



MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 17th OCTOBER 2016 AT 7:00PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE

Present: Cllrs P Smith (Mayor), P Barton, N Pinnegar, John Cordwell, 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 Cllrs Braun & Tucker, 9 public members

T.5129 Apologies for Absence none

T.5130 Declarations of Interest accepted from Cllrs R Claydon, John & June Cordwell, P Smith as Beaumont Le Roger Society members

T.5131 Public Forum

A public member spoke of annoyance at the recent car park survey being too narrow in its field of questioning. Suggestions were also given by the public member for changes to the Draft Minutes of September council meeting regarding draft car park conclusions. They also offered Council the results of another car park survey undertaken by themselves. They were advised to send the survey to the Clerk and it could then be looked at by Council at the next Council meeting. They also questioned the use of Dispensations.

Mr J Thomson of Synwell Playing Fields Committee attended and spoke to Council of the improvements made so far. The Clerk was thanked for help in preparing a funding bid document enabling further play improvements to progress. The new Foxes Trail costing £10,500 was now installed. Adult health equipment installation is being considered and views sought. Some youth antisocial behaviour problems are emerging at the bottom of the field. Work is commencing on restructuring the Pavilion lease with plans for its building refurbishment (much needed) with a long term view to continue it as a valued community facility. About £50,000 would be needed.

Mr J Walshe spoke of proposals for a 'carol theme' Christmas window competition in Wotton where the Heritage Centre would help Council in its organisation, and also pleased to see that the Chamber of Trade has decided to continue its Christmas Tree support to traders this year in addition to the Town Council's tree incentive payment. A new tourism initiative was also explained specifically aiming at the Severn Vale area.

It was agreed to bring forward the following item on the agenda

T.5132 Christmas Shop Window Competition – To consider repeating and enhancing this competition to ensure a good Christmas display as Christmas trees are not being organised this year. Since this Council agenda was circulated, the Chamber of Trade has changed its mind and will organise Christmas trees for traders in Wotton. A backing document was prepared and circulated explaining the Regeneration budget remaining and options for prizes for shop window displays; using an extra £100 as prize incentives would produce a larger incentive for better window displays (1st prize £125, 2nd £75, 3rd £35, and 5 commended vouchers of £10 to be spent in Wotton). Proposed by Cllr A Wilkinson, seconded by Cllr L Farmer, agreed 10 in favour 2 against, 1 abstention, to organise this window display competition.

T.5133 To welcome Participation People & the Youth Forum and hear views on how young people perceive, and can improve, Wotton. Molly spoke of nine youth forums now established across the district. Evie a KLB 6th form pupil spoke about Wotton being a good place to live although highlighted the following issues and asked for Council help in dealing with them.

- Streetlighting along the main/rural road to KLB School is inadequate and very dark when attending after school clubs. Analysis is needed.
- Broken fences to repair near streams (asked to provide details)
- More library opening hours needed specifically for after school times (asked to provide more detail (possibly reorganise hours?) and the reason for county cuts and volunteer staffing explained).

T.5134 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2016. It was proposed by Cllr A Kendall and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell and agreed all in favour, with one abstention, to approve these Minutes, after a few minor alterations.

T.5135 Chairman's Announcements - Cllr P Smith highlighted attending the excellent Help for Heroes lunch event at the British school along with Cllr R Claydon and respective partners.

T.5136 Accounts

- a) Lift Works – to consider quotes for lift works recommended in Zurich safety inspection and contractor service reports. Summary of works prepared and backing documents emailed prior to meeting. After much deliberation regarding the high cost of some of the recommendations, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr T Luker that the essential works as defined in 8b or original quote totalling £500 is carried out (shaft light repair, re-instate in car emergency light, investigate car alarm in power fail mode why not working, & landing barrier provision for works), voted 11 in favour 2 abstentions. Also agreed that further quotations will be sought for the other works from different lift suppliers.
- b) *Cllr John Cordwell exited room temporarily*
To receive report from Youth and Community Services for period June-August 2016 and to approve invoice of £4348. (£3298 Youth delivery as per SLA; £200 increased to end of term July 16 due to fewer weeks in original quote; £850 extra Friday sessions to end of July). It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr R Claydon that invoice is approved, and report noted, agreed by all. However it is noted that a lot of staffing turnover has taken place and this should be monitored.
- c) To approve Youth Centre PC memory upgrade at £45 per computer as per T.5064. Cllr P Smith reported that increased memory in one PC had improved access speed, therefore it was proposed by Cllr T Luker and seconded by Cllr L Farmer that the other two PC's are also upgraded, all in favour. Router upgrade to be considered at a later stage.
- d) To approve Clerk attendance at 'free' 2 day course in Northants Looking After Listed Buildings & Writing Maintenance Plans (for Parish & Town Councils) just accommodation & mileage. It was proposed by Cllr T Luker and seconded by Cllr C Young to approve, agreed by all.
- e) Budget 2016/17. To note report of expenditure against budget; noted as healthy and no questions.
- f) To approve the accounts for payment. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr A Proctor that payments are approved, all in favour.

T.5137 Farmers Market - To consider whether to waive costs to Farmers Market stallholders for six months as a short term measure to encourage more stalls; and whether this is affordable in the current financial year. A backing document explained budget impact and discussions centred on the most effective method of attracting new stalls whilst being fair also to existing stallholders. Concern that farmers markets were not so fashionable in these times of austerity prompted a request for the market operator to speak to the next council meeting.

T.5138 Committee Vacancies – To appoint Councillors to the following vacancies:
Town Regeneration Partnership Committee – none forthcoming

Youth Liaison Group – Cllr A Proctor agreed to join.

Wotton in Bloom - following the resignation of Cllr Farmer, a discussion took place regarding the number of representatives to various groups and their reasons. It was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell and seconded by Cllr A Wilkinson to defer a second Wotton in Bloom representative appointment until the November agenda, agreed 7 in favour, 6 against.

Chamber of Trade - following the resignation of Cllr Smith, it was proposed by Cllr A Wilkinson, seconded by Cllr P Smith to defer this appointment until after clarification talks with the SDC Monitoring Officer regarding any conflict of interest in possible fire station car park application, agreed 12 in favour, 1 abstention.

T.5139 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. To consider a response. This Council is concerned that by stretching across the county boundary to South Gloucestershire, the community connection with Stroud District would be lost- even though council taxes would still be paid there. The reasons for change are because of the 'first past the post' election system, a small degree of proportionality is introduced by insisting the number of electors in each constituency are within narrow limits (between 71031 and 78507 this time round). Community identity is a consideration but is a secondary one. Clerk is asked to find out views of councils of Cam, Dursley, Berkeley, and Kingswood parish councils, and Councillors are asked to visit the Boundary Commission website to understand the background numbers and establish views to feed into an official response.

T.5140 Wotton Car Parking

a) to discuss car park survey/questionnaire results and form a conclusion. The draft final report was circulated after adding extra figures gained from the Mayor's additional observations carried out to check original anomalies regarding the Chipping car park in the afternoons. 85% is the ideal occupancy figure to aim for. Indications show that there is adequate parking most of the time at Potters Pond, the Civic Centre car park is beyond capacity most of the time, and that the Chipping car park is busy all day until a lull mid pm. Indications overall show 30 more spaces needed to match 85% levels. If 40 extra spaces are added to meet future anticipated growth in demand, then it could be argued that 70 extra spaces are needed to park in Wotton overall. The survey was undertaken to give an indication if extra parking could lead to more people visiting the town and was a snapshot of 3 days, 9am to 6pm, across 3 car parks. It was not designed to question on future

developer proposals for car parks. Animated discussions concerned future levels of demand when the extra parking is not in the centre, and the results of the 2011 SDC parking survey, which drew similar conclusions. It was proposed by Cllr A Wilkinson and seconded by Cllr N Clement that the car park survey should be put on our website for public perusal, stating that this latest WTC survey supports the original SDC survey that more car parking is needed in Wotton, voted 6 in favour, 6 against, Chair used casting vote in favour – motion passed.

b) To note Glos County Council intentions for library car park out of hours usage & residents' need for parking. It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr P Barton, that a response is made to Glos CC stating that although we welcome the allowed usage by residents of Wotton, we are concerned that evening activities at the library may suffer and we question how they are proposing to accommodate parking for those user groups, agreed all in favour.

T.5141 2017/18 Local Government Finance Settlement Technical Consultation
– to consider response to this consultation, which could impose referendum principles onto Town and Parish Councils exceeding the proposed council tax increase threshold. Although this Council is not unhappy with the principle of capping, we do not wish to see an arbitrary figure placed on it, eg 2%, since inflation could be a problem in the future, and also it ultimately just raises the costs to the local taxpayer of holding a referendum – which can amount to a few thousand pounds.

T.5142 Dispensation Grant - To consider whether Wotton Town Council should grant itself a dispensation to enable it to consider a Planning Application for land behind the fire station when it materialises. The Clerk referred to the SDC Monitoring Officer for advice, explaining the situation that this Town Council in January supported in principle the provision of a car park on land behind the fire station although reserved judgement on housing matters until an application is received.

It is therefore considered in the best interests of local representation, that Wotton Town Council is still able to represent views of the electorate and discuss and vote on the planning application when it arrives, despite already having considered the principle of it, and it is for this reason that a dispensation is requested to be granted to the whole Town Council, to allow it to continue to consider a future planning application, because of individual councillors' perceived interests arising out of their involvement in the Town Council's January decision to support in principle the provision of a car park.

This does not cover any other personal interests (which individual councillors may have for other reasons) and which must be declared and acted upon in accordance with the Code of Conduct. This was proposed by Cllr L Farmer, seconded by Cllr A Kendall and agreed 12 in favour 1 abstention.

It is also noted that the current Code of Conduct is incorrect and needs altering, as it states that Dispensations must be granted by the Monitoring Officer of SDC – who has stated that Dispensations must now be granted by the Town Council itself following new legislation.

T.5143 Good Deeds Section –It was agreed to send a card of thanks to Mrs S Plant for watering the War Memorial planters all summer, also a card to Mr C Grimes for consistent litter collection up on Wotton Hill, and to Mr D Howse for the excellent hanging basket maintenance this summer in Wotton, which helped him win a BALI award recently.

T.5144 Clerk's Report A detailed report provided of Council administration and buildings activity. Still very busy despite staff shortages due to illness. Various plumbing problems have emerged all at once across the buildings, which is surprising as temperatures have not dropped yet. The 11 month old new heating at the Town Hall has broken and is being fixed by Glevum. Many good reports are still being received about the Rope Walk open space makeover.

T.5145 Correspondence to note or request action:

- a) Noted letters from Barclays regarding interest rate reduction from 0.38% to 0.19% from 5/12/2016 for Town Council and Town Trust Active Saver Accounts. Also, rate reward for no withdrawals in a month reducing from 0.5% to 0.25% for those accounts.
- b) Noted thank you letter to WTC from Bluesfest Committee for supporting the event. Brochures/Newsletters for information only: none (many are emailed now)

T.5146 Reports from Councillors & meetings attended

County Council – County Cllr John Cordwell provided a written report highlighting the carriageway patching Wotton to Alderley Road, the consultation of the Draft Local Minerals Plan 2018 to 2032 which includes fracking possibilities, and the local flood risk management strategy. The Glos Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee states that a small amount of revenue funding for flooding works is available (around £300k) for the whole county, plus contributions from Defra and the district councils and possibly in the future from CIL. The total requirement identified for Wotton was £1.5M and for the county was probably £50M. The highest priority scheme for Wotton is 16th on the list and estimated at £850k.

District Council – Cllr C Braun circulated a detailed written report. Cllr K Tucker spoke of delays to the new Gossington SDC recycling depot, and still complaints to SDC regarding new bin collection arrangements mostly due to storage problems.

PROW & Amenities Committee – not met

Finance & Special Purposes Committee – not met.

Allotments Committee – deferred until October.

Youth Liaison Group – Cllr June Cordwell commented on top up funding; £420 given to the Friday afternoon sessions run by The Door Project, plans to pilot mental health sessions with £1000 funding received from The Recreational Trust, and plans for the base of a shelter at the New Rd skatepark, £1000 funded by the High Sherriff, and £1500 from YLG.

Town Regeneration Partnership – not met

WC Sports Foundation – shelter construction going ahead as above, new safe path construction commenced with completion by 5th November. BMX track costings done and grant applications commencing, Kingswood and Wickwar primary schools are each funding a piece of equipment in the new play area, and a work party with wheelbarrows and spades smoothed the jogging trail ready for the Parc Run shortly.

Wotton Pool – refurbishment planning application applied for after optimistic talks with planning officer, pool takings higher this year due to 60 plus party bookings, a triathlon event, and plans to raise prices a little. Two volunteers have come forward to apply for grants, and to raise the profile of the pool with marketing. AGM shortly –all invited.

Wotton in Bloom - another very successful year with a BALI award for D Howse. Town Council contribution of £2000 is supplemented by £4500 fundraising and much volunteer effort such as local donations of baskets at cost price and hosted facilities for meetings.

Walking Festival – not met

Heritage Centre – visitor numbers continue to rise. Old maps display well received. Shop sales & donations continue, and grants being applied for, for extra storage & training.
Police Community Panel meeting – Cllr John Cordwell attended & noted disappointing attendance from locality. Antisocial behaviour and speeding drivers are still priorities.
Recreational Trust – considered two applications for grants; both sent back for review.

Cllrs A Wilkinson & A Kendall left the meeting 9.55pm

T.5147 Town Affairs

Cllr C Young – complained that recent Severn Trent works at top of Haw St hill were dangerous without temporary traffic lights. Mayor reported this to Highways.
Cllr A Proctor – noted a bar sticking out of coronation seats at Coombe Hill
Cllr L Farmer – noted it was encouraging to see SPFC attend this meeting
Cllr P Barton - complained about the hedge removal at Coombe/Uphill for field access. SDC enforcement has considered this, and Cllr K Tucker will forward email
Cllr June Cordwell – asked that signage at the youth centre is considered, and that footpath entrance is weedsprayed Merlin Haven onto main road.

*Due to the lateness of the hour just after 10pm it was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr C Young to continue with the meeting, all in favour.
The remaining public left the meeting.*

T.5148 Town Trust – Town Hall

a) To approve quote for £773 for emergency lighting works following failures during service visit tests. More information regarding the failure was requested, and it was proposed by Cllr P Smith seconded Cllr John Cordwell to delegate this item to the Clerk after consulting further with the Mayor, agreed by all.

Cllrs June & John Cordwell, P Smith, & R Claydon left the room

b) To consider whether to permit Town Hall Tea's additional use on afternoon of Christmas event 3rd December 3 to 8pm & any charges for Beaumont Le Roger Twinning Group as operator, normal one session community charge is £90. It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer seconded Cllr C Young that Beaumont Le Roger are asked to pay a £15 fee in lieu of a stall cost to the Christmas event organiser, and that the Town Hall facility is provided by the Town Trust to encourage attendance at this festive event, agreed by all.

Cllrs June & John Cordwell, P Smith, & R Claydon re-entered the room

This completed the business of the Town Council at 10.10 pm

Signed:

Dated:

Chairman of Wotton-under-Edge Town Council