

**MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 20th FEBRUARY 2017 AT 7:00PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE**



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

In attendance: Town Clerk Ms S Bailey, District Cllrs K Tucker, G Butcher, 6 public

T.5217 Apologies for Absence all present

T.5218 Declarations of Interest accepted from Cllr A Wilkinson (Chamber of Trade), Cllr A Kendall (governor of British School)

T.5219 CCTV – To welcome Police (Sgt Davey) to give feedback on the effectiveness of the town's CCTV system; and Redhand (CCTV provider) suggesting system upgrade. Sgt Davey explained that although images led to just one conviction in the past year, the CCTV system is very useful in not only criminal apprehensions, but also disproving allegations and helped officers follow both victims and perpetrators through town, thus channelling dwindling police resources to where they are needed most. Redhand explained that although Wotton was innovative in installing this wireless system 10 years ago, and spent a few thousand pounds upgrading the system 2 years ago, technology is advancing strongly and new cameras and systems are constantly being introduced. Redhand also no longer supports its original proprietary designed software. The Police CCTV camera supervisor from Stroud viewed Wotton's system commenting that the quality of images was similar to their own. Councillors are thus concerned that the software is rendering the system obsolescent rather than the standard of cameras, and does not see a camera upgrade as answering all of the questions. A working group of Cllrs R Claydon, C Young, P Smith, T Luker, A Wilkinson will be convened to assess the required works to the CCTV system.

T.5220 Public Forum Mr Kitchen attended and apologised to Cllrs Luker & Barton regarding misunderstandings over car park photograph and 'save land' campaign. However a formal complaint has been lodged on various councillors non-declaration of interests with SDC Monitoring Officer.

T.5221 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held 16th January 2017. It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr R Claydon and agreed 11 in favour 2 abstentions to approve these Minutes.

T.5222 Chairman's Announcements - none

T.5223 Accounts

- a) To approve quote for replacement of Civic Centre office windows. A backing document explained the single glazing, rotten wooden frame and security risk of louvre vents. Bubble wrap is needed in winter for warmth near the windows. Two quotes were provided. After discussing secondary glazing possibility, which is likely to be expensive, the desire for some ventilation in summer, fire escape issues and the merits of opening in or outwards, it was proposed by Cllr A Wilkinson, seconded by Cllr C Young, to approve the Windowcraft Rosewood external and white internal PVC window for £958 subject to receiving Conservation Area consent via the Planning Authority, agreed by all.

- b) To approve payments of the following as considered at budget meeting: (i) £2000 to Town Trust to rebuild permanent endowment following Town Hall refurbishment as required by Charity Commission (ii) £4700 to Town Trust in respect of loss of rent for Police Station (£3500) and Chipping Car Park (£1200). It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded by Cllr A Kendall and agreed by all to approve payments (i) & (ii).
- c) To approve Clerk attendance at SLCC Branch AGM in Falfield cost £15, speaker topics of insurance, Health & Safety & Risk Assessments; proposed by Cllr A Kendall seconded by Cllr L Farmer and agreed by all.
- d) To approve quote for repairs to roof of the Old Town Bus Shelter. Finding builder quotes for this work has been very difficult due to builders being busy and only wanting very large jobs. However it was proposed by Cllr L Farmer seconded by Cllr A Kendall to approve AJF Roofing undertaking this work for £1065. Planning permission not required as repairs are like-for-like basis.
- e) To approve renewal of Chamber of Trade membership at a cost of £40; proposed by Cllr A Kendall seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed by all, with 1 abstention.
- f) Budget 2016/17. To note report of expenditure against budget. Apart from areas of overspend which have already been explained to council (or separately authorised) or where spending has been from specific earmarked reserves, spending is largely in line with expectations.
- g) To approve the accounts for payment. A second credit card for office use has been requested and is awaited. The CCR high electric bill has been questioned and most will be refunded due to their error. Hockey club refund is due to them cancelling booking. It was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell seconded by Cllr T Luker, agreed by all with one abstention, to approve payments of £27,039 for Town Council and £7,522 for Town Trust.

T.5224 Audit

- a) To approve appointment of Mr I Selkirk as the independent internal auditor for the Financial Year 2016/17 for the Town Council at a rate of £190 (unchanged); proposed by Cllr L Farmer seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed by all
- b) Noted that our appointed external auditor for the financial year 2017/18 will change to PKF Little John. (Town Council voted last year to be part of the GAPTC Glos syndicate to keep costs down & benefit from economies of scale after Govt audit services deregulation).

T.5225 Telephone/Broadband - To respond to Cllr query raised ref. Youth Centre phone/ broadband; and to consider whether installing Wifi in the Civic Centre should be pursued. BT have used small print in the contract for youth centre to raise prices by £10 (only the discount is protected, not the monthly prices!). Diarise to search competitive quotes in May before June renewal. After discussion of the merits and methods of providing wifi, it was agreed that a working group of Cllrs C Young, P Smith, R Claydon would convene to explore methods and costs of a civic centre wifi system.

T.5226 Policies and Procedures

- a) To review in more depth the **Media Policy and the Code of Conduct**. Cllr R Claydon volunteered to look at the wording of the current Code to bring it more in line with the current SDC version, upon which it was originally based and suggest changes to the next meeting. After adding wording to make it clearer that Councillors should specify if they are speaking as an individual (thus not using the

word Councillor in front of surname) or as a Councillor relaying agreed Council policy, it was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and agreed by Cllr T Luker to approve the updated Media Policy, all in favour, 1 abstention.

b) To ratify the renewal of Policies and Procedures as recommended at the Finance & Special Purposes Committee as follows with a few amendments:

a) **Standing Orders**, Dec 14 – it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr L Farmer to approve the suggested changes, all in favour.

b) **Remit of Committees**, Dec 14 – it was proposed by Cllr A Proctor, seconded by Cllr June Cordwell to approve the suggested changes, all in favour.

c) **Model Publication Scheme**, Feb 14 – backing paper was omitted thus this will be considered at the March meeting.

d) **CCTV Policy**, Feb 14 – it was proposed by Cllr P Barton, seconded by Cllr R Claydon to approve the suggested changes, all in favour.

e) **Grants Policy**, Jan 14 – it was proposed by Cllr L Farmer, seconded by Cllr R Claydon to approve the suggested changes, all in favour.

f) **Complaints Procedure**, Jan 14 – it was proposed by Cllr P Barton, seconded by Cllr L Farmer to approve the suggested changes, all in favour.

g) **Adverse Weather Policy**, Dec 14– it was agreed that Council would reconsider this policy after Cllr A Kendall had suggested changes to Snow Warden element.

h) **Dignity at Work Policy**, March 15 – it was proposed by Cllr L Farmer, seconded by Cllr P Barton to approve the suggested changes, all in favour.

i) **Internet/Email Policy**, March 15 – it was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell, seconded by Cllr L Farmer to approve the suggested changes, all in favour.

j) **Grievance Procedure**, March 15 – it was proposed by Cllr L Farmer, seconded by Cllr John Cordwell to approve the suggested changes, all in favour.

k) **Disciplinary Procedure**, March 15 – it was proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar, seconded by Cllr P Barton to approve the suggested changes, all in favour.

l) **Training Policy**, March 15 – it was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell, seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar to approve the suggested changes, all in favour.

m) **Health & Safety Policy**, May 15 – it was agreed to defer policy update until May for Building Manager's input after recent NEBOSH.

T.5227 Clubs & Groups Fair – To confirm postponement of the Clubs & Groups Fair to Spring 2018 (Heritage Centre help also offered) due to staff shortages. Agreed by all.

T.5228 Litter Bin Request – To consider resident request for a litter bin at the junction of Cherry Orchard/Synwell Lane due to excessive waste being dumped in adjacent grit bin. SDC have offered a free post mounted bin, which they will empty, if we install - installation cost of £125 or install ourselves. It was proposed by Cllr A Kendall, seconded by Cllr T Luker to accept bin from SDC and install ourselves using Buildings Manager, agreed by all.

T.5229 Signage Youth Centre/Chipping Clubroom – Cllr June Cordwell explained the preferences of the working group meeting and displayed 'Wotton Youth Centre' artwork, requested in a 3ft x 2ft oval sign to be positioned in flower bed at front of building. Cllr T Luker had obtained a quote of £200 for sign and posts which the Clerk requested sight of. Wotton Youth Partnership had agreed to pay for the signage up to £250 and they were thanked for this. Planning permission would be needed in the form of Advertisement Consent. It was proposed by Cllr C Young, seconded by Cllr T Luker to proceed with this signage, agreed by all. The working

group could not see any possibilities for a sign linking the two buildings, due to one building projecting in front of the other.

T.5230 Consultations

a) South Glos Council Local Plan 2018–2036, to consider input to new Local Plan for South Glos steering district development for next 20 years (23/2/17 deadline). Clerk to respond stating that Charfield (the nearest village in South Glos to Wotton) is not mentioned, although a new neighbourhood north of Yate is, for 3000 homes to meet requirements of Yate and Thornbury. Last December's West of England Joint Spatial Plan proposal for 3000 houses north of Thornbury on the A38 is not this one, (north of Yate), so is this a new proposal after that earlier consultation.

b) Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031; letter from Cotswold District Council informing that Addendum Containing Focussed Changes to the– Submission Draft Reg. 19 (Dec 2016) published for consultation – any comments by 27th Feb 17. No comments.

T.5231 Future Car Parking in Wotton

a) To consider improving enforcement methods for existing car parks (Cllr P Barton). SDC manages two car parks (the Chipping and Potters Pond), with the Civic Centre managed by the Town Council. The bureaucracy & policies & staffing resources required to clamp vehicles and issue fines is considerable. County Council outsource parking enforcement to APCOA. SDC are asked to increase enforcement of existing Wotton car parks, and also ask for costs of doing this at Civic Centre car park. (District Cllr Butcher to enquire). The Clerk is also asked to enquire of APCOA charges for doing this at Civic Centre.

b) To consider extra future parking provision possibilities (referred from Regeneration Committee) after request letter from Under The Edge Arts informing of the effects of parking difficulties in the town on their income and requesting an independent view of the parking situation and future provision. In view of the fact that the Planning Authority decision regarding new a car park on land behind the fire station is not yet known, it is considered prudent at this stage to reconsider this issue after SDC's decision. Furthermore, the acting Chairman of the Regeneration Committee said that members felt that, without a solution to the parking problem, some regeneration objectives would be difficult to achieve.

Cllr A Wilkinson left the meeting

T.5232 Good Deeds Section: Thanks to Volunteers – to acknowledge recent volunteer work for the benefit of the town/community. It was agreed to send a card of thanks to Mark Schofield, representing the fire service, for providing a stimulating presentation to the KLB sixth form at February's 2017 Drive For Life event.

T.5233 Clerk's Report – covered January & February. Although the new CCTV camera was fitted on the RSPCA shop, Redhand are unable to direct it adequately. The Town Hall floor is not wearing well since its damage by the Dramatic Society. The cleaning contactor has been contacted for more advice.

T.5234 Correspondence to note or request action:

a) Invitation circulated to all from Baptist Church to their 300th Anniversary celebrations, which include the official opening of the 'Link' building.

- b) Noted parishioner letter of complaint about Councillors not declaring interests during the Planning Committee meeting on 30/1/2017 when the proposed car park/housing development behind the Symn Lane Fire Station was considered.
- c) Noted parishioner email of complaint concerning councillor criticism of a public forum statement during the Planning Committee meeting on 30/1/2017; plus congratulations to Councillors who supported the planning application.
- d) Noted parishioner email of complaint concerning Council's 'Support in Principle' for the car park/housing planning application behind Symn Lane Fire Station; the Town Council's Car Park Survey and failure to publish resident's survey on Council's website; and behaviour of some individual Councillors.
Complainants of b & c & d above were all advised to contact SDC Monitoring Officer as per Council Complaints Procedure. County Cllr John Cordwell has issued his own response from a County Cllr stance. All points are noted, but whilst the SDC Planning Authority deals with the matter no further action will be taken, except to note that Wotton Town Council did not publish the 'residents own parking survey' due to concerns about methodology used.
- e) Noted letter copied to Council concerning trees on eastern boundary of Bluecoat School, although this is a civil matter not concerning the Town Council.
- f) Noted invitations to Clerk/Mayor to Farewell party for KLB Japanese Guests on 24/3/2017. Unfortunately neither can attend this event and the Deputy Mayor is also unavailable. Clerk to respond.
- g) Noted grant request from Stroud Valleys Project and their availability to carry out wildlife friendly green space projects. Any projects using them will bear a cost. Information to be passed to WCSF.
- h) Noted response from SDC confirming need for wheelie bins at Weavers Row; there is no planning condition reason for needing sacks – district councillors have been investigating.
- i) Noted vandalism to Old Town Toilets and suggestion from cleaning contractor for more overnight closures, which would have cost implications. Continue to monitor for further vandalism. If this is significant then more closure times would have to be considered due to already high maintenance costs.

Brochures/Newsletters for information only: Allotment & Leisure Gardener

T.5235 Reports from Councillors & meetings attended

County Council – County Cllr John Cordwell provided a report highlighting the setting of the county budget for 1.99% increase plus 2% adult social care levy – totalling £403m and requiring £35m of savings to be found. Also, Govt new formulae for school funding will see KLB school lose 2.2%, British School gain 0.2% and Blue Coat School lose 2.7%. County elections in May will lead to some highways project delays. Most Wotton street lights will be converted to LED's in March. Funding of £2.2m has been approved towards the Gigaclear 3e broadband project rollout for 30Mbps speeds – including in the Wotton area.

District Council – a long report was provide by district councillors, covering early debt collection and ensuing problems, Stroud Subscription Rooms strategy, Council budget setting, refuse collections, CIL levy, Kingswood Neighbourhood Plan referendum delay, social housing policy & Dryleaze Court, & meetings attended.

PROW & Amenities Committee – regular path surveys have now begun

Finance & Special Purposes Committee – recommendations above.

Allotments Committee – meeting deferred

Wotton Youth Partnership WYP (formerly Youth Liaison Group) – youth centre signage considered and dealt with above. Wooden shelter being built. Mental health project gaining momentum.

Town Regeneration Partnership – met on 6th February, draft Minutes available.

WC Sports Foundation – sinking fund for new 3rd all weather pitch has £25,000 committed. Parc Run to hold fancy dress and marathon to fund raise. New BMX track will cost £18k and sponsors are being sought. Party in the Parc arrangements are well underway with a hockey tournament, Falcon donated burgers, and overall sponsoring by Wickwar Brewery. New hedging along recent new safe path is being planted at end of February.

Wotton Pool – no meeting

Heritage Centre (HC) – grants recently secured for new projector, conservation boxes, and grant for perspex covers just applied for. Current new exhibition is called Traders & Trades. Friends of the Heritage Centre was launched recently with membership funds going toward Research Room refurbishment.

Wotton in Bloom – first meeting of year; last year's colour displays to be repeated as very successful. Hopefully two more railing troughs at Old Town and a few other locations if funds permit.

YCS – 18 month review meeting held to discuss service as halfway through 3 year contract. Numbers have dropped away and there have been some staff changes; efforts being made to raise more awareness of facilities on offer. A review of the Door youth provision is also to take place this week.

SDC Rope Walk toilets – meeting with Town Council held to consider refurbishments needed using remaining maintenance budget funding. District Cllr Braun to follow up remaining works needed with SDC asset management capital projects team.

T.5236 Town Affairs

Cllr C Young – not attended a CAB meeting but understood that the Chairwoman had passed away.

Cllr John Cordwell – asked about sending out TRO proposal details to Regeneration Committee – Clerk to investigate.

Cllr June Cordwell – asked if Wotton had missed out on Spring Cleans happening in other SDC towns. Clerk responded that last year no interest was shown by Town Council to undertake this, and no contact had been received about this year's clean from SDC. Neighbourhood Warden will be asked.

It was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell and seconded by Cllr June Cordwell to extend the meeting past 10pm in line with Standing Orders (currently 9:58pm), and also to enter closed session under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to staffing matters of a sensitive nature, agreed all in favour.

The public left the meeting

T.5237 Staffing Matters

a) Deputy Clerk move to SCP32 pro rata from 1/4/17 in accordance with contract. It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell, seconded by Cllr R Claydon to approve, agreed by all.

b) To agree changes to Caretaker contract as recommended by Finance & Special Purposes Committee, namely, weekly remains 10 hrs in winter & plus 2hrs in summer to 12 hrs. It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer, seconded by Cllr T Luker to approve, agreed by all.

c) To note 1% increase in pay-scales for all staff with effect from 1/4/2017 in accordance with rates agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. It was agreed by all to note and approve this increase.

T.5238 Town Trust Items

a) To ratify earmarked funding set aside for the benefit of the elderly following the transfer of the Chipping Clubroom funds as recommended by the Finance & Special Purposes Committee, and to consider correspondence from former CCR Trustee regarding these earmarked funds. It was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell and seconded by Cllr T Luker to earmark £1004 for elderly benefit (after taking out necessary items of expenditure which benefitted the elderly to bring it up to the legal standard acceptable for public buildings hire), agreed by all.

b) To approve payment as discussed at budget meeting of £5500 administration payment from Town Trust to Town Council. It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and seconded by Cllr T Luker to approve this payment, agreed by all.

c) To approve £250 grant to the British School for their Senior Citizens events from the CCR funds earmarked for elderly benefit as recommended by Finance & Special Purposes Committee. It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and seconded by Cllr T Luker to approve this payment, agreed by all.

d) To approve £250 grant to Wotton Day Centre for a 2 course meal outing for its members, from the CCR elderly benefit earmarked funds. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr L Farmer to approve payment of £160 to the Day Centre, which is £10 per head, agreed by all. After payments of c) and d) the remaining earmarked funds for benefit of the elderly CCR monies thus totals £594.

e) To approve purchase, using an individual's donated funds, of robust octagonal seating for the area to the rear of the Chipping Clubroom. It was proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr C Young to purchase this seating for £595, agreed by all.

This completed the business of the Town Council at 10.15pm

Signed:Dated: