

**MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON MONDAY 15<sup>th</sup> MAY 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 Cllr C Braun & 1 other public

**T.5275 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 to re-elect Cllr P Smith as Chairman and Mayor; he then signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**T.5276 To elect Deputy Town Mayor and Vice-Chairman** of the Town Council. It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar to elect Cllr R Claydon as Deputy Mayor. A second proposal by Cllr John Cordwell and seconded by Cllr T Luker proposed Cllr C Young as Deputy Mayor. A vote was held with Cllr R Claydon elected with 6 votes to 5.

**T.5277 Apologies for Absence** All present. (Two councillors had just resigned - Andra Proctor and Alastair Kendall).

**T.5278 Declarations of Interest** none

*It was agreed to bring forward the District Cllr report:*

**T.5279 District Cllr Report** - Cllr C Braun spoke of the rising costs of Ubico refuse collection being scrutinised, although collections generally going well with less rubbish going to landfill. CIL (developer contributions) has now commenced with 25% awarded (versus 15%) for parishes with a Neighbourhood Plan in place. An £8m general fund is being spend on affordable housing across the district; Fountain Crescent site sale discussions held with a housing association. Small sites are preferred – although Councillors Wotton’s parking problems were highlighted if smaller developments are pursued. Dryleaze Court final residents moving shortly and the site will be sold on open market for development to fund district wide projects.

**T.5280 Election of Membership to Committees:** all agreed the following memberships. Co-opted public members to be asked to confirm memberships.

a) Planning - Full Council membership

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, Ms K Bailey and Ms P McGuinness.

d) Town Regeneration Partnership - Cllrs P Barton, N Pinnegar, R Claydon, T.Luker, P Smith, A Wilkinson plus co-opted members Reverend R Axford (St Mary’s Church), Mrs T McClusky (Beaumont-le-Roger), Mr G Phillips (Wotton Arts Association), Mrs J Tebb (Chamber of Trade), Mrs J Walshe (Heritage Centre), Reverend T Wharin (Baptist Church), Mr M Clarke (Under-the-Edge Arts & CALGS, Mrs C Sweet (Community Dementia Link).

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

**T.5281 Appointment of Representatives** to the following organisations were agreed by all:

- a) Citizens Advice Bureau - Cllr C Young.
- b) Wotton & District Recreational Trust - Cllrs A Wilkinson, R Claydon, June Cordwell, N Pinnegar, P Smith.
- c) Beaumont-le-Roger Society - Cllrs P Smith & R Claydon.
- d) Wotton Youth Partnership - Cllrs P Barton, June Cordwell, T Luker, C Young.
- 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 – 2 vacancies.
- h) Snow Warden - Cllrs R Claydon, A Wilkinson.
- i) Water Course Warden - Cllrs R Claydon, P Smith.
- j) Chamber of Trade -vacant- await Chamber new Committee details for discussions on collaboration areas possibly via Regeneration Committee.
- k) Police Stroud Cluster Group - Cllr P Smith.
- l) Synwell Playing Fields Committee - Cllrs N Clement, T Luker
- m) Wotton-under-Edge Swimming Pool - Cllr C Young.
- n) Wotton in Bloom – A Wilkinson, L Farmer.
- o) Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum - Cllr A Wilkinson
- p) Wotton Heritage Centre - Cllr June Cordwell.

**T.5282 Appointment of New Committees** - To consider whether any new committees are needed and to appoint accordingly; none needed, agreed by all.

**T.5283 Policies/Procedures**

- a) **To reconfirm the current Standing Orders and Financial Regulations** for this Council. Agreed by all.
- b) **To reconfirm Terms of Reference for Committees** & other policies as per summary document of all Town Council policies. Agreed by all. The list of policies in the document is now very comprehensive and the next set of policies to be reviewed will be later this summer via Finance & Special Purposes Committee.

**T.5284 Town Council Banking Arrangements** - To confirm Barclays as the banker for the Town Council for the forthcoming year. Agreed by all.

*Regular Council Business followed the above Annual Council Business*

**T.5285 Public Forum** none

**T.5286 To approve the Minutes** of the meeting held 18<sup>th</sup> April 2017. Cllr A Wilkinson was unhappy and questioned why his apologies for the April Council meeting had not been accepted when he was absent due to chairing the Chamber of Trade AGM. The Council responded that the dates of Council meetings were well known in advance and a clash was avoidable. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell and agreed 10 in favour, with one abstention, to approve these Minutes.

**T.5287 Chairman's Announcements** - The Mayor had attended the St George's Day toast, made a speech at the Beaumont le Roger twinning trip in France, and accepted an invitation to the Round Table every 7 year twinning event.

**T.5288 Audited Accounts and Annual Return**

- a) To approve the End-of-Year Accounts for the financial year ending 31st March 2017 and to note internal audit. All accounts documents distributed to councillors in advance. Accounts are very healthy and passed internal audit with no issues; the auditor commenting on the excellent record keeping by staff. It was proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr R Claydon and agreed by all to approve these accounts as presented.
- b) To complete and approve the answers to the Annual Governance Statement in Section 1 of the Annual Return. Council duly considered responses on this external audit form; it was proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr R Claydon and agreed by all to approve these statements.
- c) To approve the accounting statements in Section 2 of the Annual Return. After consideration of the figures, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr L Farmer and agreed by all to approve these.

**T.5289 Accounts**

- a) To consider quote for installation of WiFi at the Civic Centre. Cllrs P Smith, R Claydon and C Young had investigated costs and procedure for providing internet access through the whole of civic centre building. It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer to approve the quotation by SITM of £854 for installation (with possibility of extra £85 repeater if needed), using existing CAB BT line, Zen internet cost of £30 would be thereafter annual charge, and providing it now for free to users, however with a review of charges to users at annual budget time, seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar, agreed 7 in favour, 3 against, 1 abstention.
- b) To approve the accounts for payment. After a question regarding the Tolsey Clock high electricity charges (Cllr R Claydon to investigate the issues surrounding these high charges), it was proposed by Cllr L Farmer seconded by Cllr R Claydon and agreed all in favour to approve these accounts for payment £4,146 Town Trust and £19,085 Town Council).

**T.5290 Antisocial Behaviour at Civic Centre** – to consider legal action against owners/occupier of neighbouring property following incident of aggressive drunken behaviour and ongoing problems with rubbish dumped on Town Council land. The Clerk explained that SDC attended last week and investigated the rubbish dumping (classed as fly tipping) and spoke with the resident explaining how rubbish should be collected. The wheelie bin is now replaced with bags and all rubbish removed. Situation must be monitored. The Clerk then explained the incident involving entering the building (forcing entry when locked), issues when the Police were called, CCTV coverage, and the danger to users of the civic centre. It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer that the advice of the Police should be followed in applying for a restraining order against entering the building via a solicitor, seconded Cllr P Barton, agreed 7 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention.

**T.5291 Heritage Centre** – To agree lease renewal. Cllrs R Claydon and P Smith had worked with Jeff Walshe of the Heritage Centre on an amendment document to be attached to the current 1994 lease extending it for 7 years from April 2017 with progressive rent increases and specified review/payment dates,

updating information it since its 1994 adoption. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar, that the Heritage Centre Lease Amendment document be approved, agreed by all.

**T.5292 Dates of Meetings** Annual Parish Assembly 2018 date will be Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> April. The Planning Committee of 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2017 will not be changed due to a Hustings event at same time in town.

**T.5293 Seats in St Mary's Churchyard** – To consider email commenting on the new benches provided by Town Council/parishioner and to decide how to proceed. St Mary's Church had complained that the benches donated to the churchyard to provide seating were not oak. After much discussion of the works taken place in the churchyard and the positive comments received, it was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr L Farmer, to respond to St Marys' Church advising that if oak benches were desired then St Mary's would need to pay for them, and transfer the plaque from the bench donated by the parishioner in memory of his parents who were long standing Wotton residents, agreed 8 in favour, 3 abstentions.

**T.5294 Parkrun Consultation** – To consider any response. This DCLG consultation was considered a knee jerk reaction by central Government in the face of Stoke Gifford Parish Council's desire to cover some of its costs when over a thousand regular users began using its park facility, and consequently damaging paths and grass and raising costs for local taxpayers. Cllr L Farmer would draft a response for consideration. This was not considered relevant to private facilities such as the community park at New Rd in Wotton.

**T.5295 Councillor Resignations** – resignations noted of Alastair Kendall due to work commitments, and Andra Proctor due to health reasons. A card would be sent to them thanking both for their input and wishing them well.

**T.5296 Good Deeds Section:** Thanks to Volunteers – a card would be sent to Elizabeth Warren who served as a town councillor and former Mayor for many years, and who has now also resigned from the PROW Footpaths Committee, thanking her for all of her contributions.

**T.5297 Clerk's Report** – comprehensive report supplied covering April/May activities was noted. The damage to Wotton Hill via bank holiday barbecues and bonfires was also disapprovingly noted. The Administrator is commencing a phased return to work after a long illness.

**T.5298 Correspondence** to note or request action:

- a) Noted email of thanks from CVTN for the grant given by Town Council.
- b) Noted email requesting use of The Green on 18<sup>th</sup> June for community party; approved provided litter is collected and no fire or barbecue damage is evident.
- c) Noted General Election Hustings at 7.30pm on 22<sup>nd</sup> May at Wotton Baptist Church organised by Churches Together.
- d) Noted invitation from Pennwood Lodge Care Home to their Big Lunch on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017 from 12-4pm.

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

**T.5299 Reports from Councillors & meetings attended**

County Council –County Cllr John Cordwell provided a short report highlighting meeting the Highways manager the next day regarding spending his £30k local budget and the first county council meeting this week to confirm appointments.

District Council – discussed above.

PROW & Amenities Committee – no additions to those made at the Annual Parish Assembly last week.

Finance & Special Purposes Committee – not met

Allotments Committee – meeting deferred.

Wotton Youth Partnership WYP – not met

Town Regeneration Partnership – no comments; new chair to be appointed.

WC Sports Foundation – Cllr June Cordwell had resigned from this after many years' service and was thanked for her contributions.

Wotton Pool – Cllr Young attended and explained that extra lifeguards are being trained, entrance cost rises are being considered, the new changing rooms are excellent after their refurbishment, and that discussions with the fire service about cutting down their bushes to allow views from the new shelter are continuing. They have taken on a person to apply for grants. The Town Council is concerned that no representative attended the Annual Parish Assembly to discuss the Pool, as is expected of town organisations which receive grants.

Heritage Centre – written report from Cllr June Cordwell; Law Makers and Breakers is the new exhibition; museum accreditation has been extended for one year to 2018, Prof Horton will give a talk on the Vikings on 23<sup>rd</sup> May.

Walking Festival – event was a huge success with a debrief meeting shortly; report to be provided with ideas for the event continuing next year.

**T.5300 Town Affairs**

Cllr John Cordwell – asked if the low bench on the side of New Rd could be raised.

Cllr L Farmer – advised that Sharpness pool are offering schoolchildren free swimming lessons funded by SDC grants – are Wotton Pool aware of initiative?

**T.5301 Town Trust Items**

a) To approve the End-of-Year Accounts for the financial year ending 31st March 2017 and to note successful internal audit. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr L Farmer and agreed by all to approve these accounts.

b) Town Hall Keys – To consider letter from Dramatic Society requesting that they retain one set of keys to the Town Hall to enable access to their equipment at all times. After discussion of events at the Town Hall and requirements for access, it was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr L Farmer and agreed by all that the Dramatic Society return all keys to the Town Council. If access is required it should be arranged via the Town Council in the usual way, when it is convenient for hirers of the facility.

*This completed the business of the Town Council at 9.15pm*

Signed: .....Dated: .....