

**MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING, MONDAY 17<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 7PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE**



**Present:** Cllrs P Smith (Chairman), R Claydon, N Pinnegar, M Short, R Hale June Cordwell, J Turner, P Barton, A Wilkinson, L Farmer

**In attendance:** Clerk Ms S Bailey, District Cllr K Tucker, & 2 members of public

**T.5607 Apologies for Absence** – Cllrs John Cordwell and T Luker; accepted.

**T.5608 Declarations of Interest or Dispensations** – Cllr A Wilkinson (personal) Screwfix payment

**T.5609 To receive Police Report** – no report

**T.5610 Public Forum** – no comments

**T.5611 To receive reports from County Councillor and District Councillor**

County – County Cllr John Cordwell provided a written report.

District – District Cllr K Tucker answered questions on the written report. After a Bearlands site meeting with SDC officers, Cllr Tucker is chasing unsatisfactory answers regarding lack of planning permission needed for the ugly bin receptacles, highways issues and impeding traffic visibility, possibility of relocating them due to poor image and the first thing to greet visitors to Wotton, and the unnecessary cutting down of a healthy tree. They have cost £50,000 of SDC funds – indicating a misuse of resources when significant budget cuts and jobs are being lost elsewhere within SDC. Neighbours are complaining about the increased noise levels from the new refurbished play area and a shrub screen will be planted. Further works will also be needed due to inaccurate positioning of play items due to land ownership issues. It was noted that SDC has not bothered to respond to/thank WTC after the relevant Govt Minister was contacted by WTC regarding the loss of revenue support grant and a positive response received by us which we then passed to SDC. SDC will now no longer be required to pay back over £500,000 to central Govt.

**T.5612 To approve the Minutes** of the council meeting of August 2018. It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and seconded by Cllr R Claydon to approve the Minutes as presented, agreed 8 in favour, 2 abstentions.

**T.5613 Chairman's Announcements** – Cllr P Smith asked that Cllr R Hale include all members in his plans for a working group to consider a long term positive strategy for Wotton when he considers dates for his meeting. Pennwood Lodge have invited all councillors to attend their harvest festival on afternoon of 5<sup>th</sup> October – their new manager is keen to encourage community involvement.

**T.5614 Accounts**

a) To approve quote for clearance works to stream banks at Dyers Brook and small tree works as recommended in this year's tree survey. The whole tree survey itself and the majority of quotes for the works contained therein will be considered at the October meeting. However this tree group formed part of the stream bank works and clearance section at Dyers Brook. It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr R Hale and agreed by all to approve the quote of £1000 by DR Howse.

b) To consider quotes for waste bin service at the workshop. After discussing the requirement for waste collection at the workshop, which would improve working environment in terms of safety, and eliminate the need for a large skip every few years,

it was proposed by Cllr P Barton, seconded by Cllr June Cordwell, and agreed 9 in favour 1 abstention, to agree to the Suez £351 p.a 660L fortnightly bin collection.

c) To review analysis of results following the cemetery geophysical survey and consider quote for digging test pits. A detailed & coloured plan was prepared for Council outlining the Geophys calculated areas for depth showing an uncertain anomalous ringed area and a shallow rock strata swathe where even single depth burials may be impossible. It was proposed by Cllr Jon Turner and seconded by Cllr M Short and agreed 9 in favour 1 abstention, to approve the hire of the Geophys overseeing/report for the day and a grave/digger operator for a total of £750 in order to more accurately know what is in the anomalous area and how deep the rock strata actually is below the surface via trial pit digging. The uncertainty of these areas has large implications for the cemetery as this area takes up almost half of the remaining cemetery space. Cllrs R Claydon and P Smith wish to be present at the digging operation.

d) To approve quotation for curtain repairs at the Town Hall. The downstairs front curtain linings at all windows are now shredding with age and daylight exposure. It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr L Farmer to approve the Victoria Fabrics quote of £347 for relining, in addition to dry cleaning of the curtains themselves being carried out, for which the Clerk is given an upper budget of £300.

e) To approve Clerk's attendance at event in Taunton on 4/12/2018: "Managing Capability: Health and Performance Issues" at a cost of £65 plus mileage. Proposed to approve by Cllr L Farmer, seconded Cllr M Short, agreed by all.

f) Noted: 6% increase in the cost of recycling service equating to approx. £6 extra p.a.

g) Budget 2018/19. Report of expenditure against budget noted as healthy.

h) To approve the accounts for payment. The Clerk highlighted the additional invoices received. It was proposed to approve payments of £26,425 net for Town Council and £1,828 net for Town Trust, by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr R Hale, agreed 9 in favour, 1 abstention.

**T.5615 External Audit** – To note completion of external audit with no issues raised, and successful management of all accounts/submissions by the office administration.

**T.5616 Casual Vacancy** – SDC has advised us that an election has been called which will take place on 1<sup>st</sup> November. Nominations close 5<sup>th</sup> October.

**T.5617 Defibrillators** –The Lions and WDAG have decided to proceed with the purchase of defibrillators for the town independently of Wotton Town Council, despite town council assistance being offered. It is positive to note that Wotton will be covered by 13 defibrillators installed by the end of November, with many targeted training sessions being offered.

**T.5618 Old Town Toilets** – An update was provided on Healthmatic meeting for new toilets provision; presentation of possible options to councillors will be on 1/10/18.

**T.5619 Market Town Centres Initiative Fund** – Preliminary allocations of funding across district were received from SDC. Despite meeting the officers and providing information it is frustrating and concerning to note that Wotton has been allocated much less than other towns in the district and that the amount requested has not been met. Response has been made to SDC that the Old Town Toilet refurbishment will not go ahead without this matched funding. District Cllr K Tucker will also make enquiries.

**T.5620 Wotton Pool** – To appoint a representative following the resignation of former Cllr (C Young). It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and seconded by Cllr J Turner to appoint Cllr R Hale to position of Wotton Pool representative, agreed by all. Cllr Hale has also resigned as WCSF representative and this will be taken up by Cllr M Short – to be confirmed at October's Council meeting.

**T.5621 GMTF State of the Locality Report** – To consider supporting and participating in the initiative. A document was circulated which requests support from Gloucestershire parishes to investigate the state of their market towns and identify/ explore in more detail issues facing each and investigate options for tackling them. It was proposed by Cllr J Turner and seconded by Cllr P Barton to support the initiative, and also to suggest the additional items of: footfall information for town centres, transportation to include car parking, town's toilet facilities, and reform of business rates for commercial ventures in the town who are losing out to online competitors for consideration to the existing topics. Agreed by all.

**T.5622 Wotton as an Arts and Crafts Destination Town** – A meeting to discuss this idea will be held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 7.30pm at Under the Edge Arts. It is proposed by Cllr J Turner and seconded by Cllr R Hale that Cllrs June Cordwell, R Hale, A Wilkinson, P Barton and L Farmer attend to represent the Town Council.

**T.5623 Annual Parish Assembly** – To consider how to infuse life into this annual meeting. Cllr J Turner suggested improvements such as a topical speaker, a regular awards ceremony, presentation of grant cheques, etc to make the meeting more lively and interesting rather than a litany of committee and routine business reports. Discussions followed with various Councillor suggestions for improvement. This issue and various ideas will feed into Cllr Hale's working group discussions of a Forward Plan for the Town and improving the Town Council's image overall.

**T.5624 Good Deeds Section:** Thanks to Volunteers – to acknowledge recent volunteer work for the benefit of the town/community. Suggestions are: the Lions and the Defibrillator Awareness Group for successful recent fund raising for defibrillator installation around Wotton; the Buildings Manager and Caretaker for floor strengthening/ refurbishment work in the Civic Centre saving the Council over £2000, and also for various allotment site improvements.

**T.5625 Clerk's Report** written report provided and noted.

**T.5626 Correspondence** to note or request action:

- a) Noted email of thanks from Wotton in Bloom for card and letter of appreciation.
- b) Noted email from Wotton in Bloom detailing donation to Council and outlining future plans.
- c) Noted email requesting a referendum regarding the future running of the proposed Symn Lane car park. Response will be made outlining previous council decision.
- d) Noted letter objecting to the Town Council taking on the running of the proposed Symn Lane car park. Response will be made outlining previous council decision.

Brochures/Newsletters for information only: Clerks & Councils Direct September 2018

**T.5627 Reports from Councillors & meetings attended**

PROW – not met

SPECIAL PURPOSES – not met

ALLOTMENTS – postponed  
WOTTON YOUTH PARTNERSHIP – not met  
TOWN REGENERATION – not met  
WCSF – no report.  
HERITAGE CENTRE – Cllr June Cordwell provided a written report.  
WOTTON POOL – no report  
WOTTON in BLOOM – an awards ceremony will be held this week in Burton on Trent and Wotton in Bloom have been asked to attend.

**T.5628 Town Affairs**

Cllr A Wilkinson – complained about factual inaccuracies and misleading information given in an interview by County Cllr John Cordwell to the Wotton Times. Cllr Wilkinson asked that town councillors all consider resigning en masse in order that one town election is held, rather than many costly elections, each time a vacancy arises.

Cllr N Pinnegar – complained of bramble growth on the banks of Synwell Lane and Wortley Rd – he is asked to email the Administrator with details.

Cllr M Short – requested an agenda item for plastics usage/recycling. Details of this item are requested by the office at least a week before the next meeting.

*Cllr A Wilkinson left the meeting 8:25pm*

*It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and seconded by Cllr J Turner and agreed by all that the Following item will be dealt with in Closed Session under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to legal matters of a contractual nature.*

**T.5629 Knapp Road Allotments**

a) To consider legal advice and costs. Advice was circulated to Councillors and explained in detail. It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and seconded by Cllr June Cordwell and agreed by all to agree to suggestions contained therein regarding the Land Registry. Furthermore it was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and seconded by Cllr R Hale that the quote of £2500 is approved for preliminary legal works ahead of site improvements, agreed 6 in favour 3 against.

b) To consider physical works needed and ideas for improvements. A document is being prepared and quotes sourced for general site improvements which will be brought back to October's meeting.

*This completed the business of the Town Council at 8.50pm*

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