the Victoria and Albert Museum had visited the Castle to examine the Civic Sword and found details on the sword that have never been revealed. He was currently the leading expert on London silver hilts of the period. The sword was thought to have been made during the reign of King Charles I around the mid-1600's. As a result of his visit Dr Southwick was to work with the Mayor to re-write the sword's history.

Civic Service - The Civic Service arranged for the 4 May 2008 at St Mary's Hertingfordbury was now to be re-scheduled. Members would be advised of the new date shortly.

296. **THE MINUTES**

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 4 February 2008 be approved as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

297. QUESTIONS AND/OR STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

298. COMMUNITY SERVICES

Councillor N Wilson moved the report of the Community Services Committee.

Minute 256 – Cromwell Road Allotments – Community Allotment and Orchard - Councillor Miss C J Geall asked why the licence had been given for two six monthly periods.

Councillor Mrs B M Wrangles advised that the licence could only be made for a period of six months and it was considered too short a time for the production of produce. 12 months was felt more appropriate in relation to the growing season, therefore two six monthly licences running concurrently was approved by the Community Services Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report of the Community Services Committee held on 3 March 2008 be received and approved.

299. DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE

Councillor Miss J C S Sartin moved the report of the Development and Leisure Committee.

Minute 279 – Town and Tourist Information Centre - Councillor Miss G J Geall expressed the appreciation of Members to the officers that had supported the Town and Tourist Information Centre during the period of staff shortages. The Council commended them for their commitment to the authority.

Minute 282 – Rock at The Castle - Councillor N Wilson enquired whether a sponsor had been found for the Rock Concert and was advised that one was still being sought.

Minute 286 – The Castle - Redecoration Programme - Councillor Mrs B M Wrangles stated that she had heard good comments from the public on the redecoration programme to date. The Town Council noted how well the redecoration had been received by the public.

Minute 288 – Planning Sub-Committee – Councillor P A Ruffles enquired whether there had been any further communications from Hertfordshire County Council about the renewal of street lighting in Hertingfordbury village. The Town Council was advised that no further information had been received regarding the street lighting and Councillor Miss J C S Sartin stated that she was happy to follow this matter up with the County Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report of the Development and Leisure Committee held on 17 March 2008 (this included the relevant reports of the Planning Sub-Committee meetings of 19 November, 3 and 17 December 2007 and 7 and 21 January, 4 and 18 February (reconvened on 25 February) 2008 be received and approved.

300. FINANCE, POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

Councillor Miss C J Geall moved the reports of the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee.

Meeting of 18 February 2008 - Minute 248 – Car Park Resurfacing, Castle Grounds - The resurfacing work was to commence on Monday, 14 April 2008 and Councillor Mrs B M Wrangles asked if there would be problems with cars driving into the Castle Grounds to take senior citizens to the Vintage Party at Castle Hall on the 16 April 2008.

The Mayor, Councillor R A K Radford advised that he understood that the dates for the resurfacing work had been rescheduled, but would clarify this with officers to ensure that there would be no problems in relation to transport arrangements to the Vintage Party.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report of the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee held on 18 February and 17 March 2008 be received and approved.

301. MOTION - CLOSURE OF POST OFFICES

Councillor Mrs S M Newton had given written notice in accordance with Standing Order 1.10 and moved the following motion:

“That this Council deplored the widespread planned closures of post offices nationally and in particular in Hertford.

That there was great concern that the current post office in the Town centre would not have the capacity to cope with the future increased demand created through such closures.

That such a move to take away local post offices would have a long lasting detrimental affect on the well being of the people of Hertford and surrounding villages, especially the vulnerable, and that the Council was aghast at the current threats facing the future of our communities”.

Councillor Mrs H P Durbin felt that the Town Council should have proposals to put forward for protecting local post offices and commented that Essex County Council were now supporting post offices in rural areas of Essex.

Councillor Mrs S M Newton stated that funding would only be available from Essex County Council for 16 post offices and this would be for a period of three years after

which they would be expected to be self supporting. This was noted by the Town Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Town Council approve the motion.

Councillor Mrs H P Durbin abstained from voting and wished for this to be recorded.

302. MAYORAL NOMINATION FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2008/9

Councillor Miss K P Darby was unanimously nominated as Mayor for the Civic Year 2008/09, commencing 15 May 2008.

303. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED** that:

In view of the confidential nature of the following item, which related to the business matters of other individuals and organisations, the public be excluded whilst the following item was discussed. This was in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by the Local Government Act 1972.

304. UPDATE ON FORMER EMPLOYEE (PAYROLL NO 53)

The Town Council received an update on the latest situation concerning this former employee.