

MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 19th SEPTEMBER 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

In attendance: Town Clerk Ms S Bailey, District Cllrs K Tucker, C Braun, 5 public members

T.5112 Apologies for Absence. Cllr C Young, A Proctor, N Clement, A Wilkinson

T.5113 Declarations of Interest. Cllrs P Smith (Wotton DIY employer payments), John Cordwell (Severn Estuary Partnership member)

T.5114 Public Forum – various concerns were raised about the car parking survey undertaken last week and how it would feed into a conclusion when considering forthcoming application of a new car park behind the fire station. Questions were asked about why the Town Council had provided ‘in principle’ support. It was explained that ‘in principle’ support had been given to the provision of a car park - all other matters are unknown until the application is received and therefore it will be assessed when the application arrives. It was also felt by the public that the survey should be more detailed and in depth, with wider hours/days monitored, and state that it was being undertaken in relation to wider issues such as a new car park.

T.5115 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th August 2016. It was proposed by Cllr A Kendall and seconded by Cllr L Farmer and agreed all in favour to approve these Minutes.

The following item was brought forward on the agenda for public benefit

T.5116 Car Parking Survey in Wotton – to discuss questionnaire results and form a conclusion. Analysis is not yet complete and therefore a firm conclusion cannot yet be reached. The survey and questionnaire was a 9am to 6pm snapshot of 3 days including a Saturday, of the main 3 car parks in town, with 195 response forms received from users. Three councillors spent 18 hours each standing in car parks surveying with a helpful amount of support from 3 others, and those members are thanked for their efforts & input. A draft analysis was circulated by Cllr R Claydon. He said the survey was not intended to be a “referendum” on the proposals for a new car park but was aimed at assessing what the current parking demand was. The initial findings of the survey indicated that Potters Pond generally has enough spaces, whereas the Civic Centre (all days) and Chipping car park (morning and Saturdays) are usually at 85% capacity or over for most of the time. The questions on car park usage were similar to those of the 2011 SDC car park survey and unsurprisingly the findings are very similar. Results showed a strong desire for additional long term parking (excl. Potters Pond), visitors generally supported reasonable parking charges, although a rise in the Precept to pay for extra parking was not favoured by residents. Due to time, cost and member input limitations, further in depth surveys are not considered viable, however anomalies appear during afternoons in the Chipping car park (the busiest & largest and also the gateway car park for town visitors), and further investigation is recommended to obtain deeper understanding of its usage at various times. The Mayor is to check on this over next 3 weeks and report back to Cllr Claydon, who will incorporate into a final report for the October Council meeting. In summary, the initial results indicated that more town parking is needed, with details and a final report still to be clarified. The final report should feed into an overall long term plan for the town, which considers how the town can develop and what impact a lack of extra parking could have on the towns shops, businesses and services currently provided. Cllr Claydon was thanked for all of the work this survey has entailed.

T.5117 Chairman's Announcements - The Mayor highlighted that the Planning Committee meeting next Monday would likely be well attended since the controversial Holywell Farm application would be discussed and the developer was attending. Therefore with the agreement of the Committee chairman, the Mayor would likely chair this meeting, which will also be moved to the larger room upstairs – the Coombe Suite.

T.5118 Accounts

- a) To approve Clerk's attendance at annual SLCC Regional Roadshow Cheltenham 23rd Nov fee £69. Proposed Cllr A Kendall, seconded Cllr L Farmer, agreed by all.
- b) To consider quotation for lift works as recommended by Zurich Lift Inspection engineer, totalling £500. In addition to these works another regular inspection has just highlighted additional suggested works totalling £4600 – it is therefore suggested to defer item one month for full analysis of quotes.
- c) To approve membership renewal of SLCC for Deputy Clerk cost £187. Proposed Cllr L Farmer, seconded Cllr T Luker, agreed by all.
- d) To consider if anyone wishes to attend the Severn Estuary Forum in Gloucester 22nd Sept 2016 cost £55. Cllr John Cordwell already attends from County Council perspective and can report back on some of this meeting.
- e) To consider and approve quotes for allotments works as follows:
 - (i) New Road – Shoring up path at a cost of £1200 plus VAT. After a discussion of how the need to deeply bury water pipes due to new legislation may be covered by another solution using gravity fed tanks, it was proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar, seconded by Cllr John Cordwell, agreed by all, to approve path support works.
 - (ii) Knapp Road – Works to bank; strim, spray, weed control membrane at a cost of £745 plus VAT. The history of the need for this work was explained. However the New Road path works above now use up the annual allotment budget and more specific proposals from Knapp Rd allotment holders/the Association themselves are awaited to feed into the next budget process; proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded by Cllr L Farmer, agreed by all.
- f) To consider purchase of digital burial records system at a cost of £1100 plus annual fee of £85 after presentation from Pear Technology and as a result of Business Continuity Plan. Ms Harrison is to be thanked for her recent attendance and presentation, however we consider that an alternative cheaper solution may be more suitable at the moment using periodic scanning of an identically updated wall map and/or an excel spreadsheet would achieve the same purpose. We already maintain electronic records as a backup system to the historic ledgers. This decision is proposed by Cllr L Farmer seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed by all.
- g) To approve payment of £50 from Chairman's Allowance for Mayor for 2 tickets to attend Help for Heroes lunch at the British School on 15/10/16. Cllr P Smith does not wish to use this Allowance and will pay personally, and invited others to attend so that a table for councillors can be sought.
- h) Budget 2016/17. To note report of expenditure against budget. Report provided and after one question regarding insurance payment, noted as healthy.
- i) To approve the accounts for payment. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr A Kendall to approve the amended payments schedule as presented for a total of £27,817 for Town Council and £648 for Town Trust, agreed by all.

T.5119 Completion of External Audit for Year Ending 31st March 2016 Noted: successful completion of Audit for the year ending 31st March 2016 with no queries or even questions raised by the auditor.

T.5120 Annual Parish Assembly 2017– To consider change of date due to disruption to regular class. After much discussion regarding the date, and considering how busy our various venues are, it is agreed that the new date will be Friday 12th May 2017.

T.5121 Committee Vacancies – To appoint Councillors to vacancies on the Town Regeneration Partnership Committee (1 vacancy); & Youth Liaison Group (1 vacancy). Due to absent Councillors this will be deferred again to October meeting.

T.5122 Taxi Consultation from SDC – to consider making a response by 31st October deadline. After provision of background information, no response to be made.

T.5123 Budget Meeting – To decide date for budget deliberations – after much discussion, Wednesday 7th December at 7:30pm is set for budget discussions with a further date early January if necessary.

T.5124 Good Deeds Section – no suggestions received for cards of thanks.

T.5125 Clerk's Report A detailed report provided of Council administration and buildings activity. Bones were discovered at Rope Walk when tree planting but Police forensics found them to be not human after analysis; the area's improvement has generated many positive comments. We are hosting the South West Allotments Forum here tomorrow. The delay in our full planning application for the RSPCA shop extra CCTV camera is due to Stroud Planning Authority not advising us that the sent payment was incorrect, now rectified.

T.5126 Correspondence to note or request action:

- a) Email from People and Places advertising their 'Town Benchmarking' service at costs starting from £2000 plus £350 annual licence fee. Noted as too expensive.
- b) Noted letter from Star Fireworks informing that they cannot supply Armistice maroons this year due to changes in legislation by European Directives. They are looking at ways to resolve this for future years. Maybe consider if needed at all in the future?
- c) Noted a new grant application from Citizens Advice Bureau for £2745, in addition to room & IT/phone provision, to go forward to budget deliberations later this year. Clerk to send out details to Councillors and consider what extra information is needed.
- d) Noted a response regarding Council's refusal to extend the period for the Deed of Grant of Exclusive Rights of Burial for two plots at the cemetery. We continue to maintain the same stance on this item as previous Minutes and will respond accordingly.
- e) Noted email inviting a representative to Stroud District Heritage & Cultural Network, organised by SDC. Next meeting 12/10/2016, 7pm Kingshill House. No representative came forward and we will respond accordingly.
- f) Noted Invitation from Pennwood Nursing Home Harvest Festival 6th October 2pm
Brochures/Newsletters for information only: none

T.5127 Reports from Councillors & meetings attended

County Council –County Cllr John Cordwell provided a detailed written report and also highlighted the recent 84 & 85 bus problems were due to Stagecoach changing the agreed route and not County Council. Wotton has lost the direct service now to Southmead Hospital (change in Yate) but gained a slightly better Gloucester service.

District Council – Cllr C Braun circulated a detailed written report and spoke of the following: 7 residents remaining at Dryleaze Court who all want to move into Dryleaze house. Closure will only happen when all are moved. Laundry facilities likely to be in

garages. Warden's house now split into 2 flats. A new SDC Asset Strategy report mentions Bearlands regeneration needed, likely for 2021. Two new representatives to be recruited shortly for tenant engagement. Bearlands play area improvements – SDC has agreed to match fund up to £50,000. Local group is spearheading/preparing plans and starting to fundraise. No progress on Pitman Place play area due to problems of its location & antisocial behaviour issues where the Neighbourhood Warden has been involved in leaflet dropping. SDC are soon starting to look at ideas for town's regeneration – forward any ideas please (toilet improvements, footfall surveys, landscaping, attack more weeds, trader grants to improve frontages, etc). District Cllr K Tucker commented on a new Road Safety Partnership initiative around the county of a film with talks at satellite centres and taking 6th formers by bus in order to encourage safer driving. Also, the new SDC recycling /bins initiative appears to be producing a lot of public comments and complaints.

PROW & Amenities Committee – meeting tomorrow.

Finance & Special Purposes Committee – not met.

Allotments Committee – deferred until October.

Youth Liaison Group – Funds for camera/heritage recording grant now in account and awaiting details of quote for camera specification and SDC response re: VAT payment.

The current chair will step down shortly and a replacement is sought.

Town Regeneration Partnership – Two actions from the Community Plan will be addressed at each meeting. Further support initiatives for the farmers market are being considered although extra parking is needed. Dementia friendly town initiatives will be considered at the next meeting, good feedback received from the Rope Walk landscaping project, Town Hall Teas very well supported this year, Heritage Centre has seen increased footfall this year and more volunteers. The Walshes attended a new tourism initiative for the Severn Vale area and will host the next meeting in Wotton.

WC Sports Foundation – a report was sent highlighting the many things happening on the site such as the new safe footpath works started on the ground last week, a new BMX track out to tender, a new youth shelter soon, and very popular hockey teams with waiting lists. The children's summer activities was the best supported so far. 400 new fruit trees will be planted 20th November.

Wotton Pool – no report

Walking Festival – walks have been finalised with 3 per day, and leaders are in place, publicity to be considered at next meeting.

Heritage Centre – written report provided by Cllr June Cordwell. Cataloguing of articles has been sporadic over the years and much work is needed to correctly label and identify items for future access and reference. New management have greatly increased both visitor numbers and volunteers offering help.

T.5128 Town Affairs

Cllr John Cordwell – Children's Activity Fund still has grants available for this financial year

Cllr A Kendall – will speak shortly to class 3 at British School on what a Town Council does

Cllr T Luker – zigzag lines very faded outside Synwell Playing Fields where children access the site – asked that this is highlighted at the Highways meeting next week

This completed the business of the Town Council at 9.30 pm

Signed:

Dated:

Chairman of Wotton-under-Edge Town Council