

**MINUTES OF THE 38th TRING ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD AT THE VICTORIA HALL,
AKEMAN STREET ON MONDAY 11th APRIL 2011 AT 8 p.m.**

Present: Councillors: Roxanne Ransley, Town Mayor (presiding)
John Allan
Barry Batchelor
Wil Berdinner
Mary Booth
Lloyd Harris
Penny Hearn
Nick Hollinghurst
Denise Rance
Christopher Townsend

Also present: Susan Johnson, former Town Clerk (Minute-taker)
Belle Daytonn, Deputy Clerk
Colin Jones, Town Warden
Keith Gray, incoming Town Clerk
PCSO Tom Montgomery, Herts Constabulary
45 registered electors of Tring Town

368. **APOLOGIES**

There were apologies for absence from Councillor Mike James, Sgt Adele Hopkin, Mr & Mrs Russell and Ken Seabrook.

369. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the thirty-seventh Annual Town Meeting held on Monday 19th April 2010 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

Councillor Townsend arrived at 8.03 p.m.

370. **TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT**

The Mayor spoke of how privileged she had felt to represent Tring and to visit the very many groups who were active in the town. She particularly singled out young people; the Dementia Café; and the Lions who transported so many people to events they otherwise could not attend. She had raised many thousands of pounds for her chosen charities, and thanked all those who had helped to make this possible. In conclusion she thanked her Deputy, Councillor John Allan, and her fellow councillors for their support. She thanked the staff for their hard work in the time of upheaval in the last six months; and thanked particularly Susan Johnson, who had been Town Clerk for 21 years, and wished her a happy retirement. The Mayor welcomed Susan's successor, Keith Gray.

371. **ESTIMATES OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2011/12**

Councillor John Allan, Chairman of Finance & Policy Committee, introduced the Estimates for 2011/12. He explained that the Council had 'frozen' the Precept once again in 2011/12. Owing to the current difficult financial climate for many charitable and social organisations, the Council had increased its general grant-making fund to £10,000 (up from £3,000) for 2011/12, as well as continuing its support for the usual organisations. The Council's Reserves remained healthy, which was important to cover the financial risks the Council had to cover given its portfolio of property and activities. There were no questions from the floor.

372. **REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

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

373. **GUEST SPEAKER**

The Mayor introduced PCSO Tom Montgomery, from the Tring Community Team, who was standing in for Sgt Adele Hopkin, who had been called away for operational reasons. He listed the Tring Team as: 1 sergeant, 3 police constables, and 4 police community support officers. The Team's priority for 2010 had been combating burglary. Their new additional priorities in 2011 were to be reducing speeding and theft from vehicles. They would work with a team from around the Borough, including HM Revenue & Customs, to combat crime. Although the Crime Prevention Panel ceased last year, Neighbourhood Watch was as active as ever and worked closely with the CP Team. He hoped more households would join this very effective organisation. Finally he announced the retirement of the current Chief Constable, Frank Whitely; his successor would be Assistant Chief Constable Andy Bliss from the Essex Constabulary. PCSO Montgomery took questions from the floor. Borough Councillor Derek Townsend of Mill View Road mentioned recent reports of drugs in the town. PCSO Montgomery said there were a number of drug operations going on, and there had been some success lately in arresting major dealers. Sue Yeomans from Grove Road asked for and received assurance that the police went into Tring School regularly to talk about current issues. Tim Roberts of Little Tring Road asked about the significance of the closure of the police station front desk. CPSO Montgomery assured him that, although the desk was closed to save money, the station remained open and all his colleagues were there on duty. On a similar theme, Steve Doughty of Okeley Lane asked how much police cover was actually available in the town, given recent spates of vandalism at the Duckmore Lane allotments. CPSO Montgomery said there were officers on duty 24 hours a day, complemented by Intervention teams. There had been 5 reported incidents of vandalism at Duckmore Lane, and so a patrol plan had been put in place, with young people being met on that site; and, given the holidays, at several other sites in the town where children congregated. Councillor Penny Hearn asked that particular attention be paid to Pound Meadow. Mrs Yeomans asked about the value of the police helicopter. CPSO Montgomery said the helicopter was shared between three Forces, and was only used on rare occasions involving mostly lost children or adults, and to track criminals. Finally he announced that the 0845 number, to contact the police when there was no emergency, was to be replaced in November by a 101 number, for which there would be no charge from either a landline or a mobile phone. The Mayor thanked PCSO Montgomery for his attendance and information.

374. **BEST KEPT ALLOTMENT 2010/11**

The Best Kept Allotment prizes for 2010/11 were awarded by the Mayor, as follows:

1 st Prize	Mr & Mrs A. Russell
2 nd Prize	Mr K. Seabrook
3 rd Prize	Mrs C. Tipson
4 th Prize	Mr K. Pemberthy

Mr Pemberthy attended to receive his prize. The Mayor thanked Tring Market Auctions for its continuing support for this competition.

375. **THE ROBERT JONES ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD**

An award had been launched by his widow in 2008 in memory of Robert Jones, who died in 2007, and was MP for this area from 1983 to 1997 and a Government Minister in the then Department of the Environment. The Award was for an individual or group who had done most for environmental issues in Tring in the last 12 months. 'Group' was defined as any kind of group including local organisations and schools. The Award itself was £100 for the recipient to give to an environmental project of their choice. This year the award was made to Martin Hicks, founder of Tring Apple Fayre. Mrs Brannock Jones presented the prize to Mr Hicks in person.

376. **THE ANNUAL COMMUNITY AWARD 2011**

The Annual Community Award of £300, to be donated to a charity of the recipient's choice, was presented by the Town Mayor to Anne Nobbs for her work in Tring Red Cross, Tring Church, and Riding for the Disabled at Hastoe.

There would be a further, special presentation to honour Tim Amsden in the near future, at an event to be organised, to recognise his work for the town over 30 years; and especially to mark the recent realisation of the Tring Local History Museum.

377. **OPEN FORUM**

Mrs Jenny Brannock Jones of Grace's Maltings reported that, once again, no *Town Crier* had been delivered to their houses. Liz Bendall of Harcourt Road thanked the Town Council for its support in her and her neighbours' campaign to have the 500 bus rerouted back to run along Station Road continuously. Sue Yeomans of Grove Road asked about the Council's opinion of the new planning application for the Rose & Crown in the High Street. Councillor Batchelor, Chairman of the Planning Committee, said the application was a resubmission of that which gained consent several years ago, with an amendment to offer an extra passing place for traffic entering/leaving the High Street. The Council thought the amendment insignificant and continued to recommend refusal on grounds of safety and traffic congestion. No doubt the DBC planners would negotiate a scheme acceptable to the DBC Development Control Committee. Mrs Yeomans then went on to report that the Chiltern Countryside Group continued to campaign on Luton Airport noise issues. LLA and NATS were currently working on reducing late night arrivals, so it seemed the opinions of Tring people were being regarded. She also mentioned the campaign to oppose HS2, the high speed rail link between London and Birmingham, which was destined to pass through the heart of the Chilterns AONB. Although the least preferred route passed near Tring, she hoped that local people would oppose this desecration of the AONB. Councillor Penny Hearn thanked Mrs Yeomans for all her work on these subjects on behalf of Tring people. Mike Brash of Hazely asked for an update on future housing provision in Herts. Councillor Nick Hollinghurst, speaking as a Borough councillor, said that the second consultation over the Local Development Framework had finished; and a new consultation over the definitive plan would start later this year. The choice in Tring, involving permission for siting 150 houses either at Dunsley or between the cemetery and the industrial estate, would be made then. Councillor Hearn thought the Dunsley site was not likely to be chosen. Steve Doughty of Okeley Lane said the cemetery site backed onto his property. He was concerned at the siting of a travellers' site there. Councillor Nick Hollinghurst said that travellers' sites were a separate issue. Eighteen possible sites identified around the borough still survived in the plan, from which one or two would eventually be chosen; and they had to be sited where they were open, accessible and near housing.

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

The meeting ended at 8.52 p.m.

Signed
Town Mayor