



MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 16th NOVEMBER 2015 AT 7:00PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE

Present: Cllrs P Smith (Chairman and Mayor), T Luker, P Barton, N Clement, K Collins, June Cordwell, John Cordwell, A Kendall, N Pinnegar, A Wilkinson, L Farmer, R Claydon
In Attendance: Town Clerk Ms S Bailey 2 members of the public

T.4856 Apologies for Absence – all present

T.4857 Declarations of Interest Cllr John Cordwell Traffic Regulation Orders

T.4858 To welcome Mark Graham, Public Spaces Officer at Stroud District Council- to discuss joint tree procurement; no attendance

It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell to suspend Standing orders to allow the Treasurer of the Synwell Playing Fields Committee to speak on their behalf, all agreed

T.4859 Synwell Playing Fields – to discuss whether the Town Council should consider taking over the management of Synwell Playing Fields and its implications for the budget process (backing doc). Mr C Williams spoke of the dwindling committee membership and the history of the field, and its charity ownership by Fields in Trust. There is currently no chair or secretary and volunteers have been sought but to no avail. The AGM is in March 2016. It is felt that more expertise is needed in its management and the Committee requests that the Town Council take over the running of the venue in order to prevent collapse. The Clerk advised that there are many issues to consider such as the large effect that taking over this facility would have on the on the Town Councils' current resources, which are at capacity. Examples of this type of takeover are possibly Northleach or Stowe. GPFA can advise on this. The whole facility comprises a playing field highly maintained as a sporting venue, play equipment & inspections/repairs, lease to football club and changing rooms management, social club of the Pavillion and its lease/management, the pigeon club, accounting /invoicing/financial/banking/utility management, border of grounds maintenance – legal fees would also be needed to arrange trustee ship via the Town Council. The Clerk advised that advice would be needed form GAPTC on whether it is able to manage directly as a Trustee anything which it does not own in its own name. The Clerk advised also that the buildings at Synwell Playing Fields are in need of some repair and maintenance and this would have an impact on the Council's finances in bringing them up to Local Government standards. Leases would also have to be renegotiated with various user groups.

It was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell and seconded by Cllr T Luker to reinstate Standing Orders & resume Council session, all in favour.

Clerk to arrange a meeting with Cllrs June Cordwell, R Claydon, P Smith, the Synwell Treasurer and Mr G Ross of GPFA. It was also proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell that this item proceeds to the budget meeting to discuss its possible incorporation, and that the process of cost and integration with a full breakdown of expenditure is analysed in detail, agreed 10 in favour with 1 abstention.

T.4860 Public Forum none

T.4861 Minutes of the Meeting

Proposed by Cllr John Cordwell, seconded by Cllr T Luker that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19th October 2015 be approved as a correct record. Agreed all 10 in favour, 1 abstention.

T.4862 Chairman's Announcements – a written report provided, outlining attendance at new website meetings, caretaker interviews and appointment, staff appraisals, SW Regional LGA Conference, and new SDC Head of Planning tour around Wotton & surroundings event which was hosted here.

T.4863 Accounts

- a) Noted - receipt of refund from SOSYP of £6602, earmarked to Youth funds.
- b) To approve recommendation from Town Regeneration Partnership to re-introduce the Christmas Shop Window competition with prizes as follows: First £100, second £50, third £25, plus purchase of presentation shields approx. £60 and agree who will judge the competition, when and judgement criteria. After much discussion of various shields, it was suggested that the provider of our previous wooden shields from many years ago would be contacted to see if more could be procured, and that three large ones for gold, silver, bronze position would be displayed in shop windows for the year and small replica shields would be given as a gift. Prizes as suggested, all from Regen budget. Mayor & Deputy to organise the competition details and arrange judges (very little time left until Christmas!), and Cllr A Wilkinson to include details in Chamber of Trade newsletter being delivered shortly.
- c) To approve £2000 payment to Neighbourhood Warden Scheme. After discussion about the lack of a current neighbourhood warden, and the usage of the previous warden to sit in our One Stop Shop to replace the withdrawn SDC fortnightly customer service, it was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr A Wilkinson and agreed 9 in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention not to pay this amount to SDC in this year's budget.
- d) Budget 2015/16. To note report of expenditure against budget (backing doc). To consider adjustment as follows: move £2000 from underspent Grasscutting/Flowerbeds heading to Cemetery/Churchyard heading (new grounds maintenance contractor apportion costs differently to previous contractor). Healthy spending versus budget noted. The grasscut underspend appears to be that the new contractor has apportioned costs differently and also that their invoicing is not as efficient as previous contractor. It was suggested that new signage should be considered for the Youth Centre and the Chipping ClubRoom – maybe Wotton Youth and Community Centre? A question was raised about whether the Chipping ClubRoom would benefit from the TV licence of the Youth Centre, as the building is now connected? It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr P Barton to agree to budget adjustment headings as outlined above, all in favour.
- e) To approve the accounts for payment (backing doc). Account approval proposed by Cllr June Cordwell seconded by Cllr John Cordwell agreed by all.

T.4864 Quarterly Internal Audit - To arrange for two Councillors to carry out the internal audit checks for the period July to September 2015. This is an official audit requirement. Cllrs A Wilkinson and L Farmer to carry out; arrange by email.

T.4865 Memorial Application - To consider application for a memorial in the cemetery for a black granite headstone adjacent to a limestone horizontal memorial which covers the grave. (backing doc). In view of the differing materials to be used it is proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr P Barton that the current limestone slab is disguised with chippings over and that kerbing of same material as headstone is used to enclose – agreed all in favour.

T.4866 Old Town Toilets - Noted that overnight locking of the toilets by Veolia ceased on 31st October 2015 and that this is now included in the Caretaker's role (Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays only).

T.4867 Cotswold AONB 50th Anniversary - To consider if Council wishes to organise anything to join in with the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the Cotswold AONB in 2016. Council is too busy at present to organise anything.

T.4868 Casual Vacancy – Noted correspondence from Stroud District Council confirming that Council vacancy can be filled by co-option and that this will be decided at the December meeting as agreed. Advertising has begun for new Councillor.

T.4869 Proposed Speed Limit Change B4058 Charfield to Wotton-under-Edge - To agree support for proposed introduction of a 40mph speed limit on the B4058 from Charfield to Wotton-under-Edge (draft letter backing doc).

T.4870 Notice of Review of Polling Districts and Polling Stations - To consider response, if any, to the Stroud District Council review of Polling Districts and Polling Stations. Locations of British School and Chipping ClubRoom as previously are noted.

T.4871 Local Transport Plan Consultation Response Report - To note that further consultation commences on 20th November and to discuss submitting comments in support of re-opening Charfield railway station. Clerk formulated response as below:
This Town Council strongly supports the re-opening of Charfield Railway Station. Although the actual station is just inside the boundary of South Gloucestershire, its effect would have tremendous economic and social benefit to the inhabitants of Wotton and surrounding areas in the County of Gloucestershire. The local roads are stretched to capacity with major arterial routes very busy at rush hour periods. Continued housing development approvals are leading to more pressure, and it is essential that some of this commuter traffic is able to find alternative means of transport to major centres. Reducing the carbon footprint by using rail is also a priority. Much of the area around Wotton is AONB and the visual and amenity effect on the landscape must also be taken into account. We would like to point out (again) that in the consultation document, the short to medium term priorities map does not even show the Town of Wotton – which is the major town in this area. This Council is very concerned that an arterial transport map, showing all other town locations, omits Wotton! One other point is that a suggestion had been made to make use of ‘quiet times’ to promote deliveries to businesses. However Wotton does not seem to be included in this proposal. What is the reason for this? Furthermore - a re-opening of Charfield Station would be appreciated much sooner than 2029.

T.4872 Chains and Bollards opposite Town Hall - To consider request, following a fall over the chains opposite the Town Hall, that they be painted white or fitted with reflectors to make them more visible. (This is an additional incident to the one reported in August this year, at which time Council decided to take no action in view of no prior problems). Although Council was indeed ‘surprised’ to receive another request so soon after the previous one, and after no problems for many years, the Clerk is asked to look at adding reflector discs to the chains.

T.4873 New Good Deeds Section on Agenda ‘Thanks to Volunteers’ – it was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr June Cordwell and agreed by all to send a card of thanks to acknowledge recent volunteer work for the benefit of the town/community, as follows:

- a) Cotswold Wardens for planting new trees in the Clump.
- b) Day Centre volunteers for providing a hot meal, entertainment and socialising opportunity for elderly folk.

T.4874 Clerk’s Report - The Clerk’s detailed report on many activities was noted.

T.4875 Correspondence

- a) Noted that a resident request to purchase Town Council land at Durns Road to increase rear garden and has been declined.

b) Noted - letter requesting highways mirrors on the junction of Westridge Road with Bradley Road; a Glos Highways response has stated that mirrors are no longer considered suitable for placing at such junctions:

"The use of Convex Mirrors requires the permission of the DFT and Glos Highways does not support them. General guidance states that mirrors should not be used to aid visibility as they can significantly increase the risk of pedestrian and cycle collisions particularly in low light conditions. Due to their size, cars can be seen in the mirrors however pedestrians and cycles are much harder to see. In cases where visibility is restricted for car drivers, they become dependent on the mirror and often fail to make the necessary primary observations using direct lines of site which is where the risk to pedestrians and cyclists increases. We do not proactively go around removing historic mirrors, however if any existing mirrors become damaged or require repair, we are required to assess their suitability which in all cases I have been involved with over the past 5 years has resulted in their removal."

c) Noted letter received from 1st Wotton Senior Guides Section and to consider whether this should feed into the budget process. Suggested that this is more appropriate to go to Youth Liaison Group to consider.

d) Noted email from Gloucestershire Highways informing that the junction at the top of High Street is unsuitable for a yellow box junction & would require a Traffic Regulation Order. Due to the proximity of the pedestrian crossing this would not gain approval.

e) Noted email complaining of leaves etc on path from Symn Lane into top end of Chipping, making path slippery and to confirm that this has been cleared by our caretaker; also requesting action on overhanging trees at that point. We have contacted the adjacent property owner to request that tree branches are cut back.

Brochures/Newsletters for information only:

Recovery Summer Autumn 2015, Allotment & Leisure Gardener Issue 4 2015

T. 4876 Reports from Councillors & meetings attended

Cnty Cllr John Cordwell – written report provided detailing that speed survey and junction visibility undertaken by Glos Highways mean that War Memorial junction does not meet criteria for stop sign. Also highlighted that South Glos Council withdrawal of no 87 bus service lead to problems with Wotton–Dursley connection and Glos CC stepped in temporarily at last minute to fund a new numbered 60, a one of payment of £17m for Javelin Park incinerator delay, Govt clarification requested on solar farm subsidies for county started projects, EU referendum negotiations, complaint to Govt regarding magistrate court closures in county, and backing papers to be prepared to consider harm to fracking sites in Gloucestershire. In addition the new LED countywide streetlamp contract will commence shortly costing £41m.

District Cllr K Tucker provided a detailed report on various matters for which he was thanked (devolution meetings, new Head of Planning, new Veolia to Ubico contract, £2m Brimscombe port regeneration grant, Local Plan adoption, polling review consultation, garden waste recycling plans, and SDC budget proposals for next FY).

Footpaths Committee – not met

Special Purposes Committee – not met

Allotments Committee – not met

Youth Liaison Group – new Chairman is Katie Elliott, Treasurer Wendy Lomas, Sarah Watt is secretary.

Town Regeneration Partnership – discussed budget input, farmers market expansion & more stall possibilities, community plan furtherment and its priorities, and walking festival.

Sports Foundation - £73k pledged for footpath, £95k needed, lease now signed for this, BMX track plans now commenced with works due to start in April, various other plans also discussed such as new play area, enlarging car park, a 'man' shed and a clubhouse. A possible youth shelter is being discussed. It was noted that Churchdown appeared to have

secured facilities at their recent new skatepark for very competitive prices and contact might be useful.

Tyndale Monument – Cllr June Cordwell highlighted plans for a celebration next October with a silver band, a church service, dignitary attendance, choirs, concerts & exhibitions, and a display at the Heritage Centre of memorabilia relating to some local builders of the monument.

Wotton Pool – Cllr P Barton attended the recent meeting and mentioned to them that fundraising is expected as part of the SLA.

GMTF – Cllr A Wilkinson attended the recent event in Tetbury; discussions were encouraging and ideas shared on re-use of empty shops.

T.4877 Town Affairs

Cllr N Pinnegar – road use is becoming difficult with cars parked along Mitre Pitch to Ludgate Hill; suggested he take photos and contact police if dangerous.

Cllr A Wilkinson – Chamber of Trade; new gallery opened with 250 attendees. Committee meeting shortly.

Cllr K Collins – Tesco are cordoning off with large area with wheelie bins for a whole day at a time for delivery in road outside the shop. It was pleasing to see the PC and PCSO recently in the Royal Oak just popping heads around door to say hello!

Cllr T Luker – the bank on road from Court Meadow up to Synwell is bad again with brambles growing over verge and the seat. Seat is near salt bin – ask Amey? The leaves on the verges are district responsibility.

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

It was proposed by Cllr P Smith, seconded by Cllr L Farmer, to enter closed session under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to discuss the following due to staffing matters, and contracts/tendering of a sensitive nature, agreed by all. The Public left the room.

T.4878 Plumbing works at Youth Centre /CCR - To consider quotations to extend heating system from Youth Centre into Chipping Clubroom to reduce electricity costs (backing doc). Two quotations received very close to each other with second one more detailed. Very difficult to get interest parties to quote for works in a public building. After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr T Luker that the West Country Plumbing quote provides better value for money, with more radiators and a two tier system for £2960 + vat and we carry out this work asap, all in favour.

T.4879 Staff Appraisals – To note staff appraisals process has been undertaken (backing doc). The Mayor and the Clerk explained how this process has been very useful to feed into training requirements and assess achievements throughout the Council. The differentials between various salaries were discussed in detail along with appraisal feedback and following the previous Council decision to pay basic living wage to all staff as a minimum. After various workload discussions, it was proposed by Cllr A Wilkinson and seconded by Cllr L Farmer to agree to increase by 1 SCP increment the Building Manager's salary scale from 1st April 2016, and to set aside provision to increase the Administrator's salary scale from 1st April with the actual decision to be made at a later date – agreed 8 in favour, 2 against. This motion was an amendment to, and defeated an earlier motion, to increase both at the same time.

The Clerk appraisal was discussed and the Clerk left the room for this discussion.

The Council discussed the Clerks appraisal and it was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr T Luker that in line with the contract, that the Town Clerk has achieved a satisfactory appraisal and 1 incremental SCP salary scale is agreed for this role, agreed all in favour.

