



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL, HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4 DECEMBER 2024 AT GREENACRE CENTRE, VALERIAN WAY, STOTFOLD AT 19:00**

**Present:**

Cllr Steve Buck (Mayor), Cllr Steve Hayes (Deputy Mayor), Cllr Liz Anderson, Cllr Janice Bendell, Cllr Mary Cooper, Cllr Jos Headington, Cllr Jane Hyde, Cllr Danny Matthews, Cllr Lisa Miller, Cllr Jon Smith, Cllr Nigel Venneear, Cllr Bryony Woods.

**Also Present:**

Cllr Helen Wightwick – CBC Ward Councillor  
6 Members of the public including 1 virtually

**In attendance**

Cllr S Dhaliwal (Virtually)  
E Payne - Town Clerk

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**341/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr S Dhaliwal and Cllr B Saunders.

**Decision: It was RESOLVED to accept apologies**

**342/24 DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

There were no disclosures of interest.

**342.1/24 Requests for Dispensation - Cllr Jonathan Smith**

A request for a dispensation was received from Cllr Smith for his role as the Co-Treasurer of the Stotfold Bowls Club and his employment by Cloudy IT.

**Decision: It was RESOLVED to approve the requests for dispensations for Cllr J Smith**

***Standing Orders were suspended whilst the Public Section was opened.***

**343/24 PUBLIC SECTION**

343/24.1 A member of the public questioned the autonomous authority of the Town Clerk to dismiss staff without consultation, the guidelines ensuring fair use of such authority, and whether these guidelines were followed in a recent dismissal case. The Town Council will respond to this inquiry via email after further review.

343/24.2 A member of the public provided additional information regarding the recent planning applications for land at the Greenacre Park. He discussed the development of 30 houses on Angelica Avenue and raised concerns about the road layout and infrastructure. He also highlighted historical context regarding land allocation for housing and community use.



**344/24 MEMBERS ON OTHER AUTHORITIES**

Cllr Wightwick reported on a motion that CBC passed to use the household support fund to provide £200 each to 2,200 pensioners not on pension credit, ensuring they receive financial assistance. CBC is currently being inspected by the social housing regulator, with a grading expected in the new year. A Landlord Assurance Board is being set up to give tenants more input into decision-making. The council is working on achieving £32 million in savings, including cuts in non-statutory services, which may impact community safety and other local services.

***Standing Orders were reinstated.***

**345/24 COUNCIL MINUTES**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting held on **6<sup>th</sup> November 2024**. They were advised that Cllr Talbot had been present at the meeting, which was not reflected in the Minutes of the meeting circulated ahead of the meeting. His attendance had now been updated in the Minutes to be signed at this meeting.

**Decision:** It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on **6<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

**346/24 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS COUNCIL MINUTES, FOR INFORMATION**

There was nothing to report.

**347/24 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CIVIC ATTENDANCE**

The Mayor thanked everyone who attended and helped at the Christmas lights switch on event and the Town Clerk was asked to Minute the Council's thanks to the staff for their efforts in putting on an amazing event.

**348/24 COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**348.1/24 Planning Committee – 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024**

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024 were received. There were no recommendations.

**348.2/24 Governance & Resources Committee – 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024**

The Minutes of the Governance & Resources Committee meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024 were received.

**Decision:** It was **RESOLVED** to:

- a) **Re-adopt the Code of Conduct**
- b) **Adopt the Member and Officer Protocol**

**348.3/24 Planning Committee – 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were received. There were no recommendations.



**348.4/24 Public Realm Committee – 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

The Minutes of the Public Realm Committee meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were received.

**Decision:** It was **RESOLVED** to:

- a) **Adopt the Exhumation Policy and Procedure**
- b) **Adopt the Beekeeping Policy**

**348.5/24 Community Engagement Committee - 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

The Minutes of the Community Engagement Committee meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were received. Cllr Talbot pointed out an error in the Minutes in relation to the date for Stotfest 2025. This will be corrected. There were no recommendations.

**349/24 FINANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT**

**349.1/24 Budget and Precept 2025-26**

Members received a report outlining a proposed budget and precept request. Members were advised there was a typo in item 4.5 of the report which should reach 4.96%.

**Decision:** It was **RESOLVED** to:

- a) **Ratify the reduction in EMRs as outlined in the report.**
- b) **Approve the Budget for 2025-26 as set out in the report.**
- c) **Request from CBC that they collect a precept of £951,481.**

**Action:** Town Clerk to advise CBC on precept request.

**349.2/24 Expenditure Report**

Members received a report outlining expenditure for the period.

**Decision:** It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the expenditure outlined in the report.

**349.3/24 Income Report**

Members received the income report which was noted.

**349.4/24 Income & Expenditure Report**

Members received the income and expenditure report which was noted.

**349.5/24 Earmarked Reserve Report**

Members received the earmarked reserve report which was noted.

**349.6/24 Interim Internal Audit**

Members received the interim internal audit.



**Decision:** It was **RESOLVED** to implement the following recommendations:

- a) Standing orders are reviewed to reflect Financial Regulations
- b) An Internal Control Statement is adopted.
- c) The asset register is reviewed with updated insurance values.

**350/24 SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

**Cllr Buck requested a recorded vote.**

Members received a request, supported by five councillors, in line with Standing Order 27 to review the decision to adopt the scheme of delegation. The proposal was to review the scheme of delegation due to concerns about the extent of power delegated to officers will be discussed in a future meeting.

**Decision:** It was **RESOLVED** to call an extraordinary meeting to review the scheme of delegation

**For:** Cllr Steve Buck (Mayor), Cllr Steve Hayes (Deputy Mayor), Cllr Liz Anderson, Cllr Janice Bendell, Cllr Mary Cooper, Cllr Jos Headington, Cllr Jane Hyde, Cllr Danny Matthews, Cllr Lisa Miller, Cllr Jon Smith, Cllr Nigel Venneear, Cllr Bryony Woods.

**Against:** None

**351/24 REPORTS**

**351.1/24 Wheeled Sports Facility - Consultation Feedback**

Members received the consultation feedback for the wheeled sports facility. The Town Council received significant public support for a new sports facility and will seek funding to move forward with the project.

**Decision:** It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with the wheeled sports facility.

**352/24 MEMBER'S ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY**

352/24.1 There was acknowledgement of community efforts, including litter clean-up by Duke of Edinburgh participants and support for local events like the Christmas Tree Festival.

**353/24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

29<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

**354/24 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

**Decision:** It was **RESOLVED** that in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.



**354.1/24 Cemetery Toilets**

Members received a confidential report with indicative costs for the cemetery toilet project. Members discussed the merits of rebuild versus replacement and felt that it was a matter for public consideration.

**DECISION:** It was **RESOLVED** to consider public consultation on the project at the next meeting.

**Action:** The Town Clerk to prepare public consultation questionnaire for Full Council 29 January 2024.

**354.2/24 Cemetery Chapel Lease**

Members received a confidential report on the cemetery chapel lease.

**Decision:** It was **RESOLVED** to retrospectively sign the chapel lease.

**SIGNED BY CHAIR:** .....

**MINUTES APPROVED (date):** .....

