

Minutes of a meeting of the **SPALDING TOWN FORUM** held in the Virtual Meeting via Zoom, on Tuesday, 31 January 2023 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

R Gambba-Jones (Chairman)

A C Cronin  
R A Gibson (Vice-  
Chairman)

C J Lawton  
J D McLean

G J Taylor  
Timewell

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors M Hasan, G A Porter, G P Scalese and E J Sneath, together with John Bland (Civic Society) and Roger Perkins (Castle Sports Complex Bowls Club)

In Attendance: George Scott (Spalding Transport Forum), David Jones (PEDALS), Assistant Director-Finance, Assistant Director-Leisure and Culture, Community Development Manager, Strategic Finance Manager (SHDC), Democratic Services Manager and Democratic Services Support Officer.

**19. MINUTES**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on:

- 13 October 2022

**AGREED:**

That the minutes be signed as a correct record.

**20. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

Councillor Timewell declared an interest in item 6 on the agenda.

**21. DRAFT SPALDING SPECIAL EXPENSES BUDGET 2023/24**

Consideration was given to the report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Development and S151) which considered the Draft Spalding Special Expenses Draft Budget 2023/24.

The Chairman introduced the Assistant Director – Finance, who would be able to answer any questions on the Spalding Special Expenses Draft Budget The Assistant Director of Finance advised:

- That the Special Expenses Draft Budget shows the

Action By

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services that are delivered by the Council but deemed specifically for the Spalding Town area.

- The Council Budget had experienced inflationary pressures, the Council are proposing a budget for 23/24 of £240,000 versus last year's £233,000.
- There would be an increase on Council Tax of taxable properties in the Spalding area. For example, a typical band D property will experience an increase of ninety pence per week, from £24.57 to £25.47, a percentage increase of 3.7 %.
- The government had set its Council Tax referendum limits at £5.00 or 3%, whichever was greater.
- The Town Forum and South Holland's Council budgets will be within the referendum principal set by Government.
- Section 3.7 of the Spalding Special Expenses Draft Budget report provided a detailed breakdown of the subjective headings for the areas within the Forum budget.
- It was confirmed that no requests had been received from St Mary's and St Nicholas Parish Church regarding an increase of maintenance budget for the church yard.
- Reference was also made that Spalding has many different banded properties so the increase would vary, depending on what band property residents lived in.
- It was suggested to make sure the authority was as energy efficient as possible in all Council buildings given the currently energy crisis.
- Officers were currently reviewing ways to save energy and reviewing estimates that had been set prior to the energy crisis, to ensure that they reflected the latest energy prices.

The Chairman raised the following points.

- Expressed his concern on the energy crisis and suggested everyone who works within the Council Buildings, be energy efficient.
- Discussed the issue with the Floodlights at Halley Stewart football ground, hoping future developments would resolve the energy issue.
- Ensuring that we were mindful of future projects being as cost effective as possible.

The question was raised if solar panels would be installed on existing council properties to make them more energy efficient.

- The Chairman responded,
  - This was outside of the forums remit, suggested this may be more practical on new builds.

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- Cllr Lawton responded that as a council we were following the Councils green agenda but conceded it would not be practical to install solar panels on existing Council property but would make enquiries to see if there were any pilot schemes being trialled.

**22. ENFORCEMENT CONTRACT FOR FLYTIPPING AND LITTERING**

The Chairman of the Forum provided an update and overview of the new flytipping and littering enforcement contract and how this would operate in Spalding Town Centre.

The Chairman informed the Forum of the New Enviro Crime Contract that is coming into effect.

The following points were raised:

- SHDC has been subjected to some criticism for not fining perpetrators for littering/flytipping and other environmental crimes.
- One of our partner councils had been particularly successful at reducing environmental crimes which had resulted in the contract being adopted across the Partnership.
- The Chairman requested further information to understand the impacts to the Spalding area, which was one of the areas that suffers the most intense littering/flytipping.
- The new contract should enable the partnership to be more proactive in catching perpetrators of enviro crime, providing more resources, so the district could see the benefits in the short and long-term future.
- The Chairman would give an update at the next Town Forum meeting of contract developments.
- The Portfolio holder confirmed that the PSPO Public Spaces Protection Order has been extended for another year with a full review taking place later in the year. The Portfolio Holder explained to the forum how community wardens were able to enforce the PSPO which could result in fixed penalty notices and high fines. It was suggested that there needed to be more awareness publicised to residents of how to report flytipping/antisocial behaviour to the Police so authorities could gather more evidence for prosecution.
- The Portfolio holder suggested that the New Enviro Crime contract contains a brief description of the responsibilities of the contractor to provide residents reassurance that they would carry out a wider piece of work above just patrolling

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the towns/villages. The portfolio holder advised he would pass on further figures and information at the next meeting. The Chairman agreed further information would be of public interest.

- It was suggested that when residents have asked the council to collect large items of waste, a sticker be provided to avoid it being wrongly identified as flytipping. The Chairman was unsure if residents would commit to printing or collecting a ticket/sticker once they have paid for collection. It was also noted that residents should only leave the items out on the specified day of collection and not before as this causes some of the issues. If items are reported as flytipping when they are due to be collected this may displace statistics.

**23. SPALDING FLOWER PARADE FLOAT**

The Chairman of the Forum provided an update on the Spalding Flower Parade.

Spalding Town Forum were participating in the Flower Parade which was due to take place on 13 May 2023. The Chairman had recently sent out some information and proposals from the Transported contributors, who are extremely experienced in organising large events. The Transported Contributors will:

- Involve some of our local Schools
- Build the float
- Ensure local school children are involved and can relate to the project -
- The Spalding Town Forum float theme will be based around bees, as they play a crucial part to our environment.

The Chairman handed over the Cllr Cronin, to give his thoughts.

- Cllr Cronin noted that this was a fantastic proposal with lots of inclusion across all ages.
- The financial budget was questioned, and contingency plans discussed. Members would not have access to their designated Councillor Budgets and required clarification on how the float would be financed.
- It was raised that Transported Contributors have not contacted any central Spalding town schools which was a concern.
- Members were concerned that at present there has been no mention of how the late Councillor Angela Newton will

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be featured in the design of the float. It was thought that the float should be a celebration of the late Angela Newton's years representing the people of Spalding.

- The Forum must move swiftly on this action with officers to assist.
- Members sought clarity as to what finances were available to them.

**24. KING CHARLES III CORONATION**

Members to discuss plans for the celebration of King Charles III's Coronation

Councillor Gary Taylor presented ideas to involve the people of Spalding in the upcoming King's Coronation celebrations.

- It was noted that this event would play a huge part in history, and this will be seen once in a lifetime for many of our residents.
- Spalding Town Forum would liaise with the Communities team, ensuring events can run consecutively to offer something in the Town Centre and Ayscoughfee.
- The Communities Development Officer gave an insight into what the Communities plans are, suggestions of a Big Lunch at Ayscoughfee on Sunday 7 May, where the public can bring their own picnic to join in with entertainment and activities.
- It was suggested that all events should be promoted on SHDC website and advertised, so the residents of Spalding are involved, marking this event as symbolic, it was suggested a plaque should be presented from the Spalding Town Forum on behalf of the people of Spalding.

Other suggestions were;

- A keepsake for school children.
- Asking local Schools to make pieces of artwork that could be displayed in local shop windows.
- The Forum asked what budget was available
- Cllr Timewell asked if the town's hanging baskets could be put up earlier than usual with red, white, and blue flowers, this could then run through to the Flower parade.

Cllr Gibson agreed to promoting the town centre and contacting specialist Markets to draw people into the centre.

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The Chairman suggested to think outside the box and added that there would be competition for specialist markets so need to be swift to make contacts.

- It was suggested that all flower displays should be carried through to the bus station.
- The Chairman to look at any reserves available in the budget for funding the King's Coronation, for this once in a lifetime event.

**25. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

- The Chairman decided the next meeting will be face to face, this would be the final meeting of this administration.
- Cllr Lawton commented that the Spalding Bus Station refurbishment still had work to be completed to make it user friendly.
- The lack of bus timetables could be frustrating for travellers and lack of signage when arriving at Spalding was disappointing. It was suggested that LCC produce a more use-friendly Bus timetable,
- Ideas of a pictorial map and signs directing to shops would lift the look of the bus station, creating a more appealing, welcoming, and inviting area.
- Cllr McLean asked for some answers as to the situation at Park Road and what was the long-term impact of the roadworks.
- Cllr Taylor praised the work of the Officers, and all involved to secure the £20million levelling up fund. Updates would be made available when the designs were ready.
- Many sports and groups were interested in what facilities would be on offer and it was important to keep residents informed.

(The meeting ended at 7.54 pm)

(End of minutes)