

**MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON MONDAY 16<sup>th</sup> MAY 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, June Cordwell, L Farmer

**In Attendance:** Town Clerk Ms S Bailey, 26 members of the public

**T.5007 To elect Town Mayor and Chairman of the Town Council and to receive Declaration of Acceptance of Office.** It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr P Barton and agreed by all that Cllr P Smith be elected Mayor and Chairman for another year. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed.

**T.5008 To elect Deputy Town Mayor and Vice-Chair of the Town Council.** It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr A Kendall that Cllr L Farmer take post of Vice Chair. It was proposed by Cllr N Clement and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell that Cllr T Luker take post of Vice Chair. Cllr T Luker was elected after a vote of 6 to 4.

**T.5009 To receive Declarations of Acceptance of Office for all 12 Councillors elected unopposed;** all were noted as signed before the Clerk.

**T.5010 Apologies for Absence.** None.

**T.5011 Declarations of Interest.** Cllr June & John Cordwell owners of 13 Haw St planning application, Cllr John Cordwell member of SW Councils Management Committee, Cllr T Luker daughter member of Synwell Playing Fields Committee.

*It was agreed by Council to bring forward the public forum*

**T.5012 Public Forum** – a number of residents spoke to the council of their concern for proposals to develop on land behind the fire station. The community concerns centred on covering green fields and areas of outstanding natural beauty, preservation of wildlife, worries that car park would become a magnet for youth activities & drugs, and the loss of views of the town from the approach road. The opinion was that existing car parks could be better signposted and lines removed from roads to allow more road parking. They called upon the Town Council to represent them in protecting green areas. The Mayor thanked the parishioners for their views, however said that in the absence of an actual planning application from the developer, the Council could not yet comment on any of the details. He urged individuals to make their views known to Stroud District Council as the planning authority with responsibility for the final decision, once the application has been made.

**T.5013 Election of Membership to Committees:**

a) Planning -Full Council

b) Allotments Cllrs P Barton, N Clement, L Farmer, T Luker, N Pinnegar plus co-opted members Mr I Jones, Mr C Mitchell, Mr B Elloway, Mr G Martin, Mr A Burns, Mrs H Summers, Mr S Todd.

c) PROW & Amenity Areas. Cllrs John Cordwell, R Claydon, T Luker, N Pinnegar, P Smith plus co-opted members Mr S Jarmuz, and Mrs E Warren.

d) Town Regeneration Partnership. Cllrs P Barton, R Claydon, A Kendall, P Smith, A Wilkinson & 1 vacancy, plus co-opted members Reverend R Axford (St Mary's Church), Mrs T McClusky (Beaumont-le-Roger), Mr G Phillips (Wotton Arts Association and Under-the-Edge Arts), Mrs P Smith (Fair Trade Town), Mrs J Tebb (Chamber of Trade), Mrs J Walshe (Heritage Centre), Reverend T Wharin (Baptist Church), Mr M Clarke (Under-the-Edge Arts & CALGS).

e) Finance & Special Purposes -Cllrs June Cordwell, John Cordwell, R Claydon, plus Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

**T.5014 Appointment of Representatives to the following organisations:**

- a) Citizens Advice Bureau - Cllr C Young
- b) Wotton & District Recreational Trust -Cllrs P Barton, R Claydon, June Cordwell, N Pinnegar, P Smith
- c) Beaumont-le-Roger Society - Cllrs P Smith & R Claydon
- d) Youth Liaison Group - Cllrs P Barton, June Cordwell, T Luker, & 1 vacancy.
- e) Wotton-under-Edge General Charities - Cllrs P Barton, N Clement, T Luker, P Smith
- f) Wotton-under-Edge Combined Charities - Cllrs P Barton, T Luker
- g) Wotton Community Sports Foundation - Cllr June Cordwell
- h) Snow Warden - Cllrs R Claydon, A Kendall
- i) Water Course Warden - Cllrs R Claydon, P Smith
- j) Chamber of Trade – Cllr P Smith
- k) Police Stroud Cluster Group - Cllr P Smith
- l) Synwell Playing Fields Committee - Cllr N Clement
- m) Wotton-under-Edge Swimming Pool - Cllr C Young
- n) Wotton in Bloom - Cllrs June Cordwell, L Farmer
- o) Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum - Cllr A Wilkinson
- p) Heritage Centre – Cllr June Cordwell

**T.5015 Appointment of New Committees** - No new committees are needed at present

**T.5016 Policies/Procedures**

a) To reconfirm the current Standing Orders & Financial Regulations for this Council. It is suggested that the Code of Conduct is referred to the Finance & Special Purposes Committee for updating where necessary.

b) To reconfirm Terms of Reference for Committees; and other extant policies as per summary document of all Town Council policies.

It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr P Barton and agreed by all that a) and b) above are approved.

c) To reconfirm that Wotton-under-Edge Town Council continues to satisfy the criteria for using the General Power of Competence as Power of First Resort, proposed by Cllr June Cordwell, seconded by Cllr P Smith and agreed all in favour.

**T.5017 Town Council Banking Arrangements** - To confirm Barclays as the banker for the Town Council for the forthcoming year, proposed by Cllr P Smith, seconded by Cllr June Cordwell and agreed all in favour with 1 abstention

The routine business of the Town Council followed:

**T.5018 Synwell Playing Fields Committee (SPFC)**

*It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and seconded by Cllr T Luker to exit Council session to engage with new members of Synwell Playing fields Committee, agreed by all*

- a) To receive presentation, accounts and report from Synwell Playing Fields committee. New members of SPFC spoke about their plans for improving the field. 'New blood' of 25 members have been recruited with many new ideas. Expenses have been tightened and cleaning costs less now than in 1997. Utility providers have all been changed. Field cutting remains the biggest outlay. Plans to set up a fundraising local lottery are progressing. Children's events such as barbeques, matches & races are booked with other various day events booked/hired externally. The ROSPA report was good but stressed equipment is now quite old. Furthermore the volunteer who used to repair parts is ageing himself, in addition to the standards of maintenance needed, rising. A history sign on the field is planned. Regular local use of the area is seen with 30 to 50 children daily after school playing safely on these fields. Councillors requested more detail on income and expenditure items and that they are broken down into headings for analysis. (It appears they were lost in an email and will be re-sent.) Last year income shows a £3000 surplus, and it appears that the problems with football club payments have been sorted out with £2200 to £2400 paid. Maintenance costs seem similar to the previous year. Previously few funds were saved for replacement of equipment and the plan is to fundraise towards this. Also the small changing rooms are in need of improvement with only two toilets, it is difficult to hire out as a luxury venue. The new volunteers were thanked for stepping in to manage the facility and encouraged to continue.

*It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr June Cordwell to re-enter Council session agreed by all*

*Cllr T Luker left the room*

- b) To consider approving grant of up to £2700 subject to conditions being satisfied in (a) above. It was generally agreed that the new members of SPFC are vibrant and have many interesting ideas and should be supported and encouraged. It was therefore proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr A Wilkinson and agreed all in favour, that the final 3 year grant tranche of £2700 is paid this year, but that if any further grants are required, they must re-apply with reasons.

**T.5019 Chairman's Announcements** The Mayor provided toasts to the Queen, St George & Shakespeare in April, and gave the welcoming speech at the Beaumont le Roger exchange visit last weekend.

**T.5020 To approve the Minutes** of the meeting held on 18th April 2016. After one minor amendment it was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and seconded by Cllr R Claydon and agreed all in favour with 1 abstention to approve these Minutes.

**T.5021 Audited Accounts and Annual Return**

- a) To approve the End-of-Year Accounts for the financial year ending 31st March 2016 and to note internal audit. The internal auditor found no anomalies in the accounts and was very pleased with them, just recommending that the final monthly amount of approved payments is mentioned in the Minutes as a sum. The staff were thanked for the presentation & layout making backing information easier to understand. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr A Kendall and

agreed by all to approve these accounts. The office will check that the streamside Water Lane land is included in the asset register.

- b) To complete the answers to the Annual Governance Statement in Section 1 of the Annual Return. The appropriate boxes were ticked in Section 1, and it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr John Cordwell, and agreed by all to approve this.
- c) To approve the accounting statements in Section 2 of the Annual Return. It was proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed by all to approve the section 2 statements.

#### **T.5022 Accounts**

- a) To approve final payment of £6000 for FY 2015/16 for the Swimming Pool. It was proposed by Cllr A Kendall and seconded by Cllr R Claydon and agreed by all to approve this payment.
- b) To approve quote for £604 plus VAT to remove row of Leylandii conifers at Marchesi Walk. It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell and agreed by all to approve this quotation subject to approaching the landowners nearby and checking their satisfaction.
- c) To approve the accounts for payment. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed by all, with 1 abstention, to approve this schedule of payments, with net payments of up to £22,500 for WTC and net payments of up to £1,600 for Town Trust. The final sheet with additions will be emailed to Councillors.

**T.5023 Burial Regulations** – To consider revisions to wording to include regulations regarding photographs on memorials. The complete document of burial regulations will be reviewed by the next Finance & Special Purposes Committee. However, regarding the usage of photographs in the cemetery, this was discussed in depth, and proposed by Cllr T Luker and seconded by Cllr R Claydon that monochrome photographic images of deceased may only be laser etched onto slabs in the Garden of Remembrance, with layout subject to prior approval by the Town Council, agreed all in favour with 1 abstention. Furthermore, it was proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr R Claydon that no brass plaques are allowed to be fixed onto slabs in the Garden of Remembrance, due to tarnishing, and becoming displaced from the slab over time, agreed by all. Regarding photographs on headstone of graves, it was proposed by Cllr A Kendall and seconded by Cllr L Farmer and agreed all in favour with 1 abstention, that no photographs are allowed at all on graves.

**T.5024 Youth Centre Broadband** – To approve upgrade to minimum 2 year contract for Youth Centre Superfast broadband at a total additional cost of £488 (although minus £180 PCC grant = £308 for this contract period). Cllr R Claydon suggested that upgrading the broadband may not solve the slow speed problem of multiple users, and the Council thanked Cllr L Farmer for volunteering her IT experienced husband to look at the problem in more depth and make suggestions.

**T.5025 Traffic Regulation Orders** – To decide specifics of locations and Haw Street addition. A detailed document was prepared outlining possible areas. After much discussion it was proposed by Cllr T Luker and seconded by Cllr June Cordwell that the Highways Manager Mr A Middlecote is asked to meet councillors (Cllrs John Cordwell, P

Smith, R Claydon) to walk the sites proposed to assess their suitability for new Traffic Regulation Orders, agreed by all.

**T.5026 Town Trust Meeting** - To arrange a date for Town Trust Meeting to approve accounts – possibly following Planning Committee meeting of 23rd May. Agreed to follow next week's planning committee.

**T.5027 Public Consultation on Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Charging Schedule and on Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document** – to consider submitting any comments. After discussion of relative benefits of S106 and CIL, the Clerk is asked to write a response with the following suggestion that for Strategic Sites identified in the Local Plan, the CIL rate should not be £0/m<sup>2</sup> but an agreed amount to allow Parish and Town Councils to use their part of the CIL to increase facility within their parishes affected by the said developments.

**T.5028 Bus Shelter Cleaning** – To decide whether to include weekend cleaning of the bus shelter at the War Memorial in the Caretaker's duties. A document outlined the cost savings to Council of no longer using the contractor Veolia who anyway would suspend duties in July. Hours are available amongst caretaker's duties and person is willing. Half an hour to one hour at weekends maximum is needed. Proposed to approve Cllr A Kendall seconded Cllr L Farmer agreed by all. No discussions held on confidential staff matters.

**T.5029 Symn Lane Play Area** – To note Rospa safety inspection report. It is very frustrating to note that although everything in the report is classed as 'low' or 'very low' risk, (except one item classed as medium - latch on gate, now repaired), the assessor has classed the whole play area as medium risk despite stating it is a well maintained and good play area. Clerk to enquire why grading is 'medium'.

**T.5030 Marchesi Walk** - to consider what improvements the Council wishes to see, with reference to its inclusion on the S106 funding list to upgrade the path, so that details can be prepared and costings sourced. Cllrs P Smith and L Farmer walked the whole stretch Potters Pond to Coombe pumping station with a metre wide pole attached to child buggy, and wrote a report assessing the improvements needed along the whole stretch. Costs are higher along Valley Road to Coombe because of tarmac path falling away above the stream as more elevated structural support is needed, and the path adjacent to stream past Holywell needs raising to avoid flooding, and making smoother or tarmacking. Costs for these are likely to be prohibitive for the meagre S106 funds available, and are also Glos County Council responsibility. It is therefore requested that the original S106 document is discussed again at the June Council meeting to re-assess Town Council priority projects for receiving any S106 funding.

**T.5031 GAPTC**

- a) To decide whether to submit a resolution for discussion at GAPTC AGM. None.
- b) To decide whether anyone wishes to attend the GAPTC AGM on 16th July 2016 in Newent. No councillors available, Clerk may attend in role as GAPTC Clerk's rep.

**T.5032 Land at Water Lane** – To consider request to sell Council land at Water Lane to adjacent house-owner, who already maintains one area of the land; and points out that the other area has not been maintained in accordance with original dedication. The original document was distributed to councillors explaining the land on either sides of the

stream at Water Lane originally intended for a bridge crossing to establish a streamside walk through Wotton nearly 40 years ago. After much discussion of the fact that we are not allowed to sell this land according to this deed, and also Secretary of state permission would be required, it was proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr C Young that we resolve to keep this land and put up appropriate fencing, and maintain it in the future, agreed by all.

**T.5033 Roads / Highways:**

- a) Road Safety Initiatives - To consider information regarding Police & Crime Commissioner funding for road safety initiatives and how this could be used to benefit Wotton-under-Edge. The document with suggestions was discussed, and it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar, that the successful Drive for Life event held at KLB School for sixth formers should be a recipient of such funding and supported as an event held every two years, agreed all in favour.
- b) Highways Local Funding and Schemes – To consider suggestions for use of County Councillor allocation of £30,000 for local highways matters. Councillors made various suggestions to County Cllr John Cordwell of roads/weedbank stretches in need of attention around Wotton.

**T.5034 Pensions – Early Retirement** on Ill-Health Grounds – Financial implications – to decide whether to pay any additional costs that may arise in the event of early retirement on ill-health grounds via an increased deficit and subsequent increase in employer contribution rate; or to mitigate the costs via the Gloucestershire Fund's insurance policy. After analysis of the document it is requested that we contact the pension scheme provider to obtain a quote to see whether the extra cost of mitigation insurance is cheaper rather than paying it as a lump sum included in the usual premiums.

**T.5035 Good Deeds Section** - no new suggestions

**T.5036 Clerk's Report** A detailed report provided. The Clubs & Groups Fair was enjoyed by all and very busy. Feedback is being requested from clubs. Holding it next year at the Civic Centre as more space needed, is a possibility.

**T.5037 Correspondence** to note or request action:

- a) Noted - letter from CPRE to individual councillors opposing the proposed housing development at Symn Lane and suggesting that a car park could be paid for via the precept, plus other suggestions for parking arrangements.
- b) Invitation to Mayor noted to attend the 150 years celebrations in respect of the Tyndale Monument on 1st October 2016 - to confirm attendance.
- c) Noted JNC Fire Protection Ltd have been taken over by Walker Fire UK Ltd.
- d) Noted letter from Glos CC Legal services; speed limit B4058/B4062 change to 40mph near new skatepark

Brochures/Newsletters for information only: Caring Matters Spring 2016

*Cllr A Wilkinson left the meeting*

**T.5038 Reports from Councillors & meetings attended**

County Council –County Cllr John Cordwell provided a written report highlighting the annual county council meeting discussions, his election to Chair of the county planning committee, children's activity funding, highways schemes funding, and a fire & rescue community event in Wotton on 27<sup>th</sup> August.

District Council – District Cllr K Tucker provided an in-depth report highlighting election results, subsequent council leadership details, garden waste take-up collection problems, Glos devolution bid set-back, and closure of Dryleaze Court sheltered accommodation and its likely sale by SDC.

PROW & Amenities Committee – not met

Finance & Special Purposes Committee – not met

Allotments Committee – meeting next week

Youth Liaison Group – a summer programme is being put together by the Treasurer due to illness of Chairman. Funding is secured for mental health sessions and currently being arranged.

Town Regeneration Partnership – not met

Sports Foundation – funds for the safe path now all raised and 5 companies tendering. An old tractor is being purchased for grasscutting and rolling of rugby pitch. Orchard trees receiving compost around them. Raised pitch fees being discussed for next season. Mrs S Bates is organising various summer activities.

Wotton Pool – the Clerk attended the Pool development meeting and was impressed with the enthusiasm & commitment of the Pool members and has arranged an informal meeting for next week between councillors and the Pool to discuss changing room refurbishment plans ahead of a planning application, and also renewal of the Service Level Agreement.

Wotton in Bloom – Cllr June Cordwell reported that the hanging baskets are planned to go up around town on 25<sup>th</sup> May

Walking Festival – a meeting saw a new couple come forward who have experience running this type of event and who have offered to take it on – continue to liaise via next meeting (16<sup>th</sup> June) & offer support, but leave them to start organising the event for 2017.

#### **T.5039 Town Affairs**

Cllr A Kendall – a mattress has been on the verge at Fountain Crescent for a year – report to Neighbourhood Warden.

Cllr P Barton – suggested a fundraising idea of artist painting HMS Wotton and selling prints.

*Cllrs John & June Cordwell left the room for the following item*

#### **T.5040 Planning Item** – consider due to timescale restrictions of Planning Authority

a) S.16/0783/HHOLD – 13 Haw Street – replacement conservatory

b) S.16/0784/LBC – 13 Haw Street – replacement conservatory

After consideration of the plans, it was proposed by Cllr T Luker and seconded by Cllr P Barton and agreed by all to support this application.

*Cllrs John & June Cordwell returned to the room*

*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.*

*It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed by all to enter closed Council session.*

**T.5041 Youth Friday Afternoon Activities** – To decide appointment of contractor to deliver Friday afternoon Youth sessions from September 2016. Two very similarly priced quotations received from two contractors, and meetings were held with each of them, one of whom is currently operating our youth services on other weekdays. After much discussion concerning the merits of each provider, it was proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr C Young, and agreed 7 in favour, 2 against, 2 abstentions, that ‘the Door Project’ are given this opportunity to provide services on Friday afternoons from September 2016 to July 2017 for a sum of £2670 operating to a slightly different ethos and hopefully reaching a wider audience. We still require funding with a shortfall over the year of £422 – YLG will be asked if it is possible to support this.

*As 10pm approached a vote was taken in line with Standing Orders to continue, proposed Cllr P Smith, seconded Cllr June Cordwell, agreed all in favour 1 abstention.*

**T.5042 Heritage Centre Boiler** – To consider quotes for replacement boiler at the Heritage Centre. Three quotations were received and analysed and a comparative report produced for Council. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded Cllr A Kendall and agreed 8 in favour, 2 against, 1 abstention, that the EC Merrett quotation provides best value and are instructed for a quotation of £1665 + vat. Funds of £1000 are already earmarked for this, with the Heritage Centre also donating a grant received for this purpose of £600.

*It was proposed by Cllr N Clement and seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed by all to re-enter Council session.*

*This completed the business of the Town Council at 10.06pm*

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

Chairman of Wotton-under-Edge Town Council