



**MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD ON MONDAY 20<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2014 AT 7PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE**

**Present:** Councillors R Claydon (Mayor), June Cordwell, John Cordwell, P Smith, N Clement, Clair Galbraith, K Collins, Chris Galbraith, A Wilkinson, In Attendance: Town Clerk Ms S Bailey. Public 12

**T.4576** **Apologies** received & accepted from Cllrs P Barton, L Harris, M Zimmer, T Luker

**T.4577** **Declarations of Interest** Cllr P Smith employment at Wotton DIY, Cllr K Collins neighbour to Locombe Place application

*Cllr Chris Galbraith – Chair of Planning Committee - took the chair for the following planning items. The items were also brought forward on the agenda to allow members of the public to listen to the decisions.*

**T.4578** **Planning Applications** – responses needed before the next Planning Committee sits:

**S.14/1433/VAR – Monks Mill Barn**, Hill Mill Lane, Wortley. Variation of Condition Inc Renewals. Removal of condition 4 – no external lighting from Planning Permission S/12/0493/COU. The projected plans were discussed by Council.

*It was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell seconded by Cllr Chris Galbraith and agreed by all to suspend Standing Orders to allow the public to speak to the Council on this application. The members of the public spoke of their concerns regarding this application and Councillors asked for any necessary clarification.*

*It was then proposed by Cllr Chris Galbraith seconded by Cllr John Cordwell and agreed by all to re-instate Standing Orders to allow the Council to consider the planning application.*

It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr June Cordwell and agreed with all in favour, to support the objections of Alderley Parish meeting, and strongly object to this application on the following grounds:

- the original condition 4 attached to the planning approval S/12/0493/COU should be upheld in order to not adversely affect, either directly or indirectly, a site supporting legally protected species or its habitat in accordance with Local Plan Policy NE4 and NPPF(11).
- The light pollution created by unnecessary 'lighting of the sky' destroys the night time peace and tranquility of this very rural area, as well as projecting intrusive light beams towards other residents in the village of Alderley
- If the Planning Authority is minded to grant permission for some lighting- under some remote health and safety legislation for visitors - then this Town Council requests that any lighting would be of low luminosity eg 60w bulb maximum, be angled downwards, and have PIR sensors inbuilt to detect a presence and then extinguish the light after a short period eg 5 minutes. However, given the applicant's flagrant contravention so far of planning conditions this Council asks how such a condition would be effectively policed by the Planning Authority?

**S.14/2181/FUL – 9 Locombe Place**, Wotton-under-Edge. Small rear garden development to build four semi-detached three bedroom properties with private access road.

*Cllr K Collins left the room*

The projected plans were discussed by Council.

*It was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell seconded by Cllr Chris Galbraith and agreed by all to suspend Standing Orders to allow the public to speak to the Council on this application. Cllr K Collins returned to the room*

The members of the public and Cllr K Collins spoke of their concerns regarding this application and Councillors asked for any necessary clarification.

*It was then proposed by Cllr Chris Galbraith seconded by Cllr June Cordwell and agreed by all to re-instate Standing Orders to allow the Council to consider the planning application. Cllr K Collins left the room*

It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell and agreed, with all in favour, to object to this application on the following grounds:

- The plans are factually incorrect and misrepresent the neighboring properties & the proximity of their dwellings making the site plans appear more spacious than actuality.
- The neighbours, particularly in Fountain Crescent, would be overlooked from higher ground and face significant loss of privacy and social amenity. Any green screening from elderly conifers as indicated in the plans would disappear in a short time due to the new properties' requirement for some garden space and would lead to light pollution towards Fountain crescent properties. Also, No.12 Wortley Rd would be within unacceptable touching distance of the edge of one of the proposed house walls, and also overshadowed resulting in significant loss of light and privacy.
- The access road does not provide adequate turning space for the large number of residents of these four x 3 bedroom family properties, notwithstanding any visitors or deliveries to these properties.
- The access into this property is very poor, sited at a busy junction to Hentley Tor where cars are frequently parked on all corners and there is no footpath to protect pedestrians. Visibility is poor at the best of times.
- The proposed development is overbearing and would result in overdevelopment of the site. There is no precedent set in this street for such 'garden grabbing development' or back garden infill development on this scale.

The Clerk is also asked to contact the Planning Authority and request that the application is called in to Committee if the officer is minded to grant consent.

*Cllr K Collins returned to the room*

**S.14/2180/HHOLD – 5 Beechwood Grove**, Wotton-under-Edge. Two-storey side extension to form double garage with dressing room over. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr June Cordwell to support this application voted 8 in favour, 1 abstention.

*Cllr R Claydon resumed the chairing of the meeting*

**T.4579 Public Forum** none

**T.4580 Chairman's Announcements** A written report was provided outlining activities undertaken, namely carrying out staff appraisals, attended police panel meeting, a website proposals meeting and met a film crew at the heritage centre.

**T.4581 To approve the Minutes** of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014. It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr Chris Galbraith and agreed all in favour to approve the Minutes after a minor amendment.

**T.4582 To note Minutes of Other Committees:** Minutes of Planning Committee of 26<sup>th</sup> August and Town Regeneration Partnership Committee of 12<sup>th</sup> May 2014; duly noted.

**T.4583 Accounts**

*Due to the sensitive nature of tender documents being discussed for contract award, members of the press and public were excluded from items a) to f) and left the room, proposed Cllr R Claydon seconded Cllr Chris Galbraith agreed by all, under Public Bodies and Admission to Meetings Act*

a) To consider quotations for recommended tree work (backing papers). After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded by Cllr K Collins to award the St Marys church and Marchesi Walk tree works including felling Tree No. 5 and Tree No. 44 and pruning Tree No.38 but excluding Tree No. 24 (Silver Birch) to Tree Management for £881 and £1960 respectively, agreed by all, and to award the Cemetery tree works to

Kings Tree Services for £1180 agreed by all. The Marchesi Walk Silver Birch (tree No.24) can be considered when future budgets allow.

b) To consider quotations for tree/hedge works at Knapp Road allotments (backing papers). After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded by Cllr K Collins to award this contract to Treecreeper for £990, agreed by all. The funding from these tree works will all be from contingency budget (apart from the allotments trees/hedging which will be from allotments budget) and provision must be made to provide adequate tree budgeting in future.

c) To approve quotation for £434 for remedial electrical works to Civic Centre following 5 year electrical inspection, plus further investigative work re: lack of circuit continuity. Reports of electrical inspection were studied and it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr K Collins and agreed by all to undertake all Code 1 & 2 necessary works and investigate further the exact implications of Code 3 circuit works.

d) To approve quotation for Town Hall for £166 for remedial electrical works following 5 year electrical inspection, plus further investigative work re: lack of circuit continuity. Reports of electrical inspection were studied and it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr K Collins and agreed by all to undertake all Code 1 necessary works, including the circuit investigations identified

e) To approve quotation to reduce and repair the cracked wall at the Civic Centre car park entrance. Previous reports were discussed including the higher prices quoted to remove the Silver Birch tree and to reinstate wall with railings above a lower wall. It was proposed by Cllr Chris Galbraith and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell that just lowering the wall was the cheaper option to avoid risk of injury and it was agreed by all to approve the quotation from JB Young for £480

f) To approve quotation to re-bed capping stones on low wall adjacent to Scout Hut on top of Civic Centre car park boundary. It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr P Smith to approve works to capping stones by AB Young for £450 agreed by all.

*It was proposed Cllr R Claydon seconded Cllr Chris Galbraith agreed by all to re-enter open Council session*

g) To approve purchase of Clerk's Manual at a cost of £35-current manual is 8 years old & does not cover recent legislation necessary for staff training & Council advice. It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell, seconded by Cllr K Collins to approve this, agreed by all.

h) To approve Clerk's attendance at GAPTC Planning Explored conference on 12<sup>th</sup> Nov 2014 cost £65 & GAPTC seminar on Common Land/Village Greens on 29<sup>th</sup> Oct 2014 cost £50. The second session on village greens was not considered necessary due to lack of such space in Wotton area and Glos CC could be asked for advice if necessary, however it was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell and seconded by Cllr K Collins and agreed by all to allow attendance at the Planning Explored training.

i) To note (after already realigning contract end dates & testing market prices) British Gas 12 mth contract prices re-negotiated from Nov 14 for 12 months, saving approx. £453 a year. This was noted and thanks given to Deputy Clerk for the work done here.

j) To note report of Salaries and Expenses for the period April –September 2014 (backing papers); Noted.

k) To approve release of £2,500 from earmarked reserves to Wotton Community Sports Foundation for the skatepark. This was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr Clair Galbraith and agreed by all.

l) To consider moving BT accounts to a 2 year contract in order to reduce charges (backing papers). This appears to save about £500 p.a across all lines & users, and was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr K Collins to proceed, agreed by all. It was suggested by Cllr P Smith that a mini exchange may be suitable in the future to centralize all sites.

- m) Noted: Barclays Bank small charge for overdrawn account (backing papers)
- n) Noted: Budget 2014/15 report of expenditure against budget (backing papers).
- o) To approve the accounts for payment (backing papers). It was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell and seconded by Cllr K Collins and agreed by all to pay these accounts. The majority of these payments will be by internet banking for the first time at this Council, with the remainder following for November payments.

#### **T.4584 Grants and Donations**

- a) To consider grant application from the Historical Society to cover costs of road closure and insurance for the Mediaeval Market in June 2015 totalling £240 (backing papers). The £1000 'In Our Towns' grant has just been paid by SDC to cover fairs, festivals and market initiatives for a year which involve the community, and it was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr Clair Galbraith that this grant is paid from this budget, all agreed.
- b) To consider whether to repeat last year's £10 Christmas Tree grant to traders (total cost 2013 was £240). It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr Clair Galbraith that this initiative is again funded by the Regeneration budget, agreed by all.
- c) To consider grant request from Cotswold Vale Talking Newspaper (£50 previously). It was proposed by Cllr K Collins and seconded by Cllr Chris Galbraith to grant again £50 to this worthwhile community venture, agreed by all.
- d) To approve payment of £2600 to Citizens Advice Bureau - Government changes leading to backlog of outreach advice has led to different working methods of local CAB advisors. The £2600 was intended to provide extra outreach services by CAB directly to Wotton inhabitants as a result of Govt tax benefit changes. However Govt backlogs have meant that the case worker has operated more from a central Stroud office base helping the other advisors – a backing paper explained the recent meeting held with CAB and the current system. After much discussion regarding the provision of facilities to CAB, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr N Clement that this invoice should be paid, however it should be pointed out to CAB that WTC is not happy that the system of outreach work changed without advising us, and that any future payments will require more financial input from CAB to assess at the budget meeting, agreed by all.
- e) To consider grant request from Stroud Valleys project. This request was declined as the project is more Stroud Valleys based and the benefit does not reach Wotton, proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr Chris Galbraith agreed by all.
- f) To consider grant request from Heritage Centre for new signage (£200) and heating upgrade (£1000) (backing paper & application). After discussion concerning the grants budget and the grant policy which states that everything should be decided if possible at the annual budget meeting, it was suggested that a reply should be sent outlining that this application will be considered in line with the following financial year's grant provision.

**T.4585 Synwell Playing Field** To receive accounts and 6 monthly report from Synwell Playing Field Committee with reference to the grant agreement. Council is pleased to see input from SPFC and noted the increased football club contributions. The Council looks forward to seeing the full year accounts. It was noted that the social club which operates from the site and is the biggest tenant, was having management difficulties and it is hoped that this will not affect the overall financial position of the Committee.

**T.4586 Summer 2015 Weeding and Tidying in Wotton** To consider a recommendation from the Town Regeneration Partnership Committee to employ a person on a part-time, short term contract to weed and tidy in the town, in light of the reduced

service provided by Glos County Council. If agreed, to consider costs to take forward to budget meeting (backing paper). The Mayor outlined a recent meeting held with SDC open spaces officer which went into detail explaining the litter collections, weeds & street cleaning and zones/times used. More information is awaited before Council should consider extra employment of staff and also the possibility of current staff usage is being considered. The Glos County Council Big Community Offer as well as SDC part funding initiatives may be a way of addressing litter/weed management by making contributions to partnership bodies rather than extra employment and overheads.

**T.4587 Standing Orders** To consider whether to amend Standing Orders relating to recording of meetings in light of NALC briefing (backing paper). Due to legislative changes since the model Standing Orders were introduced and adopted by this Council relating the recording of meetings, it is no longer possible to exclude recording, and thus it is proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell that this current Standing Order (3.1) is suspended until further wording is formulated & guidance received – whereupon it can be considered by the Special Purposes Committee, agreed by all.

**T.4588 Town Regeneration Partnership Committee** To confirm Cllr A Wilkinson as a member of the Town Regeneration Partnership Committee; proposed by Cllr Chris Galbraith and seconded by Cllr P Smith, agreed by all.

**T.4589 Community Plan/Neighbourhood Development Plan**

a) To approve Community Plan questionnaire (backing paper). After discussion and a few minor amendments, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell to distribute the questionnaire to the electorate to seek views for community plan update, agreed by all.

b) To discuss details for publicising and delivery of the questionnaire – ask Wotton Directory to distribute with their next publication (small cost will be involved). For returning of forms, possibly consider using both primary schools, One Stop Shop, Library and newsmarket on Wortley Rd. Possibly 2,500 to 3,000 copies will be needed.

c) To consider whether a Neighbourhood Development Plan should be pursued following GRCC presentation recently. Council is concerned at the requirement for time and financial resources needed to complete such a project. Cllr P Smith envisaged it was a quick and straightforward matter to designate a boundary area for such a plan using SDC resources and will investigate.

*Cllr A Wilkinson left the meeting*

**T.4590 Car Parking**

a) To note report of October car park working group meeting (backing papers). The kind offer to use the auction rooms car park at the Tabernacle, when not in use, needs to be investigated – Clerk to report back when items such as signage, planning, lighting, insurance, maintenance, etc have been assessed and costed out.

b) To discuss the actions raised in item 1 of the report and decide how to proceed.

**T.4591 Poplar Trees, Chipping Surgery Development** – To decide action to be taken in light of the report received from the Town Council's arboricultural consultant (backing paper). Following the detailed report, this Council is very dissatisfied that the Planning Authority did not protect the poplars with root protection zones as the report suggested it should have, and the Clerk is asked to contact the SDC Tree Officer to complain. Regarding the trees themselves, it is clear that the risk level has increased and that consideration needs to be given to serious pollarding or removal. The Clerk is instructed to respond to the developer, who is requesting their removal, that this Council may be amenable to a request to fell them, provided that a) removal is at their expense b)

removal is undertaken by our tree surgeon and funds provided up front c) large replacement trees are planted as suggested in Mr J Unwin's arboricultural report and funded by them. The above actions were proposed by Cllr Chris Galbraith and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell and agreed by all.

**T.4592 Anti-Social Behaviour in the Chipping** – to discuss improvements - Councillor Clement to report. The Chipping car Park antisocial behaviour has generally improved over past few months, although the poor behaviour appears to have moved to Symn Lane and the damaged corner garage – police are aware of this and investigating. The recent Police Panel meeting listed anti-social behaviour as its top priority, and a mobile camera has been installed at the Chipping. The down pipe has been ripped from outside the Chipping Club Room but CCTV camera did not pick up the vandal due to the dark and the cameras need light to detect – Clerk to install a PIR light.

**T.4593 Old Town Toilets** – To discuss repair works to Old Town Toilets - Cllr Clement to report. The Council explained the cost and history of the Old Town toilet site (leased by SDC to WTC) to Cllr Clement. Cllr June Cordwell explained that although Dursley are seeing improvements to one toilet, they are losing another which overall will save SDC £11,000 p.a. Although Old Town toilets are in need of refurbishment and costly to maintain, budgets & grants are not available; a survey a few years ago in Wotton was in favour of keeping them open.

**T.4594 Clerk's Report** (*backing paper*) The Council administration and buildings management continue to be very busy, working at full capacity.

**T.4595 Correspondence** to note or request action:

- a) To note SDC Draft Housing Strategy 2014-19 Consultation, response deadline 3rd Nov 2014. Noted
- b) To note letter from 6 Market Place, Berkeley giving details of their Children in Need breakfast on 14th Nov in Berkeley at a cost of £10. Booking form needed. Noted
- c) To note correspondence concerning street lighting problems in Synwell Lane and Potters Pond. Noted and dealt with by Cllr John Cordwell – it is suggested that Councillor nighttime walks to monitor non-working streetlamps should be reinstated.
- d) To note prior invitation to the official opening of the newly refurbished room at the Chipping Hall on Friday 10th October – Information already circulated to members.
- e) To note correspondence concerning anti-social behaviour on the Bluecoat School entrance driveway and CCTV coverage (*backing paper*). Clerk already responded.
- f) To note a letter from SDC of funding available to businesses for energy surveys of premises (*backing papers*). Noted
- g) Noted: Conservation Area Consent received for works to trees in St Mary's.
- h) Noted: Conservation Area Consent received for works to trees in Dyers Brook.
- i) Letter received for residents of Water Lane complaining about metal fencing around house long term – Clerk to pass to SDC Planning.
- j) WCSF request letter for annual fireworks event – agreed
- k) The Heritage Centre have written to request a meeting to review the lease of the Centre – Clerk to arrange a date with Cllrs Claydon & John & June Cordwell.
- l) A resident bordering St Mary's Church has written to complain about overhanging Yew and Maple - Clerk has arranged for offending branches to be trimmed.

Brochures/Newsletters for information only:

Caring Matters Autumn 2014, CPRE Gloucestershire news Autumn 2014

**T.4596 Reports from Councillors on meetings attended**

County Council – report circulated in advance; bus routes have changed and are available at the One Stop Shop. Old London Rd landslide repair order has been given to Amey who have a scheduled date by end December.

District Council – report circulated in advance. SDC has devised a new way of building more housing, whilst making it unavailable for ‘right to buy’ schemes in order to replenish its needed social housing stock

Footpaths Committee - will meet next week

Special Purposes Committee – date to be arranged shortly

Allotments Committee - postponed

Youth Liaison Group – AGM recently, new chair is Phil Sullivan

Town Regeneration Partnership a mediaeval market is planned for 2015 organised by Heritage Centre to raise funds for them and likely to be Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June

Sports Foundation – skatepark has now raised enough funds thanks to County Cllr Cordwell’s grant endorsement and an announcement should be due soon

SOSYP – Cllrs T Luker & Clair Galbraith attended a meeting whereby youths also attended and gave enthusiastic demonstrations. Dursley’s new youth centre will open soon. Wotton session are split onto junior & senior with middle overlap. A mobile youth bus is available - it visits Dursley regularly but does not appear to have been asked to visit Wotton.

Wotton Pool – a meeting between Cllr K Collins, the Mayor and Wotton Pool highlighted the fact that a WTC rep could not attend pool meetings due to their Constitution and that they would need to become a Trustee. Clerk to request copy of Constitution. A report for the pool is requested for November as per the Service Level Agreement and of particular interest is any grant applications in order to reduce future reliance upon the Town Council and the Wotton Taxpayer. The pool development committee, which a council rep IS allowed to attend, has been scheduled for this same evening as the Town Council meeting.

**T.4597 Town Affairs**

Cllr P Smith questioned the unblocking of drains – Cllr John Cordwell advised him to report all blocked drains via Glos CC report it website and they would be dealt with.

Cllr June Cordwell – applying for a youth grant from Cemex – website should give details of area conditions. Regarding Dursley Pool, £400,131 has been generated after expenditure to be used for new building works with £57,000 generated from the Dursley Sport Centre.

*Meeting concluded at 9.56pm*

Signed ..... Date .....  
Chairman & Town Mayor