



**MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING,
MONDAY 21st OCTOBER 2019 AT 7PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE**

Present: Cllrs R Claydon (Chairman), N Pinnegar, T Luker, J Turner, D Thomas, John Cordwell, June Cordwell, R Hale, S Wood, P Barton, A Wilkinson, M Tucker, S Smith
In attendance: Town Clerk Ms S Bailey. District Cllrs C Braun, K Tucker, 3 public.

Cllrs June & John Cordwell thanked the Town Council for the engraved glassware gifts presented at the '50 years of service Town Crier event' yesterday, which recognised their 28 years and 40 years' service as town councillors respectively.

T.5886 Apologies for absence. All present

T.5887 To receive Declarations of Interest/Dispensations now or as soon as known. Personal interests declared by Cllr A Wilkinson Screwfix payment, Cllr R Hale Blues Festival participation & Symn Lane car park adjacent location, Cllr N Pinnegar Bear St garage payment, Cllr J Turner licensing adjacent to Co Op. It was considered that the discussions regarding Blues Festival Town Hall deposit and their Recreational Trust affiliation did not constitute a conflict of interest needing town councillor representatives to Rec. Trust declaration.

T.5888 To comment on Police statistics for Wotton. Cllr R Claydon downloaded the latest monthly statistics, and noted the mostly antisocial behaviour offences, and that it was a quieter month. Cllr S Wood met the Police to discuss Community Speedwatch possibilities; he did not think the project was suitable for this location and the Police do not consider Wotton to have a speeding problem due to high number of parked cars. However a speed wire will be installed at Coombe Rd shortly to temporarily ascertain average speeds there.

T.5889 Public Forum– Mr D Driver and 2 colleagues presented their thoughts on tree planting proposals to the town council for the sites of Knapp field, the Cemetery, and Holywell Leaze. Marchesi Walk and Hill Rd were not considered suitable at present due to amount of work involved in those sites. The Town Council climate action working group would meet after the planning committee meeting next Monday to discuss the proposals in the document presented today, in more detail, and then present its findings and conclusions to November Town Council, also considering the availability of volunteers to prepare, plant, maintain them, the benefits to wildlife, and more hedging, and secure any grant funding needed. The inclusion of Streamsfield as a future planting site could also be considered.

T.5890 To receive reports from County Councillor and District Councillor.

County Cllr Dr JE Cordwell provided a written report; he highlighted the county transport plan, which did not mention much concerning Wotton. Glos CC considers that Charfield station (in South Glos County) re-opening plans are proceeding ahead of Stonehouse and Hunts Grove new stations.

A written District Council report was circulated. The recent SDC Green Spaces report <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/environment/planning-and-building-control/planning-strategy/evidence-base/environmental-evidence/green-infrastructure-sport-and-recreation-study>

complemented the Wotton Community Sports Foundation, and made recommendations for Synwell Playing Fields. SDC has highlighted 4 new strategic directorship appointments needed, 2 have just taken place (Director of Place and Director of Resources) with 2 more happening this week.

T.5891 Minutes of the Council Meeting of September 2019. Proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar, seconded Cllr N Hale, agreed all in favour to approve these Minutes.

T.5892 Chairman's Announcements Cllr R Claydon provided a brief written report on meetings attended; Beaumont le Roger organisation is busy making arrangements for the French visit at the end of May 2020 - new committee members are needed. SDC is carrying out fact-finding of all assets/property in its district, such as Rope Walk toilets; they emphasised that this was not about closing the facility but commented that running 8 toilets in district costs, £250k which seems very high. The Greenway group is seeking £10k for its next phase of Feasibility Study – the 5.9km route construction cost is likely to be £500k to £1.1m depending on route chosen. Other meetings attended were Durns Rd resident requesting overgrowth clearance ahead of wall rebuild, a council buildings insulation survey by contractor, and the Recreational Trust, which is seeking bids from a qualifying organisation for up to £1000 grant. The Bowls Club were approached by the Dryleaze site developer to sell them Trust land. Also, Code of Conduct seminar at SDC, and a Symn Lane car park meeting with SDC planning officer and developer. The Chairman also thanked the Clerk and the staff for organising the excellent '50 years town crier' event yesterday. The caterer's food was also very well received and a thank you card is requested to be sent to Sarah Beale Catering.

T.5893 Co-option – To co-opt new Town Councillor and receive Declaration of Acceptance of Office if co-opted. Sally Smith spoke to Council and answered questions. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr John Cordwell that a secret written ballot is undertaken, agreed by all. This was carried out, resulting in an affirmative vote. Sally Smith was welcomed to the Town Council and duly signed the Acceptance of Office register and took her seat at the table.

T.5894 Accounts

- a) To consider and approve quotes for works to New Road Poplar trees; and update regarding Knapp Road Elm. Western Power has removed the dying Elm at New Rd allotments due to location near power lines. Three quotes were obtained for pollarding of poplars at new Rd Allotments as decided at September's council meeting. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar, agreed by all, to approve Tree Fella's pollarding quote for £1400.
- b) To consider and approve quotes for works to clear scrub/bramble on Marchesi Walk. Subject to the Clerk checking that the cheapest quote included felling and poisoning the Ash saplings in line with the other quotes obtained, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar, agreed by all, to approve DR Howse for £700 to undertake this work.
- c) To consider and approve quotes for works to clear overgrowth/bramble at Dyer's Brook, adjacent to fallen wall. It was proposed by Cllr J Turner and seconded by Cllr R Hale, agreed by all, to approve DR Howse quote for £250.
- d) To approve utilities provider from 16th November 2019. A detailed spreadsheet was circulated in advance comparing 5 utility providers and their rates for 9 gas/electric site usage points across all buildings, with an emphasis on green energy quotations. After much discussion of the sources of green energy, it was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell and second by Cllr D Thomas to approve Ecotricity for the next 2 years, agreed by all. Although Ecotricity were £635 more expensive (at estimated total of £11,626 across all sites), the ethos of greener renewable energy sourcing and reinvestment into future renewables is considered more important.
- e) To ratify approval of electrical quotes for works needed in recent 5 year electrical inspections: Town Council £796; Town Trust £209. Civic Centre lift & alarm circuits

still to test. Proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar seconded by Cllr J Turner, agreed by all to approve remedial works, which are scheduled for this week.

Cllr R Hale left the room

- f) To consider quote for repair or complete refurbishment of Town Hall floor (following hirer damage) and decide how to proceed. The strong floor adhesive tape used by the Blues Festival has damaged the varnish seal on the Town Hall floor. A quote was obtained to repair by Council's long standing cleaning contractor. However this was considered too expensive by the Festival organisers. After much discussion of the standard of work needed for repair and the fact that the town hall hire fee was originally waived for this event (although a deposit was taken as normal), it was proposed by Cllr A Wilkinson, seconded by Cllr P Barton and agreed by all, that the hirer is allowed to effect the repair, and that the standard should match the rest of the floor when inspected by Council staff. The deposit will be withheld until the repairs have been completed to an acceptable standard. *Cllr R Hale returned to the room*
- g) To approve PAT training at a cost of £199 for new Buildings Manager. Proposed by Cllr June Cordwell seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar, agreed by all to approve.
- h) To approve annual subscription to CPRE cost £36. Proposed by Cllr June Cordwell seconded by Cllr M Tucker, agreed by all to approve.
- i) Budget 2019/20, report noted as healthy.
- j) To approve the accounts for payment, £24,577 for Town Council net and £1,044 for Town Trust net. Proposed by Cllr R Hale seconded by Cllr T Luker, agreed by all to approve. *Cllrs A Wilkinson and N Pinnegar left the room*
Cllrs A Wilkinson and N Pinnegar returned to the room

T.5895 Climate Change: Tree Planting suggestions from Sept meeting – To consider reports for the proposed areas of Town Council land where tree planting may be possible; and to decide whether to proceed with plans when presented. Report to be circulated & considered at climate action working group next week and the suggestions therefrom awaited for November Council discussion with any budget implications.

Cllr R Hale left the room

T.5896 Symn Lane Car Park – To receive report from the Working Group and to consider any questions which need decision. A report was circulated highlighting that the developer is tying up final agreements with partners and related documentation, with intention to commence works on site early 2020. Wotton Town council is clarifying a number of issues relating to EV charging points & grants, lighting for the site, safety & signage issues, and future landscape maintenance.

Cllr R Hale returned to the room

T.5897 Rural Services Network – to consider whether this Council wishes to join a group of Rural Market Towns being established to present the arguments of rural areas to Govt. Cllr M Tucker suggested that RSN has a closer relationship with central Govt than Glos Market Towns Forum (of which he has recently become a director), and that this should be the preferable entity to work with to get rural issues heard. After discussion and consideration, it was proposed by Cllr J Turner and seconded by Cllr D Thomas that WTC becomes a member of RSN costing £130 p.a, that Cllr M Tucker is the representative for WTC, and that at renewal time, the benefits of GMTF should be closely examined as to whether membership of both is worthwhile, agreed by all.

T.5898 WCSF Stone Barn – To consider letter from WCSF proposing to demolish the stone barns at the Community Parc. The signed Head and Under Leases from 2008 state that the stone barn may be demolished and it is declared to be redundant (clauses

10 & 11). Wotton Town Council declares that it has no intention of taking back the stone barn for its own use, and furthermore does not wish to contribute towards its current maintenance. Proposed that the Clerk to respond accordingly with above comment by Cllr J Turner, seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar, agreed 11 in favour, 2 abstentions.

T.5899 Good Deeds Section: Thanks to Volunteers – To acknowledge recent volunteer work for the benefit of the town/community. A thank you card is to be sent to the Guild of Town Criers participating in the event on Sunday after their Guild meeting, in full regalia, to honour George Carpenter and his 50 years celebration as Wotton's Town Crier, where he was bestowed as an Honorary of Freeman of the Town.

T.5900 Clerk's Report -circulated in advance and noted. The new buildings manager has been in post a week, and new caretaker 5 weeks, and both are doing well. It is hoped that by the end of the year, staffing levels will be back up to normal capacity.

T.5901 Correspondence to note or request action:

- a) To note resident email and response regarding the provision of bicycle parking facilities in Wotton. Clerk to add that the Co Op also has bicycle racks and reply.
- b) To note email from Stroud District Road Safety Group regarding Proposed Multi-Site Traffic Regulation Orders consultation document and consider whether WTC wishes to comment. The Multi site TRO application may be dropped as being too difficult to achieve across too many parishes. The group may concentrate more on speed cameras and vehicle activated signs.

Brochures/Newsletters for information only; none, mostly now by email.

T.5902 Brief reports from Councillors

Footpaths Committee, Special Purposes Committee, Allotments Committee, Wotton Youth Partnership, Town Regeneration, Sports Foundation, Wotton Pool, Heritage Centre and any other meetings attended.

FOOTPATHS & PROW –met 16th October; discussed the Gateway project looking at 2 new information boards in the Chipping and Civic Centre car parks. Leaflet discussion is deferred; there appear to be a number of leaflets around which need co ordinating. The walking festival will also meet this week.

SPECIAL PURPOSES – not met

ALLOTMENTS – tenants meeting took place. Complaints received about top and middle paths at Knapp Rd very slippery and difficult to walk on. A branch hanging from New Rd allotments first poplar tree needs removing, as it may fall, at entrance to site. Clerk to arrange buildings manager to visit site tomorrow morning.

WOTTON YOUTH PARTNERSHIP – written report provided by Cllr June Cordwell.

WOTTON POOL – update sent around by email from Pool Chairman. Tiling works commenced and changing rooms upgrade work currently being finalised.

REGENERATION – met 25th September; presentation on market proposals, although this maybe delayed until new car park is built, and a request that Council employs a person next year to specifically deal with litter/weeds around the town.

WCSF – written report by Cllr June Cordwell. Maintenance needs of the site are increasingly putting a strain on finances and vandalism is starting.

HERITAGE CENTRE – meeting this week.

GMTF – Cllr M Tucker attended their AGM and agreed to become a director.

T.5903 Town Affairs – very brief comments from Members or items for future agendas:

Cllr R Claydon - youths are using the old quarry site at the overlook at the top of Old London Rd to throw stones and branches into the road. The landlord has tried to

remove them but it re-occurs. Asked for it to be reported to the PCSO/Neighbourhood Warden.

Cllr J Turner reported that subsidence is occurring more on the B4058 by Old London Rd junction near the golf course. Apparently patching has been attempted but the land is still slipping.

Cllr J Turner left the room

T.5904 PLANNING ITEM *(time restriction by SDC for response)* S.19/01203/LAPRV H & H Relish, 36 Long Street. Application for licence to extend hours for the sale of alcohol. To consider if Council wishes to comment. After discussion of other venues' licensing hours nearby, Council agrees to make no comment on this application, proposed by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr S Wood, agreed by all.

Cllr J Turner returned to the room

Closed Session *confidential matters of either a legal, contractual or staffing nature whereby the public are excluded under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.*

Proposal to enter closed session by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr T Luker, agreed by all.

T.5905 Staff vacancies - To ratify appointment of new buildings manager. Proposed by Cllr R Hale, seconded by Cllr A Wilkinson, agreed by all.

Cllr A Wilkinson left the meeting at 9.10pm

T.5906 SDC Boundary Commission proposals - to note that WTC solicitor sent pre-action protocol letter incorporating barrister advice to SDC in advance of Judicial Review Process and to receive/consider response from SDC. Discussions centered on the protocol letter, the response from SDC legal officer, the various ramifications of issues involved and the response needed to WTC solicitor ahead of the next steps. Clerk to respond to solicitor, requesting further clarification on various matters and advice ahead of SDC meeting. A meeting is also requested with KLB School Chair of Governors, Sport Wotton, and WCSF Chair.

Proposal to exit closed session by Cllr R Hale, seconded by Cllr T P Barton, agreed by all.

This completed the business of the Town Council at 9.30 pm

Signed:Dated: