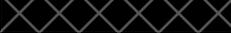




From: 
Sent: 18 October 2023 15:45
To: 'office@marlow-tc.gov.uk'
Subject: Questions Marlow Town Council official support of Marlow Film Studios Planning Application

Dear Town Clerk

Re: Marlow Town Council official support of Marlow Film Studios Planning Application

We have been approached by numerous listeners and others questioning the process regarding the public statement made by Cllr Richard Scott on behalf of Marlow Town Council (“MTC”) to the Planning Portal in support of the Marlow Film Studios (“MFS”) proposed development which has been widely reported on Social Media, quoted on the MFS Website and in the Marlow Free Press.

Marlow FM has, under the terms of its ‘Key Commitments’ a duty to ‘facilitate discussion and expression of opinion’ and is ‘answerable to its listeners and the people of Marlow’

In line with our commitments and the public interest of gaining access to the facts surrounding the reaching of the decision We understand that there is a Council meeting scheduled for this Tuesday 24th and have a list of questions pertaining to the Statement to the Planning Portal. We would be grateful to receive the Council’s response. Sadly I will be unable to attend the meeting but will endeavour to appoint a proxy to read out the questions on our behalf. If not I would be grateful to receive your response as Town Clerk.

1. Who issued the formal request for a meeting?
2. On what date was the meeting held?
3. How much notice of the meeting was given?
4. Why was this meeting considered ‘informal’ when the council’s own website states that there is a formal ‘planning meeting’ scheduled every three weeks and thereby an existing process in place to support or reject current planning applications?
5. How was the meeting held (zoom etc)?
6. If this was by Zoom (or any other electronic conferencing facility) is there a recording available, and if not why not?
7. Who chaired the meeting?
8. Do any councillors have any financial interests in Marlow Studios, its developers, parent or subsidiary companies or, are there any promises made retrospectively, currently or for future collaboration between the companies and councillors; implied or otherwise?
9. At the meeting did any councillors declare an interest or exempt themselves from any arguments or votes because of such a declaration as defined under the Guidance to Councillors 2013?

10. Who drafted or wrote the statement submitted to the Planning portal?
11. Why was an amendment necessary?
12. The statement to the planning portal was made by Cllr Scott in his capacity as a 'member of public' yet the statement is clearly on behalf of the Town Council. Is there a reason for this?
13. Why was the statement to the planning portal left to Cllr Scott and not submitted by the Leader of the Council or clerk?
14. If no written advice was given what was the formal or informal advice by the Town Clerk to the meeting, councillors and/or council leader regarding the status of the meeting or its convening?
15. What documents or research did the Council do to inform their decision.?
16. When MTC formally met on 3rd October (it appears the minutes are yet to be agreed) there is no reference to the statement and any public response. Was this informal decision ratified and if not why not? What reference if any was made to the statement by councillors regarding the response made to the Planning portal?
17. In reference to Q15 it has been intimated to us that councillor and others have felt unhappy with the status, process and outcome of the meeting with some off-the-record contact citing 'closing of ranks' or other measures to stop public discussion. Is anyone (councillors, clerks, or any other staff) aware of any disquiet or resolutions to stop this subject being discussed publicly or privately?
18. Right Hon Joy Morrissey MP together with other local councils, has officially raised an objection with the proposed studios. How do the council square this apparent 'going it alone' in its support?

I look forward to receiving your response in due course. In the interest of openness and clarity this email and any responses will be published on our website and social media. Email addresses and other personal information will be redacted.

Yours Sincerely

Tim Ashburner
Marlow FM

