

RICHMOND TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2011

Present: Councillors Heap
 Burrows
 White
 Johnson
 Harris
 Robinson
 Steggles
 World
 Lord
 Hignett
 Holmes
 Blease

In attendance: Mr Miles Templeton (Town Clerk)
 Mrs C. Ord

Prayers were said by Rev. Allan Reed

01.01.11 Apologies: Apologies were received from Councillors Cooper and McGarry

02.01.11 Public Open Session:

Rev. K. Hall thanked the Town Council for the use of the Town Hall on Christmas Day for serving of Christmas lunches. He also thanked all those who had been involved in the preparations for the Christmas Day event which was very much enjoyed by the 54 people who attended.

Rev. Hall said that they would like to do the same again on Christmas Day 2011 and would be asking the Council at a later stage to consider this request.

03.01.11 County Councillor:

County Councillor Parsons gave an update on the proposals for the use of land at Swalegate by Richmond Town Football Club. Approximately 600 youngsters take part in football activities and it is hoped that the discussions will secure this land for a peppercorn rent. He also informed members that it was hoped that a barn which stands on private land and adjoins the site could be converted to provide changing facilities with the possible addition of cabin at a later date to provide more facilities, all of which could be screened by a tree planting scheme. Further discussion is ongoing.

The County Councillor gave members an update on the decision to site the Bus Shelter outside the Town Hall. A planning application is now in progress.

County Councillor Parsons apologised, on behalf of NYCC, for the disruption which will be caused by the road works planned for the Channel for two

weeks from February 14th. He stated that vehicular access into and out of the Market Place would be via Kings Street with traffic lights regulating the flow of traffic. The County Councillor stressed how beneficial it would be for Richmond to have this programme of highway improvement and repairs implemented and he hoped that the townspeople would be patient whilst the work was completed.

Councillor Blease drew attention to some blocked drains he had noticed around the town and he was concerned about potential problems that might be caused by a sudden downpour. County Councillor Parsons asked Councillor Blease to provide him with the exact locations so that he could arrange for the gulleys to be cleared.

04.01.11 Declarations of Interests and Lobbying:

It was agreed that these should be dealt with as and when they arose during the meeting.

05. 01.11 Future of Richmond TIC

Mr Simon Fletcher, an Assistant Director at Richmondshire District Council addressed members to discuss the proposed changes to the provision of the Tourist Information within Richmond. He informed members that due to financial cuts that were to be applied within the District Council during the next two financial years the Tourist Information Centre (TIC) may not continue in its present form. Mr Fletcher stated that although some savings had been achieved within the District Council, mainly through the introduction of shared services with Hambleton District Council, further savings still needed to be found. Councillors enquired about the annual cost of providing a TIC and the income derived from it. Mr Fletcher responded by stating that the TICs at Richmond and Leyburn cost £130,000 per year and the bulk of these costs were to cover staff wages. Although the Richmond TIC did generate some income, the amount did not come close to offsetting its costs. Councillor Lord declared an interest.

Mr Fletcher outlined a number of options and strategies that were being pursued to ensure the provision of a replacement service, which might take the form of a tourist information points, which could be either unstaffed or staffed by volunteers. Members felt that further discussions were necessary and the matter should be deferred and placed on the Agenda of the next Communities Committee. Mr Fletcher would be invited to attend this meeting.

06.01.11 Minutes:

Proposed: Councillor White Seconded: Councillor Blease

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 13 December 2010 be accepted as a true record subject to the following amendments:

13.12.10:

Councillor Lord informed members that he had commissioned the production of a Boundary Staff which could be used at the 2011 Boundary Riding. The staff, which would bear the Richmond Town Logo, would be smaller and lighter than the town banner and could be carried by the Bannerman for the bulk of the walk. The original town banner would be returned to the Town Hall after use only during the initial stage of the walk.

07.01.11 Update:

Item 09.11.10 – Councillor Harris asked the Town Clerk for an update on stallage fees in relation to the markets held at Richmond Station. The Town Clerk informed members that he was continuing to discuss this issue with Matthew Reed, the caretaker at the Station, who had asked for a copy of the legal document which sets out the requirement to pay stallage fees. The Town Clerk stated that he had had some difficulty locating the paperwork relating to the Market Charter, and in particular the wording that confirms the right of the Council to enforce the stallage fee for any market taking place within 6 and two-thirds miles of the Market Place. He had consulted with the local historian, Jane Hatcher and she had managed to produce some relevant documentation which the Town Clerk was now going to place before the caretaker at the Station, Matthew Reed.

08.01.11 Town Clerk's Report:

Clock Repair: The Town Clerk reported that he had received a quotation for the repairs to the Council Chamber Clock. Members asked that the quote be referred to the Resources Committee.

Loop System: Members were informed that the loop system in the Chamber was not working due to disruption to wiring which occurred when asbestos work was carried out. Repairs to the loop system would take place next week.

Christmas Lights: Members were informed that considerable savings to the Christmas Lights budget had been made by Mr. Macey, the Town Hall Keeper, who had negotiated with a local contractor for some repair work to be carried out at a reduced rate.

Proposed: Councillor Burrows Seconded: Councillor Harris

RESOLVED: that thanks to Mr. Macey be recorded.

Flog It: Members thought that the recent episode of 'Flog It' had been extremely good and the filming had provided excellent publicity for Richmond town.

09.01.11 Communications:

Item 27- Change of date: This item referred to the Parish Council Workshop and the Town Council awaits clarification of the change of date and time.

Item 23- Play Areas Consultation: Councillor Burrows informed members that this communication had been received at very short notice and after due discussion members passed the following resolution.

Proposed: Councillor Burrows Seconded: Councillor Steggles

RESOLVED: that a letter be sent to Richmondshire District Council informing them of the lateness of their consultation document and declining the proposal to transfer the responsibility of the Parish Playing Fields to Richmond Town Council.

Those members who are also on the District Council abstained.

10.01.11 Accounts:

Proposed: Councillor Lord Seconded: Councillor Robinson

RESOLVED: The accounts were noted.

11.01.11 Committees

Planning - 15 December 2010
- 19 January 2011

The Minutes of these meetings were noted

Resources - 10 January 2011

Proposed: Councillor Lord Seconded: Councillor Robinson

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2011 be approved.

Communities - 17 January 2011

Proposed: Councillor World Seconded: Councillor Robinson

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2011 be approved.

12.01.11 Outside Bodies:

The Mayor stated that he had attended a meeting of the Georgian Theatre Management Council on January 28th and it was noted that the dedication to the Lady Crathorne would take place on March 6th 2011. The Town Council had resolved to provide a framed photograph to be put up within the Theatre commemorating the fine work that Lady Crathorne had done for the town. The Town Clerk was asked to ensure that the photograph be provided in time and also to provide the form of words that would accompany the photograph.

Councillor Burrows reported on the outcome of a recent meeting of the Richmondshire Area Committee. The bus stops on the Market Place were now to be located outside the Town Hall and the Friary Gardens and the necessary planning permission was being sought.

Richmond Library is safe from the effects of public expenditure cuts although it is possible that the service may operate with the assistance of some volunteers. Councillor Burrows reported on the proposed reduction of two officers from the police force within Richmondshire District. He informed members that discussions relating to Richmond Lower School site were ongoing it was likely that the site would remain as it is and be put to some form of community use.

Councillor Burrows had also attended a meeting of the Richmondshire District Council Standards Committee at which it was reported that Standards for England are to be abolished under the decentralization and localism bill.

Councillor Burrows mentioned that the AGM of North Yorkshire Link would be held at 1.00pm on February 28th at the Swaledale Rescue Centre in Hipswell Road. He informed Councillors that he was unable to attend that meeting and suggested that another member may wish to take his place. He also stated that as he would cease to be a Councillor in the very near future and members should consider nominating a Council representative to take his place.

Councillor Harris reported that he had attended a meeting of the RSVCI and it was clear that the funding position for this organization will be tight from 2011/12. He added that the RSVCI were concerned about the potential shrinkage of the RDC Economic Development Unit. There was a possibility that the Youth Hostel Association may be interested in locating some offices at the Lower School site.

13.01.11 Standing Orders:

The Town Clerk informed members that the italics that had been missing from the 2008 Standing Orders had been inserted into the current draft and the review was now complete, subject to any alterations relating to the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

The Mayor opened the discussion on this matter by proposing that from 2011 the Town Council elect a Mayor and a Deputy Mayor and that the Deputy Mayor becomes Mayor the following year. Each year thereafter the Town Council will elect a Deputy Mayor only. There was some discussion about this and Councillor Harris stated that he might wish to introduce a counter-proposal that the Town Council continues to elect a Mayor each year but that the outgoing Mayor then becomes the Deputy Mayor for a year.

Proposed: The Mayor Seconded: Councillor Burrows

From 2011 onwards the Town Council will elect a Mayor and a Deputy Mayor and that the Deputy Mayor becomes Mayor the following year. Each year thereafter the Town Council will elect a Deputy Mayor only.

This motion was not carried

14.01.11 Precept 2011/12:

Councillor Lord introduced the debate by stating that at a recent meeting Councillors had produced a working Precept for discussion. The figures contained within this document represented no change to the 2010/11 Precept. Councillor Burrows stated that by not increasing the Precept the Town Council were, if inflation is taken into account, cutting the budget and he suggested that he would like to see a 1% increase on the Precept and that the resultant £1518 increase be allotted to Town Hall repairs and maintenance.

Proposed: Councillor Burrows Seconded: Councillor Harris

That the 2011/12 Precept be increased by 1%

This motion was not carried.

Councillor Johnson stated that he would like to see the Precept cut by 2% and he provided an overview of where these saving could be made.

The Town Clerk asked members to consider a request he had received from Richmondshire District Council to round up or round down the Precept figure to the nearest £100.

Proposed: Councillor Lord Seconded: Councillor Robinson

RESOLVED: that a 0% increase be recorded for the year 2011/12 and the appropriate pro forma for a Precept of £151,900 be completed and returned to the District.

Councillors Johnson and Harris asked that their votes against the proposal be recorded.

15.01.11 Dates for the Civic Year 2011/2012

Proposed: Councillor World Seconded: Councillor Hignett

RESOLVED: The Chair of all Committees to provide dates for all meetings in 2011/2012 including the annual Precept meeting and these will be presented at February 2011 council meeting for approval and then placed on the Mayor Making Agenda for information purposes.

16.01.11 Sporting Facilities for Richmond Residents:

Councillor Lord declared an interest.

Councillor World addressed members and condemned any proposals that would remove the rights to land which are currently used primarily for sporting facilities. Members of Richmond Town Council support the future provision of open spaces where possible, for use as sporting facilities, which would enable local clubs to expand and cater for future generations. He mentioned that Earls Orchard was used by at least five football organizations. The huge contribution that sporting organizations make to Richmond town is acknowledged and applauded by all members. Coaches, friends and families freely give a considerable amount of their time to people of all ages and abilities to enable them to participate in all areas of sport.

Proposed: Councillor World Seconded: Councillor Robinson

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk be requested to write to members of the various sporting organizations to express the gratitude of the Town Council for the dedicated service that they provide.

17.02.11 Members Comments:

Councillor White: informed members that the Chair commissioned as a memorial to the previous Town Clerk, Alan M. Wilcox will be presented at the Civic Society Coffee morning on the 19th of February at 10.30 am.

Councillor Burrows: informed members that this may be the last meeting of the Town Council that he could attend. The Mayor thanked him for his many years of valuable service and stated that he would be greatly missed by the Town Council.

Councillor Harris: stated that Councillor World would soon mark his 20th year as Town Councillor and he wished to recognize the very valuable contribution that Councillor World has made during this period. Councillor Harris also stated that he wished to see another clock face added to Trinity Church Tower and he would seek to raise this matter at a future meeting of the Town Council.

The Mayor: paid tribute to past Mayor, Grace Buckle, who had recently passed away.

Proposed: Councillor Lord Seconded: Councillor White

18.02.11 RESOLVED: to move into Private Session

19.02.11 Freeman Badges:

This item was withdrawn

20.02.11 Staffing Matters:

The Town Clerk stated that his contract expired on 18th April 2011 and that he would not be seeking to renew it. Arrangements would therefore need to be made for the recruitment of his replacement. Councillor Harris expressed the view that this matter needed to be urgently progressed and he also asked the Town Clerk if he would consider staying on in his post until the end of May 2011. It was agreed that the matter would be taken to the February meeting of the Resources Committee for progression and that this meeting would be brought forward by one week.

The meeting closed at 21.25