

MINUTES OF THE EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING OF THE OTTERY ST MARY TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 29TH AUGUST 2017 AT 7PM AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, THE OLD CONVENT, 8 BROAD STREET, OTTERY ST MARY

PRESENT Mayor

Councillors

Councillor Dobson (Town Ward)

**Holmes, Edwards,
Faithfull,** (Town Ward)
Bartlett and Gori (North Ward)
Pratt (Tipton St John Ward)
together with the Clerk

Other Persons Present

Liz Graveney – Town Clerk`s Assistant

PRAYER

The Clerk read the Council Prayer

17/08/58

TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Pang, Carter and Giles

17/08/59

TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND RECEIPT OF REQUESTS FOR NEW DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS (DPIS) DISPENSATIONS FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

The Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and Cllr Bartlett declared interests in item 5 as the Mayor and Deputy Mayor were involved with the Library/Information Centre project and Cllr Bartlett was involved with the toilets project

17/08/60

IN CONSIDERATION OF THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 (PUBLICITY WOULD BE PREJUDICIAL TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST BY REASON OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED): TO AGREE ANY ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH AFTER THE PUBLIC AND PRESS HAVE BEEN EXCLUDED

Cllr Pratt requested that Item 5 should not be taken in Confidential Session. There was no seconder for this proposal. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that items 5 and 6 be dealt with in Confidential Session

17/08/61

TO ALLOW MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT TO SUBMIT QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE LIMITED TO 3 MINUTES

There were no members of the public present

The following items were taken in Confidential Session

17/08/62

NEW LIBRARY/TOILET – UPDATE ON PROJECT RE COSTINGS AND OTHER MATTERS AND CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL REPORT PREPARED BY THE CLERK IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL`S FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Deputy Mayor provided background information on the various projects he and the Mayor had been involved in and the many events they had worked on during the years. He advised that the former Clerk worked alongside them and was fully involved in the various projects. He advised that the bank project had been something that the community wanted. He advised that the current Clerk took little interest in the bank other than visiting the premises when there was concern about the lack of space in the Information Centre. Accusations had been made about VAT fraud and maladministration and he indicated that because of this that latterly the project had caused him much upset and stress. He took the view that there should now be a line drawn under the project. Cllr Pratt was of the view that there had to be accountability as public money was involved and that any additional costings for the project should have been authorised by Full Council which had not been the case in this instance.

Cllr Gori mentioned that she had prepared a number of Risk Assessments which were for the protection of the Council and the Clerk and questioned why the process, as provided for in the documents, had not been actioned. In response the Clerk advised that she had come into post in August 2015 and the bank had been purchased the following month. The documents that Cllr Gori had produced had been drafted in 2016 some considerable time after the bank had been purchased which was the reason she had not used the documents, although she had risk assessed the matters she had been aware of. The Clerk had provided the Council with a summary of the steps she had undertaken to minimise the risks to the Council as the library project had progressed; however the Mayor maintained that this was incorrect as you couldn't have a risk assessment after the project had been completed. Cllr Gori advised that each time a new project was embarked upon by the Council that it was important that a Risk Assessment be carried out.

Cllr Pratt proposed that the Architect's offer to have a meeting to discuss the additional costings, as itemised in a letter received from the Architect should be taken up. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Faithfull. A vote was taken. The motion failed

Cllr Holmes proposed that the Council accepts the overspend; pays all outstanding invoices in respect of the library and toilets in full and that the Council considers the library and toilet project closed without further discussions. The Mayor made an amendment to the proposal whereby the electrician's invoice in respect of the electrics to the two doors should not be paid until the outstanding works had been completed. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Gori. A vote was taken. The motion was passed

17/08/63

CONSIDERATION OF INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2017/18 ANNUAL AUDIT

The Council agreed that the Clerk should ascertain from the current auditor his future plans and come back to the October Full Council meeting with her findings.

The Public part of the Meeting resumed

17/08/64

ANY MATTERS OF URGENCY BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE MAYOR (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

It was understood that the Post Office would probably be moving into McColls shortly. It was indicated that there may be public consultation for any proposed move

17/08/65

TO RECEIVE COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS

i.Cllr Bartlett suggested that the Council should have a `Plan B` in place, in the event that the Heritage Society did not progress the lease of the Old Town Hall

ii. Cllr Pratt announced that he had resigned from the Heritage Society

Meeting ended at 7.47pm

Mayor's signature: Date:.....

**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 7PM AT THE
TIPTON ST JOHN COMMUNITY HALL**