

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GROVE HOUSE, HIGH STREET NORTH, DUNSTABLE

ON MONDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2023 COMMENCING AT 6.00 P.M.

Present: Councillors Liz Jones (Town Mayor and Chair), Louise O'Riordan (Deputy Town Mayor) Trevor Adams, Gregory Alderman, Richard Attwell, Wendy Bater, Matthew Brennan, Philip Crawley, Mark Davis, John Gurney, Kenson Gurney, Michelle Henderson, Peter Hollick, Nicholas Kotarski and Matthew Neall; with Paul Hodson (Town Clerk and Chief Executive) and Georgia Pearson (Democratic Services Manager)

Apologies: Councillors Robert Blennerhassett and Alex Butler

Public Attendance: 3 in person, 15 online and 1 on Teams

189/23 DECLARATIONS

Councillors Matthew Brennan, Phillip Crawley, John Gurney, Kenson Gurney and Matthew Neall declared interests due to being Central Bedfordshire Councillors.

Councillor Hollick Declared an interest as he is a Dial A Ride trustee and part of the land surrounding Watling House belongs to Dial A Ride for parking their vehicles.

190/23 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

One member of the public asked the council members why Watling House was vacant and up for sale. This was due to Central Bedfordshire Council no longer needing the use of Watling House for their offices.

191/23 TO DISCUSS CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL'S PROPOSAL FOR WATLING HOUSE AND AGREE A RESPONSE, IF REQUIRED.

Councillor Jones Declared an interest in Dial A Ride as her spouse is an employee of the charity and the Mayor is supporting Dial A Ride as one of her chosen charities this year.

Councillor Kenson Gurney proposed, it was seconded and

NOT RESOLVED:

That Dunstable Town Council (DTC) approach Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) regarding the disposal of the site known as Watling House, located at High Street North, Dunstable, LU6 1LF requesting that CBC allow a period of time (estimated to be 6 months) for DTC to explore the option of Dunstable for DTC to take ownership of the site and facilitate a number of amenities to improve the lives of the people of Dunstable. Furthermore, that if, following consultation, the will of the populus is so; that DTC be allowed to submit a bid for the transfer of ownership, at an agreed market

cost, to the Town Council.

This motion recognises that the North Dunstable ward is at the lower end of the Socio-Economic spectrum and this important facility presents a good opportunity to improve this situation.

Councillor Brennan proposed and

WITHDREW:

That the Town Council officially opposes the proposed demolition and sale and asks CBC to explore the provision of a SEN school in the area.

Councillor Henderson proposed, it was seconded and

RESOLVED:

That the Town Council opposes the proposed demolition and sale at this time and asks CBC to explore the provision of other avenues that would have a community benefit.

Councillor Jones proposed, it was seconded and

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Hollick address the CBC Committee on behalf of the Town Council in the meeting of Central Bedfordshire Council regarding Watling House on the 14 September 2023.
The meeting closed at 18:52