

**MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING,
MONDAY 21st MAY 2018 AT 7PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE**



Present: Cllrs P Smith (Chairman) T Luker, N Pinnegar, June Cordwell, R Claydon, John Cordwell, R Hale, J Turner, P Barton, M Short, L Farmer, A Wilkinson (19:03 to 19:55)

In attendance: Town Clerk Ms S Bailey, District Cllrs K Tucker, G Butcher, C Braun, 1 member of public

T.5517 To elect Town Mayor and Chairman and to receive Declaration of Acceptance of Office. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr L Farmer and agreed by all that Cllr Paul Smith is elected as Mayor & Chairman. The Acceptance of Office was duly signed.

T.5518 To elect Deputy Town Mayor and Vice-Chairman. It was proposed by Cllr P Smith, seconded by Cllr P Barton and agreed by all that Cllr Roger Claydon is elected as Deputy Mayor.

T.5519 Apologies for Absence Cllr C Young

T.5520 Declarations of Interest or Dispensations Cllrs June Cordwell (and Cllr John Cordwell as spouse) Heritage Centre personal interest ref: grant, Cllr N Pinnegar personal interest ref: RBL grant, Cllr P Barton personal interest ref: RBL grant, Cllr John Cordwell (& Cllr June Cordwell as spouse) personal interest ref: RTO county matters, Cllr A Wilkinson personal interest ref: Screwfix payment.

T.5521 Election of Membership to Committees: After discussions, it was proposed by Cllr L Farmer seconded by Cllr M Short that the following councillors are elected as representatives, agreed by all, with the exception of Cllr C Young's membership, which will be confirmed on June agenda.

- a) Planning (Full Council)
- b) Allotments: **Cllrs P Barton, J Turner, L Farmer, T Luker, N Pinnegar** plus co-opted members Mr I Jones, Mr C Mitchell, Mr B Elloway, Mr V Howell, Mr A Burns, Mrs H Summers
- c) PROW/Amenity Areas: **Cllrs John Cordwell, R Claydon, T Luker, N Pinnegar**, P Smith plus co-opted members Mr S Jarmuz, Mr D Curtis, Mr M Cross, Mr P Comer and Mrs J Mason
- d) Town Regeneration Partnership: **Cllrs P Barton, N Pinnegar, R Claydon, T Luker, R Hale, P Smith, A Wilkinson, C Young (tbc)** plus co-opted members Reverend R Axford (St Mary's Church), Mrs T McClusky (Beaumont-le-Roger), Mr G Phillips (Wotton Arts Association), Mrs J Tebb (Secret Gardens Trail), Mrs J Walshe (Heritage Centre), Reverend T Wharin (Baptist Church), Mr M Clarke (Under-the-Edge Arts), Mrs C Sweet (Community Dementia Link), Ms S Hunt (Wotton in Bloom), Mr M Tucker (Chamber of Trade), Mr R Garlicki (Blues Festival)
- e) Finance & Special Purposes: **Cllrs June Cordwell, John Cordwell, T Luker, plus Chairman and Vice-Chairman**

T.5522 Appointment of Representatives to organisations. After discussions, it was proposed by Cllr P Smith seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar that the following councillors are elected as representatives, agreed by all, with the exception of Cllr C Young's representation, which will be confirmed on June agenda.

- a) Citizens Advice Bureau. There is no current rep & CAB committee set-up has changed – Clerk to ascertain what CAB now requires of members.
- b) Wotton & District Rec Trust: **Cllrs R Claydon, R Hale, N Pinnegar, P Smith, A Wilkinson**
- c) Beaumont-le-Roger Society: **Cllrs P Smith & M Short**
- d) Wotton Youth Partnership: **Cllrs P Barton, June Cordwell, T Luker, R Hale, C Young-tbc**
- e) Wotton-under-Edge General Charities: **Cllrs P Barton, J Turner, T Luker, P Smith**
- f) Wotton-under-Edge Combined Charities: **Cllrs R Claydon, N Pinnegar**
- g) Wotton Community Sports Foundation: **Cllr R Hale**
- h) Snow Warden: **Cllrs R Claydon, A Wilkinson**
- i) Water Course Warden: **Cllrs R Claydon, P Smith**
- j) Chamber of Trade: **Cllr J Turner**
- k) Police Stroud Cluster Group: **Cllr P Smith**
- l) Synwell Playing Fields Committee: **Cllr T Luker**
- m) Wotton-under-Edge Swimming Pool: **Cllr C Young - tbc**
- n) Wotton in Bloom: **Cllrs L Farmer, A Wilkinson**
- o) Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum: **Cllr A Wilkinson**
- p) Wotton Heritage Centre: **Cllr June Cordwell**
- q) Wotton Walking Festival: **Cllr N Pinnegar**
- r) Greenway Group: it was also proposed by Cllr P Smith, seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar, to appoint a representative to the Greenway Group, namely **Cllr R Hale**, with **Cllr P Barton** as second representative agreed by all.

T.5523 Appointment of New Committees. To consider whether any new committees are needed and to appoint accordingly. The idea of a new tourism committee was considered very briefly however it is felt that this item is best dealt with and absorbed by the Regeneration Committee.

T.5524 Policies/Procedures

- a) To approve updated Standing Orders and Financial Regulations for this Council. New model Standing Orders have just been produced by NALC and therefore will be considered by the next Special Purposes Committee before the updated version is presented to Council. It was proposed by Cllr R Hale and seconded by Cllr June Cordwell that the suggested amendments to the Financial Regulations are adopted by Council, agreed by all.
- b) To approve updates to the following policies/procedures:
 - i) Business Continuity Plan. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded by Cllr L Farmer agreed 11 in favour 1 abstention to approve updates suggested to this policy with a couple of minor amendments.
 - ii) Internet banking. It was proposed by Cllr R Hale seconded by Cllr L Farmer agreed all in favour to approve the updates to this procedure.
 - iii) Remit of Committees. It was proposed by Cllr L Farmer seconded by Cllr John Cordwell agreed all in favour to approve the updates to this policy.
 - iv) Cemetery Regulations. This is a much-expanded policy and incorporates existing rules with many new sections. The risk assessment section is yet to be completed and the intention is also to produce a statement regarding greenspace management in addition to more burial procedure detail. It was proposed by Cllr P Barton to accept this policy, submitting the extras at a later stage, seconded by Cllr R Hale, agreed by all.

v) To reconfirm all other extant policies not included above as per summary document of all Town Council policies. The document listed all council policies with review dates, proposed to confirm all these by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr P Barton, agreed by all.

T.5525 Town Council Banking Arrangements - To confirm Barclays as the banker for the Town Council for the forthcoming year, proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar, seconded Cllr T Luker, agreed by all.

The routine business of the Town Council followed

T.5526 Public Forum June Cordwell spoke of the need to continue to support the Heritage Centre via the annual grant since, despite the small shop area doing well, these funds were heavily relied upon to support core utility costs of running the entity, member numbers had fallen recently, and it provides an excellent service using volunteers for both visitors and local people,.

Mr M Tucker of the Chamber of Trade spoke of the support from 18 volunteers last weekend tidying the town ahead of the entry to Britain in Bloom and that they should be thanked for their efforts.

T.5527 To receive Police Report - none provided, reminder was requested. There is a new PCSO for this area whom we hope to meet soon.

T.5528 To receive reports from County Councillor and District Councillor County - long written report provide by County Cllr John Cordwell. Council sessions are proving very frustrating whereby motions are deliberately amended/replaced by majority opposition party to alter the decisions. The backlog of footpath applications & works continues with no new post funded. LED streetlamp conversion will continue with some works shortly in Wotton; a post on Old London Rd is to be investigated. Councillors noted that it is annoying to see politics getting in the way of basic council business. A metal railing on the raised level at Old Town has been damaged and needs investigating as it is broken and vulnerable.

District – detailed written report provided. Consultation is commencing shortly on car parking charges. A quote for lighting at the OK path has been obtained for £50k from Western Power but much local support and fundraising would be needed. Town Councillors would prefer to see solar powered lighting in that situation, although county streetlighting officer is unsupportive. To consider item on June agenda. WTC commented that many funds are being spent by SDC in the Stroud area such as canal investment, Stroud Subscription rooms and centre redevelopment, and very little in the outlying districts. Cllr Braun replied that Brimscombe Port will provide housing and business space thus supporting the whole district, and that tourists would eventually be drawn in by the canal to the whole area. Furthermore, the emphasis is to remove costly assets from SDC's books, to generate capital revenue, to plug shortfalls in the budget.

T.5529 To approve the Minutes of the council meeting of 16th April 2018. It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar to approve the Minutes as presented, agreed all in favour.

T.5530 Chairman's Announcements – The Mayor attended Beaumont le Roger twinning visit last weekend and gave a welcome speech. He will attend the new courtyard garden opening at the Chipping Hall next weekend.

T.5531 Audited Accounts and Annual Return

- a) To note end-of-year budget report and agree earmarking of funds as at 31/3/2018. The yearend budget report was approved, proposed Cllr R Hale, seconded Cllr T Luker, agreed by all. It was agreed to defer the earmarking of surplus funds to the June agenda in order to allow more time for deliberation.
- Cllr A Wilkinson left the meeting*
- b) To approve the End-of-Year Accounts for the financial year ending 31st March 2018 and to note internal audit. It was proposed by Cllr R Hale and seconded by Cllr R Claydon, and agreed by all to approve the accounts as presented. The internal auditor report was noted with council appreciative of the auditor's comment of 'an excellent set of concise records; the Clerk/staff should once again be commended'.
- c) To complete and approve the answers to the Annual Governance Statement in Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. It was proposed by Cllr R Hale, seconded by Cllr June Cordwell to approve Section 1, agreed by all.
- d) To approve the accounting statements in Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell, seconded by Cllr J Turner to approve Section 2, agreed by all.

T.5532 Accounts

- a) It was proposed by Cllr P Barton, seconded by Cllr John Cordwell, agreed by all, to approve the grant payments agreed at the budget meeting, as follows:
- i) Arrive Alive £150
 - ii) Secret Gardens Trail £250
 - iii) Cobalt £100
 - iv) CAB £1355
 - v) CVTN £200
- Cllrs J & J Cordwell left the room*
- b) To approve grant to Heritage Centre of £3400 as per agreement. After the fact was highlighted that the grant amount is variable yearly (subject to request at the budget meeting) since the service level agreement to support the Heritage Centre raised the rent incrementally from 2018 to 2021, it was proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar and seconded by Cllr T Luker to agree this payment, agreed by all.
- Cllrs J & J Cordwell returned to the room*
- c) To approve quote for GDPR amendments to website. The Clerk had received a response from the website provider that the quotation would not increase if we wished to provide our own generic/council documents relating to notices, as long as there was no extra work for them involved other than loading them onto website as agreed. It was thus proposed by Cllr L Farmer, seconded by Cllr T Luker to agree to this work, agreed by all.
- d) To approve quote for recommended works to lift at a cost of £244 plus VAT. Comments from users are positive after various lift improvements over the past year. It was proposed by Cllr M Short and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell to agree to these works, agreed by all.
- e) Further to April 2018 decision not to pay the NABMA subscription, & request to negotiate, to consider offer to pay the reduced, half-price subscription of £159. After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and seconded by Cllr M Short and agreed 10 in favour 1 against to approve this payment.

- f) To agree increase in cleaning costs due to increase in National Minimum Wage for Civic Centre (£16/mth), Town Hall (£14/mth), Youth Centre (£2.84/mth) and CCR (£4/mth). It was proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell to agree these increases, agreed by all.
- g) To approve electrical fitting of 5 uplighters at Town Hall at a cost of £260. It was proposed by Cllr R Hale and seconded by Cllr T Luker to agree these works, agreed by all.
- h) To approve purchase of replacement coir matting for Civic Centre entrance at a cost of £84. Clerk has already ordered this due to significant deterioration of the matting; it was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell and seconded by Cllr L Farmer to approve this replacement, agreed by all.
Cllrs N Pinnegar and P Barton left the room
- i) To approve £85 to Wotton Royal British Legion road closure fee for Remembrance parade. It was proposed by Cllr T Luker and seconded by Cllr R Hale to agree this payment, agreed by all.
Cllrs N Pinnegar and P Barton returned to the room
- j) To approve two Councillors' attendance at GMTF visit to Burford, lunch & travel costs only. It was proposed by Cllr P Barton and seconded by Cllr L Farmer to agree this attendance by Cllrs J Turner and R Hale, agreed by all.
- k) To approve the accounts for payment. Late additions to the sheet were explained by the Clerk and sent out; it was proposed by Cllr R Hale and seconded by Cllr L Farmer to agree these payments, agreed by all. (Net of £25,231 for Town Council and £1,206 for Town Trust).

T.5533 Meetings

- (i) Annual Parish Assembly 2019 – date of Monday 13th May 2019 proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded by Cllr T Luker, agreed 9 in favour 2 abstentions.
- (ii) Budget meeting 2018 –date of Thursday 29th November 2018 proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded by Cllr June Cordwell agreed by all.

T.5534 Symn Lane Play Area – To note detailed ROSPA inspection report & any works needed therefrom. The Clerk provided a summary document highlighting the works carried out, those ongoing and those where no action was needed. Council is content that matters for rectification and monitoring are in hand.

T.5535 Old Town Toilets – To receive report from Cllr T Luker on plumbing issues and other building matters. To consider options for the future of the toilets. No quotations yet received: Cllr Luke has met a plumber and an electrician for indications, following a roof quotation a few months ago.

T.5536 Market Town Centres Initiative Fund - SDC has budget of £200K over the next 3 years to support capital projects within town centres. To consider outline proposals by 8th June. Matched funding required. After a variety of discussions considering needs of the town and those which would promote and benefit tourism initiatives, it was proposed by Cllr M Short and seconded by Cllr L Farmer, and agreed 10 in favour 1 abstention, that the following proposals are suggested to SDC as possibilities with feedback requested:

- a) Installation of a coach parking bay at Parklands entrance, where land is owned by SDC, possible cost estimate of £25k.
- b) Old Town toilets rebuild at cost estimate of £80k.
- c) Phase II Feasibility Study for Greenway Route cost estimate £3900.

T.5537 Road Traffic Orders – To consider response to amendments proposed by the County Council to RTOs submitted by the Town Council. County Cllr Cordwell and the Clerk met County officers to discuss changes to the proposals and give feedback. The only change to WTC suggestions will be the shortening of space on Tabernacle Hill to allow garage egress. Other proposals will now go forward for final approval in the officer's report shortly.

T.5538 Good Deeds Section: Thanks to Volunteers – to acknowledge recent volunteer work for the benefit of the town/community:

- a) Mrs & Mrs Sweet for organising a successful walking festival.
- b) Mr M Clarke for organising Under the Edge Arts events and receiving positive publicity/opening of courtyard garden shortly.
- c) Mr G Philips for a successful Arts Festival and excellent publicity for Wotton.
- d) Mrs S Hunt for organising town tidy up ahead of Britain in Bloom entry.
- e) The Lions for taking part also in above event.
- f) The Auction Rooms for allowing their car park to be used for traders in the town and also the walking festival visitors recently.

T.5539 Clerk's Report detailed report provided covering 2 months.

T.5540 Correspondence to note or request action:

- a) Noted Minister response to MP regarding Town Council's concerns about the loss of Revenue Support Grant funding to SDC.
- b) Noted email detailing Govt grant support for electric vehicle charging points installation & consider whether Council wishes to include this on future agenda for further investigation. Possibility of consideration in the future, however it is not considered a priority at the moment. Clerk to respond.
- c) Noted letter of thanks from Wotton RBL for donation.
- d) Noted response from SDC regarding Town Council letter concerning lack of tourism initiatives in the southern part of the district
- e) Noted SDC Community Governance Review 2018/19- info for Parishes & timetable – consultation commences late summer.

Brochures/Newsletters for information only: Allotment & Leisure Gardener Issue 2 2018; Clerks & Councils Direct May 2018;

T.5541 Reports from Councillors & meetings attended

PROW & Amenities Committee – Surveys have been completed and extra issues are now being investigated. Old mill wall & Holywell works finally expected to commence by Cotswold Wardens this summer.

Finance & Special Purposes Committee – to meet in a week.

Allotments Committee – not met, but the Clerk & grounds staff thanked for organising / carrying out a variety of allotment improvements recently.

Wotton Youth Partnership – awaiting photo publicity in the Gazette for newly donated Wotton Rovers U12 team kit.

Town Regeneration Partnership – Mr M Clarke walked around Wotton with the Gazette editor highlighting positive aspects of Wotton to improve publicity. The map boards need updating with new maps, which show some out of date info. Brown signage is needed from the M5 showing Wotton as a tourist destination. The Community Plan needs reviewing to assess the issues previously highlighted.

WC Sports Foundation – Party in the Parc is soon, work on the new BMX track has started, a park'n'ride shuttle into Wotton is a mooted idea for the future.

Heritage Centre – AGM held last week. A new treasurer is needed.
Walking Festival – Walk organisers were thanked (P Smith & R Claydon).
Donations from walkers also totalled £415 with good Gazette coverage. AGM to be held at the Star in June.
Synwell PFC – new outside fitness equipment has just been installed.
Recreational Trust – not met
Wotton in Bloom – town tidy up happened at weekend with 18 volunteers, Clerk forwarded organiser’s explanatory emails to Councillors. Another clean up on 1st July. Baskets should be hung up next week;162 this year. Fundraising continues.
Greenway Group – Sustrans Phase I Feasibility Study is to be carried out this summer. Glos CC and South Glos CC are now supporting the initiative.
LGA /NALC seminar in London – attended by Cllr M Short who intends to pen a brief summary. Examples of successful partnership working were highlighted.

T.5542 Town Affairs *none*

It was proposed by Cllr T Luker and seconded by Cllr L Farmer 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.5543 National Salary Award 2018 – To approve updated pay scales in line with NALC guidelines. Copy of updated scales supplied to Councillors. All staffing contracts are tied to National Association of Local Council Rates & Scales. It was proposed by Cllr R Hale and seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed by all to approve the new staffing pay rates backdated to April 2018.

It was proposed by Cllr T Luker and seconded by Cllr L Farmer to exit Closed Session, agreed by all.

TOWN TRUST ITEMS

1. To approve the End-of-Year Accounts for the financial year ending 31st March 2018 and to note internal audit. After one question requesting a breakdown of £763 of the income line in the accounts, it was proposed by Cllr L Farmer and seconded by Cllr P Barton and agreed by all to approve the audited Town Trust accounts.

This completed the business of the Town Council at 9.35pm

Signed:Dated: