

**DRAFT MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY**  
**Held on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018, at 7pm in the Civic Centre**



**Present:** Cllrs, P Smith (Mayor), R Claydon (Deputy Mayor), P Barton, John Cordwell, June Cordwell, L Farmer, C Young, T Luker, M Short, J Turner, N Pinnegar, R Hale.

**In attendance:** Town Clerk Ms S Bailey & Administrator Mrs D Hyam Members of the Public 4

1) **Welcome and to receive apologies** for absence from Councillors. No apologies received.

2) **Adoption of Previous Minutes** of the Annual Parish Assembly of 12<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and any matters arising from those minutes. It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and seconded by Cllr R Hale to approve the Minutes as presented, all in favour.

3) **Brief Report from the Mayor** Cllr Paul Smith

The Mayor thanked the Town Clerk and staff for their hard work during a very difficult time due to reduced resources caused by long term sickness plus the departure of the Caretaker. He added that we now have a new Caretaker who has helped tackle the heavy workload.

He thanked Councillors for their support and wished to thank the outgoing Councillors Andra Proctor, Norman Clement and Alastair Kendall for their service and welcomed new Councillors Jonathan Turner, Richard Hale and Mike Short.

It has been a busy year with the Town Council making improvements and supporting good causes in the town such as;

- Improvements to the entrance and new water supply at New Road Allotments.
- The Fleur de lys on the Chipping Hall roof was replaced as the existing one was damaged.
- The Town Council continues to give financial support to Wotton Pool. The Pool has been offered a grant of £45,000 from Sport England, for replacing tiles to the pool and to refurbish the changing rooms and office. For this to go ahead, the lease and Service Level Agreement with the Wotton Swimming Pool Ltd are being modified to meet the grant requirements of Sport England.
- The Youth Work carried out at the Youth Centre is run by two youth work providers via a contract. This contract is due to finish this summer, and a small working party of Councillors has been drawing up Tender Documents to allow the Town Council to select a youth work provider for the next three years. The contract will be let by the summer.
- The Town Council continues to support Wotton in Bloom with additional funding this year to support the group's entry into Britain in Bloom for the first time.

4) **Brief Reports from Town Council Committee Chairs.**

**Planning** (Cllr C Young)

The report in the booklet outlined the number of applications received and of those approximately 50% were supported. It was stressed that 93% of the applications were permitted by Stroud District Council as Wotton Town Council can only give their recommendations and the final decision is taken by SDC. The following points were highlighted:

- The application for the development of the land behind the fire station has been resubmitted, and is now waiting for SDC decision.
- Dryleaze Court is now up for sale.
- The application at Fountain Crescent has been permitted.
- No progress seems to be made at the Full Moon development.
- The National Planning Policy Framework is out for consultation and is open until May.

### **Footpaths** (Cllr R Claydon)

The report in the booklet detailed four new members to the committee. Cllr Claydon thanked the outgoing members for their efforts. It also included the following points:

- The review of the Parish's public rights of way started in 2016 has been completed. Any findings will be reported to Gloucestershire County Council.
- Footways have continued to be surveyed following work carried out by Virgin Media and results are being analysed.
- Wotton was selected by the Cotswold Conservation Board to be part of their "Cotswold Gateway Project". If successful the town will be given gateway markers and noticeboards showing circular walks and cycling routes.
- The Committee oversees the town's Holywell Leaze amenity area and it is hoped that the Cotswold Wardens will make repairs to the old mill wall and install a stone circle seating area with financial support from the Town Council.
- It was noted that the second Wotton Walking Festival will take place from 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

### **Allotments** (Cllr P Barton)

The report included the following points;

- There are some vacant plots at Knapp Road and New Road.
- A new Holding Deposit of £50 has been introduced for new tenants.
- The first Publication of the "Allotment News" produced by the Town Council and was well received by tenants.
- The Memory Group have taken on plot 15 at New Road.
- Improvements have been made at Knapp Road clearing two plots and the area inside the main gate. A skip was used to remove rubbish, fly tipping and items from New Road.
- Around £8000 has been spent at New Road to improve the main entrance, new gates, new water supply and a new noticeboard.
- Plots have been strimmed and covered at both sites using Town Council, resources saving nearly £700.

### **Regeneration** (Cllr A Wilkinson)

No report available and Cllr A Wilkinson was not present at the meeting.

### **Wotton Youth Partnership** (Cllr June Cordwell)

The report gave some background on the formation of the Wotton Youth Partnership (previously known as the Youth Liaison Group). It supports a wide range of activities as follows:

- With a grant from SDC the Heritage Project it is helping KLB Students to film memories and views of older people in the town.
- The partnership has given financial support towards, the training of young youth leaders, the WCSF for a shelter and the BMX tracks, Bearlands Play Area, and a graffiti workshop at Under the Edge Arts
- Grants have been obtained for Mental Health and Wellbeing to create a one-to-one space at the Youth Centre.
- Future plans are to buy football shirts for Wotton Rovers Juniors.

**Wotton Library.** No attendee, however a written report provided in the booklet.

**Wotton in Bloom.** No attendee, however a written report provided in the booklet.

**Wotton Pool.** No attendee, however a written report provided in the booklet.

## **Wotton Community Sports Foundation**

A written report was provided and the highlights of the year were as follows;

- Party in the Park was very successful and will now be an annual event.
- Sports usage of the park continues to grow with hockey in particular.
- The regular parkrun proves to be popular.
- The Safe Access Path was installed.
- The construction of the BMX and pump track is planned during the summer.
- Plans are currently being finalised for The Sensory Garden.

Future plans include:

- Improvements to parking with funding support from Barnwood Trust.
- To develop plans for clubhouse facilities.
- To look at the possibility of a Mens Shed using the barns onsite.

**Synwell Playing Field.** No attendee, however a written report provided in the booklet.

## **Heritage Centre**

The Heritage Centre thanked the Town Council for their ongoing support, which is planned to continue until 2021. In addition to the report the following points were noted:

- The centre is trying to attract younger people to get involved and volunteer.
- Visitor numbers were down last year but it is hoped that this will improve with walkers and other tourists making full use of the Tourist Information Point.
- Former residents are attracted to the Centre for information.
- Recording of 6,000 artefacts on the data base has been completed with about the same amount still to go.
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**Wotton-under-Edge & District Community Recreational Trust.** No attendee however a written report provided in the booklet.

## **County Council Matters** (Cllr John Cordwell)

Cllr John Cordwell explained that he had served on the County Council for 40 years and is lead member for a number of committees.

The following points were noted from the report:

- The Council continues to absorb the reduction in Government Revenue Support and the council tax in total increased by 4.49%.
- A request has been made to have an extra officer to tackle the large backlog of requests for definitive map modification orders.
- Tarmac have now been contracted to deliver road surfacing work.
- An Ofsted inspection carried out last spring found children's services inadequate. The Cabinet agreed an Improvement Plan on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2017.
- A total of 23K of the 30K Highways Local funding allocation was spent in Wotton-under-Edge.
- Consultation on Traffic Regulation Orders has now ended.

## **District Council Matters** (District Cllr Catherine Braun)

Apologies were given for not submitting a written report but Cllr C Braun reported the following points:

- The waste and recycling program is working well and there has been an increase in residents recycling waste.

- The Neighbourhood Wardens continue to deal with issues ranging from litter to anti-social behaviour.
- Plans for the housing development at Fountain Crescent supported by SDC have been passed and are going ahead.
- The former sheltered housing site at Dryleaze Court is now up for sale.
- Tenant services are reviewing older properties in the area looking at thermal insulation and ways to reduce carbon emissions.
- Public meetings were held to consult on the review of the local plan. This highlighted areas for new housing and areas where local people did not want any development. Students at KLB School took part in the consultation and their views proved to be very interesting and will be included in the plan.
- The Greenway Group has received a number of donations and this will allow for an initial feasibility study, to establish a route and flag up any issues.
- The play area at Bearlands is now being installed. This has been achieved with support from the local housing association along with the Bearlands Action Group and Wotton Youth Partnership. It is hoped that the play area will be ready for opening in early June.
- Due to a reduction of 20% in staffing resources at SDC many green issues will have to be prioritised going forward.
- The garages at Mount Pleasant are now empty and there are discussions taking place to decide the future of the area. The developer of the Full Moon site might be considering the options in relation to that development.

Concern was raised by councillors at the lack of parking in Mount Pleasant and the difficulties already in the area. A suggestion was made to install parking bays where there are wide grass verges. Cllr Braun confirmed that there are no plans to provide extra parking across the district.

7) **Public Forum** No further comments were made by the public on Town Affairs.

The Mayor, on behalf of the Town Council, expressed condolences to Mr G. Carpenter, (the Town Crier, former Mayor and Town Councillor,) on the recent death of his wife.

The Assembly Concluded at 8.05pm

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

Chairman & Town Mayor