

**MINUTES OF THE 43rd TRING ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD AT THE VICTORIA HALL,
AKEMAN STREET ON MONDAY 18th APRIL 2016 AT 8 p.m.**

Present: Councillors: Stephen Hearn, Town Mayor (presiding)
J. Bowden
O. Conway
H. Grace
P. Hearn
M. Hicks
P. Hills
N. Hollinghurst
N. Nutkins
R. Ransley
C. Townsend
G. Wilkins

Also present: Michael Curry (Town Clerk)
Dawn Slade (Deputy Clerk)
Vivianne Child (Guest Speaker)
Peter Cox (Guest Speaker)
XX registered electors of Tring Town

408. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies received from the following members of the public: Susan Lanning, Doris Bardell and Karen **Whitby**

409. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the forty first Annual Town Meeting held on Monday 20th April 2015 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

410. **TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT**

Councillor S. Hearn outlined the work of the Town Council over the course of the year.

411. **ESTIMATES OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2014/15**

Councillor P. Hearn, Chairman of Finance & Policy Committee reported on the Estimates of Income and Expenditure for 2016/17. The Committee has special responsibility for agreeing the annual Estimates of Income & Expenditure and recommending to Council the level of Precept.

She explained that setting the budget this year was not as straight forward as it often is because there was a range of opposing factors to take into account.

On the positive side: the priority of the Council is to continue the implementation of the Town Plan. A grant from Dacorum Borough Council for this eased the demands on the Town Council's finances.

On the negative side, however: the squeeze on local government finance is such that Dacorum Borough Council and Herts County Council will only do work where they have a statutory obligation. Cutting the verge, clearing drains and painting white lines cannot be taken for granted. These things matter to residents, so these are duties that the Town Council may have to pick-up with the costs involved.

The Town Council took ownership of the Nora Grace Hall when it was surrendered to us by the Red Cross. Under the day-to-day management of Tring Together the Hall is a valuable local

asset, but unfortunately the building has a finite life span. Ideally plans need to be put in place to cover that eventuality. The Council is started with discussion with Tring Together and a decision to put aside some funds when possible.

Another expense which the Council has to make provision for is the cost of elections. Last year's election cost the Council £8,365 and this was when the costs were split three ways – local election, district council election and general election. It is estimated that £12,000 will be needed in four years' time. The budget includes £3,000 this year and will in future years for the next election.

The Town Council therefore decided that the right course to follow in the circumstances was to start making provision for these extra tasks now. This meant a two percent rise in the precept and a budget that will generate a surplus of £10,878. £5,000 of which will go into earmarked reserves for the Nora Grace Hall and the balance into unspecified reserves.

The 2% increase in the Town Council's element of the council tax you pay brings the rate for a band D property to £25.16 for the year. Up 49p from the previous year – less than a 1p per week.

412. **A PRESENTATION BY TRING YOUTH COUNCIL**

Ahmed Al Maadlani, Chair of the Tring Youth Council addressed the meeting, outlining the work of the Youth Council.

He explained how the Youth Council was a group of young people aged 11 – 19 from the Town and surrounding villages looking at issues concerning youths and ways that young people can contribute to the community. The Council is apolitical and is issued based. The central issue that will be investigated in the coming year is young people's mental health.

The Youth Council organised the dog show at the Summer Carnival and a bake-off at the Tring Park Family Festival. The money raised is used to support the Tring Youth Club. The Youth Council has a project to install floodlights at the skate park.

412. **STREAMSIDE WALK, BROOK ST – AN UPDATE FROM DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL'S CLEAN, SAFE & GREEN TEAM**

Mr Robert Cassidy, Parks & Recreation Officer, Dacorum Borough Council outlined the schedule of work that is being undertaken at Streamside Walk to make it a sustainable area that can be enjoyed by all. The work includes clearing out certain trees to remove those that are a risk and to improve the quality of those remaining; clearing and replanting of the stream; planting bulbs and installing benches.

He thanked Tring residents for their incredible support of projects such as the Memorial Gardens and hoped to replicate the success of the Memorial Gardens at Streamside Walk.

In response to a question from the audience, he explained the actions taken by Dacorum Borough Council's Enforcement Officers to stop the damage at the Brook Street site and ensure proper reinstatement.

412. **REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

A list of representatives had been provided. There were no questions.

413. **GUEST SPEAKER**

The Mayor introduced Peter Cox, Tring Camera Club and Vivianne Child, Tring Together, who gave a presentation on the events of Charter 700.

414. **BEST KEPT ALLOTMENT 2015/16**

The Best Kept Allotment prizes for 2015/16 were presented by Councillor Stephen Hearn, as follows:

Winner	Mr J.W. Budd
2nd Prize	Mr K. Seabrook
3rd Prize	Mr P.G. Flitney

415. **THE ANNUAL COMMUNITY AWARD 2015**

The winner of the Annual Community Award of £300, to be donated to a charity of the recipient's choice, was announced by the Town Mayor as Vivianne Child.

416. **OPEN FORUM**

During this item the following comments were received from members of the public:

Parking & Other Highways Issues. Several comments were made with regard to parking and other highways issues in Tring:

- Repeated abuse of double yellow lines in the High Street, Frogmore Street and Friars Walk causing traffic congestion and a lack of enforcement
- Obstructive parking on the pavement in Wingrave Road. Reference was made to the pending legislation with regard to parking on the pavement
- The recent introduction of double yellow lines at various locations throughout the town was welcomed, but doubts were expressed at the efficacy of enforcement. Outside the Natural History Museum was quoted as an example
- Clarification on the rules with regard to parking by disabled badge holders was given
- The need for traffic control at the canal bridge on the Wingrave Road, particularly after the recent accident there
- The poor state of the High Street, exacerbated by the effect of the wet weather on the underlying chalk and the design of the covers.

Councillor S. Hearn outlined the work being done by the Road & Home Safety Working Party in tackling such concerns by working with the local County Councillor in highlighting the issues to the Highways Authority. Improvements to the High Street was a priority. The Town Council was also looking at the future of the Market Square now that the trial relocation of the two markets to Church Square had been successfully completed.

Councillor P. Hearn thanked Councillor N. Hollinghurst, in his role as local County Councillor, for his tireless efforts in trying to improve highways provision in and around Tring.

War Memorial Renovations. Mr Ted Oram of the Parochial Church Council outlined the need to renovate the war memorial and how a project to have the work done by the 27th November 2018, its centenary, was progressing.

Nora Grace Hall Signage. In response to a question from the floor, the Clerk was able to confirm that the old Red Cross Hall signs would be replaced.

The Mayor concluded the evening by thanking everyone for their interest.

The meeting ended at 9:11 p.m.

Signed
Town Mayor

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