

THE MEETING OF EXETER CITY COUNCIL

Guildhall
Tuesday 13 October 2009

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor (Cllr Winterbottom)
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Cllr R Smith)
Councillors D Baldwin, M A Baldwin, Boyle, Branston, P J Brock, S Brock, Choules, Coates, Cole, Mrs Danks, Edwards, Fullam, Gale, Mrs Henson, Hobden, Martin, Mitchell, D J Morrish, Mrs J Morrish, Newcombe, Newton, Noble, Prowse, Robson, Sheldon, Shepherd, Shiel, P A Smith, Starling, Taghdissian, Thompson, Wadham and Wardle

50 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting of Council held on 14 July 2009 were taken as read and signed as correct.

51 **OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no official communications.

52 **PLANNING COMMITTEE - 20 JULY 2009**

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 20 July 2009 were taken as read.

Members declared the following personal (*prejudicial) interests and, where appropriate, left the meeting for the duration of the items:

COUNCILLOR	MINUTE
Councillor Choules	89* and 90* (he is a member of the University of Exeter Council and his wife, sister-in-law and himself are employees of the University)
Councillor Cole	89 and 90 (partner is employee of University of Exeter)
Councillor Prowse	89 and 90 (student landlord)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 20 July 2009 be received.

53 **PLANNING COMMITTEE - 27 JULY 2009**

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 27 July 2009 were taken as read.

Members declared the following personal (*prejudicial) interests and, where appropriate, left the meeting for the duration of the items:

COUNCILLOR	MINUTE
Councillor Choules	94* (he is a member of the University Council and his wife, sister-in-law and himself are employees of the University)
Councillor Cole	94 (partner is employee of University of Exeter)
Councillor Prowse	94 (student landlord)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 27 July 2009 be received.

54

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 7 SEPTEMBER 2009

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 7 September 2009 were taken as read.

Members declared the following personal (*prejudicial) interests and, where appropriate, left the meeting for the duration of the items:

COUNCILLOR	MINUTE
Councillor Choules	108* and 110* (he is a member of the University of Exeter Council and his wife, sister-in-law and himself are employees of the University)
Councillor Cole	108 and 110 (partner is employee of University of Exeter)
Councillor Martin	109 (member of Haven Banks Outdoor Education Centre Advisory Committee) 113* (applicant/owner of property)
Councillor Newcombe	109 (Member of Devon County Council and a Trustee of the Haven Banks Outdoor Education Centre Advisory Committee)
Councillor Mitchell	112 (partner is Manager of the business at 227 High Street)
Councillor Prowse	109 (Member of Devon County Council)
Councillor Taghidissian	109 (overlooks the site from his office)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 7 September 2009 be received.

55

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 1 OCTOBER 2009

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 1 October 2009 were taken as read.

Members declared the following personal interests:

COUNCILLOR	MINUTE
Councillor Martin	120 and 121 (Employee of Devon County Council)
Councillor Newcombe	121 (Member of Devon County Council)
Councillor Prowse	120 and 121 (Member of Devon County Council)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 1 October 2009 be received.

56

LICENSING COMMITTEE - 28 JULY 2009

The minutes of the Licensing Committee of 28 July 2009 were taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 28 July 2009 be received and, where appropriate, adopted.

57

LICENSING COMMITTEE - 22 SEPTEMBER 2009

The minutes of the Licensing Committee of 22 September 2009 were taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 22 September 2009 be received.

58

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY - 1 SEPTEMBER 2009

The minutes of Scrutiny Committee – Community of 1 September 2009 were taken as read.

A Member declared the following personal interest:

COUNCILLOR	MINUTE
Councillor Newcombe	53 (Member of Devon County Council and Chair of the County's Children and Young People's Services Overview/ Scrutiny Committee)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee - Community held on 1 September 2009 be received.

59

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY - 3 SEPTEMBER 2009

The minutes of Scrutiny Committee – Economy held on 3 September 2009 were taken as read.

A Member declared the following personal (*prejudicial) interest:

COUNCILLOR	MINUTE
Councillor P Smith	35* (Chair of Trustee Board of Barnfield Theatre)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee – Economy held on 3 September 2009 be received.

60

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - RESOURCES - 16 SEPTEMBER 2009

The minutes of the Scrutiny Committee – Resources of 16 September 2009 were taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee – Resources held on 16 September 2009 be received.

61

FINAL ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE - 23 SEPTEMBER 2009

The minutes of the Final Accounts Committee of 23 September 2009 were taken as read.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Final Accounts Committee held on 23 September 2009 be received.

EXECUTIVE - 15 SEPTEMBER 2009

The minutes of the Executive of 15 September 2009 were taken as read.

Members declared the following personal (*prejudicial) interests and, where appropriate, left the meeting for the duration of the item:

COUNCILLOR	MINUTE
Councillor Cole	104 (Member of Local Government Pension Scheme)
Councillor Mrs Morrish	100 (Member of Methodist Church)
Councillor Newton	102 (employer is potential future user of Bedford Square)
Councillor Thompson	*103 (owner of land included within area of Core Strategy consultation)

In relation to Minute 105 (Honorary Alderman) an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council will be held prior to the ordinary meeting on 15 December 2009.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 15 September 2009 be received, and where appropriate, adopted.

EXECUTIVE - 29 SEPTEMBER 2009

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive of 29 September 2009 were taken as read.

Members declared the following personal (*prejudicial) interests and, where appropriate, left the meeting for the duration of the item:

COUNCILLOR	MINUTE
Choules	*120 (he is a member of the University of Exeter Council and his wife, sister-in-law and himself are employees of the University)
Cole	120 (Partner employed by University of Exeter)
Prowse	120 (student landlord)

In relation to Minute 122 (Public Speaking at Planning Committee – Amendment to Standing Order 19A), Councillor Noble moved an amendment to the Recommendation in the following terms:

“The recommended amendments to Standing Order 19A be approved, subject to the addition of the words ‘Members of the Committee may ask questions of a speaker, solely for the purpose of seeking clarification of points made by the speaker, who may answer by way of such clarification only, provided that the time taken for all such questions and answers shall not exceed two minutes in total.’”

Whilst acknowledging the importance of keeping discussions on planning applications relevant and succinct, Councillor Noble regretted the proposal to discontinue the right of members to ask questions directly of the speaker. His amendment sought to re-instate this facility but impose a two minute limit on the questions and answers.

Other members commented on the tendency for recent meetings to be long and repetitious and were concerned that on a number of occasions it had been necessary to hold additional meetings in order to deal with routine business. It was suggested that the number of major planning applications currently going through the planning process had contributed to the situation. It was considered that the question and answer facility, the purpose of which was to clarify issues, had been misused. Members frequently asked speakers questions of a professional nature, which should properly have been directed to officers, and speakers sometimes used their responses merely to repeat information which they had already conveyed. Members felt that the proposed restriction would be unnecessary if contributors to the debate confined themselves to discussion of planning matters.

Nevertheless members greatly valued the process which enabled the public to directly address the Planning Committee and, whilst accepting the need to curtail overlong and irrelevant discussion, they wished to preserve the question and answer facility. They acknowledged the importance of involving members of the public in debate to re-assure them of the fair and open processes of the Council. The effective operation of all Committees was the joint responsibility of the Chair and all members and should not require a change to Standing Orders.

A vote was taken on the amendment proposed by Councillor Noble and this was lost. A vote was taken on the original recommendation of the Executive and this was also lost. The existing Standing Order 19A therefore remained unamended.

RESOLVED that, subject to the refusal of the recommendation in Minute 122 (Public Speaking at Planning Committee – Amendment to Standing Order 19A) as set out above, the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 29 September 2009 be received, and where appropriate, adopted.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 7.40 pm)

Chair