

MINUTES OF THE **MEETING** OF THE **STRATEGIC PLANNING FORUM** HELD ON **WEDNESDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2019** AT 7.00 P.M. AT THE TOWN HALL, GREAT WESTERN HOUSE, 9 DEVON SQUARE, NEWTON ABBOT

**PRESENT:** Councillors C Parker (Chairman) Presiding

P Bullivant	R Jenks (Mayor)
Mrs K Crout	Mrs A Jones
D Corney-Walker	M Joyce (Dep Mayor)
D Howe	

Councillors In attendance:

C Davieson	B Hayes
R Hall	

In attendance: Philip Rowe – Town Clerk

Alex Robinson – Committee Administrator

**SP1. CHAIRMAN OF STRATEGIC PLANNING FORUM**

Nominations were received for the election of the Chairman of the Strategic Planning Forum for the year 2019/2020.

Accordingly, it was

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Colin Parker be elected Chairman of the Strategic Planning Forum for the year 2019/2020.

**SP2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Mrs Carol Bunday and Mike Hocking and Sam Scott, Deputy Town Clerk.

**SP3. VICE-CHAIRMAN OF STRATEGIC PLANNING FORUM**

Nominations were received for the appointment of the Vice-Chairman of the Strategic Planning Forum for the year 2019/2020.

Accordingly, it was

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Mike Hocking be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Strategic Planning Forum for the year 2019/2020.

**SP4. INTERESTS**

None declared.

**SP5. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Planning Forum held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018 were received and signed as a correct record.

**SP6. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Members gave due consideration to the Terms of Reference Accordingly, it was,

**RESOLVED** that, the Terms of Reference be hereby, approved and adopted for the year 2018/19, subject to minor amendment.

#### **SP7. BRUNEL WARD - VACANCY**

The Chairman invited the Mayor to update Members on the discussions he had had with fellow Members regarding the filling of the vacant seat in Brunel Ward. The Mayor, Councillor Richard Jenks, informed Members of the wide range of options for the filling of the vacant seat as suggested by fellow Members. In summarising the comments, Councillor Jenks noted the breadth of views and was keen to reach a consensus of opinion. The Chairman invited the Town Clerk to remind Members of the necessary protocol by which a vacant seat must be filled, and in these circumstances by co-option rather than by an election in view of the seat not having been filled at the elections held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019.

The Chairman thanked the Mayor for his summary update and the Clerk for his advice on procedure and invited Members to consider the practical options for filling the vacant seat for the Brunel Ward.

Members made a variety of suggestions and points which the Chairman drew to a consensus of option. Following a lengthy discussion, the Chairman thanked all Members for their comments and for reaching a balanced view. Accordingly, it was:

**RECOMMENDED** that the Council on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2019 delegate authority to the Town Clerk to advertise the vacant seat for Brunel Ward and invite candidates suitably qualified residents to apply for co-option onto the Town Council.

#### **SP8. VISION, PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES**

The Chairman referred to the document, previously circulated and noted that it reflected the Council's current vision, priorities and objectives to date, but he invited Members to review the priorities for the Council and to make suggestions for new objectives for the next four years and beyond. Following a discussion among members it was suggested that the Council's Priorities remained as set out but that they would be re-ordered on the document to reflect their relevance. The Chairman noted that the financial implications of the Vision, Priorities and Objectives would be considered at the next meeting of the Strategic Planning Forum on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2019. Accordingly, it was;

**AGREED** that the revised Vision, Priorities and Objectives document, be hereby approved subject to minor amendment and be submitted to the Council for adoption.

#### **SP9. NEWTON'S PLACE PROJECT**

**A.** The Chairman invited the Town Clerk to update Members on the Newton's Place Project. The Clerk reported that the project was progressing well however there had been some issues which had caused a delay in the programme. The excavation of the 'lift pit' had revealed an archaeological find and the base of the front fascia wall was found to be much wider below ground requiring the redesign of the entrance and lift to be reengineered to accommodate a move of 150mm (6"). There had also been some unexpected works, including significant repairs to the parapet behind the front fascia wall. The schedule for the forthcoming week would include the completion of

the interior steelwork and the installation of the staircase to the first floor. The Project Manager is monitoring the work programme closely to minimise any delay to the completion. Once the construction contract is complete, the Museum Designers will fit out the exhibition space and move the objects into place. Hugh Harrison, specialist conservator has been booked to assist with the move of the Sandford Orleigh Screen.

The Clerk tabled a summary of the project costs, circulated for information. He highlighted the distinction between the construction costs and the additional costs associated with the project but not included in the Heritage Lottery Fund Grant; including the restoration of the font, pulpit and Chancel ceiling. The costs would be covered by other grant funding and the contingency sum reserved for unplanned expenditure.

**B.** The Chairman invited Members to consider Phase II Development. Members discussed the previous Council's aspiration to develop the land adjacent to Newton's Place to house a number of community organisations relocated from the District Authority premises. The Clerk had met with Teignbridge District Council to discuss the possible transfer of a small portion of the adjacent Car Park into Town Council ownership, which would enable a more complimentary design to the new building. The previous Council had agreed in principle and had requested the Town Council undertake a working brief and feasibility study. Following the recent local elections, the Clerk had contacted the new Council Administration to pursue the enquiry and confirm the viability of the Phase II development. Following discussion among Members, all were in agreement in principle that Phase II should go ahead subject to its viability and the confirmed occupancy of local community groups relocated from the District Council. Accordingly, it was;

**AGREED** that the Council be recommended to undertake the development of Phase II of Newton's Place subject to confirmation from the District Council of its long-term viability and to take account of the future of the Alexandra Cinema.

**C.** The Chairman continued the discussion and requested Members consideration of the development of the 'Cultural Quarter'. Members discussed the extent of the 'cultural quarter' and the possible sites to be included, such as the Alexandra Cinema and the Pannier (Butter) Market and agreed that these should be included in the discussions with Teignbridge District Council. Following discussion among members, it was;

**AGREED** that the Council be recommended to delegate authority to the Town Clerk to resume his discussions with the District Council on the development of Phase II and to include the additional sites for development within the town's 'Cultural Quarter'.

## **SP10. STRATEGIC MATTERS**

A. The Chairman noted that the Council's key priorities had been discussed and agreed but that he invited Members to offer any additional ideas for consideration in the future. There being no additional priorities at that time, the Chairman thanked Members for their consideration.

B. The Chairman invited Councillor Mike Joyce to provide a verbal update on the District and County's response to the 'Climate Emergency'. Councillor Mike Joyce reported that he and Councillor Mrs Karen Crout had initially researched the matter of

Climate Emergency and the declarations made by both the District and County authorities recently. He reported that whilst the principal council would like the Town Council to make a similar declaration that he did not consider the Council to be in a position to do so immediately. Councillor Joyce informed Members that he and Councillor Mrs Crout would investigate the matter further within Town and Parish Councils to assess their collective response to the matter and would report back to the next meeting of the Strategic Planning Forum on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2019.

**AGREED** that Councillors Mike Joyce and Mrs Karen Crout investigate the matter of Climate Emergency further and would report back to the next meeting of the Strategic Planning Forum on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2019.

**SP11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2019.

CHAIRMAN