

SUTTON COLDFIELD INTERIM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

18:00 TUESDAY 15 MARCH 2016

MERE GREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE

PRESENT:-

Chairman: Councillor Anne Underwood, BCC

Vice Chairman: Ken Rushton (SCIRG)

Elizabeth Allison (Sutton Coldfield Civic Society), Councillor David Barrie, Councillor Lyn Collin, Councillor Meirion Jenkins, Paul Long (SCIRG), Councillor Ewan Mackey, Councillor David Pears, Councillor Rob Pocock, Stephen Smallwood (SCIRG) and Councillor Ken Wood.

IN ATTENDANCE:-

Nick Randle OBE, FILCM – Interim Parish Clerk

Ifor Jones – Service Director, Localisation, BCC

Olive O’Sullivan – Project Officer, BCC

Beverly Edmead – Community Governance Manager, BCC

Steve Hollingworth -Assistant Director, Sports Events and Parks, BCC

(There were approx. 35 residents present)

NOTICE OF RECORDING

The Chairman advised that under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, members of the press and public were entitled to record the proceedings of the Parish Council, and requested that notice was given prior to recordings being made. The Interim Parish Clerk indicated that he was recording the meeting.

2. NOTES OF 16 FEBRUARY 2016 PARISH COUNCIL STEERING GROUP MEETING

The Notes of the Parish Council Steering Group Meeting, held on 16 February 2016, having been circulated to Steering Group members, were received and noted.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None submitted.

4. APPOINTED COUNCILLORS

The Interim Parish Council noted the names of those appointed via the Birmingham City Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) Order 2015 as the Council’s Representatives for the period up to the election of Councillors on 5 May 2016; these being:-

Mrs Elizabeth Allison; Councillor David Barrie; Councillor Lyn Collin; Councillor Meirion Jenkins; Mr Paul Long; Councillor Ewan Mackey; Councillor David Pears; Councillor Rob Pocock; Mr Ken Rushton; Mr Stephen Smallwood; Councillor Anne Underwood and Councillor Ken Wood.

5. APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM PARISH CLERK

The appointment of Nick Randle OBE FILCM as Interim Parish Clerk was confirmed. Members welcomed Nick Randle and wished him well in his role as Interim Parish Clerk.

6. CODE OF CONDUCT

The draft copy of the Code of Conduct for Sutton Coldfield Parish Council was submitted:-
(See Paper No. 1)

RESOLVED:-

That the Code of Conduct be adopted for Sutton Coldfield Parish Council.

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

None declared.

8. NAME OF COUNCIL

The Interim Parish Council was advised that a motion would be brought to the first meeting Of the Council following elections to the Parish Council to adopt the status of Town Council. The Interim Parish Council was advised that if this motion is carried, a motion would be brought that the Town Council Chairman be designated the office of "Town Mayor".

Following a show of hands, the recommendation was agreed.

9. STANDING ORDERS FOR THE CONDUCT OF COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Standing Orders for Sutton Coldfield Parish Council were submitted:-

(See Paper No. 2)

RESOLVED:-

That the Standing Orders for the Conduct of Council and Committee meetings be adopted, with the following amendment to the rules of debate at public meetings:-

If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the amended motion becomes the substantive motion.

10. INVOLVING THE PUBLIC IN THE WORK OF SUTTON COLDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

The following report of the Interim Parish Clerk was submitted:-

(See Paper No. 3)

The Interim Parish Clerk briefly advised of several suggestions and initiatives for resident engagement and participation, and following discussion, the following recommendations were agreed:-

RESOLVED:-

1. That the Council adopted the practise of having a short Public Question Time in relation to items on the Agenda at all Council meetings.
2. That the Council would provide an annual report every year after the financial year end and published newsletters on a two to four times a year basis.
3. That the Council would provide regular news releases on relevant topics and that these would be drafted by the Parish/Town Clerk in the first instance and then approved by the Chairman and two other Councillors.
4. That the Council considered the provision of regular Councillor surgeries in local centres to interact directly with the community.
5. That the Council adopted this overall approach to communication with the public in the first instance.

11. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

1. The Chairman advised that up to 20 minutes would be allowed for members of the Public to ask questions, make representations or give evidence in connection with items on the Agenda. (Members of the public may speak for up to 2 minutes.)
2. Referring to Agenda item 14, a member of the public requested that consideration was given by the Parish Council to support the Birmingham Tree for Life Planting Programme with schools in the district and that provision was made for this when identifying priorities.
3. A member of the public provided details of the Arts Trail Event taking place on 18/19 June, and requested that consideration was given by the Parish Council to provide funding for some of the activities.
4. A member of the public expressed disappointment at the members' allowance and expenses proposed, including the support costs for the role of Mayor, and sought assurances that no financial decisions would be made until the Parish Councillors had been elected.

12. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Financial Regulations for Sutton Coldfield Parish Council were submitted:-
(See Paper No. 4)

RESOLVED:-

That the Financial Regulations for Sutton Coldfield Parish Council be adopted with the following amendment to Budgetary Control and Authority to Spend:-

Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:

- the council for all items over £10,000;
- a duly delegated committee of the council for items over £2,500 or

- the Clerk, in conjunction with Chairman of Council or Chairman of the appropriate committee, for any items below £2,500.

13. INTERIM FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The following report of the Interim Parish Clerk was submitted:-
(See Paper No. 5)

Following discussion, the recommendations outlined in the report were agreed:-

RESOLVED:-

1. That the Interim Financial Arrangements using Birmingham City Council to provide banking and financial administration services be approved until the Parish Council's infrastructure was in place.
2. That the Chairman and Deputy Chairman were nominated as the two Authoriser Councillors copied on payment requests for approved purchases thereby meeting the authorisation requirements in the Council's Financial Regulations.
3. That the Interim Parish Clerk be authorised to procure and implement a Financial management system based on RBS Omega at a total cost of £8,000.
4. That the Interim Parish Clerk be authorised to establish banking arrangements for the Council with Unity Trust Bank.
5. That the Interim Parish Clerk/RFO be authorised to take out appropriate insurance on behalf of the Council.

14. BUDGETS AND PRECEPT FOR 2016/17

The following report of the Interim Parish Clerk was submitted:-
(See Paper No. 6)

Concerns were raised regarding a number of the costs detailed in the report, and felt that further consideration must be given to these once the Parish Council was elected.

Following further discussion, it was:-

RESOLVED:-

1. That the Interim Parish Council initially adopted the proposed interim budget to provide for the establishment of the Council.
2. That the additional spending priorities for the current year and for the strategic period, during a process to be held as part of the proposed summer school in June and July of this year when Elected Members could define long term goals and identify spending targets.
3. This could be supported by a community consultation at the Annual Meeting of Electors in June.
4. This expenditure should be considered in conjunction with any asset transfer discussions that may take place at that time.

15. SUTTON COLDFIELD TOWN HALL

The following report of the Service Director, Localisation was submitted:-

(See Paper No. 7)

Mr. Jones, Service Director, Localisation drew Members' attention to the options and recommendations to be considered.

Following discussion, a number of concerns were raised. The options and recommendations proposed were put to the vote, and by a show of hands, were declared to be carried.

It was:-

RESOLVED:-

1. That the Interim Parish Council agreed that it wished to take an interest in the Town Hall either by means of the freehold transfer of the asset with an appropriate covenant for civic, cultural and community use or via a leasehold transfer.
2. That the business case evaluation of SCART be received at a future meeting of Parish Council following the election.
3. That the Interim Parish Council approved a joint commission of up to £10,000; £5,000 from the City Council and £5,000 from the Interim Parish Council to engage an appropriate agency to assist SCART to strengthen their business case to be presented to the Interim Parish Clerk for appraisal.
4. That the Interim Parish Clerk be instructed to commission or undertake an independent evaluation of the business case to be considered at a future meeting of the Parish Council.
5. That the Interim Parish Clerk be instructed to engage with City Council Officers to consider the feasibility and practicalities of a freehold transfer of the asset to the Parish Council. And that any transfer would be subject to appropriate best value and risk management considerations, and for the Interim Parish Clerk to provide a decision report on the way forward in relation to the Town Hall to the June meeting of the Parish Council.
6. That the Interim Parish Council noted that there may be TUPE implications SCART would need to consider as the potential management agency and Lease, and that this would need to be subject to City Council Cabinet approval as well as consultation with Trade Unions and staff (June 2016).
7. This would also apply to the Parish Council should it opt to run and manage the facility directly.
8. That the Interim Parish Council instructed the Interim Parish Clerk to review options around a potential lease on CAT terms, and to seek property and legal advice on this, and to bring forward a CAT policy for agreement at the June 2016 Parish Council meeting but only if the SCART business case had been deemed fit for purpose by the Parish Council.
9. That the Interim Parish Council approved the Interim Parish Clerk working with the appropriate City Council Officers and SCART developed a capital investment approach looking at the potential for SCART to raise funds as a charitable body to invest in

modernisation of the facilities at the town hall and for the Parish Council to raise funding for structural repairs and building refurbishment through Prudential Borrowing.

10. That should the Parish Council decide to directly manage the town hall, then The Parish Council would be wholly responsible for the costs of structural Repairs, refurbishment and modernisation of the building.
11. The Parish Council would need to consider Prudential Borrowing for the total Cost of repairs, refurbishment and modernisation, as well as any potential Grant funding (e.g. Heritage Lottery Funding) for the works.

16. RECRUITMENT OF A PERMANENT TOWN CLERK

The following report of the Interim Parish Clerk was submitted:-

(See Paper No. 7)

Members felt to would be useful for a small working group to work with the Interim Parish Clerk on the recruitment process.

It was:-

RESOLVED:-

That the Interim Parish Clerk be authorised to commence the recruitment process for a permanent Parish Clerk and that Parish Council sought to recruit at an appropriate point on LC4 mid-range with potential to reach upper LC4 as the Council became more established or if a particularly outstanding candidate presented themselves. That a shortlisting and interview panel be appointed at the Annual Parish meeting.

17. OFFICE ACCOMMODATION AND INITIAL STAFFING

The following report of the Interim Parish Clerk was submitted:-

(See Paper No. 8)

It was:-

RESOLVED:-

1. That the Interim Parish Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman be authorised to conduct further investigations, with a view to obtaining suitable retail based accommodation for the Parish Council, and that once identified, to negotiate an appropriate lease and make arrangements for the premises to be fitted out for occupation.
2. That the Interim Parish Clerk be authorised to proceed with the recruitment of an Administrative Assistant for the Parish Council.

18. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (ADMINISTRATION) REGULATIONS

The Interim Parish Clerk advised of the requirement to join the local government pension scheme as an admitted body so that the Council could meet its obligations to provide a pension scheme by offering the Local Government Pension Scheme to all future employees of the Parish Council

It was:-

RESOLVED:-

To apply to become an admitted body so that future employees of the Parish Council were designated as eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

19. PARISH COUNCIL LOGO AND BRANDING

The following report of the Interim Parish Clerk was submitted:-

(See Paper No. 9)

Following discussion, it was:-

RESOLVED:-

That the Interim Parish Clerk be authorised to commission initial design work to develop a branding scheme for the Council and that the design proposals were brought to a future Parish Council meeting for consideration.

20. WEBSITE DOMAIN NAME

The following report of the Interim Parish Clerk was submitted:-

(See Paper No. 10)

Following discussion, it was:-

RESOLVED:-

1. That the Interim Parish Council approved that its website should be named suttoncoldfieldtowncouncil.gov.uk
2. That the Interim Parish Clerk be authorised to commission an internet host and website provider for the Parish Council and to progress work to build the pages for the proposed website.
3. The Interim Parish Council endorsed the temporary arrangements that had been made for Birmingham City Council to host web pages for the Parish Council until arrangements were in place for the Parish Council to host its own website.

21. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

It was agreed that the appointment of committees would be deferred until after the Parish Council elections in May.

22. DELEGATIONS OF POWERS TO COMMITTEES AND OFFICERS

The following report of the Interim Parish Clerk was submitted:-

(See Paper No. 11)

It was:-

RESOLVED:

That the delegation of certain decisions to officers in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman in the period between the March and May 2016 meetings of the Council be approved.

That the adoption of a Scheme of Delegations to committees be deferred until after elections to the Parish Council in May 2016.

23. APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

It was agreed that Mrs Elizabeth Allison (Sutton Coldfield Civic Society) be nominated as the Parish Councillor representative to the City Council Standards Committee until the elections to the Parish Council election in May 2016.

24. MEMBERSHIP OF NALC AND WALC

The following report of the Interim Parish Clerk was submitted:-

(See Paper No. 12)

Following discussion it was:-

RESOLVED:-

That the Interim Parish Council applies for membership of the National Association of Local Councils and Warwickshire Association of Local Councils from 1 April 2016.

25. TIMETABLE OF EVENTS: MARCH TO SEPTEMBER 2016

The timetable of events was received and noted.

The meeting closed at 1943hrs.