

WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the **FINANCE & SPECIAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** of 19th February 2016 at 11 am in the Committee Room at the Civic Centre.

Present Cllrs P Smith(Chair), June Cordwell, T Luker, R Claydon

Town Clerk: Ms S Bailey

1. **Apologies for Absence** Cllr John Cordwell
2. **Declarations of Interest** none
3. **Approval of Minutes of Finance & Special Purposes Committee** of 6th October 2015; it was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed all in favour to approve these Minutes.
4. **DRAFT Business Continuity Plan** - to consider updates. An updated plan was circulated to all prior to the meeting and some comments received. The document was analysed again page by page. The Clerk is to investigate the possibility of using the Youth Centre and computer system there in the event of an emergency & the Civic Centre Office needing to function elsewhere. The wall burial map is crucial to operational activities at the cemetery and the Clerk is to look into the costs and possibility of digitising the map. The venue appendices at the end of the document need to label more clearly the water/gas/electric turn off points. Confidentiality of staff/supplier/customer contact details was discussed – this section is to be an appendix at the end and only distributed to the Mayor/Deputy Mayor and staff who are crucial to carrying out stated activities in the document. Other more minor items were updated. The document can then be progressed to Town Council for further comments and approval.
5. **NALC Quality Status Scheme** - to consider:
 - a) An application for National Council Award Scheme 'Quality' Status (middle level) after achieving Foundation award. It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr R Claydon and agreed all in favour that Wotton Town Council applies for mid level Quality Status when all the necessary documentation is in place.
 - b) If a) is agreed, to consider the updated Action Plan, a Community Engagement Policy, the provision of a printed Annual Report, published draft Minutes to be available within 4 weeks of meeting, evidence of promoting elections, and evidence of supporting the community in planning for its future.

Action Plan – a draft plan of achievements over past two years and the plan for the next 12 months was circulated. Although this is not a long term Forward Plan, (such a plan may emanate from the current Community Plan update), it gives a flavour of the immediate target areas for our resources. After a few minor amendments it was proposed by Cllr T Luker and seconded by Cllr June Cordwell and agreed all in favour that Wotton Town Council adopts this action plan.

Community Engagement Policy – a draft policy was circulated in advance of the meeting. After a few minor amendments it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr June Cordwell and agreed all in favour that Wotton Town Council adopts this policy.

Promotion of elections – the Clerk has displayed posters around town and on the website of the forthcoming Town Council elections. The Annual Parish Assembly on 12th March can also be used to promote this. Councillor drop in sessions could be considered.

Printed Annual Report – Council has now agreed to delay the 2017 Annual Parish Assembly until the end of April to allow time for the annual booklet to be produced including financial information without having to do two reports – this booklet can then be distributed around Wotton at the end of the Financial Year.

Published draft Minutes to be available within 4 weeks of meeting – since we prepare draft Minutes very quickly anyway this should not be too onerous, however, the website displayed drafts should have a DRAFT watermark across each page and clearly state DRAFT in red at the top of the document. This must be done for ALL official Committee and Council meetings. A pre-draft will be sent out to all Councillors for initial comments prior to it being displayed on the website.

Community Planning support – recently evidenced by the update to the 2005 Community Plan eg, consultation questionnaires & many meetings with volunteers on this steering committee. Planning applications are responded to after involving the public eg, the Full Moon. The Regeneration Committee involves co-opted members of the public who have volunteered their knowledge and services, as does also the Footpaths Committee and the Allotments Committee. Council support has been given to community groups wishing to improve Wotton Pool, Synwell Playing Fields Committee, Wotton in Bloom, Wotton Community Sports Foundation, the Heritage Centre, the Library to keep it open, provision of a Youth Centre after County closure, the cinema to encourage its revival, the Chamber of Trade, and a walking festival is being organised for 2017. The Chipping Club Room was taken over and improved in order to safeguard its future. In addition, Councillors are representatives on many other Wotton charities, trusts and community ventures. A new website has been established in order to reach out more to the public with news items and information provision.

Meeting finished at 1.10pm

Signed

Date