

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 22nd November, 2023 at 6:30pm in Franklin Hall, Spilsby. These are notes of the meeting until approved by the Council as a true record.

Present:

Cllrs T Kemp (Mayor), M Gibson, L Marsh, W Rose, T Taylor, D Mangion and M Wragg. Town Clerk - J Sargent and Deputy Town Clerk - S Thomas.

There were 2 residents in attendance.

Public Session

No questions were put to the Town Council.

To receive a report from Lincolnshire County Councillor W Bowkett

County Cllr Bowkett submitted apologies due to illness and emailed a report, distributed to Councillors prior to the meeting.

To receive a report from District County Councillor E Marsh

District Cllr E Marsh submitted apologies citing work commitments and emailed a report, distributed to Councillors prior to the meeting.

With no further matters it was resolved unanimously to move into formal session.

96. Welcome

Cllr T Kemp welcomed all present, reminding Councillors about emergency exits and safety protocols; to turn phones off and appropriate conduct.

97. Apologies

It was resolved unanimously to accept apologies from Cllrs L Day (Deputy Mayor), A Day & B Rose; East Lindsey District Councillor E Marsh and Lincolnshire County Councillor W Bowkett.

98. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Mangion - item 9b. Cllr L Marsh - item 19.

99. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 25th October 2023.

With no matters arising, it was resolved unanimously to accept the minutes for October as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

100. To approve the accounts for October 2023.

With no matters arising the accounts for October were resolved unanimously.

101. To receive a bank reconciliation for October 2023.

The Clerk provided a bank reconciliation to keep Councillors up to date with the Council's financial status, for information purposes only.

102. To review Policies:

a. Grant Award Policy

With no matters arising it was resolved unanimously to adopt the policy.

103. To receive brief reports from the Town Mayor, Town Council's working groups, representatives on outside bodies and the Town Clerk.

Mayor's Report

Cllr Kemp attended a Remembrance Day service at St. James and praised the vicar on the service, which was well attended.

Recreation Ground

Cllr Taylor mentioned that the Recreation Ground Committee had now set up a crowdfunding page to raise funds for the PlayZone, SkatePark & Pavilion Development project - <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/spilsby-playzone>. Cllr Taylor mentioned there was plenty of positivity regarding the project, especially from the Football Association and the Football Foundation. The project was also in the local newspaper.

Cllr Kemp donated his Mayor's allowance to the project which the committee are grateful for and send their thanks.

Grammar School Foundation

Cllr Gibson reported that notices had been distributed to individual students for grant applications. The next meeting is scheduled for February.

Poorlands

Cllr L Marsh reported that there had been no meetings since the last Town Council Meeting.

Twinning

No update provided.

Good Neighbourhood Scheme

Cllr Gibson reported that the next 'Afternoon Tea' will be in January, with a date yet to be decided. The afternoon tea planned for 8th December is cancelled due to Franklin Hall being booked.

Cllr Bowkett reported information on people who are considered a fall risk, Cllr Gibson circulated the information via email with the group.

Community Speedwatch

No report received.

Spilsby Business Partnership

The partnership has now disbanded.

Town Clerk's Report

The Clerk emailed a report to Councillors prior to the meeting. The Clerk reported receiving a grant application form from ELDC. Sand, sand bags, items for the rose garden and benches are all listed on the grant application.

LIVES sent a letter of thanks to the Town Council for a recent donation. The letter included information on how LIVES are prioritising the area for the recruitment of new volunteers. A letter of thanks was also received from the British Legion for the Remembrance Day services at St. James and RAF Spilsby; and the poppy display around the town. The Friends of RAF Spilsby sent some pictures from the service; the Clerk advised these would be put on the website.

Two members of the public arrived at 6:45pm. Cllr Kemp suspended Standing Orders to allow for questions, however, as no questions were put to the Town Council, the formal meeting resumed.

104. To consider Grant applications from:

- a. Spilsby U3A
- b. Spilsby Twinning Association

The Clerk clarified there was just under £3,000 left in the budget for donations. Cllr Gibson advised on the number of times a group can submit an application in a 12-month period as detailed in the policy.

Spilsby U3A submitted an application to help with printing costs to publish a leaflet to include a map, walking trails, historical information and pictures of the town. Cllr Kemp advised U3A use Franklin Hall and are a benefit to the town.

Cllr Mangion explained how the Twinning Association represent the town internationally as an ambassadorial function and that the group largely cover their own costs. The Clerk mentioned the application submitted does detail that it is the town that is twinned, not the Twinning Association. The Twinning Association had

recently received a grant to assist in the visit of residents from the twin town in Germany - Bassum. This application is to help with the costs of the visit of residents from the twin town in France - Fresnay-sur-Sarthe.

Cllr Mangion suggested reinstating a larger donation to the Twinning Association within the budget. The Clerk advised that the group had not submitted a request for funds in the previous 4 years and was therefore removed from the budget. Cllr Marsh suggested raising the profile of the Twinning Association and the visits to the town to help with interest, funding and membership.

Cllr Kemp suggested meeting with the Twinning Association to find a better way forward to promote the group and the town. The Clerk suggested working with the Events Team.

It was resolved unanimously to donate £250.00 to Spilsby U3A and £250.00 to Spilsby Twinning Association.

105. To receive an update on the Christmas Market preparations for 2nd December, 2023 Cllr Rose was not in attendance to provide an update. It was mentioned that the market, Cracker Day and the Festive Fabuloso were all on the same day which was seen as a positive, to bring people to the town and keep them here for longer with a greater offer. Cllr Kemp advised that the preparation had been going well

106. To receive an update on the Recognition Day Celebration event.

Cllr Marsh reported that Taylor's have offered to sponsor the whole event, including the awards, as long as they can have a stall at the event to advertise the business. Cllr Marsh advised the next step is to look at a date to hold the event.

107. To consider Spilsby Events Team insurance costs.

The Clerk sought clarification on where to allocate the insurance costs within the budget. The insurance covers 8 events throughout the year. Allocating the costs to the tourism budget would free up some funds to support the costs of the Christmas Market. Cllr Gibson mentioned that the group are still establishing themselves, and may require support in the early stages. As they progress, they may become self-sufficient. Cllr Kemp advised there are Councillors on the committee and that the group will work with the Town Council. It was resolved unanimously to allocate the insurance costs to the tourism and event budget.

108. To consider employing a cleaner for the office and chamber.

The Clerk informed Councillors that the current cleaning contractor will be ending their contract at the end of 2023. The Clerk had been recommended a cleaner, however, she is not self-employed so would have to be set up as an employee of the Town Council. It was resolved unanimously to ask the hall manager if cleaning the office and chamber could be included in our rent.

109. To consider the ELDC asset transfer request:

a. The future of the public toilets.

District Councillor E Marsh advised that the public toilets are under review by a scrutiny panel and could potentially be closed by ELDC. The ongoing costs were provided; the Clerk mentioned to cover the costs would mean a 5% increase in the precept. Cllr Kemp commented that the public toilets would be a liability.

Cllr Taylor commented ELDC are not obligated to provide public toilets and that if transferred to the Town Council, the public toilets would be refurbished and subsidised over 3-5 years to assist with the management and maintenance. Cllr Taylor recommended waiting to see the results of the scrutiny report and that the removal of public toilets would contribute to demise of the town centre.

Cllr Mangion suggested the public toilets in their current state were not fit for use but do provide a social benefit. Cllr Marsh suggested deferring until the scrutiny panel report is available.

Cllr Wragg referenced Alford Town Council taking on their public toilets and car parks from ELDC, however, it's likely that the costs to cover the management and maintenance would mean an increase to their precept.

It was resolved unanimously to defer until a later date when the scrutiny panel report is available and to put to the residents in the Explorer magazine or at the Annual Town Meeting.

a. Previous transfer agreement.

A representative of ELDC contacted the Clerk to confirm if a previous agreement made by the Town Council in 2021 to accept the transfer of the Rose Garden, the Orchard in Post Office Lane car park and two portions of land on Ashby Meadows.

Cllr Taylor questioned whether the Town Council maintain these areas. The Clerk confirmed ELDC maintain them, however, the Town Council have contributed to the maintenance by installing

benches and planters with ELDC's approval. The Clerk also advised that whilst they belong to ELDC, the pride team can help maintain the areas.

It was resolved unanimously to reject the transfer and leave ownership with ELDC.

b. Remaining assets.

It was resolved unanimously to reject the transfer of the remaining assets, including car parks, the Sir John Franklin statue and other portions of amenity land.

110. To consider options to purchase of the Beehive, High Street

The Clerk explained that the Town Council is not currently in a position to be able to buy the property, however, it's about exploring possible options to help and be a driving force for improvement in the town. Cllr Taylor advised the building has

recently come up for sale. It has historical value and it could be refurbished for many uses, such as a shop and flats or office or to house new public toilets.

Cllr Kemp said it would have both a social and economic benefit.

The Clerk has been in contact with the Heritage Officer about properties in despair in the town's conservation area, including the Beehive with a view to encouraging owners to make the necessary improvements to their buildings. It was resolved unanimously to monitor and liaise with ELDC and LCC to find a way forward.

111. To consider change of start time of Full Council Meetings to 6pm.

Councillors discussed how the earlier start time of 6:30pm had worked well. The Clerk confirmed it was the earliest a meeting could start. It was resolved by majority to change the start time of meetings to 6pm.

112. Financial Planning 2024-25

a. To consider a budget and precept for 2024-25.

The Clerk advised that ELDC are likely to issue a deadline in January to submit the precept request and therefore had to be included on this agenda. The Clerk advised the draft budget included a 5% increase on the precept which would balance the draft budget. However, there were items to consider such as the restoration of the reserves - to comply with the Financial Regulations, further funds towards the play area redevelopment, an increase of office maintenance costs for redecoration of the office and chamber (as per the tenancy).

The Clerk provided figures on the percent increase and the increase per household (a band D property) to help with the consideration of the precept. Councillors discussed the rate of inflation being at 5% and how much the Council want to achieve over the next financial year. Cllr Kemp advised being more cautious this year with regard to a potential increase to help put the Town Council's finances in a better position.

It was resolved unanimously to increase the precept by 7.5% to account for inflation, rising costs and projects the Town Council want to deliver in 2024-25.

113. To resolve to exclude the public and the media to discuss confidential matters in accordance with The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

Cllr Kemp advised members of the public would have to leave at this stage.

114. To consider applications for co-option.

Councillors considered an application from E Marsh to be co-opted on to the Town Council. It was

resolved unanimously to co-opt E Marsh onto the Council. All staffing matters were resolved unanimously.

With no further matters, the Cllr Kemp closed the meeting at 7:40pm.