

RAUNDS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
12 September 2023 at 7.30pm

PRESENT:

Cllr R Beattie, Cllr P Byrne (Chairman), Cllr O Curtis, Cllr A Fernley, Cllr H Howell, Cllr D Hughes, Cllr M Levell, Cllr R Levell and Cllr L Wilkes.

IN ATTENDANCE:

S Tucker, Clerk (Minutes)

FC60.23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr B Cross and Cllr T Swailes.

FC61.23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Notification of requests from members of the public to address the meeting in compliance with adopted protocol.

None received.

FC62.23 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

None received.

FC63.23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

COUNCILLORS ARE REMINDED THAT IF THEY HAVE EITHER A DISLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST OR OTHER INTEREST IN ANY ITEM THEN THEY SHOULD DECLARE THE INTEREST AND LEAVE THE MEETING FOR THAT ITEM.

Cllr H Howell declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item FC70.23.

FC64.23 Minutes: To confirm the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 8 August 2023.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 8 August 2023 be confirmed as a true record.

FC65.23 Committee Minutes: To receive the minutes of the following Committee Meetings:

- (i) **Planning Committee** held on 22 August 2023;

RESOLVED that:

The minutes of Planning Committee held on 22 August 2023 be noted.

FC66.23 Mayor's Report: To receive the Mayor's report.

The Mayor presented an overview of recent engagements attended.

RESOLVED that the digest of Mayoral activities for July-August 2023 be noted.

FC67.23 Unitary Councillors Report: To receive reports from Unitary Councillors.

It was noted that a meeting of NNC's Executive would be taking place on Thursday 14 September, with items for consideration including North Northamptonshire Greenway Strategy and Taxi de-zoning across the authority area.

It was also noted that NNC's Community Funding scheme had re-opened for applications.

RESOLVED that the Unitary Councillor reports be noted.

FC68.23 Grant Funding Application: To consider an application for grant funding from 2nd Raunds St Peters Brownies.

The Council reviewed the application for a grant of £200 to fund the purchase of storage equipment and noted that there remained sufficient funding in the 2023-24 community grants budget to meet the applicant's costs.

RESOLVED that the application be approved.

FC69.23 Shop Front Improvement Grant Application: To consider an application for a shop front improvement grant from Everyday Essentials.

The Council reviewed the application for a grant towards the re-rendering of the premises, and noted that there remained sufficient funding in the 2023-24 economic development budget to meet the maximum £500 award.

RESOLVED that the application be approved.

FC70.23 Postural Tachycardia Syndrome (PoTS) Awareness Day: To consider a request to mark PoTS Awareness Day on 25 October 2023.

The Council reviewed the request to mark PoTS Awareness Day and approved the lighting up of the Town Hall in purple on Wednesday 25 October 2023, along with sharing any associated publicity.

RESOLVED that the request be approved.

FC71.23 Saxon Hall Furniture: To consider purchase of replacement chairs for Saxon Hall.

The Council reviewed the proposal to purchase replacement chairs for Saxon Hall. It was agreed that full replacement of all 150 chairs was necessary given the deterioration of the existing stock and the bulk discount available.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) **The purchase of 150 replacement chairs for Saxon Hall be approved; and**
- (ii) **Authority be delegated to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Finance Committee and the Clerk to determine the appropriate budget from which to fund the replacement.**

FC72.23 Public Toilet Lease: To consider renewal of the Town Square public toilet lease.

The Council considered the report and agreed that based on existing monthly usage figures, the cost per use of the Town Square public toilet was increasingly difficult to justify, particularly in light of the increased charges proposed under the new lease arrangement.

It was also considered that the purchase of a standard replacement toilet unit at £54,325 (plus annual cleaning and maintenance commitments) did not offer a financially viable alternative.

It was therefore agreed that the rolling quarterly lease arrangement should be discontinued at the end of the next quarter, and that enquiries would be made with the provider to confirm arrangements for closure of the facility and removal of equipment. Following closure and securing of the unit, it was requested that signage be erected advising members of the public where alternative toilet facilities could be accessed.

RESOLVED that the Town Square public toilet lease be terminated.

FC73.23 *The press and public will be excluded from the following agenda items due to the confidential nature of the business under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960*

RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting.

FC74.23 Church Steps Project: To review the tenders received for the St Peters Church Steps Project.

The Council reviewed the tenders received and determined that the project should be placed on hold until such time as Planning Permission has been

approved and grant funding to finance the project has been successfully secured.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The indicative project costings be noted;**
- (ii) Heritage grant funding opportunities be pursued;**
- (iii) Appropriate safety signage be installed;**
- (iv) Professional advice be sought by the Clerk; and**
- (v) The remaining earmarked reserve allocated to the project be repurposed for the replacement Skate Park project.**

FC75.23 Clerk’s Update Report: To receive a confidential report from the Clerk.

The Clerk presented the confidential report.

Following a discussion, it was

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The flooring consultant’s report be noted;**
- (ii) The Church Wall repair be noted;**
- (iii) That an open tender process be conducted for the Council’s grounds maintenance contract.**

FC76.23 Establishment Report: To receive a confidential report from the Clerk.

The Clerk and the Chairman of Personnel Committee presented the confidential report.

Following a discussion, it was

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The proposed staffing arrangements, as amended, be approved; and**
- (ii) Authority be delegated to the Clerk and the Chairman of Personnel Committee to make the necessary amendments to Job Descriptions and employment contracts.**

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 21.24pm.

Approved: (Town Mayor)

Meeting date.....10 October 2023.....(Council)