

CHIPPENHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting for Chippenham held at the Town Hall, High Street, Chippenham on Wednesday 27 April 2011 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs SE Oakes (Chairman)
Councillors Mrs DB Allen, Mrs LK Andre, TC Bate, MC Coates,
WJ Douglas Mrs SA Gibson, R Jones, Mrs MF Lloyd, ACG Noblet,
MAC Packard, BS Patterson, JA Phillips, Mrs NM Phillips,
Mrs M Pile, DLB Powell, RHP Purdon, Mrs LS Roberts-Rance,
JR Scragg, Mrs ME Stickland, Ms S Veitch, Mrs JM Wood and WA Wood

OFFICERS

PRESENT: Mrs S Wilthew (Clerk & Chief Executive)
Mr CNA Williams (Head of Support Services)
Mr A Jones (Head of Service Delivery)

1. CHAIRMAN/TOWN MAYOR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman gave a synopsis of the requirements for convening and carrying out the responsibilities of holding the Annual Town Meeting, which in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 is the "Parish Assembly" open to the public, although any voting is restricted to electors.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors PR Darby, Mrs EA Kennedy and Mrs MM Fallon.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Wednesday 28 April 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. TOPICS AND QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED

There were no Questions previously notified in writing.

5. QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

There were no Questions from the floor.

6. CURRENT ACTIVITIES

At the invitation of the Chairman, the Clerk & Chief Executive gave a report on staff changes, projects and achievements in the year which was ending (2010/11).

The Heritage Centre Manager/Curator had been appointed with effect from 31 August 2010 and the Management Team reformed with the appointment of both the Clerk & Chief Executive and the Head of Service Delivery with effect from 01 November 2010.

In addition the Deputy Mace Bearer had been promoted to Mace Bearer and the search continued to fill the vacancy which had therefore arisen.

Amongst the projects completed during the year had been:-

- Scheduled resurfacing of the tennis courts at John Coles Park
- An application had been started to achieve Green Flag status
- Completion of an extension to the London Road Cemetery which will ensure burials can be made for at least 25 years
- A successful grant application had been made to the Football Foundation to partly fund a Changing Block Extension and All Weather Surface at Stanley Park
- Silver Birch trees had been provided in the High Street
- A partnership had been agreed with Wiltshire Council for the management of the Town Market as part of a portfolio of Markets and should lead to development of it
- The Heritage Centre had received 25, 778 visitors, an all time record, and once again achieved the standards needed to renew its Accreditation
- The volunteer Wardens at the Heritage Centre had been nominated for a Community Award in the Team Category
- Awards had been made organisations from the Grants and Donations programme
- A programme of Town Events had been completed, and worked started on the Civil War Event to be held in June 2011
- Reviews had been undertaken of the location for the Tourist Information Centre and of the letting and use of the Neeld & Town Halls
- The Millennium Wall was refurbished in time for the 10th anniversary of construction
- The Town Council had responded to 358 Planning Applications within the required timescale, and of the 23 recommendations for refusal only 3 had been over turned
- The Town Mayor had undertaken 198 engagements in the year and the Deputy Mayor had undertaken 29.
- It was noted that fundraising for the Mayor's charity had so far raised £2 400 approx for SNAP (St Nicholas' Appeal for a Hydrotherapy Pool).

As part of the commitment to "continuous improvement of services" the following efficiencies had been carried out:-

- A maintenance contract for a three year period had been entered into for machinery used on all sites
- Red Diesel was now used in all eligible vehicles
- A replacement vehicle had been purchased to provide more efficient maintenance of the Rivers Route
- A further vehicle had been replaced out of sequence to minimise repair costs
- The replacement of the tea hut at John Coles Park had been ordered to minimise repair costs to the previous worn out building

- The loan to finance the expansion of the London Road Cemetery had been taken out at an advantageous fixed rate (3.8%)
- The electricity contracts for the property portfolio had been renewed slightly before the due date to take advantage of a cost reduction of 22%
- Income from the tennis courts had John Coles Park had been increased by issuing a lease for two courts to the Tennis Club.

The achievement of Quality Council status during 2011 remained a priority.

The Town Council had been able to maintain its high standards of all services provided to the community, and been able to do so despite only setting a minimal increase in Council Tax for 2011/12 (2.2%).

In conclusion it was noted that consideration would be given to an alternative format for this meeting in subsequent years.

The meeting closed at 7.25 pm.

These Minutes are subject to confirmation at the next Annual Town Meeting.