

**DRAFT MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING,  
MONDAY 18<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2018 AT 7PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE**



**Present:** Cllrs P Smith (Chairman) T Luker, N Pinnegar, June Cordwell, R Claydon, John Cordwell, J Turner, P Barton, M Short, A Wilkinson

**In attendance:** Town Clerk Ms S Bailey, District Cllrs G Butcher, C Braun, 9 members of public

**T.5544 Apologies for Absence** Cllrs L Farmer, R Hale

**T.5545 Declarations of Interest or Dispensations** Cllrs John & June (as spouse) Cordwell dispensation relating to County Council matters, Cllr A Wilkinson (personal) relating to Screwfix payment, Cllr N Pinnegar & P Barton (personal) relating to RBL issue

**T.5546 To receive Police Report and welcome police attendance** PC Paul Mathews introduced himself as newly covering this area in addition to his wider remit towards Nailsworth. PCSO Hazel Walkley will also cover Wotton as new PCSO on return after injury. An incident report was circulated by email to Councillors and crime is generally very low for this area (lower than Dursley which suffered from a handful of youths responsible for 30% of crimes recently). Wotton's 82 incidents over last 6 weeks were varied but not serious, with a large amount of lead stolen from roofs and some domestic violence. The Police Point in the library is under review as a higher visible presence is required with a meeting room; fire station usage is being considered.

**T.5547 To welcome SDC Community Services Manager, Mr M Towson, who will talk about the proposed introduction of parking charges.** To consider if WTC wishes to respond to the parking consultation now or to defer until after the separate meeting arranged with Mr Towson on 28th June. Three officers for Stroud District Council introduced themselves and spoke of the background to the car parking charges consultation. SDC has now formally approved starting the commencement of consultation to legally amend the parking Draft Variation Order throughout the district. Various towns have cited car parking issues such as Nailsworth, Wotton, Dursley, and also Stratford Park and Minchinhampton – thus a district wide survey was considered the appropriate starting point. This was undertaken by ARUP and the report is available to view on SDC's website. Previous surveys, particularly for Wotton which was found to have specific problems, and which demonstrated problems via actual survey data, were found to still be viable, and thus SDC is attempting by consultation to provide a solution to free up more spaces for visitors and encourage more turnover of the existing spaces available. Proposals suggest 50p charge for first hour, 80p for 2 hours, £1.20 for 3 hours. Long stay sections would cost £2.50 all day. Potters Pond would be free after 3pm and no charge for disabled parking. Charge times would be 9am to 5pm. Purchase of season tickets would not necessarily guarantee a space. Feedback is requested from Wotton Town Council and residents before a report is submitted to SDC's committee in Autumn. Councillors made various comments such as although on street parking is still free, many cars would be forced onto the streets to look for cheaper parking thus clogging up busy streets more, eg Market St has 56 residents and only 8 spaces. More parking is needed rather than just a charging mechanism. SDC needs to look at innovative charging mechanisms used in some other UK towns, such as first two hours free at any point in one day. There is a worry that visitors/town shoppers will be tempted away to Yate, Thornbury or

Cribbs Causeway where parking is free, thus adversely affecting the remaining traders in the town. In addition to parking data surveys taken, SDC needs to analyse forecast output data for town's footfall if such proposals are implemented. In other words, how would success be measured if the objectives are not forecast and any goals not easily identifiable – would a half empty car park be seen as positive and a goal obtained? Would footfall data for Wotton's shops/trading community be a more accurate gauge of success if measured both before and after proposals? The Chipping Car Park is actually leased from the Town Trust to SDC and needs to be discussed separately and decided by Town Council, likewise the civic centre car park is Town Council's decision. The costs of maintenance of the Chipping Car Park by SDC are requested ahead to feed into the end of June meeting. Town Council requests that the final decision is made by a committee of councillors at SDC and not by officers, and also that this council meeting is not seen as a 'tick box' for SDC's consultation events - but a separate consultation meeting is held by SDC for the people of Wotton to give their views. It was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr A Wilkinson that a response from WTC on the car parking consultation is deferred until July's agenda after the meeting with SDC officers to discuss matters in more detail, agreed by all.

**T.5548 Public Forum** Four members of the public spoke about their concerns regarding introduction of parking charges: Dursley, Nailsworth and Stroud have large supermarkets which offer free parking when shopping there – Wotton has no such advantage. Other nearby shopping towns such as Yate, Thornbury and the Mall will benefit to the detriment of Wotton. Alternative forms of transport possibilities in the consultation report are not possible in Wotton. If charges are introduced, spaces will be visible and it deemed successful, but that will be because visitors have gone elsewhere again to the detriment of Wotton and counterproductive. Traders in Wotton and the Chamber of Trade are not in favour of car parking charge introduction. Other UK towns which have done this have seen parking on minor A roads around towns increase - in Wotton this is not possible due to hilly terrain, poor access, narrow roads, many double yellow lines and already clogged up streets. 65 cars would be pushed onto local residential streets daily looking for spaces. SDC's CEO Mr Hagg mentioned to the Chamber president a report which suggested that charge introduction had no positive effect on local business – sight of this report is requested.

**T.5549 To receive reports from County Councillor and District Councillor** County – County Cllr John Cordwell provided a written report and also highlighted the county minerals plan consultation ending on 13<sup>th</sup> July. Streetlighting in Old London Rd would be converted to LED, and the broken metal railing in Old Town will be replaced and is on order. The ICO requirement to publish data relating to the Javelin Park incinerator may be challenged at Appeal.

District – a comprehensive written report was supplied and Cllr Braun was available to answer any questions.

**T.5550 To approve the Minutes** of the council meeting of May 2018. It was proposed by Cllr J Turner and seconded by Cllr P Barton to approve the Minutes as presented, agreed all in favour.

**T.5551 Chairman's Announcements** – an event at Woodchester Mansion will shortly be attended by the Mayor.

### **T.5552          Accounts**

- a) To consider quote for Defibrillator for The Chipping at a cost of £2100 plus £126/annum maintenance costs thereafter. Following recent near usage and much publicity in the town about AED possibilities, the Lions have commenced fundraising for extra units. It is thus agreed to await the outcome of a meeting with the Lions regarding funds needed & raised and maintenance thereafter – deferred until July agenda.
- b) To note & ratify that two places booked for Level 2 Manual Handling Course (& certified certificate) on 4th July for Buildings Manager and Caretaker cost of £65.p.p. Proposed to approve by Cllr P Barton seconded Cllr J Turner agreed by all.
- c) To approve earmarking of surplus funds from 2017/18 budget. A spreadsheet was circulated with suggestions of earmarking possibilities. After much discussion of the need for extra funds to be earmarked to play equipment renewal (to be considered at the end of year budget process) it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar and agreed 10 in favour 1 abstention to approve the earmarked funds as suggested amongst the various headings.
- d) Budget 2018/19. Report of expenditure against budget noted as healthy.
- e) To approve the accounts for payment. After explanation of a few added payments, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed by all to approve these payments of £20,839 for Town Council and £1,332 net for Town Trust. It was noted that Wotton DIY no longer offers a discount to the Town Council and this will be investigated.

### **T.5553          Policies and Procedures**

- a) To approve revisions to Standing Orders. After being scrutinised by Finance & Special Purposes Committee, further recommendations were made. It was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell and seconded by Cllr M Short to approve this updated document, agreed all in favour.
- b) To approve Dispensation Request template. After its proposed introduction by Finance & Special Purposes Committee following a meeting with SDC's Monitoring Officer, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr M Short to approve this updated document, agreed all in favour.
- c) To note discussions with Monitoring Officer re Code of Conduct; and to authorise spending of up to £500 for Monitoring Officer advice regarding Code clarifications. Cllrs R Claydon, P Smith and the Clerk attended a meeting on 2nd May at SDC offices with the Monitoring Officer(MO) to discuss the recent complaints against some Wotton Town Councillors and to discuss Wotton's current Code. The MO has met again with the complainant to update them on the situation and we await her confirmation that the issue is not dropped but investigated. The MO suggested that the Wotton Code, which used to follow closely the SDC Code, was slightly different due to SDC changing its Code but not advising parishes of this. This may be leading to differences in interpretation, and although she appreciated that WTC has endeavoured to change its Code to make it clearer, she suggested some work is done by her to further improve its clarity and interpretation - with a cost to WTC of up to £500. Proposed by Cllr M Short, seconded by Cllr P Smith, to approve MO funded Code advice, agreed 10 in favour 1 abstention.

d) GDPR – it is noted that a working group is established (meeting 19th June) comprising Special Purposes Committee members to consider 14 policies/documents/forms to comply with the new regulations.

**T.5554 Cemetery Geophysical Survey** – to receive, discuss and interpret the results of the survey. This item will be deferred until July agenda to allow more input time and analysis of the data/maps provided.

**T.5555 SDC S106 Funding Allocation** – To consider allocation of £1,438, S106 monies from application S.16/0321/COU Workshop, Webb's Yard in view of funding already awarded to Synwell Playing Field new fitness equipment as follows:

Cost of equipment	£7500
S106 monies already awarded	£3650
Grant already paid from Town Council	£2000
Total	£5650 (= 75% of project's cost)

If WTC agree donation of £1438, adding to £5650 totals £7088, thus 95% of project would be funded by Council with very little local fundraising. Clerk asked to investigate SDC's conversations already with SPFC and their funds raised. SPFC Rep. also asked to clarify finances with the SPFC treasurer as their current cash holdings are unclear from the accounts forwarded to us.

**T.5556 Committee Membership and Representatives**

To agree membership/representative for the following:

- (i) Town Regeneration Partnership – Cllrs J Turner and C Young
- (ii) Swimming Pool Committee representative- Cllr C Young
- (iii) CAB representative – Cllr M Short if meeting times appropriate.

It was proposed by Cllr T Luker and seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar to propose the above Councillors as additions to committees/representatives, agreed by all.

**T.5557 War Memorial Wreaths** - To note email from secretary of Wotton RBL and consider its request for a Council policy regarding removal of wreaths from the War Memorial. After discussions regarding not being able to affix wreaths to the memorial itself due to its listing and that a wire is always needed to hold all of the Remembrance wreaths together, also the fact that the Council removes the faded/broken wreaths at the latest in Spring before summer bedding is put out, it was felt by Council that this procedure is adequate and that no further policy is needed to provide additional wreaths. The Memorial itself is very fitting as a permanent tribute to those fallen, and that the current practice should continue, proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded by Cllr C Young, agreed 9 in favour 2 abstentions.

**T.5558 Old Town Toilets** – to receive update regarding builder quotes (Cllr T Luker). Cllr T Luker is still compiling individual quotes for roof, plumbing and electrics. A parishioner & also Cllr Wilkinson have received advice/thoughts separately from builders on costings. Previous quotes obtained suggest around £80,000. It is requested to put on the next agenda an item to consider whether to appoint an architect to advise on replacement construction and costings, and to decide on the brief of such an appointment.

**T.5559 Tolsey Clock** – to receive maintenance report. The clock maintenance volunteer recently serviced the clock following its major overhaul and refurbishment 3 years ago. The gearbox and shafts were greased, insides swept



out, and LED lighting & clock face security checked over. A rubber closing flap was fitted over the hatch fitting. All went well with the next service due 2021. Mr Woolfrey was thanked for this work.

**T.5560 Stroud District Council's Statement of Principles Consultation** – to consider any responses to this consultation regarding the Gambling Act 2005. After reading the whole consultation, Cllr Short advised that this was a well constructed and thought out document and he was impressed with the care and diligence demonstrated in its duty; thus proposed by Cllr M Short seconded by Cllr June Cordwell to support the proposals in this consultation, agreed by all.

**T.5561 Stroud District Green Infrastructure, Sport & Recreation Study** – To consider additional responses to survey. A number of venue and activity additions were made to the draft presented – the finished response will be forwarded to SDC's survey compiler.

**T.5562 Good Deeds Section: Thanks to Volunteers** – to acknowledge recent volunteer work for the benefit of the town/community: Mrs L Clarke for the design, planting and construction of the garden inside Under the Edge Arts Centre; Mr A Burns for much volunteer work undertaken at New Rd allotment site.

**T.5563 Clerk's Report** written report provided and noted.

**T.5564 Correspondence** to note or request action:

- a) Noted letter of thanks from Arrive Alive for grant.
- b) Noted letter of complaint from allotment holder regarding matters at New Road allotments. A response was drafted by the Clerk and agreed by Council.
- c) Noted letter of complaint from trader ref: previous Code of Conduct complaints and unresolved meeting with SDC Monitoring Officer. Council awaits further contact from the Monitoring Officer at SDC regarding next stage.
- d) To consider letter from Sue Ryder Leckhampton Court Hospice regarding fundraising. This hospice is outside the area and thus Council does not wish to consider this for grant funding.

Brochures/Newsletters for information only: none

**T.5565 Reports from Councillors & meetings attended**

PROW & Amenities Committee not met

Finance & Special Purposes Committee met and the items are being considered on this agenda re: staffing and various policies.

Allotments Committee an allotment tenants meeting was held. Although fewer attendees, there was an informal atmosphere with chatting and sharing ideas.

Wotton Youth Partnership meets tomorrow

Town Regeneration Partnership not met

WC Sports Foundation meeting this evening

Heritage Centre – not met

NALC - Cllr Short wrote a brief report explaining attendance at an event in London which gave examples of local authorities joint working. Some positive aspects from cutting costs eg donating lawn mowers to local groups for community grass cutting.

Walking Festival – Cllr N Pinnegar gave written report on committee elections & plans for next year's festival and also explanation of the healthy accounts balance.

Beaumont le Roger – recent twinning event was very positive and there are two fundraising events to happen shortly.

Wotton Pool – bookings are up slightly, new solar panels working well which have raised water temperature by 4°. Lots of qualified lifeguards available due to university returnees. New steps & ramp being purchased to assist elderly/disabled /parent & child, etc into water. Sport England are being very helpful regarding tiling of the Pool project. The Pool's volunteer fundraiser is doing an excellent job.

Stroud Cluster Group – Cllr P Smith attended although unfortunately missed the police report. Horsely Tip is closed for 3 weeks due to improvements, but Thornbury as local alternative is not available to nearby Glos county residents due to excessive charge proposals imposed by S Glos Council.

Renishaw – Cllr P Smith attended an information event explaining that phase 4 of extensions would commence soon and that phase 5 would apply for planning permission at end of this year. They wish to have more local apprentice training facilities on site as they are having problems attracting skilled young people away from city centres. They also wish to see Charfield railway station re-open and are talking to Government about this possibility, since local transport problems could hinder future growth/expansion potential in this area.

**T.5566      Town Affairs - none**

*It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell to enter Closed Session under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to discussing staffing matters of a sensitive nature, agreed by all.*

**T.5567      Staffing Matters**

a) To approve Deputy Clerk 2 weeks compassionate leave. It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar to approve this leave, agreed by all.

b) To agree Buildings Manager resumption of retained fire-fighting duties during council work time. After much discussion regarding views on time used for fire duties, a proposal of reinstating the same system of working as previously was proposed by Cllr P Barton, seconded by Cllr M Short, and agreed 7 in favour, 3 against, 1 abstention.

c) To approve Town Clerk 4 weeks absence.

*The Town Clerk left the room during discussions, returning to Minute the decision.*

It was proposed by Cllr C Young and seconded by Cllr P Barton to approve two weeks leave and two weeks absence, agreed 8 in favour 3 against.

*It was proposed by Cllr T Luker and seconded by Cllr June Cordwell to exit Closed Session, agreed by all.*

**TOWN TRUST ITEMS**

1. To approve Minutes of Town Trust meeting held on 23rd November 2017. It was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell and seconded by Cllr P Barton to approve these Minutes agreed 9 in favour, 2 abstentions.
2. To approve compilation of Minutes of Town Trust matters considered at Town Council meetings for the period January 2018 to May 2018 inclusive. It was proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar and seconded by Cllr R Claydon to approve these Minutes agreed all in favour.

*This completed the business of the Town Council at 10.20pm*

Signed: .....Dated: .....