

Didcot Town Council

Extra-Ordinary meeting of Council Monday 12th August 2019 at 7.30pm Main Hall, Didcot Civic Hall



Minutes

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a true and correct record by the next meeting of this committee.

PRESENT

Councillors:

Mr A Dearlove
Mrs E Hards
Mr N F Harris
Ms V Haval
Mr S Hewerdine
Mr A Hudson
Mr M Khan



Mrs D Macdonald
Mrs M Mallows
Mr M McNeill
Mr J Moody
Mr D Rouane
Dr P Siggers
Mr A Thompson
Ms M Walsh
Ms C Wilson

Officers: Mrs J Wheeler (Town Clerk)
Mr T Hudson (Deputy Town Clerk)

Three members of the public in attendance.

Public Participation

None

53. To receive apologies

Councillors Mr P Davies; Dr A Sandiford; Mr A Macdonald and Mr P Giesberg tendered apologies.

Cllr Mr S Hewerdine enters the meeting.

54. To receive declarations of interests

None

55. To agree the dates of the meetings of the Civic Hall Management Committee

The suggested dates were circulated with the agenda: Monday 30 September 2019; Wednesday 23rd October 2019; Wednesday 22nd January 2020 and Wednesday 25th March 2020.

It was proposed by Cllr Dr P Siggers; seconded by Cllr Mrs E Hards:

RESOLVED TO confirm these dates for the future meetings of the Civic Hall Management Committee.

56. To approve and seal the Service Level Agreement for legal services from Oxfordshire County Council

It was clarified that this agreement would be at a competitive hourly rate but also the County service has an expertise in dealing with local Government matters. There may be occasions where a conflict of interest would require Didcot Town Council to source a different solicitor but most matters would be covered by the County.

It was proposed by Cllr Mr J Moody; seconded by Cllr Ms M Walsh:

RESOLVED to approve the Service Level Agreement which is reviewed annually.

It was **AGREED** to remove the name of the Town Clerk from the agreement but just state a generic "Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer".

57. To consider the recommendation from the Civic Hall Management Committee to appoint Parkinson Practice to liaise with the VAT office

The Town Clerk had circulated a pack of reports with the agenda to try to give all Councillors the background to this issue and the current situation. The matter is complex but the VAT office has given a final deadline of November 2019 for the Council to file the sums they think they owe. The matter was discussed at a meeting of the Civic Hall Management Committee. Steve Parkinson would liaise on behalf of Didcot Town Council with the VAT office.

The Town Clerk would seek clarification from SODC on the business rates for the Civic Hall, both back-dated and current.

It was debated whether it would be better to appoint a new adviser but the deadline in November was a final deadline – a new adviser may struggle to fully understand the issues in this time - whereas the Parkinson Practice was already well acquainted with the issues. Cllr Mr D Rouane stated that the VAT office usually only goes back four years but if they had any misgivings about this situation they could go back further. He recommended meeting this November deadline. He also felt that Steve Parkinson had given good advice which Didcot Town Council had failed to follow.

Cllr Mr D Rouane proposed an amendment - that a maximum budget of £10,000 was set after which the project would need to be reviewed at Full Council if not resolved. This amendment was accepted.

It was proposed by Cllr Dr P Siggers; seconded by Cllr Mrs E. Hards:

RESOLVED to appoint the Parkinson Practice to represent Didcot Town Council in calculating sums owed to the VAT office (if any) and to liaise on behalf of Didcot Town Council before the November deadline. This appointment is subject to a maximum budget of £10,000.

Recorded Vote

	For	Against	Abstention
Cllr P Davies	-	-	-
Cllr A Dearlove	x		
Cllr P Giesberg	-	-	-
Cllr E Hards	x		
Cllr N Harris		x	
Cllr V Haval	x		
Cllr S Hewerdine		x	
Cllr A Hudson		x	
Cllr M Khan	x		
Cllr A Macdonald	-	-	-
Cllr D Macdonald	x		
Cllr M Mallows	x		

Cllr M McNeill	x		
Cllr J Moody	x		
Cllr D Rouane	x		
Cllr A Sandiford	-	-	-
Cllr P Siggers	x		
Cllr A Thompson	x		
Cllr M Walsh	x		
Cllr C Wilson	x		

58. To consider and approve the advertisement, job description and salary range for a new role – Planning and Environment Officer

The principle of creating a new role had been discussed at the July meeting of the Personnel and Administration Committee – however the detail was still to be clarified. As the Deputy Town Clerk was due to leave by the end of the week, the advertisement, job description and job specification was circulated via email to all members of Personnel and Administration Committee to gain permission to put this on the agenda.

An amendment to the job title was proposed by Cllr Mrs M Mallows; seconded by Cllr Mr A Hudson to “Trainee Deputy Town Clerk” with special responsibility for planning and environment.

This amendment was not accepted by Cllr Mr M Khan.

Recorded Vote

	For	Against	Abstention
Cllr P Davies	-	-	-
Cllr A Dearlove			x
Cllr P Giesberg	-	-	-
Cllr E Hards		x	
Cllr N Harris	x		
Cllr V Haval		x	
Cllr S Hewerdine	x		

Cllr A Hudson	x		
Cllr M Khan		x	
Cllr A Macdonald	-	-	-
Cllr D Macdonald		x	
Cllr M Mallows	x		
Cllr M McNeill		x	
Cllr J Moody		x	
Cllr D Rouane		x	
Cllr A Sandiford	-	-	-
Cllr P Siggers		x	
Cllr A Thompson		x	
Cllr M Walsh		x	
Cllr C Wilson		x	

The amendment fell. Cllr Mr N Harris left the meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr Mr M Khan; seconded by Cllr Mrs D Macdonald:

RESOLVED to approve the job advertisement; job description and person specification for the Planning and Environment Officer position as circulated.

Recorded Vote

	For	Against	Abstention
Cllr P Davies	-	-	-
Cllr A Dearlove		x	
Cllr P Giesberg	-	-	-
Cllr E Hards	x		
Cllr N Harris	-	-	-
Cllr V Haval	x		
Cllr S Hewerdine		x	

Cllr A Hudson		x	
Cllr M Khan	x		
Cllr A Macdonald	-	-	-
Cllr D Macdonald	x		
Cllr M Mallows		x	
Cllr M McNeill	x		
Cllr J Moody	x		
Cllr D Rouane	x		
Cllr A Sandiford	-	-	-
Cllr P Siggers	x		
Cllr A Thompson	x		
Cllr M Walsh	x		
Cllr C Wilson	x		

59. To consider a motion that Didcot Town Council recognise, promote and partake in Zero Emissions Day 2019

The following motion was proposed by Cllr Mr P Davies.

Motion to be proposed by Cllr Phil Davies: that Didcot Town Council recognise, promote and partake in Zero Emissions Day 2019.

The council notes that:

1. The council unanimously resolved to declare Climate Emergency on the 24th June 2019 and set targets to achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2030 and Carbon Zero by 2050.
2. Zero Emissions Day 21st September 2019 is an environmental challenge.
 - Zero Emissions Day, also known as 'ZeDay', is a worldwide movement that aims to encourage the use of renewable energy sources, as opposed to finite fossil fuels.
 - Started in 2008, founder Ken Wallace launched a website calling for September 21st to be a day where no fossil fuels are consumed.
 - The challenges stated for ZeDay are simple:
 - i. Don't use or burn oil, gas or coal.
 - ii. Minimize (or eliminate) your use of electricity generated by fossil fuels.
 - iii. Don't put anyone in harm's way: All essential and emergency services operate normally.
 - iv. Do your best, have fun, enjoy the day!
 - Since the launch of Zero Emissions Day, 11 years ago, the date has become one that has gained global recognition.

3. We, as a council, need to begin progressing towards Carbon Neutrality and onwards to Zero Carbon Emissions and ZeDay is a way to demonstrate this process has begun.

In light of the above, the Council agrees to:

- A. Recognise, promote and partake in Zero Emissions Day 2019
- B. Continue to participate in annual Zero Emission Days until Zero Carbon is achieved by the UK.

Cllr Mr S Hewerdine spoke to this motion in the absence of Cllr Davies. Zero Emissions Day or “Z” Day is on 21st September – having supported a climate change motion this motion is designed to add to the initial declaration.

Cllr Ms M Walsh proposed an amendment to this motion adding the words: *“by beginning an audit of DTC use of fossil fuels in its direct operations with a view to making DTC participation in Zero Emissions Day 2020 an effective example and encouragement to Didcot residents and businesses”*.

Cllr Mr S Hewerdine accepted the amendment and there was a discussion as how the audit of the Town Council assets could proceed. It was proposed by Cllr Mr S Hewerdine; seconded by Cllr Mr D Rouane:

RESOLVED to agree the motion with the amendment. The final agreed action is:

“In light of the above, the Council agrees to:

- A. Recognise, promote and partake in Zero Emissions Day 2019 by beginning an audit of DTC use of fossil fuels in its direct operations with a view to making DTC participation in Zero Emissions Day 2020 an effective example and encouragement to Didcot residents and businesses.
- B. Continue to participate in annual Zero Emissions Days until Zero Carbon is achieved by the UK.”

60. Didcot Garden Town Project and the report of the Council’s representative on the Didcot Garden Town Management Board.

Cllr Mr M Khan had circulated a summary. The next meeting of the Management Board was 16th September and there was a Community Engagement Event planned at Cornerstone in October. An up-date will be available after these events.

61. Questions to the Leader concerning the business of the Council in accordance with Standing Order 45.

Question by Cllr Dr P Siggers

Can the Leader report on the Summer Fayre?

Response: Firstly I would like to welcome Cllr Anthony Hudson for taking his place on the Environment Committee. I am delighted to report that the Summer Fayre was a success. It was well attended and feedback is positive. There were over 100 stalls; live music and a programme of events in the main arena. Thanks must go to all the Summer Fayre team who worked tirelessly to put this event on for the community. The date for the Fayre next year has been reserved provisionally as Saturday 1st August 2020. The finances are still to be confirmed.

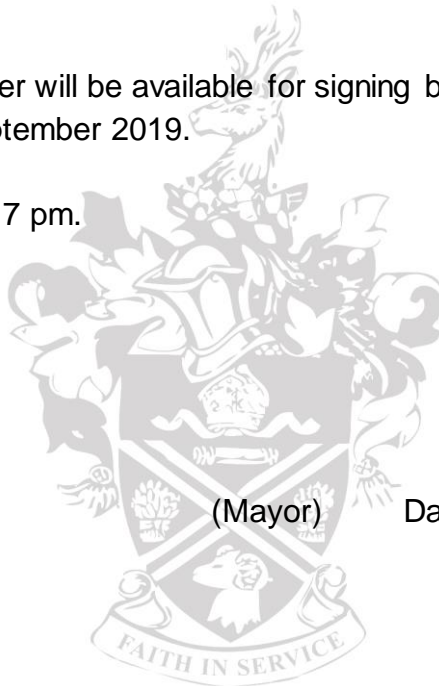
Question by Cllr Mr S Hewardine

Can the Leader confirm that the letter supporting the original motion for climate change will be prepared and signed before “Z” Day?

Response: The letter will be available for signing before or at the Full Council meeting on 2nd September 2019.

The meeting closed at 9:17 pm.

Signed:



(Mayor)

Date: