



MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 21st NOVEMBER 2016 AT 7:00PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE

Present: Cllrs P Smith (Mayor), P Barton, N Pinnegar, June Cordwell, A Kendall, L Farmer, R Claydon, T Luker, C Young, A Proctor, N Clement, A Wilkinson

In attendance: Town Clerk Ms S Bailey, District Cllr G Butcher, 1 public

T.5149 Apologies for Absence accepted from Cllr John Cordwell

T.5150 Declarations of Interest accepted from Cllrs P Smith (Wotton DIY employment), Cllrs P Smith, R Claydon, T Luker, N Pinnegar (Walking Festival member)

T.5151 Public Forum A public member explained that a recent residents own car parking survey was distorted in its view because it had asked a leading question regarding a specific development and was not a general analysis of more parking in the town – which is needed as demonstrated in the recent Community Plan.

T.5152 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 17th October 2016. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr L Farmer and agreed all in favour to approve these Minutes, after a minor alteration.

T.5153 Chairman's Announcements - Cllr P Smith commented on a successful explanatory meeting with Wotton in Bloom Committee, the Mayor, the Town Clerk and Cllr L Farmer – Cllr Farmer will now continue as a WTC representative to Wotton in Bloom.

T.5154 Accounts

- a) Lift Works – to consider quotes for Civic Centre lift works and service contract. A detailed backing document provided comparative quotes from 6 lift companies. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded by Cllr June Cordwell and agreed by all that RJ Lifts is chosen as offering the best value. Furthermore, the life expectancy of the lift overall needs to be gauged when RJ undertakes the assessment report, which will impact on whether the previous lift company's suggested more detailed & expensive upgrade works are undertaken or not.
- b) To approve purchase of SDC grant-funded Heritage Project equipment – camera £1283 and laptop £624. It was proposed by Cllr A Kendall seconded by Cllr P Smith and agreed by all to proceed with this grant funded purchase – kindly managed by Mr J Walshe of the Heritage Centre. Cllr P Smith will speak to Mr Walshe regarding the 20 minutes cut off time for this Sony camera to ascertain suitability.
- c) To approve ILCA training for Cllrs P Smith, N Pinnegar and L Farmer at £99 per person; proposed Cllr A Kendall, seconded Cllr T Luker, agreed by all.
- d) Noted letter from Npower informing of new Capacity Mechanism Obligation Levy charges to apply from November.
- e) Noted slight increase in GAPTC subscription charges for 2017/18 – increasing to 31.98p per elector (31.6p per elector in 2016/17).
- f) To consider LCAS membership renewal at a cost of £95; proposed Cllr L Farmer, seconded Cllr T Luker, agreed by all to approve.
- g) To approve membership renewal £250 Glos Market Towns Forum; proposed Cllr June Cordwell, seconded Cllr A Wilkinson, agreed by all to approve.
- h) To consider request for funding (Town Regen Budget) towards Walking Festival costs.

Cllrs T Luker, P Smith, N Pinnegar & R Claydon left the room, Cllr June Cordwell was elected Chair for this item.

After discussions regarding the establishment of the walking festival group by the Town Council and the desire that it becomes a successful annual festival for the town, it was proposed by Cllr A Wilkinson seconded Cllr C Young and agreed by all that a grant of £850 is awarded to the Walking Festival Committee from the Town Regen budget for the items specified in the application (logos, leaflets, printing and general publicity/merchandising) associated with launching a successful walking festival in Wotton. However, Council is adamant funding from other sources is applied for and the recommendation is to immediately contact the Chamber of Trade and the Recreational Trust.

Cllrs T Luker, P Smith, N Pinnegar & R Claydon returned to the room & Cllr P Smith resumed the Chair.

- i) Budget 2016/17. To note report of expenditure against budget. Noted as healthy.
- j) To approve the accounts for payment. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon to pay these accounts (minus the payment to ELA Lifts since no renewal of contract), seconded Cllr L Farmer, agreed by all.

T.5155 Grants - To note application from Synwell Playing Field Committee for £2700 and consider additional information required prior to budget meeting. Previous grant application was to support entity's continuation due to football club failure to pay. The latter has now mostly paid their fees, and this grant is instead for play equipment. Therefore, Council wishes to see evidence of equipment quotes, and also evidence of other funding sources, in order to consider this item at the December budget meeting.

T.5156 Farmers Market - To consider report and recommendation from Town Regeneration Partnership committee to continue, in the short term, with the Farmers Market in its current form and to encourage new stallholders by offering the opportunity to use the less desirable upstairs space (no further downstairs space available) for half price. The matter will then be reconsidered when the outcome of the anticipated car park planning application is known, when possibilities for an outdoor market will be explored; this is proposed by Cllr A Wilkinson seconded by Cllr R Claydon and agreed by all.

T.5157 Youth Matters

- a) Summer Youth Project – to note report on Summer 2016 activities; and to discuss with a view to feeding into budget process for 2017/18. Report was discussed and the popularity and success of the 2016 summer activities especially the outings were noted.
- b) Noted that the Town Council is working with The Door on a funding bid to the Police & Crime Commissioner to continue Friday afternoon sessions for 4 years. The success of The Door in gaining national awards for youth service provision was noted.

T.5158 Business Rates Revaluation –Valuation Office letters received regarding increases to business rates valuations for Town Council and Town Trust properties. Town Council properties show 6.9% increase. SDC has confirmed that we still have relief exemption for Town Hall, Youth Centre, & Chipping Club Room after we wrote for clarification.

T.5159 Wotton Pool – To make one amendment to final Draft Service Level Agreement regarding removing the early termination clause; proposed by Cllr P Smith seconded Cllr A Kendall agreed 9 in favour 3 abstentions to approve this amendment.

T.5160 Burial Fees – To consider proposal from Cllr P Barton to waive burial fees for children under 16 years old. After much discussion of issues surrounding the emotional side of child burials and the costs of cemetery maintenance forever going forward, it was

proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr L Farmer, to eliminate charges for burials for Wotton resident children 0 to 5 year of age, and reduce fees by 50% for 5 to 16 years of age Wotton resident children (the latter half of the motion was an amendment, approved by 7 in favour, 5 against vote), overall vote agreed 9 in favour, 2 against.

T.5161 Knapp Field – To consider quote for £872 for length of improved fencing at Knapp Field in response to request from people who rent it for their horses. Annual rent received is only £300. The rental agreement clause 2.2 states that stock proof fences must be maintained by the tenant. The Town Council considers that it has met its responsibilities in making the site secure and safe (after works to adjacent ditches and removing barbed wire in overgrown hedges 18 months ago). It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr C Young that extra fencing is not purchased, agreed all in favour.

T.5162 Clubs & Groups Fair – second year after success of 2016 event. To approve date of 20th May 2017, venue is the Civic Centre and to consider how Town Council can organise publicity and arrangements. Although Cllr June Cordwell commented that many groups like to organise their own fairs/events, it was suggested that the office compiles a list of jobs which need to be carried out to help with organising this vent. The ladies from Bearlands Play Area will be organising bacon butties from the kitchen.

T.5163 Committee Vacancies – To appoint Councillor to vacancy on the Town Regeneration Partnership Committee. It was agreed that Cllr N Pinnegar would join.

T.5164 The Boundary Commission for England published proposals for new parliamentary constituencies as part of reducing the number of Members of Parliament from 650 to 600 and equalising number of voters in constituencies. The proposals affect Stroud District in the following way; Stroud Constituency - Quedgeley added to it. Cam, Dursley, Berkeley, Wotton areas to be part of a more southern constituency. Nailsworth area to be part of the Cotswold constituency. Effectively, the District will be covered by 3 parliamentary constituencies as against the current 2. There is a 12 week statutory period for consultation by the BCE. SDC is analysing its proposals and bringing a report to Strategy & Resources Committee. Following discussions at October meeting, to consider additional information and official response. It was proposed by Cllr A Wilkinson seconded by Cllr L farmer and agreed 10 in favour, 2 abstentions to submit the following response:

Wotton-under-Edge Town Council is unhappy about the proposal for Wotton-under-Edge to become part of a new constituency which would be based largely on the South Gloucestershire areas of Chipping Sodbury, Yate and Thornbury. Wotton-under-Edge is a rural parish and the proposal would transfer the town into a mainly urban constituency. Wotton has no affinity with the new area or any common issues. Wotton-under-Edge is already on the edge of Stroud District and the proposed association with a predominately South Gloucestershire constituency will further increase the isolation felt by Wotton from the rest of the district making it even more difficult for the community to make its voice heard. Accordingly, the Town Council would prefer Wotton to be moved into the Stroud constituency which would provide a stronger relationship between the district and the town. It would also mean that a local and more influential MP could be lobbied on topics of concern to residents of the district such as housing, the local economy and its infrastructure.

The Town Council recognises the remit of the Boundary Commission but by considering Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire together as a sub-region inevitably means that some very dissimilar communities are brought together. To avoid this, the Town Council feels that Gloucestershire should be a sub-region on its own and in this case it would be possible for constituencies of the correct size to be established only from wards within the County boundary.

The Town Council is also unhappy that the new name of the proposed constituency does not include Wotton-under-Edge which is identified in the Stroud District Local Plan as a Local Service Centre.

T.5165 Adoption of Phone Kiosks – To consider if Council wishes to adopt phone kiosks at Gloucester Row or Synwell Green, which are otherwise intended for removal by BT due to low usage. Cllr L Farmer is speaking to interested parties and will revert back to speak to the item on the December agenda.

T.5166 Christmas Tree Disposal – To consider suggestion for shredding of Christmas trees with resultant compost available for use on allotments (instead of skip provided by SDC). Council discussed the local farmer's offer of shredding Xmas trees at his local farm, however decided it is happy with the SDC provided skip in the centre of the Chipping and that this should suffice, but thanked the farmer for his considerate offer.

T.5167 Good Deeds Section: Thanks to Volunteers – to acknowledge recent volunteer work for the benefit of the town/community. It was agreed to send a card of thanks to Mr P Grimes for providing such excellent quality and cost competitive hanging baskets for Wotton's summer displays, all grown from his farm shop in Wotton.

T.5168 Clerk's Report A detailed report of Council administration and buildings activity was provided.

T.5169 Correspondence to note or request action:

- a) To note letter requesting Town Council support for residents of Weavers Row, Gloucester Street, to have beige refuse bags rather than bins. After much discussion of the arguments in favour of Weavers Row using beige sack instead of bins (largely relating to the original planning condition restricting placing bins outside!), it was agreed that the Town Council would write to SDC in support of the residents' request for sacks.
- b) To note email showing results of a resident's own survey of Chipping Car Park and consider how/if council wishes to publish this report. Resident's own survey was noted and the residents were thanked for providing this information – however the Council considers it more appropriate to consider this report when a planning application materialises regarding land behind the fire station, since one of the questions related to use of this land. This survey will not be published on the Town Council website.
- c) To note email from a trader in support of new car park proposal. Noted.
- d) To note email requesting a survey of all Wotton residents regarding the anticipated planning application for the new car park & housing in Symn Lane. Noted – but we do not have the resources to undertake this action, furthermore, Wotton residents must respond to SDC as part of the planning authority process, since the Town Council is only a consultee in the whole planning application process.
- e) To note email expressing disappointment that no action is to be taken to improve pedestrian safety for patients attending Culverhay Surgery. Noted.

Brochures/Newsletters for information only: CPRE Gloucestershire Views Autumn 2016; Caring Matters Autumn 2016; Allotment & Leisure Gardener Issue 4 2016

T.5170 Reports from Councillors & meetings attended

County Council – County Cllr John Cordwell provided a written report highlighting Hillesley Rd carriage way patching, 2018 to 2032 draft Minerals Local Plan, broadband speed surveys, A38 Berkeley Rd bridge replacement plans, county LED streetlighting replacement, and county 2017/18 budget process and the funding gap of £30m.

District Council – a 4 page report was provided by district councillors on various issues.

PROW & Amenities Committee – not met

Finance & Special Purposes Committee – meet next week.

Allotments Committee – meeting deferred/staff & councillor illness.

Youth Liaison Group – not met, had an informal meeting instead.

Town Regeneration Partnership – many items discussed at this committee meeting such as new tourism initiative for Severn Vale area.

WC Sports Foundation – more tree planting undertaken, new access path opening ceremony soon, Parc fun run organised. Plans for 2017 & beyond include Party in the Parc, a bigger parking area, a BMX track seating area, a grass maze, a permanent tepee, and a possible 3rd all weather pitch sinking fund. Youth shelter is now being installed.

Wotton Pool – met 7th November, more financial details discussed regarding pool expansion plans. Wood purchased for the renovations. Good year financially for the Pool with revenues +11%

Wotton in Bloom – not met

Walking Festival – not met

Heritage Centre – new LED display cabinets now in situ, plans to revamp reading room and improve kitchen. Laptop to be very useful with the Heritage Project camera.

T.5171 Town Affairs

Cllr A Wilkinson – highlighted the Chamber of Trade Xmas event on 3rd December, with a party at the Swan afterwards. Car park proposals are still supported by the Chamber.

Cllr R Claydon – noted that new food recycling collection by SDC is disappointing.

Cllr A Proctor – reported the road subsidence at the top of Rushmire Hill.

Cllr A Kendall – is giving a talk on ‘council role’ to British primary School children shortly

Cllr L Farmer – commented on the good Christmas window displays in Wotton.

Cllr June Cordwell – commented that Town Hall Teas would celebrate 25 years in 2018

Cllr P Smith – also noted that waste collections by SDC were sporadic at the moment

This completed the business of the Town Council at 9:40 pm

Signed:

Dated:

Chairman of Wotton-under-Edge Town Council