

**MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 19th JUNE 2017 AT 7PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE**



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

In attendance: Town Clerk Ms S Bailey, District Cllrs Braun, Tucker & Butcher & 3 other members of the public

1 minute's silence was held for recent terror attacks and London fire victims

T.5302 Apologies for Absence All present.

T.5303 Declarations of Interest Personal -County Cllr John Cordwell (possibly in relation to TRO financing dependent upon GCC match funding)

T.5304 Village Agent –Jane Creed, the new Village Agent for this area, was welcomed. In role since January covering Dursley, Wotton, Cam & Kingswood, she helps vulnerable adults and above fifties to find help, signposting them to suitable resources. The scheme is out to tender and may change its format later in the year, tying up with the clinical commissioning group, rather than reporting to Glos Rural Community Council. Jane also works with Linked-up-Wotton, joining up various services and highlighting them to others, and has a base in the fire station office.

T.5305 Public Forum Mr Tucker spoke representing the Chamber of Trade and asked about the possibility of using the now closed building supplier's site in the Chipping as a car park. A letter from the Town Council has already been handed to the site owner but no reply received.

T.5306 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th May 2017. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr June Cordwell to approve these Minutes, after a minor amendment, agreed all in favour

T.5307 Chairman's Announcements - none

T.5308 Accounts

a) To consider contract quotes for telephone & broadband for office and Youth Centre and choose provider. Much analysis work was undertaken to provide 7 different options from 5 different suppliers, since we have just ended the BT fixed term contract. It is complicated to compare and reliability of service must also be a factor in choosing a provider in addition to price consideration. After much discussion regarding the merits of different companies and personal experiences, it was proposed by Cllr A Wilkinson and seconded by Cllr L Farmer and agreed by all to select the BT 'line package 3' for 2 years, without mobiles, to include broadband, unlimited call options for CAB and WTC offices which reduce call costs, totalling £142.80 per month for all lines in total. Current monthly costs are £178 per month total. Lower priced alternative options carry some concern about reliability if problems arise, and compromising business continuity would be a false economy.

b) To consider insurance quotes for Town Council and Town Trust and choose provider. Three suppliers were analysed, meetings held and a comparison document produced. After discussion of the almost halving of price since the previous contract renewal, and the merits of different cover available, it was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell and agreed all in favour, to renew with Zurich Insurance who have given us good service, for a 3 year fixed period at a price of £5,503 for Town Council and £3,195 for Town Trust

per annum premiums. Furthermore, £66 will be added to the Town Council premium per annum to include 3 key personnel emergency/accident cover providing £100,000 revenue to assist business continuity.

c) Budget 2017/18. Although still early in the new financial year, report of expenditure against budget is noted as healthy. Council is pleased at spreadsheet layout and being able to follow explanations of spend clearly.

d) To approve the accounts for payment. One extra payment of £7,500 is added to the Council schedule as advance payment of Traffic Regulation Orders invoice to Glos County Council. After answering a few queries, it was proposed by Cllr L Farmer, seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar and agreed by all with 1 abstention, to approve these payments.

T.5309 Councillor Vacancies An election has been called to fill the two council vacancies for the date of 26th July. Candidate packs are available and an election is called if more than one candidate for each vacancy is presented.

T.5310 Play Area Safety ROSPA Inspection – to note report regarding Symn Lane play area. It is disappointing to note that the only item of concern is a broken latch (which has been removed) on the gate at the entrance yet this has produced a medium risk rather than the low risk rating, throughout the whole report. This also happened last year, leading one to question the report's usefulness.

T.5311 Youth Provision – To consider continuing with the Friday youth sessions provided by The Door from Sept 17 to March 18 and cost implications. A review meeting held with The Door highlighted their securing a grant from the Police Crime Commissioner which was smaller than hoped for districtwide, and has led to the successful Friday Wotton sessions facing closure. With contributions from the Baptist Church and extra support offered from The Door organisation itself, it was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr P Barton, and agreed by all, that £1800 be provided by the Town Council to ensure that The Door continues to operate and have a presence within Wotton on Fridays from September 2017 to March 2018, and that a review is held of our youth service provision in Spring 2018.

T.5312 Intruder incident at Civic Centre – to provide update on legal action/police response. At the request of Inspector Clifford, a more informed response was finally forthcoming from the Police regarding the incident. It is a pity that all of this information was not forthcoming at the time and this would have saved a good deal of time spent engaging a solicitor and chasing the Police for information. The Town Council agrees to put legal action on hold.

T.5313 SDC Asset Proposals:

a) For demolition 4 properties in Gloucester St & Bradley St - to comment to SDC on these. Although this Town Council does not oppose the site's continued use for affordable/social housing, we would like the opportunity to purchase the site for car parking, should the social housing plans be unviable. We would like to know the cost of this land for use as such and if there is any reason legally why we could not purchase this site for parking. SDC is well aware that car parking is a serious issue in Wotton and is hampering future growth and survival as a market town. SDC appreciates this problem and the SDC 2015 Local Plan specifies two vehicle spaces per household for any new builds in Wotton as opposed to lower national requirements. SDC's own 2010 parking survey

highlighted this problem, also backed up by Wotton Town Council's own recent survey. Regarding our concern for the welfare of the current tenants in the remaining two properties, we are concerned that they are rehoused suitably in view of negative past experiences in this town. A specified way forward for this site should be confirmed by SDC in order that past mistakes of leaving sites vacant is not repeated.

b) For sale, garages site adjacent to Full Moon – to consider site uses and feedback to SDC. Wotton Town Council is not opposed to there being redevelopment on the Mount Pleasant garages site, however it considers that the responsibility for providing parking for all of the surrounding social housing which uses this garage site (and its adjacent roads) should remain with SDC. Therefore 'any' development of this site should also incorporate parking for existing residents on this garages site. Removing parking provision in Wotton is contrary to the spirit of the SDC Local Plan where it is stated that parking is a specific problem in Wotton. Town Councillors are very concerned that a recent officer/district councillor visit happened during the working day hours when most of the vehicles were away from the town (at work!) and therefore SDC failed to appreciate the severity of the problem in this, and surrounding, roads. The Town Council urges SDC to be more realistic and visit during evenings or the weekend.

T.5314 Good Deeds Section: Thanks to Volunteers – a card would be sent to Jane Gunning and Jenny Jerrold thanking them for kindly maintaining the garden outside the Heritage Centre. The Clerk was also thanked for the good publicity for the Town Council by organising the plant sale at the recent Wotton Secret Gardens event which raised £290 from plants (the event raised over £4000 for Wotton in Bloom and the Community Parc).

T.5315 Clerk's Report – comprehensive report supplied covering May/June activities was noted. Littering and poor behaviour at the Clump on Wotton Hill is leading to many bags of rubbish being collected and grass burnt from barbeques. The two new defibrillators (outside Synwell Pavilion and Civic Centre) are now live and working and registered with South West Ambulance – dial emergency services to be given the access code. Training will be arranged shortly.

T.5316 Correspondence to note or request action:

- a) Noted card of thanks from Administrator following injury absence.
- b) Noted letter of thanks for grant from Cobalt & the Spring newsletter.
- c) Noted letter of thanks for grant from Wotton Day Centre.
- d) Noted AGM of CPRE Glos Branch 16th June (emailed to Councillors in advance).
- e) To comment on correspondence relating to campervans in Wotton and lack of parking. After discussion, Clerk is to respond highlighting the scarcity of car park land in Wotton and the priority of any parking projects by the Town Council would be to encourage visitors to the town to support the local economy, and not to provide parking for additional residential vehicles.
- f) Noted letter to Stroud District Council, copied to Town Council, regarding trees on Eastern boundary of Bluecoat School.
- g) To comment on correspondence from resident requesting new Scout Hut access onto civic centre car park. We understand that this is no longer proceeding, although the Scouts do have a legal agreement with the property owner and would need to be approached in the first instance. The Town Council is not keen at all on the idea of new scout access via the car park.

Brochures/Newsletters for information only: War Memorials Trust Bulletin May 2017, Allotments

T.5317 Reports from Councillors & meetings attended

County Council – County Cllr John Cordwell provided a written report. Amey are supposed to have sent a satisfaction survey to all parishes but none have arrived. The Traffic Regulation Orders should have funding agreed shortly, but need upfront payment to secure matched funding since it is competitive. County Council cabinet positions have been filled by Conservatives who hold the majority. Children’s services rating is judged ‘inadequate’ by Ofsted – a review meeting to assess this situation will be at the end of June.

District Council – a 3 page written report was circulated. Higher costs from the new waste Ubico contract are being investigated mostly due to rising basic costs, bin replacements & extra collections. An £8m budget is prioritised districtwide providing more affordable homes to rent.

PROW & Amenities Committee – not met

Finance & Special Purposes Committee – not met

Allotments Committee – next meeting to be arranged shortly. Inspection of New Rd site held last week; plot improvement letters will be sent out. Knapp Rd to follow.

Wotton Youth Partnership WYP – much information has been collected regarding mental health and will be categorized for easy access. £1200 paid to WCSF for new youth shelter. Cllr June Cordwell provided a written summary of the 3 different youth providers all offering sessions at the Wotton Youth Centre. Also the Sports Hall at KLB will see extra training sessions in the summer with personal trainers stressing health/muscles/food. The new badminton group have now successfully bought their own equipment using ‘Glos CC Children’s Activity Fund’.

Town Regeneration Partnership – not met

WC Sports Foundation – no report

Wotton Pool – no meetings held, however Alan George has very successfully secured a grant of £32400 for changing room building redevelopment. A triathlon of 70 entrants also raised £4000.

Heritage Centre – A successful AGM was held highlighting the Centre’s increased footfall and improvements. Reg Clarke was elected new Chairman.

Police Cluster Meeting – Cllr P Smith provided a report; district crime has increased for the first time in a few years, shoplifting has also increased largely at the Co-op in Wotton and Sainsburys in Dursley. Nailsworth is seeing an increase in anti social youth behaviour. Police staff are changing a lot recently, and likely to change again. Police coverage in Wotton is very thin, as resources are overstretched.

S West Youth Enterprise Partnership – held at Renishaw attended by Cllrs June Cordwell & Cllr R Claydon as Deputy Mayor. Standard of entrants was high and the enthusiasm from the young people demonstrating their business ideas was very impressive indeed.

Wotton in Bloom – baskets all up and looking good already; 149 troughs and baskets this year – the most ever.

Party on the Green – District Cllr Catherine Braun was thanked for organising an excellent event in Synwell, which was well attended by the community.

T.5318 Town Affairs

Cllr L Farmer - asked that nettles be cut down at Potters Pond footpath – Clerk asked for location to be clarified.

Cllr T Luker – asked that road gullies at Synwell Lane be cleared– Clerk asked for location to be clarified to pass on to Glos Highways.

Cllr June Cordwell –asked that funeral director property adjacent Symn Lane and Chipping footpath be contacted asking to clear overgrowth. Also commented on mess left by media digging contractor at the Chipping Surgery bus stop.

Cllr P Barton – asked that Amey address the rough road surface on corner of Bradley St/Westfields as too rough for wheelchairs.

Cllr P Smith – complained at the lack of notification from Virgin Media regarding cable laying and lack of traffic management leading to dangerous road situations.

T.5319 Town Trust Items

Public & Cllr A Wilkinson left the room

Meeting of Wotton Town Trust - Monday 19th June 2017

- 1) Received apologies for absence; Cllr A Wilkinson
- 2) To approve Town Trust Minutes dated 12th January 2017 and to ratify decisions made at Town Council for period January to May 2017. It was proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell to approve these after a minor amendment, agreed all in favour.
- 3) To agree Town Hall lift maintenance contractor from November 2017. The current contractor was contacted however refused to improve on their quotation when RJ Lifts quoted at half the price. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr P Barton and agreed by all to appoint RJ Lifts as the contractor for the maintenance of the Town Hall specialised lift – RJ now maintain both Council lifts.
- 4) To approve continuing loan of items to the Heritage Centre until further notice. It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar and agreed by all to continue with the loan of the 1989 postbox, town crier's staff & uniform, Elizabethan fireback, two silver medallions commemorating 375th anniversary of sailing of the Mayflower, and the 1836 date stone from National School in the Chipping (amongst others).

This completed the business of the Town Council at 8.50pm

Signed:Dated: