



**MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD ON MONDAY 18<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2016 AT 7:00PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE**

**Present:** Cllrs P Smith (Mayor), T Luker, P Barton, N Clement, N Pinnegar, R Claydon, A Kendall, C Young, A Wilkinson (from 7:35), June Cordwell, L Farmer  
**In Attendance:** Town Clerk Ms S Bailey, 8 members of the public

**T.4984            Apologies for Absence** – accepted from Cllrs John Cordwell & K Collins  
**T.4985            Declarations of Interest** none

**T.4986            St Mary's Church** -To receive presentation by Geoff Hill on the re-ordering. Mr Hill explained the background of the ageing and reducing number of congregation, a lack of young families, and reducing spare time amongst our modern lifestyles. The church is failing to serve the community, it is lacking in volunteers and income is reducing with only donations to support its fabric. New ways are needed to approach this, for example introduction of messy church on Saturday mornings. A problem is the lack of versatile, usable space. Fixed pews were suitable 100 years ago but more flexibility to attract the public now is needed, for example to erect tables. The congregation was consulted two years ago and an architect found who was sympathetic to ecclesiastical buildings. Plans were exhibited 18 months ago and the Parochial Church Council approved the plans. Following public consultation, the plans have changed a little and a draft leaflet shows the new proposals. The exterior will remain unchanged. Some pews inside will be removed, mostly at the extremities of the building, and stackable chairs will substitute. The altar will move a little more towards the congregation to be more inclusive. Storage space, two toilets and a new servery are still planned. No balcony, no changes to tombs, and no underfloor heating is included as too costly, improving draught exclusion will be priority. Heating costs £4800p.a. Fundraising target is £250,000 with £30,000 achieved so far. After various question from Councillors and opinions offered, Mr Hill and Revd Axford were thanked for the explanations and Councillors advised to contact them for further information or a viewing. The Council requested it be informed when a Faculty application is made.

*Cllr A Wilkinson entered the meeting*

**T.4987            Public Forum** Mr George & Mr Buist attended on behalf of Wotton Pool and handed out financial & annual reports to the end of October 2015, accompanied by details requesting a £6000 grant as part of the Pool SLA Agreement. Although public attendance swims were down by 20% this was compensated by more school swims. Prices will remain the same this year – it is the Town Council £28,000 grant which keeps the pool afloat rather than entrance fees. Lifeguards are paid £7 per hour and are all teenagers. The benefits of solar water heating were discussed in general terms. The breakdown of £6000 grant request arises mostly from £1293 heater element repairs, £1026 structural survey to aid changing room decisions/plans, £2000 replacement of decaying structural members & external cladding, and £1500 replacement drains. Grant applications would need to be made for the changing room refurbishment plans.

**T.4988            Minutes of the Meeting** Proposed by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr T Luker that the Minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2016 be approved as a correct record, agreed 10 in favour, 1 abstention.

**T.4989            Chairman's Announcements** – none

#### **T.4990       Accounts**

- a) Recycling sacks – current supply of sacks from Smith’s running out (cost £1.94 sack several years ago, plus annual £40 Duty of Care fee). To approve purchase of sacks from SITA (our new waste collection contractor) at a cost of £1.75/sack (minimum order 50, so initial cost £87.50 but will last 2-3 years – Duty of Care fee included in sack price). We have changed contractor and this will also save money, proposed to approve by Cllr L Farmer, seconded Cllr P Barton and agreed by all.
- b) To approve honorarium of £400 to Mr Woolfrey for maintenance of the Tolsey clock, proposed to approve by Cllr R Claydon, seconded Cllr N Pinnegar and agreed by all
- c) To approve honorarium from Town Trust of £100 for Town Crier, proposed to approve by Cllr June Cordwell, seconded Cllr P Barton and agreed by all
- d) To approve upgrade to minimum 2 year contract for Youth Centre Superfast broadband at a total additional cost of £488 (although minus £180 PCC grant = £308 for this contract period). Although this was approved last month, BT has said that a new contract needs to be taken out. A motion to upgrade now rather than wait until more information is forthcoming from the youths, on what exactly the broadband is used for, was not carried. It was proposed by Cllr P Smith, seconded by Cllr R Claydon and agreed 7 in favour, 4 against, to ask for more details on youth usage regarding broadband, and then consider if upgrade is useful.
- e) To receive verbal councillor audit report on final quarter/full year internal audit. Cllr N Pinnegar and Cllr C Young undertook the audits and found nothing out of order. The Deputy Clerk was thanked for being so helpful.
- f) Budget 2015/16. To note report of expenditure against budget and end of year analysis. Healthy position was noted, the year was slightly underspent and also slightly more income should lead to some extra reserves – final year accounts are being prepared now.
- g) To approve the accounts for payment. A couple of late invoices were noted. It was proposed also by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr N Clement that due to the lateness of information the £6000 payment request from the pool is considered at the next Council meeting in order that Council has an opportunity to analyse the information presented this evening, agreed 9 in favour, 1 abstention, 1 against. It was proposed to approve the payments by Cllr R Claydon, seconded Cllr N Pinnegar and agreed by all

**T.4991       Grants and Donations** – To approve payment of grants agreed at Budget meeting, as follows: it was proposed to approve payments a) to e) by Cllr A Kendall, seconded Cllr P Barton, and agreed by all

- a) Victim Support - £30
- b) Gloucestershire Chest Fund - £75
- c) Cobalt - £50
- d) CAB – costs in kind for telephone/room hire/use of photocopier.
- e) County Air Ambulance - £150
- f) Synwell Playing Fields - £2700. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon that the new Playing Fields Committee are requested to attend the May Council meeting to update the Council on their plans, and provide the year’s accounts, whereupon the grant can be considered, seconded by Cllr June Cordwell, and agreed 9 in favour, 2 against.

**T.4992       Marchesi Walk** – to consider what improvements the Council wishes to see, with reference to its inclusion on the S106 funding list to upgrade the path, so that details can be prepared and costings sourced. Discussions concerned how much the path actually needs to be upgraded to be wheelchair friendly – Cllrs L Farmer and P Smith agreed to test the path with a widened pushchair and report back to the May meeting regarding works needed.

**T.4993 Memorials in Garden of Remembrance** – To consider whether to permit memorial tablets, which display photographs of the people interred in the Garden of Remembrance. A slab has been inserted into the Garden without permission, and they wish now to apply for permission, the error having been pointed out. Another application for a photo slab is ready to follow this one. After much discussion regarding the aesthetics of photographs in cemeteries, and a failed motion to not allow any photographs on memorial stones, it was proposed by Cllr P Smith and seconded by Cllr R Claydon that the wording of the current burial regulations is re-considered on the May agenda to assess whether monochrome etched photographs should be allowed on stones in the Garden of Remembrance and/or headstones, voted 9 in favour 2 against.

**T.4994 Community Plan** – Noted that the Wotton-under-Edge 2016 Community Plan now has 500 copies printed and available for distribution at various community points

**T.4995 Traffic Regulation Orders** – to discuss list of proposed areas and agree which should be pursued. A detailed document with 14 proposed areas was sent to the Gloucestershire Highways Manager for comments, and those comments were discussed and analysed in detail for each proposal. It was agreed to pursue the following 5 areas and await the last four for developments:

- 1) *Road outside Potters Pond new development = double yellow lines at the entrance to the estate, many problems over past 2 years with the new housing development which has insufficient parking and is leading to parking outside on roads and pavements, and also reducing visibility on blind bend on hill to overtake.*
  - 2) *Gloucester St just above the Civic Centre = double yellow lines. Chicane system of parking on both sides at intervals. This is a bus route and buses have problems bending around the cars. There are also problems with parking on pavement outside the civic centre reducing visibility; possibly bollards needed here.*
  - 3) *Locombe Place = double yellow lines at junction. Cars cannot exit safely to see, also parking on pavements here too, so dangerous for pedestrians.*
  - 4) *Wortley Rd with School Rd = double yellow lines, between the bridge and Ludgate Hill; this is particularly difficult to navigate with increased parking now on both sides.*
  - 5) *Dryleaze/Westfields from Haw St – increased parked cars make turning into and out of road difficult – extending double yellow lines may be difficult, but refreshing the disabled bay lines may help the issue at the junction.*
- *Outside Culverhay surgery – met on site to discuss this - Highways Manager to obtain costings for possibility of constructing a build out at a suitable location.*
  - *Outside fire station – if a new housing development is proposed behind the fire station, concerns may be raised as part of the planning process.*
  - *War Memorial - stop sign needed and more solid lines as many cars do not stop. The level of visibility required for a stop sign is dictated by the speed of the traffic which at 19mph at this junction must be no less than 20m. The visibility at this junction is at least 30m and therefore does not meet the criteria for a stop sign. The Highways Manager is asked to make alternative suggestions.*
  - *Long St – defined parking bays may restrict car-parking ability rather than improve it. Therefore Glos Highways are asked to improve disabled white lines and signage.*

**T.4996 Stroud Youth Grant Funding Programme 2016/17** – To discuss potential youth projects for which this grant funding could be used, bearing in mind any YLG applications. YLG will not be making any application and it is requested that YCS make an application on our behalf for a mental health project/well-being funding /counselling sessions as this is an area which has been highlighted as ‘in need’ by the youth worker.

**T.4997 Christmas Event** – To receive update on plans for the event from the Chamber of Trade. Cllr Wilkinson explained that Chamber members have different ideas about the Christmas event due to the proposal of an ice rink being expensive to underwrite, and that the Committee awaits re-confirmation from the individual member if she will indeed continue to organise this event. If not, then the Chamber has stated that it will continue to organise a Christmas event.

**T.4998 Elections** – to note 12 town councillor vacancies filled uncontested and to agree to co-opt for the one Wotton South Ward vacancy at the June Town Council meeting. It was proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr L Farmer to advertise and co-opt at the June Council meeting, agreed by all.

**T.4999 Recreational Trust** – to approve new Constitution. Cllr Claydon explained the recent Trust meetings and changes to the draft constitutions and the appendix document. This document is a significant improvement on the previous documents in place and Mr Walshe has worked hard to bring order to all of the historical documentation held. The Town Council also is also protected and still keeps voting control with 5 of the 9 Trust positions. Also, due to the cinema becoming a commercial entity, funds of £20,000 are being transferred back and will be distributed to needed groups according to an application process. Apart from one alteration (that Cllr June Cordwell is no longer the treasurer of YLG in the Appendix), it was proposed by Cllr A Kendall and seconded by Cllr L Farmer and agreed by all to approve the new Constitution.

**T.5000 Old Town Toilets** - To review data survey of users from a recent two day count of Old Town toilets and consider quotes for their cleaning when current contract finishes at the end of June. Councillors Barton, Claydon, Tucker, Smith & Young were thanked for their time in doing this. Following the survey a document compiled the figures showing that on average there are about 20 visits a day (with some of these being the cleaners themselves, Amey workers, and various bus drivers) which produce a cost per visit of £1 to the Wotton taxpayer for £7200 p.a. maintenance of the facility. After much discussion it was agreed that more analysis is needed as to which option to pursue regarding the toilets' future: 1) close them, 2) refurbish the existing fabric and its costs 3) knock down and rebuild a modern single-use toilet using a loan – PWLB loan of £75,000 repayments are £4,800 a year. Cllr P Smith will pursue the costing ideas with the Open Spaces Manager at SDC.

Veolia will no longer manage the toilet-cleaning contract after end of June, and prices have been obtained to add it to our existing cleaning service contract with Mr Connor, employing a local person at a slightly cheaper rate. It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and seconded by Cllr A Wilkinson and agreed by all that Mr Connor is appointed from 1<sup>st</sup> July to manage the Old Town Toilet cleaning contract, also providing a deep clean prior as explained in the report, and that improved toilet roll holders and soap dispensers will be also purchased as in the report.

**T.5001 Good Deeds Section; 'Thanks to Volunteers'** – to acknowledge recent volunteer work for the benefit of the town/community. Cards to be sent to Mr Staszek for various public spirited wall and footpath repairs around town for many years, and to Mrs A Watts for cleaning the bus shelter in Mount Pleasant.

**T.5002 Clerk's Report** - a full report covering March/April activities was circulated and noted. Also to note that an anonymous donation is promised to the Youth Centre/CCR for a specific project (signage, computers upgrade, blinds all needed?). The damp at the town hall columns was discussed and a consultant will be asked to provide guidance

on repair. Lastly, the Cotswold Conservation Board has today just agreed a grant of £2500 for further refurbishment works of the Rope Walk Open Spaces Project – bringing the total amount the Clerk has raised via grants in 3 months to £6,300 for this project.

#### **T.5003 Correspondence**

- a) Noted- receipt of Crime Commissioner funding of £4000 towards equipment/sessions for Youth/Senior Citizens interactive project. Friday sessions from April to July have just been awarded to YCS for continuation. Sessions from September onwards with a provider will be discussed on May's agenda.
- b) Noted letters of thanks to Mayor and Town Clerk from KLB School for attending the farewell reception for the Japanese visitors.
- c) Noted various complaint emails received concerning Gloucestershire County Council's proposed installation of a gate to prevent unauthorised parking in the Library car park. It is understood that County wishes to prevent unauthorised use of library parking so that library users have priority, however the underhanded way it was communicated (via parishioner grapevine) is a direct contradiction to the Parish Charter and the Clerk is asked to write a letter of complaint.
- d) A letter regarding the proposed car park and housing development on land at Symn Lane proposes that the housing element of the development should be removed and the car park paid for by increasing the Precept. Clerk to respond to the parishioner that such a Precept rise would be unacceptably high to the Wotton taxpayer and that the cost is out of reach for this small town council.
- e) Noted that the Round Table will light a beacon for the Queen's 90th birthday celebrations and the Mayor will light the beacon.
- f) SLCC Local Councils Markets Seminar – free, but in Ludlow, Weds 29 June 10 to 13.30- no attendance.
- g) Noted car park signage complaint by parishioner and consider if any action should be taken – Buildings Manager will look at cutting back any foliage covering car park signs in the town.
- h) Dementia awareness email thanking us for including this as an initiative on Community Plan and to consider what action to be taken to progress the issue. Mrs C Sweet is to be asked to attend June Council meeting and advise us how we could proceed with this issue.

Brochures/Newsletters for information only: none

#### **T.5004 Reports from Councillors & meetings attended**

County Council – County Cllr unwell; no report.

District Council – District Cllr K Tucker provided an in-depth report highlighting forthcoming elections, garden waste collection services, Ubico services transfer, Glos devolution bid, Dryleaze accommodation part disposal, and confirmation that SDC will sell Fountain Crescent land at the end of the year in all likelihood to a developer rather than for affordable housing as previously planned.

Footpaths Committee – a few people have come forward as volunteers to organise a walking festival but more are needed, and roles need to be identified. A 5<sup>th</sup> May meeting at Civic Centre requests more volunteers. Suggestions for improvement were given to the allotment committee regarding the sloping entrance to the site at New Rd.

Special Purposes Committee – none

Allotments Committee – Cllr P Barton and the Administrator started New Rd allotment inspections this morning.

Youth Liaison Group – meeting tomorrow

Town Regeneration Partnership – not met

Sports Foundation – Cllr June Cordwell highlighted that the skatepark path is now £1810 short of £95,000, a skatepark safety inspection showed a need for more seating, more brooms, and bins on site. Path tenders are being prepared. Hedges being cut back. BMX track is being marked out, with a separate group pushing this project ahead. The sensory garden needs landscaping and raised beds. The new trees are all looking good. Clubhouse discussions were held on whether a container could be suitable if clad/ disguised appropriately.

Recreational Trust – discussed under new Constitution as above.

**T.5005 Town Affairs**

Clr A Wilkinson explained that the visit Wotton sign planning application on the War Memorial corner was likely to be refused, and if it could not be ‘called-in’ by a district councillor then an appeal is being considered.

*The Following items are dealt with in Closed Session under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to contracts/tendering/legal issues of a sensitive nature.*

*It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar and agreed by enter closed Council session.*

**T.5006 Youth Summer Activities** – to approve quotation of £2400 for middle 4 holiday weeks comprising 3 fixed Thursday sessions, 3 project sessions and 3 trip based activity sessions. After much discussion of the current contract with YCS as the service provider, and provision of youth / earmarked reserves budgetary data by the Clerk, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr A Kendall, that this summer activity proposal is approved however that close monitoring of youth expenditure is maintained from here, agreed by all.

*It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and seconded by Cllr R Claydon and agreed by all to re-enter Council session.*

*This completed the business of the Town Council at 10.15pm*

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

Chairman of Wotton-under-Edge Town Council