

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

At an Ordinary Meeting of the Council held in the Guildhall, Winchester on 31 October 2007.

Attendance:

Councillor Pines (The Mayor in the Chair) (P)

Councillors:

Allgood (P)	Huxstep (P)
Anthony (P)	Izard (P)
Barratt (P)	Jackson (P)
Baxter (P)	Jefferies (P)
Beckett (P)	Johnston (P)
Bell (P)	Learney (P)
Berry (P)	Lipscomb (P)
Beveridge (P)	Love (P)
Biggs (P)	Mather (P)
Busher (P)	Maynard
Chamberlain (P)	Nelmes (P)
Chapman (P)	Nunn (P)
Coates (P)	Pearce (P)
Collin (P)	Pearson (P)
Cook (P)	Read (P)
Cooper (P)	Ruffell (P)
Evans (P)	Saunders (P)
Fall (P)	Spender (P)
Godfrey (P)	Stallard (P)
Goodall (P)	Stephens (P)
Hammerton (P)	Sutton (P)
Hicks (P)	Tait (P)
Higgins (P)	Verney (P)
Hiscock (P)	Wagner (P)
Hollingbery (P)	Weston (P)
Howell (P)	Wood (P)
Humby (P)	Worrall (P)
	Wright (P)

1. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 12 September 2007 be approved and adopted.

2. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR**

The Mayor reported with great regret the recent death of Councillor Sue Fitzgerald. The meeting stood for a few moments in silent tribute to her memory.

The Mayor then explained that the Council was again meeting in the King Alfred Hall, as an experiment, to assess the possibility of holding Council meetings there on a permanent basis. Members were invited to forward any comments to Group Leaders, who will be consulted about any necessary changes, before the next Council meeting on 9 January 2008.

The Mayor referred to his attendance at a ceremony on 12 October 2007, organised by the Winchester Volunteer Bureau, to recognise the voluntary efforts of local people. On 22 October 2007, the first presentations were made of the Mayor's Volunteers Awards award for outstanding service to the local community, and nominated residents of the District each received a Certificate of Appreciation. There would be a further presentation on 12 November 2007.

Finally, the Mayor informed the Council that the Chief Executive had successfully completed a sponsored cycling trip to the City Council's twin city of Laon. The sponsorship had raised over £2,000 in aid of the Mayor's Charities.

3. **COMMUNICATION FROM THE LEADER**

The Leader reported on the successful opening of the Winchester Business Centre in Parchment Street. He thanked the University of Winchester, the Chamber of Commerce and local traders for their efforts in bringing the project to fruition, which was a major achievement and would provide an important information centre and place of business in the Town.

4. **QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14(2)(b)**

1. Current Staff Vacancy Figures

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, Councillor Allgood, answered a question from Councillor Cook.

2. Parking Usage Figures for Park and Ride

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport, Councillor Wood, answered a question from Councillor Beveridge.

3. Proposed Closure of West Meon Post Office

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Beckett, answered a question from Councillor Biggs.

4. Pollution in Winchester

The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Safety, Councillor Pearson, answered a question from Councillor Jackson.

5. Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, Councillor Allgood, answered a question from Councillor Learney.

6. Recycling of Domestic Food Waste

The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Safety, Councillor Pearson, answered a question from Councillor Cooper.

7. Council Tax Yield

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, Councillor Allgood, answered a question from Councillor Cooper.

8. Provision of Paper Copy Documents to Residents without access to the Internet

The Portfolio Holder for Performance and Communications, Councillor Hollingbery, answered a question from Councillor Bell.

9. Introduction of 20mph Speed Limits

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport, Councillor Wood, answered a question from Councillor Tait.

10. Hampshire Farepass Scheme – Hours of Operation

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport, Councillor Wood, answered a question from Councillor Johnston.

11. South East Business Portal

The Leader, as Portfolio Holder for Economy and Tourism, answered a question from Councillor Huxstep.

12. Alternate Bin Collection

The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Safety, Councillor Pearson, answered a question from Councillor Collin.

13. Marketing Qualifications for Guildhall Staff

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, Councillor Allgood, answered a question from Councillor Cook.

14. Guildhall Advertising Boards

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, Councillor Allgood, answered a question from Councillor Tait.

15. Tenants TV Licences – Makins Court, Winchester

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, Councillor Coates, answered a question from Councillor Cook.

16. Street Nameplates

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport, Councillor Wood, answered a question from Councillor Tait.

17. Traffic Islands in St Cross Road, Winchester

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport, Councillor Wood, answered a question from Councillor Tait.

18. Tower Arts Centre, Winchester

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Beckett, answered a question from Councillor Tait.

5. **PETITION**

The Mayor informed the Council that there was one petition to be presented, from Mr Alistair Marsden, regarding the proposed closure of the Tower Arts Centre, Winchester.

Councillors Collin and Godfrey each declared personal and prejudicial interests with regard to the subject matter of the petition, as they were employees of the County Council. Councillor Love declared a personal and prejudicial interest as he was a member of the petitioner's organising committee. All three Members remained in the meeting to listen to the presentation by Mr Marsden and then left the chamber whilst the item was discussed by Council.

The following Councillors declared personal (but not prejudicial) interests with regard to the petition for the reasons stated; they all remained in the meeting throughout the consideration of the item:-

Councillor Allgood – Member of Hampshire County Council.

Councillor Barratt – attended User Group meetings.

Councillor Bell - attended User Group meetings.

Councillor Coates – Vice Chairman of Stanmore Combined.

Councillor Fall – Ward Member.

Councillor Jackson – attended events at the Centre.

Councillor Nunn – Ward Member.

Councillor Stephens – Ward Member.

Councillor Tait – City Council representative on the Management Committee.

Councillor Verney – Deputy City Council representative on the Management Committee.

Councillor Tait explained that although he had been nominated as the Council's representative on the Management Committee, it had not met during his term of office and was now disbanded.

In his presentation, Mr Marsden made the following points:-

- (a) the petition to keep the Centre open had been signed by 1,007 people in just seven days and the online petition, which would be submitted to the Prime Minister, had been supported by 1,200 people.
- (b) the City Council clearly recognised the cultural and community importance of the Centre by recently awarding it Key Client Status, but more could be done to support its future financially, as many arts facilities were funded by district councils (e.g. Basingstoke and Chichester).
- (c) there were good links with the Stanmore community and Kings School, both of which could be strengthened to the mutual benefit of all.

- (d) there was a strong economic business case for retaining and developing the Centre. Arts and cultural activities attracted large businesses which, together with the tourism aspect and other activities, generated considerable funds for the local economy. It was estimated that this totalled around £500,000 in the case of the Tower Arts Centre, which also employed three full time and three part time staff.

In conclusion, Mr Marsden highlighted that the County Council was due to determine the future of the Centre on 9 December 2007 and he urged the City Council, if necessary, to meet the financial shortfall, which he considered it could do without creating a precedent.

The Mayor thanked Mr Marsden for his presentation and invited him to remain, as the Council would now have a discussion about the matters he had raised.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15(6) the Council had a general discussion about the above.

There was general agreement that the Tower Arts Centre provided a much valued facility, which served many communities in the District, including people who would otherwise have little opportunity to experience such activities. Some Members recalled that when the City Council contributed £1m towards the Discovery Centre, it was not suggested that there would be a reduction in other arts facilities in the District. The Discovery Centre did not have the space to provide replacement facilities and it was also unlikely that, should Kings School assume some form of control over the Tower Arts Centre, it would be able to reproduce the quality and variation of the existing programme. In fact, it seemed clear that the School only wished to operate the building, not the events.

Other Members emphasised the economic and cultural contribution of the Centre and queried why the decision was being rushed, when further research was clearly required. Seeking support from the University of Winchester was also suggested.

In responding to all of the above, the Leader confirmed that he was very much in favour of retaining the Tower Arts Centre, but that did not mean that the City Council would be able to meet the County Council's contribution, should it be withdrawn. The City Council currently gave the Centre a £21,000 grant and that would continue. It would also help to seek other sources of funding, including from the University, which had already been contacted. Although Kings School had indicated a willingness to operate the building, there were many details about its involvement still to be resolved (e.g. what days/hours would the School make the building available?). A public meeting about the proposed closure would be held on 1 November 2007 and the Leader would be in attendance to hear further views. Cabinet would receive a report on 14 November 2007.

6. **CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDED MINUTES**

Cabinet – 17 October 2007

Principal Scrutiny Committee – 22 October 2007

PUSH - Establishment of a Joint Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Committee

It was noted that Principal Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting held on 22 October 2007, had considered the matter and supported the recommendations of Cabinet. As the Committee had met after the Council Minute Book was printed, a copy of the minute was circulated to Members.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Beckett, moved that Recommended Minutes 432 and 466 be approved and adopted.

RESOLVED:

1. That Recommended Minute 432 be approved and adopted.
2. That Recommended Minute 466 of Principal Scrutiny Committee be noted.

Cabinet – 19 September 2007

Principal Scrutiny Committee – 24 September 2007

Annual Review of the Constitution – Review of Portfolio Holder Decision Making Scheme of Delegation

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Beckett, moved that Recommended Minutes 324 and 361 be approved and adopted.

RESOLVED:

1. That Recommended Minute 324 be approved and adopted.
2. That Recommended Minute 361 of Principal Scrutiny Committee be noted.

Licensing and Regulation Committee – 9 October 2007

Review of the Licensing Policy

The Chairman of Licensing and Regulation Committee, Councillor Mather, moved that Recommended Minute 385 be approved and adopted.

Councillor Learney drew attention to para. 2.29 (page 10) of the Policy, where Harestock should be added to the list of 'other public areas'. The Corporate Director (Governance) reported that para. D14 (page 33) regarding Children and Smoking should be deleted, as this matter was now subject to the new legislation on smoking in public places.

With the leave of Council, it was agreed that both the above amendments would be taken as proposed, seconded and carried.

RESOLVED:

That Recommended Minute 385, as amended above, be approved and adopted.

Standards Committee – 15 October 2007

Review of Local Protocols

The Vice Chairman of Standards Committee, Councillor Read, moved that Recommended Minute 422 be approved and adopted.

RESOLVED:

That Recommended Minute 422 be approved and adopted.

7. **APPOINTMENTS TO BODIES SET UP BY THE COUNCIL**

RESOLVED:

1. That Councillor Bell replace the late Councillor Fitzgerald as a full member of the Environment Scrutiny Panel.
2. That Councillor Johnston replace the late Councillor Fitzgerald as a full member and Councillor Love be appointed as a Deputy, on the Resources Scrutiny Panel
3. That Councillor Fall replace Councillor Barratt as a full Member and Councillor Barratt replace Councillor Fall as a Deputy Member, on the Social Issues Scrutiny Panel.

The meeting commenced at 7pm and concluded at 9.15pm

The Mayor