



## **MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2015 AT 7PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE**

**Present:** Cllrs P Smith, R Claydon, N Clement, A Wilkinson, K Collins, M Zimmer, P Barton, John Cordwell, T Luker, A Kendall, N Pinnegar, L Farmer  
**In Attendance:** Town Clerk Ms S Bailey. Public 11

**T.4751 Apologies for Absence** received from Cllr June Cordwell

**T.4752 Declarations of Interest** Cllr John Cordwell florist invoice, Cllr P Smith employer invoice

*It was agreed to bring the following item forward on the agenda due to large amount of public interest and Cllr T Luker took the Chair for this item.*

**T.4753 Planning Applications** – response needed by SDC before next Planning Committee. S.14/2430/FUL The Full Moon, Mount Pleasant - Proposed demolition of existing public house and erection of 11 new dwellings with access and parking (revised tree plans). Council considered the revised plan recently submitted.

*It was proposed by Cllr T Luker and seconded by Cllr P Smith to suspend Standing Orders in order to hear from members of the public, agreed by all.*

Members of the public spoke about the overdevelopment of this site, the existing poor traffic situation, the proposed use of materials not being clear, the displacement of buses when resting, the need for more local parking if this car park disappears for housing, lack of consultation by SDC with locals on the revised plans, and the loss of the public house as a community facility.

*It was proposed by Cllr T Luker and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell that the Council reinstates Standing Orders and returns to Council session, all agreed.*

After considering the revised plans and much discussion, it was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr P Barton and agreed by all to object to this application on the basis of:

- The proposed site plan is overdeveloped with too high a density of housing and a lack of amenity space.
- There has been a distinct lack of local consultation by the developer of these new, revised proposals and this is not in keeping with the Developer Protocol which is currently in force between SDC and this Town Council and any developer who has any housing proposals in Wotton.
- There is the strong possibility of the proposed housing overlooking neighbouring properties eg no 9. However the revised plans are very poor and have not demonstrated adequately the elevations and context of neighbouring properties, and therefore the full scale of these new proposed changes and layout are not adequately visible. The houses appear to have been sited much closer to existing properties and thus proper plans showing adjacent properties must be lodged before a decision from the planning authority is forthcoming.
- Although two car spaces per dwelling are welcomed, the cramped development of this site will still lead to poor maneuverability within this site and forced parking on roads elsewhere nearby by local residents who use this area currently for car parking. The Council asks what has happened to the Housing Department's promise to make extra local parking spaces available on Mount Pleasant verges due to parking areas lost? The District Councillors are asked to follow this up. Furthermore after entering the site from the main road, this cramped parking arrangement will still lead to inability to turn thus necessitating reversing out onto a busy main road.

- We request that the 2 TPO trees (including the Town Council owned tree on the Green adjacent) are protected around their roots and that a root protection scheme and a construction working method statement for TPO trees are approved before any works commence. Given the lack of tree protection to other nearby developer works recently, we request strict adherence to root protection methodology and that this is enforced by SDC Planning Authority. The Town Council is also very saddened to hear that yet another fine tree (large red Maple) will be lost to the developer of this site for no apparent reason than it is in the way of profit.
- The potential damage during construction to the already very poor roads in the area around this site
- Disappointment that there is no affordable housing on this site

**T.4753 Public Forum** A member of the public spoke of their concern that the public sewer is under the Full Moon site. This would be dealt with by SDC building control.

**T.4754 Declaration of Acceptance of Office** received from Cllr A Wilkinson

**T.4755 Co-option of Councillors & Appointments**

- a) Co-option to Town Council to fill 3 vacancies - to consider candidates for and to receive any Declarations of Acceptance of Office from successful candidates. 5 candidate applications were received and 2 withdrew before the vote. All 3 candidates attended and were asked questions in turn by Council. In line with Standing Orders it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell that a secret written ballot be held to co-opt candidates, all agreed. In the subsequent vote all three candidates of Alastair Kendall, Nicholas Pinnegar and Lucy Farmer were elected to the Town Council. The all signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office, were given information packs, and took their seats at the table. The whole Council was also give a copy each of all Council rules, policies and procedures on a memory stick.
- b) To appoint Members to vacancies as follows:
  - (i) Council Representative to CAB. Cllr A Kendall agreed.
  - (ii) Allotments Committee – Cllr L Farmer and Cllr N Pinnegar agreed
  - (iii) Town Regeneration Partnership – Cllr A Kendall agreed.

**T.4756 Chairman's Announcements** The Mayor reported that he had attended the Medieval Fair, and also the Beaumont Le Roger exchange visit to France where he gave the opening speech.

**T.4757 Minutes of the Council Meeting** Held on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015 - to approve these Minutes. After a minor amendment, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr K Collins and agreed by all to approve these Minutes.

**T.4758 Accounts**

- a) To approve quote for edge of stream/bank clearance at Marchesi Walk. After explanation that we had been waiting for the previous contractor to do this work but they had pulled out at the last minute, it was proposed by Cllr K Collins and seconded by Cllr R Claydon that this new quotation by the current open spaces contractor is accepted for £720 plus vat, all agreed
- b) To approve renewal of membership subscription to Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum at a cost of £250. It was proposed by Cllr K Collins and seconded by Cllr M Zimmer that this is approved, all agreed.

- c) To note letter from BT informing that line rental will increase by 5% from July 2015. Current price £14.20 will increase to £14.91. 2 year contract ends 28/10/2016 – if we extend this to June 2017 line rental will be £13.86. To consider extending contract 9 months, bearing in mind that prices have increased despite agreed contracted prices (BT say this is due to a national price increase). After much discussion on the dissatisfaction of BT pricing, it was proposed by Cllr M Zimmer and seconded by Cllr T Luker that the contract is extended for a further 9 months, all agreed.
- d) Budget 2014/15. To note report of expenditure against budget (backing papers). The budget report was noted – the play area maintenance budget looks large although this is offset by receipt of the S106 developer funds which have now been received for payment of Symn Lane new play equipment.
- e) To approve the accounts for payment (backing papers). The Clerk explained a few extra invoices which had arrived; it was proposed by Cllr K Collins and seconded by Cllr P Barton that these accounts are all paid apart from the Evergreen invoice until the website contract is discussed and decided due to email fees therein, all agreed.

#### **T.4759 Grants and Donations**

- a) To consider grant request for funding towards a safe pedestrian, access path to Skate Park from Wotton Community Sports Foundation. After much discussion of the significant contributions made over the years, but also the need for safe access for young people to the skatepark, it was agreed in principle that a contribution would be provided, however we need more detailed information nearer to the budget assessment time in October for the next FY grants.
- b) Letter of thanks from Air Ambulance for grant. Noted
- c) Letter of thanks from Insight Gloucestershire for grant. Noted

**T.4760 Land at Court Orchard** (sub-station and adjacent) - To note response from solicitor informing that the Land Registry will not register Town Council as owner of the land at Court Orchard; and to decide how to proceed. Council is astonished that we have maintained and occupied this land for over 12 years and have a Deed of Dedication to us from the original developer – Clerk is asked to ascertain from solicitor if he is aware of this occupation, without the owner's question, and thus our implied ownership.

**T.4761 Website Update** – To approve recommendation from the Website Working Group for the new Town Council website. The Group interviewed 4 candidate companies after quotations were obtained for the new website; after analyzing all providers on a like-for-like basis, it is felt that Front Room could provide the best value website to suit our needs and could demonstrate good evidence of a similar website with a local Town Council who had recently used them and were very satisfied. It was proposed by Cllr P Smith, seconded by Cllr R Claydon and agreed by all to proceed with this new provider.

**T.4762 Insurance** – To consider adequacy of Council and Trust insurance in time for renewal in July 2015. Although we are committed to a Zurich contract for another two years, a backing document assessed the adequacy of individual items & cover on our policies. It is requested that the Deputy Chain of office originally purchased for £500 is added, in addition to checking that all workshop items are covered. Other minor matters of cover were discussed and the Clerk is delegated to address these issues.

**T.4763 Chipping Green** – To consider putting up a 'No Dogs' sign on the Chipping Green following a report from Police of problems with dog faeces. A detailed discussion concerned dogs being allowed, but clear up signs wanted, or a sign stipulating no dogs at

all. After much debate, it was proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell and voted 6 in favour, 5 against, to erect a sign on the Chipping Green stating 'No Dogs'. The Clerk questioned how this would be policed; it is thought that persistent offenders would be reported to SDC dog wardens.

#### **T.4764 Councillor Training**

- a) Code of Conduct workshop - To consider attendance at Code of Conduct workshop from 3-5pm on 2/7/2015 at Ebley Mill cost of £50 for up to 3 people (deferred from May meeting). It was not thought necessary to attend this since the revised Code was recently adopted – if SDC are considering a new Code, then research is needed.
- b) To consider Councillor attendance at the following training seminars:
  - (i) Being a Better Councillor – Full day course at Highnam, cost of £95/person or £85/person if two or more councillors attend from the same council - on dates: 22nd June, 13th July, 27th October. The Clerk is asked to distribute details of evening Councillor training courses.
  - (ii) Chairmanship – Full day course 9th July at Quedgeley, cost of £95/person. No attendees.
  - (iii) Development of Chairmanship Skills – Two evenings, 14th October and 11th November at Churchdown, cost of £95/person. Cllrs P Smith & T Luker will attend this.
  - (iv) Introduction to Planning – Evening course at Stroud District Council offices on 30th July cost £15/person. Cllrs K Collins, L Farmer, T Luker, P Barton & N Pinnegar will attend this, proposed by Cllr M Zimmer, seconded by Cllr P Smith agreed by all.

**T.4765 CAB Consultation** – To consider response to a review concerning the role of elected councillors on the Board of Stroud District CAB (backing papers). After much discussion of the possible conflict of interest which may arise if a Cllr acts as a Trustee of CAB, it is considered that the current situation is sustainable and does not need to change, since the Town Council's internal rules and procedures ie via the Code of Conduct, would cover such a situation.

**T.4766 Clerk's Report** A detailed report provided by the Clerk. End of year accounts have now been audited. The CCTV is being upgraded next week for the three new cameras following Faculty permission. The Building Manager is now catching up on outstanding jobs following completion of Tolsey Clock repairs.

**T.4767 Correspondence** following was noted:

- a) To note letter of complaint regarding flowerbeds. Clerk to respond that all borders are moving to a system of shrubs/perennials/bulbs in addition to summer bedding and that a system of transition will take place.
- b) To note email concerning pest control for rats in the area of Holywell Farm. This was dealt with in conjunction with Glos CC Public Rights of Way team, who have advised that this is an adjacent landowner dispute and advised owner collaboration and signage.
- c) To note letter from Valuation Office regarding the application to amend the non-domestic rateable value for the Civic Centre. We still await dates for information needed. It is questioned why we must pay the higher rate before the case has been decided, when large business in the SDC area do not pay up front.
- d) To note application for road closure of Church Street, Long Street and High Street on 10th July 2016 for Giant Slide fundraiser for British School PTA. The Council questioned the provision for parking, and asked whether any trader consultation has taken place. Also a shorter length was suggested to allow crossing of street. A member of the public attended from the PTA to hear views and he was asked to attend the July Council meeting to discuss the proposal in more detail.

Brochures/Newsletters for information only: none

#### **T.4768 Reports from Councillors on meetings attended**

County Council – County Cllr Cordwell provided a written report in advance explaining delays in the County LED street lighting contract award, and requests submitted to the new local highways manager for road repairs. All local transport consultation even was also attended and County Cllr John Cordwell stressed the need to reopen Charfield Railway Station.

District Council – written report kindly provided by District Cllr K Tucker

Footpaths Committee -to meet shortly, GMTF – representative ill

Special Purposes Committee - to meet shortly

Allotments – to meet next week, Youth Liaison Group – not met, SOSYP – not met

Town Regeneration – the Community plan was discussed with a GRCC plan event tomorrow evening to provide further guidance on way forward. More public involvement is needed. Walking festival proposal was considered for next spring.

Sports Foundation - no report, Swimming Pool – no report

#### **T.4769 Town Affairs**

Cllr T Luker – asked about responsibilities for grass cutting on verges from Potters Pond up to Synwell– mixture of Glos CC, private landowners and small square of WTC grass opposite Church Walk, the latter of which is being done this week.

Cllr A Kendall – asked if we can consider providing cycle parking in town?

Cllr A Wilkinson – updated Members regarding Chamber of Trade events, curry night was a success with Mark Horton, the clay shoot barbeque will take place soon, leaflets are going well. Question asked regarding cleaning of War Memorial as slabs looking black and Memorial stone dirty. The Memorial itself would require a special (often expensive) cleaning process, however the slabs could be pressure washed.

*Cllr A Wilkinson left the meeting*

Cllr P Barton – complained that cars are constantly parking behind the bus stop at the War Memorial and making it difficult for pedestrians – advised to report to Police.

Cllr K Collins – asked if hedges / verges could be cut at road entrance Wotton Rd to KLB School as exit from junction now difficult to see and dangerous. Also road sign has been damaged for a while and needs rehangng. Clerk to report to Highways.

Cllr M Zimmer – questioned Dept of Transport criteria regarding a halt/stop sign at War Memorial. County Cllr John Cordwell to investigate further.

Cllr R Claydon – suggested a thank you note from Mayor/Council to Mr M Woolfrey for Tolsey Clock repairs. Also noted litter problem on top of Wotton Hill after visitors there.

*Cllr L Farmer left the meeting*

#### **T.4770 Town Trust Matters**

a) To note completion of legal procedures concerning the transfer of the Chipping Clubroom to the Town Trust. Noted. The account funds remaining are yet to be transferred as CCR former Trustees were awaiting final utility invoices.

b) To note update from meeting with representatives of the Heritage Centre and to discuss the way forward. The Mayor explained discussions recently whereby the Heritage Centre explained their financial problems looking forward 18 months, and their proposals for the Town Trust taking back the asset, and allowing the Heritage Centre use of the building without rent in order to ensure viability of the historical assets into the future. An informal presentation to Council will take place in July to expand on ideas, however there would be some cost implications for the Council/local taxpayer and these need to be ascertained before the autumn budget process commences.

*Meeting concluded at 9:55pm*

Signed ..... Date .....

Chairman & Town Mayor