

MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 20th MARCH 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 Kendall (from 7:15), C Young
In attendance: Town Clerk Ms S Bailey, District Cllr C Braun

T.5239 Apologies for Absence Cllrs John Cordwell, A Wilkinson

T.5240 Declarations of Interest none

T.5241 Cycling/Walking Path – To welcome SDC Cllr Catherine Braun to discuss ideas & questionnaire for cycling/walking path between Wotton/New Mills/Charfield/Kingswood. Cllr Braun spoke of the possibilities for a more sustainable, safer and enjoyable form of travel between these local centres, and support from Renishaw, and the parish councils of Charfield & Kingswood. Although Wotton Town Council would encourage more research into this idea, there is concern about raising the hopes of the public via an upbeat survey, since in reality there is no funding available from a county council perspective and the previous detailed appraisal of over 10 years ago estimated over £1m needed to achieve it. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed 10 in favour one against, that Cllr Braun obtains the original detailed survey as a starting point, and conducts more research into possibilities (costings, routes, etc), in order that a questionnaire can be more usefully framed.

T.5242 Public Forum no public

T.5243 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held 20th February 2017. It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr P Barton and agreed all in favour to approve these Minutes.

T.5244 Chairman's Announcements - none

T.5245 Accounts

- a) To approve earmarking of following unspent funds at financial year end:
- (i) £4550 – Defibrillator grant just awarded
 - (ii) £2000 – From Town Hall Capital Maintenance budget to build funds for Town Hall maintenance.
 - (iii) £2500 – from Civic Centre Capital Maintenance budget to build funds for Civic Centre maintenance.
 - (iv) £1500 – from unspent funds in Play Area budget to build funds for new play equipment.
 - (v) £1000 – from unspent funds in Elections/Legal budget, £500 to build funds for Town Hall maintenance, £500 earmark Play Area budget.
 - (vi) £2000 – from unspent funds in allotments budget to increase earmarked allotments reserves.
 - (vii) £1000 from unspent Footpaths/Holywell budget for works to Holywell Leaze/Marchesi Walk.
 - (viii) £4500 from unspent grass-cutting/flowerbeds budget as follows:
£1000 earmark for flowerbeds; £1000 to build funds for Town Hall maintenance, £2500 earmark to Old Town Toilets Improvements.
 - (ix) £1200 – from unspent funds in toilets budget to increase earmarked reserves for Old Town Toilets Improvements.
 - (x) £1500 – from unspent Office Expenses budget to increase reserves for Old Town Toilets improvements.

- The above (i) to (x) were all discussed in detail, proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr A Proctor and agreed by all.
- b) Noted refund NPower £707 from Chipping Clubroom electricity overcharge.
 - c) To approve annual subscription to GAPTC of £1451, proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded Cllr L Farmer and agreed by all.
 - d) To note and ratify approval of clearing fallen trees from Conygre Wood onto farmer's field - cost £320, proposed by Cllr T Luker seconded Cllr P Barton and agreed by all.
 - e) Budget 2016/17. Noted that report of expenditure against budget is healthy; £2500 grant from Cotswold Conservation Board will arrive shortly.
 - f) To approve the accounts for payment. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded by Cllr June Cordwell, agreed by all, to approve net payments of £32,704 for Town Council and £2,134 for Town Trust.

T.5246 Assets List – To approve Assets List ahead of external audit as at March 2017. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded Cllr L Farmer and agreed by all to approve this asset register, recognising that this list is for external audit only and that a separate new insurance list will be considered when our 5 year insurance agreement ends in June. Updated valuations are requested for the Mace and Mayoral/Deputy Mayor chains.

T.5247 Meeting Dates – To confirm Council meeting dates from June 2017 to May 2018. Suggested dates were proposed by Cllr T Luker, seconded Cllr N Pinnegar, agreed by all to approve; the budget meeting will be 28th November 2017; Tuesday 29th August 2017 and Tuesday 29th May 2018 for council meetings normally falling on a bank holiday Monday. The decision regarding the Annual Parish Assembly date will be decided at the May Town Council Meeting in order to assess the success of holding it on a Friday.

T.5248 Policies and Procedures - To approve the following policy updates:

- a) Model Publications Scheme. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded Cllr L Farmer and agreed by all to approve this policy revision.
- b) Adverse Weather policy - it was agreed to defer revisions to this policy until after the snow wardens had considered the practical nature of expected duties.
- c) Code of Conduct - the revisions to this policy will be considered after the district council makes its decision on a recent planning application.

T.5249 Dementia Friends Sessions – To confirm date for Cllr Dementia Friends session -part of Dementia Friendly Town status criteria. The 9th May is suggested.

T.5250 GAPTC

- a) Councillor Vacancy –proposal of candidate to represent Stroud District parishes on GAPTC Executive Committee. (Wotton Clerk is already Glos Clerks Rep to this Committee). None proposed.
- b) AGM Saturday 15th July 17 –invitation to submit a resolution for debate at this meeting. None suggested.

T.5251 SDC Future of Town Centres Consultation

- a) To consider how Wotton Town Councillors wish to contribute to the SDC report. After reviewing the circulated draft proposal document, Councillors would like input into matters relating to Wotton, preferably via an evening face to face

meeting. The time scale for needing this meeting is requested in order to arrange a suitable date.

b) To consider progressing the Wotton Neighbourhood Development Plan. The high costs of preparing an NDP were considered against the benefits, in the light of little community support. Also a plan must be 'pro' development in essence. However, the CIL developer contribution of 25% versus 15% for non NDP parishes is an enticement. It is suggested that a brainstorming session is held after the next planning meeting in order to ascertain if there are areas where Councillors see agreement. Clerk to circulate Kingswood's NDP again for information, along with other useful guidance.

T.5252 Heritage Centre

- to approve external building repair works totalling £2965 - from earmarked reserves*

- to approve lease renewal for further 7 yrs to 2024 & lease amendments*

a) Grant to the Heritage Centre of £3400 which will be paid in April 2017, and will be used to pay rent and utility expenditure, this was proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr June Cordwell to approve, agreed 9 in favour 2 against.

b) External repair works to the Heritage Centre costing approximately £3000, this was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr L Farmer to approve, with the Clerk to authorise works after one more quote is obtained, agreed by all.

c) An 'in principle extension' to the Heritage Centre lease for a further 7 years to 2024 but subject to an agreement of lease amendments and rent/rental review was proposed by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr L farmer, agreed 9 in favour, 1 abstention, 1 against.

The rent is currently £1400 p.a and there is concern that there has been no rent review since 1994. Indexation of this already low rent (much lower than commercial values) would provide a current figure of £2615. Since costs of maintaining buildings are increasing, it will be very difficult to hold this rent for 7 years, and Council thus suggests a progressive move towards a rent more reflective of current value. One way of achieving this without the need to re-write the current lease would be to reduce the grant paid to the Heritage Centre.

The lease amendment document was discussed in detail:

- The last page states that this is a Deed and thus Council is worried that legal advice may be needed if it is intended for this amendment document to be a 'Deed' rather than an Addendum to the existing lease.

Items on the document which Council questions are:

- Pge 1 amendment 2, 'to further cement the relationship' ; change 'cement' to 'update'
- Pge 2 amendment 8, delete the words 'for this term'. If a rent review is needed every 3 years – need to consider where this might be inserted.
- Pge 3 amendment 13, does this need to be here, as the Town Trust has buildings insurance?
- Pge 4 amendment 15, things need to be added to this list eg interior items excluded and also excluded is heating and hot water system.
- Pge 4 amendment 17, not necessary as the current lease already says this in different words.

T.5253 Good Deeds Section: Thanks to Volunteers – to acknowledge recent volunteer work for the benefit of the town/community. No suggestions.

T.5254 Clerk's Report – report supplied covering March; no extra questions.

T.5255 Correspondence to note or request action:

a) Although deadline for responses was short & has passed, noted Consultation on the Glos LGPS Investment Strategy Statement & Strategic Asset Allocation.

b) Noted letter of thanks from British School for Town Trust grant of £250 towards their Senior Citizens events.

c) Noted invitation to the launch of the new Police & Crime Plan 2017-2021 on 30/3/2017 at 6pm at Barnwood, Gloucester. Town Clerk to attend.

Brochures/Newsletters for information only: Clerks & Councils Direct March 2017; Recovery Winter 2017

T.5256 Reports from Councillors & meetings attended

County Council – County Cllr John Cordwell provided a report highlighting extra Govt spending for adult social care in the budget and possible extension of the Amey Highways contract,

District Council – a long report was provided by district councillors, covering Stroud Subscription Rooms proposals to reduce costs, SDC budgets, Gossington recycling building licence granted, Kingswood Neighbourhood Plan going to referendum, and tenant/social housing committee updates.

PROW & Amenities Committee – not met

Finance & Special Purposes Committee – not met

Allotments Committee – meeting deferred, however path shoring up works now completed and make paths much more stable and accessible.

Wotton Youth Partnership WYP – an informal interim meeting was held; the Lions wish to sponsor a young person – awaiting information

Town Regeneration Partnership – not met

WC Sports Foundation – written report supplied by Cllr June Cordwell; awaiting KLB School regarding the funds distribution for joint venture company.

Wotton Pool – no meeting

Heritage Centre - written report supplied by Cllr June Cordwell

CAB – Cllr C Young attended Stroud meeting. Nothing to note other than Stroud area fundraising is going well.

Community Infrastructure Levy – Cllrs R Claydon & P Smith attended an interesting CIL presentation at SDC offices – report from this has been circulated to all.

T.5257 Town Affairs

Cllr A Kendall – noted that changed work commitments mean uncertainly for his attendance at future council meetings.

Cllr P Barton – noted that a resident was concerned about the bridge wall at Potters Pond.

Cllr June Cordwell – explained that Mr P Grimes from The Farm Shop had now secured a match funding business grant enabling his expansion plans to go ahead.

T.5258 Town Trust Items

a) To consider Land Registry Notice of application to cancel a caution against a first registration in respect of the parking area in front of the garage next to the Youth Centre in the Chipping. After much discussion regarding the events leading up to this caution being registered in 2000, it was agreed that the Town Trust would object to the caution being removed on the same basis as when initially registered, and that the Clerk is authorised to obtain legal advice if necessary, requesting a time extension also if necessary.

b) Chipping Hall – To consider extending the lease, in its current form, to Under-the-Edge Arts from February 2020 – 2026, keeping rent reviews every 3 years and increasing the annual rent from £6000 to £7000 in 2018, £8000 in 2019 and £9000 in 2020. This was proposed by Cllr A Kendall seconded by Cllr L Farmer, and agreed by all to approve.

c) Town Hall

(i) Noted letter from Dramatic Society querying utilities charge for hire of the Town Hall during their pantomime production. Noted that the Dramatic Society has also been invoiced for cleaning paint from the Town Hall floor following the pantomime.

(ii) Noted deduction of £20 from deposit of hirer due to building being left in unsatisfactory condition, requiring additional cleaning.

This completed the business of the Town Council at 9.45pm

Signed:Dated: