

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL

HELD IN THE ROBIN ROOM, THE CASTLE, HERTFORD ON

MONDAY, 25 JANUARY 2010

The Mayor, Councillor D R Poole

Councillors: Miss K P Darby, Mrs H Durbin, Mrs A Emsley, Miss C Geall, Mrs B Haddock, J Hedley, M McCormick, R A K Radford, Dr L E Radford, P Ruffles, Miss J Sartin, N Wilson.

Town Clerk, Mrs N L Villa
Civic Administration Manager – Ms T Carpenter (Minutes)
3 Members of the public

Prayers – Cllr P Ruffles led the opening prayers

218 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs H Durbin	Prejudicial	Agenda item 10 Mudlarks – Family Connection
Cllr Mrs B Haddock	Personal	Agenda item 10 Mudlarks – Working Group
Cllr Miss C Geall	Personal	Agenda item 8 Precept - Museum Patron
Cllr P Ruffles	Prejudicial	Agenda item 8 Precept – Museum Trustee
Cllr Miss J Sartin	Prejudicial	Agenda item 8 Precept – Museum Trustee
Cllr R Radford	Prejudicial	Agenda item 8 Precept – Museum Trustee

219 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor drew Members attention to the forthcoming Civic Service at 10.30am on Sunday 31 January 2010 at St Joseph's Catholic Church. He further announced that the annual Mayor's Civic Dinner would take place at the Whistling Duck Restaurant on Saturday 20th March 2010. Ticket price £35.

220 THE MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the Full Town Council meeting held on 9 November 2009 be approved as a correct record and the Chairman be authorised to sign the same.

221 QUESTIONS AND/OR STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Rachel Milroy of Mudlarks addressed the Council to express the Management Committee's gratitude for the Council's ongoing support for the project. The project continued to thrive thanks to good local support and operated on three days per week. The allotment site was in an excellent location, being on a bus route and the project members had built a good relationship with other allotment holders and local residents. Ms Milroy further stated that the siting of a large shed on the site would assist the trainees considerably, particularly for those with poor mobility and in inclement weather. In conclusion Ms Milroy invited all Councillors to visit the site to witness the work of the project.

222 COMMUNITY SERVICES

Councillor Miss K Darby moved the report of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 7 December 2009.

Minutes 181 – Mudlarks. It was confirmed that the membership of the Working Group was due to be referred to a group discussion to seek new volunteers

Minute 189 – Community Grant Applications. The accuracy of the minute relating to the payment of a grant to the Hertford Methodist Church was

questioned. The Council policy relating to grants to places of Worship stated 'no such grant would normally be awarded to a place of worship' as opposed to the minuted item 'places of worship were excluded from the grant scheme'. This was noted.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report of the Community Services Committee held on 7 December 2009 be received.

223 DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE

Councillor Miss J Sartin moved the report of the Development and Leisure Committee meeting held on 5 January 2010 (including the relevant reports of the Planning Sub-Committee meetings of 14 September 2009, 29 September 2009, 12 October 2009, 26 October 2009, 9 November 2009 and reconvened meeting on 16 November 2009) and 23 November 2009.

It was confirmed that the Planning Sub-Committee was shortly to provide a detailed report to the Development and Leisure Committee recommending various planning guidelines and policies for Hertford Town Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report of the Development and Leisure Committee meeting held on 5 January 2010 (including the relevant reports of the Planning Sub-Committee meetings of 14 September 2009, 29 September 2009, 12 October 2009, 26 October 2009, 9 November 2009 and reconvened meeting on 16 November 2009) and 23 November 2009

224 FINANCE, POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

Councillor Miss C Geall moved the report of the meeting of Finance, Policy and Administration Committee held on 11 January 2010.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report of the meeting of Finance, Policy and Administration Committee held on 11 January 2010 be received.

225 PRECEPT

Councillor Miss C Geall introduced the precept report for 2010/11 and was pleased to report that the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee was able to recommend a 0% increase in the precept for the Town Council's portion of the Council Tax for 2010/11. This zero increase had been achieved without any reduction in service levels across all services, and continued to build prudent reserves for unexpected expenditure in both the general and building reserves. National pay agreements which govern

the annual increases in staff salaries had been kept to a minimum for the forthcoming year and this had assisted in maintaining the level of precept from 2009/10, as well as the careful planning of optional projects for the year ahead.

Councillors wished to record their appreciation to the members of the Finance, Policy and Administration along with the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer for their achievement in proposing a 0% precept increase.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Council approved a precept demand of £1,036,064 for 2010/11 as recommended by the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee and the Mayor was authorised to sign the precept demand.

226 **CHARITY NOMINATIONS**

The Council was advised that following the amalgamation of several small Charities administered by the Council to form one united charity 'The Ancient Charities of Hertford' it had become necessary to nominate three Council representatives as trustees to the Charity. The Mayor would be an ex officio trustee, and it was recommended that Cllr P Ruffles and The Reverend Bill Church of St Andrews Church be the two further nominations.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Town Council representatives trustees of the Ancient Charities of Hertford be the Mayor of Hertford (ex officio), Cllr P Ruffles and The Reverend Bill Church.

227 **MUDLARKS**

Note: Having previously declared a prejudicial interest, Cllr Mrs H Durbin vacated the room prior to the discussion on this item.

The Council received a report providing an update on the current situation regarding the planning application submitted by Mudlarks for the erection of a large shed on Cromwell Road Allotments.

Councillors were keen to ensure an early solution to the matter and it was recommended that the issue be referred to the Community Services Committee to consider whether to grant planning permission for the proposed shed. It was hoped that an early meeting of the Working Group could be convened to ensure the Council's previous objections could be addressed prior to the next meeting of the Community Services Committee on 22 February 2010. Those Councillors not on the Community Services Committee would also be given an opportunity to put forward any suggestions.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Council delegates authority to the Community Services Committee to consider whether to grant permission for the proposed shed.

228 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

In view of the confidential nature of the following items which relates to individual members of staff, the public shall be excluded whilst the following items are discussed. This is in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by the Local Government Act 1972

229 **STAFFING UPDATE**

The Council received a verbal update on the staffing situation at Hertford Town Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Council delegate authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Chairman of Finance, Policy and Administration, to resolve a staffing issue.
- b) The request from a member of staff to be allowed to continue to working beyond the Council's normal retirement age be approved.