



**MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD ON MONDAY 21<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2016 AT 7:00PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE**

**Present:** Cllrs P Smith (Mayor), T Luker, P Barton, N Clement, N Pinnegar, R Claydon, A Kendall, C Young, A Wilkinson,

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

**T.4959 Apologies for Absence** – accepted from Cllrs June & John Cordwell, L Farmer, K Collins

**T.4960 Declarations of Interest** none

**T.4961 Public Forum** none

**T.4962 Minutes of the Meeting** Proposed by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2016 be approved as a correct record, agreed 8 in favour, 1 abstention.

**T.4963 Chairman's Announcements** – The Mayor apologised for his behaviour towards the Clerk at the previous Planning Committee meeting.

**T.4964 Accounts**

- a) To consider recommendation from Town Regeneration Partnership committee to apply for brown tourist signage to be added to directional signage at Ozleworth, application cost £250. If the application is successful the Council will need to pay additional costs for the design/manufacture/installation of the sign. Glos CC signage costs identified are much higher than previously anticipated (at £2000 ish) and the matter will instead be progressed by hopefully placing a sign advertising Wotton within Newark Park ground & sign near exit.
- b) To approve attendance of Cllr Barton and Administrator at Allotments Forum in Gloucester on 28th April 2016. Costs will be mileage only. Proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar, seconded Cllr R Claydon agreed by all.
- c) To consider quote for removal of tree from plot at New Road Allotments for £261. Two quotes were obtained. Tree is making half of plot unusable, proposed Cllr R Claydon, seconded Cllr C Young, to remove agreed all in favour.
- d) To approve Earmarking of underspent funds from current year's accounts & Reserves as follows, and as already discussed during the budget deliberations:
- (i) £850 from 15/16 Footpaths budget to fund Holywell Leaze wall repairs
  - (ii) £2500 from 15/16 Civic Centre Capital Maintenance budget to build funds for future major maintenance works to Civic Centre
  - (iii) £2400 remaining from 15/16 Allotments budget to fund allotments works.
  - (iv) £1000 remaining from 15/16 Vehicle budget to build funds towards new vehicle purchase
  - (v) £1000 remaining from 15/16 Play area budget to build funds towards replacement equipment
- (i) to (v) above proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar and seconded by Cllr R Claydon and agreed by all to approve earmarking as current year underspends.
- (vi) £10,000 from free reserves for Traffic Regulation Orders
  - (vii) £20,000 from free reserves for allotments works
  - (viii) £15,000 from free reserves for new van purchase
  - (ix) £5,000 from free reserves for possible improvements to Old Town Toilets.
- After discussion of a backing document outlining Rope Walk toilets meeting with SDC and the situation at Old Town toilets, Clerk will arrange a 2 day rota session

for Councillors to compile visitor statistics in order to assess usage of the latter site, survey proposed by Cllr P Smith seconded Cllr T Luker, agreed by all.

(x) £4,000 from free reserves for CCTV equipment

(xi) £5,000 from free reserves for grant towards safe path to Skatepark

(xii) £3,800 from free reserves to fund Town Clerk Community Governance studies 2 years.

(xiii) £6,000 from free reserves for maintenance works to Heritage Centre

(xiv) £1,000 from 15/16 grants budget for Heritage Centre boiler.

(vi) to (xiv) above proposed by Cllr A Kendall and seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed by all to approve earmarking from free reserves as agreed at budget.

(xv) £300 from 15/16 grants budget towards Christmas event towards road closure/insurance – a specific grant application would come from the organiser of the event who is working with the backing of the Wotton Chamber of Trade.

(xv) above proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar and seconded by Cllr P Barton and agreed by all to approve grant underspend for this purpose.

(xvi) £2000 from 15/16 Town Regeneration Budget towards brown tourist signage costs – not now needed, but requested that these funds are earmarked to next year's Regeneration Budget proposed Cllr P Smith, seconded Cllr T Luker, agreed by all.

- e) To note receipt of £867.74 from M&G Dividend Fund. Noted
- f) To approve yearly renewal of membership to GAPTC at a cost of £1416.31. Proposed Cllr R Claydon, seconded Cllr T Luker, agreed by all.
- g) To note 1.3% increase in tariff for O2 mobile phone (average increase per month 42p). Noted.
- h) To consider whether to purchase Queen's 90th birthday commemorative medals at a cost of £1.99 each plus £7.50 carriage – minimum order 50 medals (minimum cost £107). Agreed not to purchase.
- i) To approve payment of £2,700 towards cleaning of Wotton Library. Proposed Cllr R Claydon, seconded Cllr T Luker to approve, agreed by all.
- i) Budget 2015/16. To note report of expenditure against budget, circulated in advance. Noted as a healthy position.
- j) To approve the accounts for payment. A few minor extra payments were noted, proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded Cllr N Pinnegar and agreed by all to approve.

#### **T.4965 Grants and Donations**

a) To consider grant application from The British School towards Senior Citizens Hospitality event. After much discussion of the need to adhere to a grants policy of only considering grant awards once a year from November for payment the following April, it was agreed to encourage the British School to reapply in the autumn, proposed by Cllr P Smith, seconded by Cllr R Claydon, agreed 5 in favour 4 abstentions.

#### **T.4966 Documents to be approved:**

a) To consider adoption of 2016/17 Action Plan approved by Finance & Special Purposes Committee. Proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr T Luker to approve this document, agreed by all.

b) To consider adoption of Community Engagement Policy approved by Finance & Special Purposes Committee. Proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar and seconded by Cllr C Young to approve this document, agreed by all.

- c) To approve updated Asset Register required for end of financial year accounts. Proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr P Barton to approve this document, agreed by all.
- d) To approve updates to Internal Controls Risk Assessment Document. Proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr T Luker to approve this document, agreed by all.
- e) To approve new Internal Financial & Administrative Procedures Document as requested by external auditor in 2015. This comprehensive document lists how the Council functions from an administrative point of view and is also an aid to Councillors carrying out the quarterly audit checks. Clerk is asked to check what happened to set of keys for Deputy Mayor. Proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar to approve this document, agreed by all.
- f) To consider adoption of Business Continuity Plan as recommended by Finance & Special Purposes Committee. The Clerk explained that an electronic backup system for burial records (in addition to our spreadsheets) was being investigated, and also that security of usage of internet when using the youth centre as an emergency work location would also be investigated. It was proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar and seconded by Cllr A Wilkinson to approve this document.

**T.4967 National Council Awards Scheme** – To consider recommendation of Finance & Special Purposes Committee that an application for Quality Status (middle level) is made following achievement of Foundation award. It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed all in favour that the requirements are in place and that the Quality Status level can now be applied for.

*Cllr A Wilkinson left the meeting*

**T.4968 Community Plan** – To approve the Wotton-under-Edge 2016 Community Plan and printing of 500 copies for £520. No further comments received and Cllr R Claydon was thanked for the large amount of work which went into updating this Community Plan. Proposed by Cllr T Luker and seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar to approve this document, agreed by all. It is also requested that the full version with questionnaire responses be loaded on to website along with condensed version.

**T.4969 Heritage Centre** – To note formalisation of the process of assisting the Heritage Centre; the Historical Society's formal letter of approval; and to approve the grant therein of £3,400 to be paid in April. A brief update of how the Town Council is now assisting the Heritage Centre was provided, proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr R Claydon to approve this payment and the process as also outlined at the budget meeting, agreed by all.

**T.4970 Youth Centre Broadband** – to consider whether to upgrade to superfast broadband and costs. A document outlining costs was provided. Average broadband speed is 18MB but speeds reduce dramatically when the computers are on and many youths are all trying to access via handheld devices at same time. Usage methods were discussed and how important the internet is to young people using the youth centre. It was proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed by all that we upgrade for the rest of this BT contract to £38 per month (from £16) until June 2017, using £180 of PCC funding for initial cost, with Town Council youth budget funding thereafter.

**T.4971 Marchesi Walk**

(a) To consider request for WTC to remove tree adjacent to 33 Court Orchard which is alleged to be causing structural damage to the property. A document outlined the situation so far. The Council will contact the owner of the land 'Cedar Falls' to state that a tree on

their land may be causing adjacent property problems and request them to fell it. The advice from our insurance company was inconclusive and unclear and clarification is requested. It may be that a tree survey is needed.

(b) To consider request to reduce a conifer in the hedge at the rear of 27 Court Orchard as it restricts light to bungalow (was last cut back winter 2013/14 at a cost of £249). A quote to remove the conifer is requested and it is proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr T Luker to remove this now rather than spending funds every two years for reduction, agreed by all.

**T.4972 Christmas Event** – To receive update on Chamber of Trade plans for the event. In the absence of Cllr Wilkinson the Clerk reiterated that she had met with Ms Nevitt who is working with support of the Chamber to organise an event. Discussion and plans are being formalised and draft ideas/plans should hopefully be available in a few weeks.

**T.4973 2015 GPFA Playground Assessment Scheme Report** - Symn Lane Play Area – to note report and consider Clerk's suggested response. Councillors agreed unanimously to send the response which highlighted many inaccuracies and inconsistencies within the GPFA report.

**T.4974 GAPTC AGM 16th July 2016** – To consider invitation to submit resolutions for debate at this meeting. No resolutions offered.

**T.4975 Uley & Owlpen Community Design Statement** – To note public consultation, closing date 11th April 2016, and to decide if Council wishes to comment, as we are an adjacent parish. No comments offered.

**T.4976 Coombe Allotments** – to note that due to advice and legal opinion, CALGS have withdrawn the CPO request. It is noted that under the 1908 Allotments Act we are now no longer obliged to consider an increased demand for allotments, and currently have enough to satisfy our waiting lists which are low at the moment.

**T.4977 Good Deeds Section; 'Thanks to Volunteers'** – to acknowledge recent volunteer work for the benefit of the town/community. No suggestions forthcoming at present. The office has developed a Town Council personalised card with local views and these were shown to Councillors.

**T.4978 Clerk's Report** - a full report covering February & March activities was circulated and noted, and a few questions answered. A new damp issue was highlighted at the Town Hall near the columns at the lift base.

**T.4979 Correspondence**

a) To note zero rating notices for Town Hall/Chipping Clubroom/Youth Centre from Stroud District Council.

b) To note email correspondence regarding lorries on Wortley Road. The County Cllr has responded to this mail – it is unlikely that lorries are using this as a cross country route, furthermore there is no vehicle weight restriction for this road.

c) To note invitation to Mayor to propose the toast at St George's Day event.

Brochures/Newsletters for information only: none

**T.4980 Reports from Councillors & meetings attended**

County Council – written report provided by County Cllr John Cordwell.

District Council – Cllr June Cordwell provided a written report highlighting that Fountain Crescent and will still be sold but this may take some time.

Footpaths Committee – none

Special Purposes Committee – none

Allotments Committee – Cllr P Barton explained that New Rd users are reconsidering ideas for the entrance slope safer access; it is requested that Footpath Committee gives its advice.

Youth Liaison Group – to meet shortly

Town Regeneration Partnership – not met

Sports Foundation – no report.

Synwell PFC – Cllr N Clement said that the AGM has various new members. The Clerk is attempting to arrange an informal introductory meeting.

#### **T.4981 Town Affairs**

Cllr A Kendall – requested assistance in delivering election forms to SDC

*The Following items are dealt with in Closed Session under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to contracts/tendering/legal issues of a sensitive nature, and staffing matters.*

*It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr C Young and agreed by enter closed Council session.*

**T.4982 Salaries** – To review salary scales and approve increases in accordance with contracts as previously discussed in Closed Session: refer October 2015 Minutes/Confidential Backing Document. (NB Also increase for Deputy Clerk in accordance with contract after CILCA success). The Clerk outlined the results of the appraisal process and the remuneration decisions taken thereafter. It was considered that the role of Administrator warranted an increase of 1 spinal point to SCP14 given effective working and various responsibilities, Cllr C Young proposed to approve this Administrator increase and also the Deputy Clerk 1 spinal point increase as per contract, seconded Cllr T Luker, agreed by all.

**T.4983 Youth Sessions** – to discuss new Friday youth/elderly session quotes and funding sources. A meeting was held at the youth centre to discuss the progression of summer activity session planning and the continuation of Friday afternoon youth sessions, which integrate youth and elderly as per PCC funding. YCS had produced a bid for Friday sessions which was more than budget allows. A scaled down bid also did not meet the objectives. Some YLG funding may be available to supplement but no figures can be obtained yet. Council discussed provision by a competitor and that will be investigated. However in order to provide continuity (after delays in obtaining a response from YCS for the last 3 months on this subject) it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar that the Clerk is authorised to instruct Friday youth provision for a 3 month period April to June 2016 by YCS subject to suitable pro rata costings based on the bid, and that a separate quote be obtained from YCS and another provider for the period September 2016 to June 2017, agreed by all.

*It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed by all to re-enter Council session.  
This completed the business of the Town Council at 9.30pm*

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

Chairman of Wotton-under-Edge Town Council