



MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 15th FEBRUARY 2016 AT 7:00PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE

Present: Cllrs P Smith (Mayor), T Luker, P Barton, N Clement, K Collins, June Cordwell, John Cordwell, N Pinnegar, A Wilkinson, R Claydon, A Kendall, C Young, L Farmer

In Attendance: Town Clerk Ms S Bailey, 2 members of the public (District Cllrs)

T.4936 Apologies for Absence – all present

T.4937 Declarations of Interest Cllr John Cordwell traffic orders & mileage payment, Cllr R Claydon mileage payment, Cllr P Smith Wotton DIY, Cllr A Wilkinson Chamber of Trade payments & land behind fire station, Cllr June Cordwell WCSF

T.4938 Public Forum none

T.4939 Minutes of the Meeting Proposed by Cllr K Collins, seconded by Cllr R Claydon that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th January be approved as a correct record after a few amendments, agreed all in favour.

T.4940 Chairman's Announcements – none

T.4941 Accounts

- a) To approve renewal of Chamber of Trade membership cost £40; proposed by Cllr T Luker seconded by Cllr June Cordwell to approve payment agreed all in favour, with one abstention.
- b) To approve payments to Wotton-under-Edge Town Trust as follows:
 - (i) £2000 to rebuild permanent endowment as required by Charity Commission following Town Hall refurbishment;
 - (ii) £4700 Town Council support to cover loss of rent for Chipping car park and former Police Station. (i) & (ii) proposed by Cllr K Collins seconded by Cllr P Barton to approve payment agreed all in favour.
- c) To approve administration payment of £5250 from Wotton-under-Edge Town Trust to Town Council. Proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded by Cllr T Luker to approve payment agreed all in favour.
- d) To approve Clerk attendance at the SLCC/NALC Partnership event to be held in Birmingham on 14th April 2016. No cost other than mileage. Representing SLCC Gloucestershire. Proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded by Cllr P Barton to approve payment agreed all in favour.
- e) To approve Deputy Clerk attendance at SLCC VAT course 24th May 2016 cost £95 + VAT. Proposed by Cllr K Collins seconded by Cllr A Wilkinson to approve payment agreed all in favour.
- f) Youth Work – To receive quarterly report from Youth & Community Services for the period September to December 2015 and approve invoice. It was disappointing to note that YCS are 'confused' by what they are supposed to be doing – the terms of the SLA make it clear what times/works/payments are agreed. The inclusion of the SDC Youth Forum information in this report clouds matters and although interesting to note, should not be thrown into the ring of confusion. The youth forum works will stop shortly and different funding will cover Friday eve activities. Proposed by Cllr P Barton seconded by Cllr T Luker to approve this payment agreed all in favour.
- g) Budget 2015/16. To note report of expenditure against budget. Noted as healthy. Cllr Claydon had various questions on figures which have been answered satisfactorily.
- h) To approve the accounts for payment. Proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded by Cllr A Kendall to approve payments schedule, agreed all in favour.

T.4942 Grants and Donations

- a) To consider grant application from Teenage Cancer Trust. It is agreed that we do not donate to national charities but concentrate on local issues.
- b) To note letter of thanks from Under the Edge Arts for the grant towards the Blues Festival. Noted. All 'In Our Towns' funding is now used.
- c) Noted email of thanks from the organisers of the Wotton Open Gardens & Sculpture Trail & change in arrangements to smaller event this year and larger next year.

T.4943 Audit - To receive report on Councillors' Quarterly Internal Audit October - December 2015. Carried out by Cllrs P Barton and R Claydon – a good audit with only two areas to comment on; the authorisation of any overtime may warrant a more defined system, and the improvements to the petty cash system were highlighted.

T.4944 Meeting Dates – To approve Town Council meeting dates for the forthcoming year. A long discussion concerned moving the Annual Parish Assembly from March to late April or early May to enable year end accounts to be included in the annual report and more time for booklet production. However it is noted that an election purdah period for County Cllr elections may affect the ability of the Councillor to answer questions at the annual meeting, and also Town Councillors may change if there is a May election that year. Proposed by Cllr P Smith seconded Cllr A Wilkinson to approve the suggested dates with Annual Parish Assembly delayed until 25th April, 12 in favour, 1 abstention.

T.4945 Queen's 90th Birthday

- a) To consider whether Wotton should participate in the nationwide lighting of beacons on 21st April 2016 to mark the Queen's 90th birthday. No councillors offered their services however it is suggested that the Round Table might wish to consider this.
- b) To consider participating in the 'Clean for the Queen' campaign to be held during the first week in March. Stroud District Council will supply litter-picking equipment and arrange for collection of waste. Only one Councillor interested in pursuing – ask in town.

T.4946 Veolia Contracts

- a) To note letters from Veolia giving notice that the service contracts for the cleaning of Old Town Toilets and the bus shelter and for the collection of business waste will end on 31st March 2016. To note extension of Veolia contract to clean the toilets until the end of June 2016. Our cleaning contractor has not been able to find anyone to clean Old Town toilets from July due mostly to their poor state, and therefore is unable to bid for the contract. It is suggested that we continue to press SDC/Ubico to quote for this.
- b) To consider arrangements for the disposal of Business Waste from 1st April 2016. A backing document obtained quotations from various companies – SITA offered the best value at £312 p.a. – a saving of £102 from current Veolia. Proposed by Cllr K Collins seconded by Cllr P Barton to agree SITA's appointment, voted all in favour.

T.4947 Circus Visit and Bonfire Night Event, New Road Sports Field – To approve permission for WCSF to host Circus Ginnett visit 26th & 27th July 2016; and for Bonfire Night celebrations 5th November; both events to take place on the New Road sports field. Proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar seconded by Cllr L Farmer grant permission, agreed all in favour, 1 abstention.

T.4948 40 and 50 MPH Speed Limit on B4058 and B4062, Wotton-under-Edge and Kingswood. To receive draft Traffic Regulation Order and to consider if Council wishes

to submit any comments. A letter of support was sent in November to Glos CC for this proposal – it is suggested that we re-send this to make sure our support is received.

T.4949 Christmas Event – To note arrangements for the Christmas event in the town and to consider Town Council support. The Clerk is meeting two of the organisers this week to ascertain their plans and what support they need.

T.4950 Good Deeds Section; ‘Thanks to Volunteers’ – to acknowledge recent volunteer work for the benefit of the town/community. A new Council card has been devised and should be printed shortly. It is suggested that a person (C Jackson) who helped an elderly chap who came off a mobility scooter and administered first aid is thanked by card.

T.4951 Culverhay Surgery Entrance Access – to consider request from the Patients Group to support the installation of a crossing and/or double yellow lines opposite, and a dropped kerb access. Notes of a previous site meeting held by the Patients Group with the Glos Highways Manager were circulated to Town Councillors. Cllr John Cordwell and the Clerk met Mr Sykes representing the Group on site, with the Glos Highways manager to discuss the problems.

The Town Council sympathises with the Group’s concerns but has some trouble seeing what a viable solution might be. The Council is not in favour of installing double yellow lines opposite the surgery entrance due to displacement of cars and the worry that this would actually speed up traffic. Council is also uncertain about installing a crossing from a road regulation/compliance point of view as the short stretch is littered with drive access points and various entrances/obstructions – not to mention narrow pavement width. This would possibly be an expensive option which would need a considerable budget. The Glos Highways manager is asked to investigate the possibility of building out a crossing point – to make a dropped kerb access for crossing the road which may only displace about 1 car. Also costs would need to be ascertained with suggestions as to where funding might emanate eg. Culverhay Surgery donation?

T.4952 Clerk’s Report - a full report covering January and February activities was circulated and noted, and a few questions answered.

T.4953 Correspondence

a) To note email concerning need for a pedestrian crossing in Haw Street from Merlin Haven/Westfields to Symn Lane. This was attempted a number of years ago but was considered not high on the Glos CC Highway’s list of priorities – it is on the suggestions list for Traffic Regulation Orders which has been recently submitted for comment to the Glos Highway Manager.

b) To note letter notifying of house to house collection dates on behalf of Scope.

c) To note invitations to Clerk and Mayor to attend Japanese Exchange students farewell party on 18th March 2016, (now at KLB School) – confirmed.

d) To note email regarding consultation by South Glos Council on changes to bus services 84 and 86 – consultation closed 11th February with very little notice! The intention is to have a circular route in opposite directions for no’s 84 & 85 with no cuts in service.
Brochures/Newsletters for information only: Clerks and Councils Direct January 2016; Caring Matters Winter 2015;

T.4954 Reports from Councillors & meetings attended

County Council – written report provided by County Cllr John Cordwell highlighting the county budget and a 4% rate rise approved with 2% towards adult mental health services.

Legalities of parking fines were also discussed. The public transport consultation is open, with plans that there are no more direct buses to Gloucester from Wotton, necessitating a change at Dursley.

District Council – Cllr Lesley Reeves provided a written report highlighting an SDC site visit to Dryleaze where the central block of 17 empty bedsit units (unlettable for a few years) will be demolished after the few remaining tenants are rehoused – uncertain as to what will be rebuilt there. Regarding forthcoming elections, it is unclear which electors are included in the new Wotton South Ward of less than 100 people, the majority of which is supposed to encompass elderly in a dementia home....

Footpaths Committee – Cllr P Smith is the new Chairman, recent discussions concerned the 2017 waking festival, Holywell Leaze land and various stiles.

Special Purposes Committee – to meet this week.

Allotments Committee – not met

Youth Liaison Group – to meet shortly

Town Regeneration Partnership – Cllr R Claydon explained the push towards getting the Community Plan update finished in order to use the grant funding, discussions continue on how to revamp the farmers market to make it more viable, some walking festival input via walk choices, and better signage needed from Newark Park with attempts to procure brown signs highlighting the direction to Wotton as a historic market town.

Sports Foundation – written report from Cllr June Cordwell circulated highlighting flash flooding problem for the first time as overflow ponds didn't cope, more tree planting plans, new hockey pitch netting via local sponsor, sensory garden help offers received, annual skatepark inspection deemed ok, plans for a 'parc questionnaire' for feedback, and thoughts on improving the entrance to make it more inviting.

Walking Festival – in Spring 2017, Cllr P Smith spoke of plans for 9 walks, a group/informal committee needs to be set up to arrange this event

Synwell PFC – Cllr N Clement said that the AGM is on 15th March when a new committee should be in place and hopefully the way ahead clearer for its management

T.4955 Town Affairs

Cllr L Farmer – many question being asked at primary school about fire station land

Cllr A Wilkinson – Chamber of Trade town map is being reprinted and all outside advertising boxes have now been sold, an overhaul of the C of T tourist website has been agreed, curry club meeting this week and the AGM next week at the Swan, Glos CC Cabinet have agreed to sell strip of fire station land to developer Colburn Homes and thus planning application for car park/housing to the rear can go ahead. Developer can now arrange the community consultation event in Wotton. Reinstatement of the Visit Wotton sign on derelict shop door at War Memorial has been applied for via SDC listed building consent, with many positive/ supportive comments so far.

Cllr P Smith – corner property owner at Potters Pond has complained of new development road/verge layout means vehicles cutting corner and putting her household in danger - she is advised to speak to the site manager to ascertain final verge plans.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS *Considered due to SDC time restrictions on responses.
Cllr T Luker took the chair*

T.4956 S.14/2430/FUL Full Moon, Mount Pleasant, GL12 7JS. Revised application. Proposed demolition of existing public house and erection of 11 new dwellings with access and parking. Stroud District Council's Development Control Committee has now considered this application and agreed to defer decision for at least 6/9 months to allow the community more time to bid for the site as a public house and a going business concern, with the Planning Officer strongly advised to work with the community.

Furthermore they felt the site proposal was cramped and the application appeared overdeveloped. Cllr K Collins explained that the community are working hard behind the scenes with a proposal to offer for and reinstate the hitherto viable public house.

Regarding this planning application, it was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr P Barton, voted 10 in favour, 1 abstention, **that the Town Council backs the community group's bid for the site**, however if it were to fail then we object to the application as follows:

- The site is overbearing, overdeveloped and appears cramped with too high a density of housing and a lack of amenity space
- Although two car spaces per dwelling are welcomed, the double length parking spaces are very tight, are unsightly, out of character for the area, and will lead to poor maneuverability within this cramped site. Furthermore after entering the site from the main road, this cramped parking arrangement will lead to inability to turn thus necessitating reversing out onto a busy main road
- We request that the TPO trees (including the Town Council owned tree on the Green adjacent) are protected around their roots and that a root protection scheme and a construction working method statement for TPO trees are approved before any works commence
- The houses have no chimneys and this is out of keeping with the local vernacular and the streetscene
- Safeguards are made to the potential damage during construction to the already very poor roads in the area around this site
- We would like to see some affordable housing on this site
- If the District Council is minded to approve the application, then conditions are to be attached which require all parking during construction to be on the site and not on adjacent roads, and that the adjacent parking area at the Green is kept clear at all times to enable local residents to continue to enjoy their amenity space and for access to the Oliver Memorial Chapel
- If the District Council is minded to approve the application, then we request that it is once again called in to Development Control Committee to decide. We request that SDC works with the community and allows the community enough time to submit workable solutions to operating once again a public house facility. We understand that the site owners are still not forthcoming in replies for information and we wish to see the democratic planning process protect the community and enable solutions to be found.

T.4957 S.15/2822/HHOLD 9 Westfields, GL12 7AH. Two storey extension and improvement to vehicular access. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr C Young, agreed by all, to object to the application on the basis of poor quality design, not aesthetically pleasing in its setting adjacent to a conservation area, out of keeping with the streetscene, against Policy HC8 of the November 2014 Stroud District Local Plan in its scale and design and not in keeping with the existing dwelling, there is a loss of pavement which is dangerous for pedestrians navigating a difficult corner, there is limited driveway exiting visibility due to protruding adjacent house, one and a half parking spaces is insufficient in Wotton and two is the accepted norm in Wotton as per the Local Plan, parking of buses at the bus stop immediately to the front of the property would be affected, elevational drawings do not display the higher ground levels around the house and this may lead to further complications. We also request that a Gloucestershire Highways opinion is sought if the officer is minded to approve this application.

Cllr P Smith took the Chair

It was proposed by Cllr P Smith, seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar, to enter closed session under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to discuss the following due to matters involving land purchase and/or legal advice, agreed by all. The Public left the room.

T.4958 CALGS – To receive update on allotment land in Coombe and whether to consider an alternative acquisition strategy.

A meeting was attended by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, the Town Clerk and Cllr R Claydon with the landowner & partner, and her solicitor to discuss ways in which we could work together to safeguard the future of allotment holders in Coombe. A meeting summary document was produced which was circulated to Councillors. The site owner said that she had not been approached by the allotmentees and would be willing to negotiate to discuss a sale, but at building land values rather than agricultural values – since she had already received an offer for the land subject to planning permission being granted. She was not interested in a compulsory leasing arrangement and wished to secure the land in the interim for her own use. She highlighted land which could be available to hire in Coombe and suggested the Town Council look into that option, since compulsory purchase should be used as a last resort once all other options have been extinguished.

After much discussion regarding the Town Council case for a Compulsory Purchase Order and the legislative obligation of allotment provision, it was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar and agreed by all that:

1. The alternative land in Coombe is investigated by meeting the land agent
2. That a barrister's opinion is taken on the viability of this as a Compulsory Purchase Order – subject to CALGS providing the legal fee of approximately £600
3. That CALGS are contacted and a) advised that the landowner is willing to negotiate with them but clearly expecting a larger offer than to date, b) they are given a copy of the Loxley meeting summary, c) they are advised of the other land possibly available in Coombe, which they were apparently advised of last November, and ask them why they did not advise the Town Council of this land possibility.

It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr L Farmer and agreed by all to re-enter Council session.

This completed the business of the Town Council at 9.15pm

Signed:

Dated:

Chairman of Wotton-under-Edge Town Council