



**MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING,  
MONDAY 17<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2020 AT 7PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE**

**Present:** Cllrs R Claydon (Chairman), N Pinnegar, T Luker, J Turner, D Thomas, John Cordwell, June Cordwell, S Wood, P Barton, M Tucker, R Hale

**In attendance:** Town Clerk Ms S Bailey. District Cllrs G James & 3 members of public.

**T.5970 Apologies for absence.** Noted from Cllr S Smith. Cllr A Wilkinson sent apologies in anticipation of arriving late, but did not attend.

**T.5971 To receive Declarations of Interest/Dispensations** now or as soon as known. Personal interests declared by Cllr S Wood (allotments), Cllr N Pinnegar (Bear St garage), Cllr J Turner (Chamber of Trade and builder quotes), Cllr M Tucker (Chamber of Trade), Cllr R Hale (Symn Lane car park), Cllr D Thomas (Chamber of Trade).

**T.5972 To comment on Wotton's Police statistics** Cllr R Claydon provided the latest statistics for December. [www.police.uk/gloucestershire/CB3/crime/stats/](http://www.police.uk/gloucestershire/CB3/crime/stats/) Graffiti problems at Merlin Haven may appear in next month's statistics.

**T.5973 Public Forum** Mr D Driver gave a summary of proposals for tree planting in Wotton on behalf of the Wotton Area Climate Action Network (WACAN). At the allotment partnership meeting, many residents attended to ask questions about proposal for Knapp Field and the feeling was generally very supportive. The next planting opportunity is November for the free planting packs from Woodlands Trust. Mr Driver did not consider that maintaining a hedge between the field site and the allotment served any useful purpose. A site meeting is needed in May to consider final planting proposals. Local residents are uneasy about the proposals to place two disease resistant Elms at the bottom of the cemetery and thus this proposal is removed with the suggestion of either another cemetery location or at Holywell Leaze picnic area, to give much needed shade in hotter summers. A site location meeting is suggested asap at Holywell as the two Elms have arrived and need to be planted very soon in their final location. Ms T Le Coyte of WACAN spoke of her 'action on plastic' sub group mission and encouraged Councillors to get involved in removing plastics from the countryside around Wotton, and maybe the Council could consider making a plastic free pledge. Another WACAN member spoke of the solar streets initiative and the good response from IDDEA for her solar panel quotation. More information is also needed from SDC regarding possibilities for solar panels in conservation areas, such as Wotton's centre.

**T.5974 To receive reports from County Councillor and District Councillor.**

County Cllr Dr JE Cordwell provided a written report explaining the spending proposals approved by county for next FY, and the (re-)establishment of road safety partnerships in all districts, With Cllr Cordwell chairing the Stroud one. The £50k approved for bus shelters will be for new provision where there are none, rather than refurbishment of older ones.

A District Council report was circulated. Cllr G James answered questions: all the new SDC strategic directors are now in place. The Boundary Commission has confirmed the new parish boundary changes with relation to Kingswood but as the District Ward boundary still had to be confirmed, there was still uncertainty about the removal of Wotton's 'parish-ing'.

**T.5975 Minutes of the Council Meeting:** January 2020 Minutes, proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar, seconded Cllr R Hale, agreed all in favour to approve these Minutes.

**T.5976 Chairman's Announcements** Cllr R Claydon provided a written report. He thanked Cllr S Wood for locking/unlocking the play area (with Buildings Manager assistance on weekday mornings) but requested that other councillor volunteers to step in to also assist (Cllrs R Hale, D Thomas, M Tucker offered help). Cllr Claydon spoke of the frustration of seeing the Stonehouse rail station re-opening being pushed at Glos County level but no liaison undertaken with South Glos Council, just 1 mile from Wotton over the boundary, which is pushing ahead with Charfield station re-opening. Thus the draft Glos CC Transport Plan is lacking in initiatives and detail regarding the Wotton area with little evidence of GCC working with the neighbouring county to support the re-opening of Charfield Station and providing active access to it.

### **T.5977 Accounts**

- a) To approve grant of £150 to Great Western Air Ambulance Charity to be paid from 2019/20 budget; proposed by Cllr J Turner seconded by Cllr T Luker agreed by all.
- b) To ratify WTC contribution (£65) for the 2020 Events postcard produced by the Heritage Centre (financed by SDC tourism initiative grant); proposed by Cllr J Turner seconded by Cllr R Hale agreed by all.
- c) To authorise SDC Tourism Grant expenditure for the new Wotton Tourist leaflet produced by the Heritage Centre, and suggest any 'minor' amendments to its content. The Clerk had already forwarded a number of councillor comments to be considered for incorporation into the leaflet, and after agreeing to forward Cllr Claydon's comment about the Cotswold Way being in the incorrect place, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon seconded by Cllr P Barton agreed by all, that 15,000 leaflets are printed from one of the 3 quotes (up to a maximum of £1000) – with the business hopefully benefiting local companies.
- d) To note BT price increases for line rental (approx. 6%) and broadband (approx. 3%) from 1/4/2020. Noted; however since this is a price rise within our two year fixed contract, it is proposed to cancel the One Stop Shop dedicated BT line (521659) since two separate lines will not be needed when receptions are merged into one – and much correspondence is now done by email. There is a 30 day free period without termination charges due to price rise, thus proposed by Cllr J Turner and seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar, agreed by all to cancel this line.
- e) To approve payment from Town Trust to Town Council of the administration fee of £7,000; proposed by Cllr R Hale seconded by Cllr T Luker agreed by all.
- f) To approve payments from Town Council to Town Trust as follows:
  - (i) £2000 to rebuild permanent endowment following Town Hall refurbishment as required by the Charity Commission
  - (ii) £4700 to Town Trust (Police Station £3500 & Chipping Car Park £1200 rent loss). Both were proposed by Cllr R Hale seconded by Cllr M Tucker agreed by all.  
*Cllrs J Turner, D Thomas & M Tucker left the room*
- g) To approve continued subscription to Chamber of Trade at a cost of £40. Proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar seconded by Cllr T Luker agreed by all.  
*Cllrs J Turner, D Thomas & M Tucker returned to the room*
- h) To consider whether Council wishes to make a voluntary payment of £106 to SDC p.a. for emptying two Town Council owned dog waste bins. After much discussion regarding the locations of the bins and the district's duty to maintain the area litter & debris free including dog waste, it was proposed by Cllr R Hale and seconded by Cllr J Turner and agreed 8 in favour 3 against, that Wotton Town Council does not pay a

separate fee to SDC for these two dog bins, but works with the District to consider amalgamating the bins into one combined bin with litter, to allow emptying synergies.

i) To note receipt of private donation of £750 towards upkeep of the Clump on Wotton Hill. Noted – thank you card to be sent.

j) To approve Clerk attendance at SLCC Glos and South Glos Branch AGM on 5th March at the Gables, Falfield, cost £25. Proposed by Cllr T Luker seconded by Cllr P Barton agreed by all.

k) To approve quote for replacement planning/information officer laptop including installation & configuration to existing office network, cost £1221 plus VAT. The Mayor explained attempts to retain the current laptop despite official support for windows 2007 ending, however the wrong software is on the machine and the I.T. company has been unable to effect its upgrade. As it is 10 years old, it was proposed by Cllr J Turner seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar, agreed by all to approve this quote, however to investigate the likelihood of obtaining the laptop directly from Dell at a cost of £106 cheaper, but also with an extended warranty.

l) To approve quote of £380 from Tree Mgmt to significantly reduce beech hedge adjacent to Remembrance Garden at cemetery on health & safety grounds & before bird nesting season commences. The overgrown hedge is now covering the first path and making the other paths very slippery. An alternative much higher quote was also obtained. Proposed Cllr J Turner seconded by Cllr D Thomas, agreed by all to approve.

m) Budget 2019/20. Noted as healthy.

*Cllrs S Wood, N Pinnegar left the room*

n) To approve the accounts for payment. After explaining a few late payment additions, it was proposed by Cllr R Hale seconded by Cllr T Luker, agreed by all to approve payments of £22,896 for Town council and £8,370 for Town Trust, both net.

*Cllrs S Wood, N Pinnegar returned to the room*

**T.5978 S106 Funding, Land off Pack Horse Lane** – to authorise minor amendment to WCSF project allocation. This planning agreement was made a number of years ago and due to car park improvements already on site, Council is amenable to the funds being used for other urgent but similar site improvements, eg towards sensory garden access, proposed by Cllr June Cordwell seconded Cllr R Hale agreed by all.

**T.5979 Tree Planting proposals** – to receive report from Mr D Driver/Climate Action volunteers and consider tree planting proposals for Knapp Field, Holywell Leaze & the Cemetery. The Clerk produced a document explaining the importance of hedges and how a hedge in this field serves multi purposes such as carbon capture, boundary delineation, security/allotment protection and wildlife conservation. Thus tree planting proposals and hedge work can act in synergy; one does not preclude the other. Furthermore, access is needed to the southern area of allotment boundary via the Knapp field for maintenance, and also the re rear of Fountain Crescent ditch boundary due to ditch maintenance. Council considers a site meeting in May to be appropriate to discuss planting proposals and layout. Questions were asked about the suitability of the field for any public access, due to its rough, undulating nature after being used for horses for many years.

In view of the cemetery no longer being suitable for the two recently purchased disease resistant Elms, a meeting will be arranged this coming weekend at Holywell Leaze to consider the alternative siting of these Elms. The Clerk will investigate the possible Ash dieback at the cemetery entrance.

**T.5980 Annual Parish Assembly** originally for 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020. In view of clash with elections timetable, to consider changing date of this meeting. Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May is

suggested as it is no longer a bank holiday; proposed to approve Cllr R Claydon, seconded Cllr T Luker, agreed by all

**T.5981 Remit of Committees/Working Groups** – To agree revisions to draft proposed document in line with recently agreed council changes to committees, working groups/partnerships. After explaining the history of why the changes were effected, in line with SDC monitoring officer advice, the new Remit Policy was proposed for approval by Cllr R Hale, seconded by Cllr M Tucker and agreed 10 in favour 1 against. It was explained that if members of the public wish to joining the partnerships of footpaths, allotments, and regeneration they are more than welcome, and will be invited by the Chair of the working group; they are thus invited to contact the council if interested.

**T.5982 Symn Lane new Car Park**

*Cllr R Hale left the room*

a) Solar Power Canopy for Electric Charge Points – to discuss in principle approval of this as a project to take forward. Cllr D Thomas produced a backing document explaining the ideas and concept of power generation for electric vehicle charging and the funding possibilities, which may become eligible if the project is ready make applications. Discussions were held surrounding the new car park delays in commencement, the total grant funding requirement needed for this project, the actual benefits in usage of the power generated & payback periods, and the planning permission needed. It was proposed by Cllr S Wood, seconded by Cllr M Tucker, and agreed by all that this project is approved in principle subject to:

- a) the car park build commencing
- b) grant funding being obtained to cover the whole cost of the project
- c) planning permission approval
- d) confirmation from the developer that concrete foundations for the pillars and cable ducting will be provided.

It is vital that this project is approved & 'oven ready' as a project to secure grant funding when applications open, since such grant funding initiatives are eagerly awaited nationwide and will be competitive, and timescales are usually short for applications.

b) Lighting proposals for SDC Planning Authority - to agree light levels and if timer is needed. Conversations have taken place with SDC's Planning Officer regarding the already lowered illumination levels at the new car park. It appears that there may have been a misunderstanding at SDC level regarding the agreed lower levels and the developer's lighting surveyor has provided a report which clarifies the new levels. Thus a timer switch is unlikely to be needed. However if a decision is needed on this matter regarding timer or light levels, it is proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr M Tucker and agreed by all that delegated powers are given to the Clerk to make the decision after liaison with the Mayor and car park working group.

*Cllr R Hale returned to the room*

**T.5983 Solar Power** – to consider ways forward for WTC to assist in the community benefiting from solar energy in Wotton after WACAN's meeting and presentation from Solar Streets Initiative (Frome TC). A document was produced with various options for Council to consider. After discussion of the possibilities for WTC given the resources available, it was proposed by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr P Barton, and agreed by all that, in addition to investigating solar panels on council properties which is already part of the climate action working group agenda, WTC undertakes the following:

- a) Organise a public information event with Severn Wye Energy, local installers and SDC planning officers to give advice & promote solar panel installations in the Parish.
- b) Consult with SDC to ascertain if they are planning to set up an initiative similar to that established by Frome Town Council and express an interest.
- c) Issue the media statement as follows:

*“The Town Council has recently been made aware of the “Solar Streets” initiative which is endorsed by Frome Town Council working with a local supplier IDDEA to provide for low cost solar panels for local communities. This scheme is potentially available to Wotton residents. More details are available at: [www.frometowncouncil.gov.uk/your-community/resilience/solar-streets/](http://www.frometowncouncil.gov.uk/your-community/resilience/solar-streets/) or [www.iddea.co.uk/what-is-solar-streets/](http://www.iddea.co.uk/what-is-solar-streets/)*

*As part of its climate change initiative, Wotton Town Council supports programmes which provide opportunities to increase renewable energy usage in the community, although any such investment has to be a personal choice and individuals who are interested should satisfy themselves of the value for money of what is on offer. Further advice on solar panel installations is available from the Energy Saving Trust and Severn Wye Agency. Severn Wye Energy offer advice through their Warm and Well, Link to Energy and Target 2020 programmes for energy efficiency and not just advice for solar panels. The same applies to the Energy Saving Trust.*

*[www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/renewable-energy/electricity/solar-panels](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/renewable-energy/electricity/solar-panels)  
[www.severnwye.org.uk/en](http://www.severnwye.org.uk/en).*

**T.5984 SDC ‘Working Together’ Protocol** – Comments were suggested; proposed to sign up to this Protocol again, and submit comments as considered, by Cllr N Pinnegar, seconded by Cllr R Hale, agreed by all.

**T.5985 Draft SDC Local Plan** – to consider additional comments for WTC to submit regarding housing numbers in area, with reference to Kingswood suggested allocation of 50 houses. A draft document was circulated outlining housing due to be built in Wotton, as well as Kingswood, and how many primary school places are available. The result is that more housing development in Kingswood is not sustainable due to lack of primary school places, particularly in certain age groups. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr N Pinnegar and agreed by all, that the document is sent as suggested with the addition of explanations of class number data in various years at Wotton’s primary schools.

**T.5986 Good Deeds Section:** Thanks to Volunteers – To acknowledge recent volunteer work for the benefit of the town/community. Thank you card is to be sent to benefactor of funds for maintenance of the Clump, in memory of his wife.

**T.5964 Clerk’s Report**-circulated in advance and noted. The Clerk highlighted the heating problems at the civic centre following a radiator replacement, and broken woodwork from the front gable of the town hall in the storm – a vertical lift was used by the buildings manger to inspect and photograph the remaining woodwork to assess for safety. A local surveyor has been contacted for a quotation to assess the whole building, in terms of work needed and its general state of repair.

**T.5965 Correspondence to note or request action:**

*Brochures/Newsletters for information only; none – mostly electronic*

- a) Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan – To note public consultation events and consider comments by 26th March – this will be on March agenda.
- b) Gloucestershire Mineral Plan 2018-2032. Notification of Inspectors Report
- c) Arts Festival St George’s Day Celebrations, 25th April – noted invitation to Mayor to propose the Toast to St George.
- d) Noted letter of thanks from Greenway Group for grant towards Route Design Study.

- e) Noted letter of thanks to OSS Staff from WUE Historical Society and Heritage Centre for taking donations for the Wotton calendars.
- f) SDC – noted email correspondence that Boundary Commission has approved the agreed revisions to the Wotton/ Wortley/Kingswood Ward boundary changes.

#### **T.5966 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 – not met

SPECIAL PURPOSES – not met

ALLOTMENTS – tree proposals at Knapp Field were discussed in detail with general enthusiasm. Sloping paths at Knapp Rd allotment site were the subject of complaint. Inspection to take place by Allotments Chair and the Administrator.

WOTTON YOUTH PARTNERSHIP – Cllr June Cordwell provided a written report. SDC Youth Forum is now starting, and The Door's new youth worker Rosie is doing very well.

WOTTON POOL – no meeting

REGENERATION – no report

WCSF – investigations are being made into legalities of the 3G pitch and match regulations resulting in higher costs which is a large shock financially.

HERITAGE CENTRE – Cllr June Cordwell provided a written report.

#### **T.5967 Town Affairs** – very brief comments from Members or items for future agendas:

Cllr D Thomas – was contacted by a parishioner about swift bird boxes being needed on the Chipping Hall as masonry work has blocked their nesting holes. Cllr Thomas will contact the chair of Under the Edge Arts.

Cllr M Tucker – Chamber of Trade has made a plastics free pledge and asks that the next meeting of WTC's climate action group considers similar.

Cllr June Cordwell – enquired about data protection regulations for youth partnership.

**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 R Hale, agreed by all.*

**T.5968 Insulation of Council/Trust Properties** – To consider quotes, approve contractor and identify budget funding source. Quotations were obtained for wall and ceiling insulation where appropriate for the civic centre, heritage centre, town hall, youth centre and chipping club room, and a document circulated explaining the works and costs. It was proposed by Cllr S Wood and seconded by Cllr R Hale and agreed by all that Evolve is chosen for a fee of £4,635 which includes the French drain at the chipping club room but excludes vermiculite removal at the town hall. Clerk is delegated to consider appropriate budget source.

**T.5969 Council Website** – to appoint new website provider to take over maintenance/hosting as recommended by the Website Working Group. After many months of analysis /deliberations and further questions answered, a document was circulated explaining the options. It was proposed by Cllr N Pinnegar and seconded by Cllr R Hale that Town & Parish is chosen to take over WTC's existing website on Wordpress keeping it as close as possible to the existing format, but updating as necessary for compliance. Cost is £799 in year 1 (including set up) and £300 per annum cost thereafter. Free plugins will be used for facility hire ("My Calendar") and also a secure page for monthly documentation being made available to councillors (password

protected). Delegated authority is also given to the Clerk to make alterations to the procurement as necessary in order to effect this operation if any problems arise during the transfer.

**T.5970 Photocopier** – To approve new 5 year photocopier contract. A document was circulated highlighting the quotations received. Due to competitive pricing and good service received it is proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed by all that Annodata continues to provide the service, price £103 per qrtr.

**T.5971 Civic Car Park lights** – to approve contractor works to repair 4 of 8 not working tall lampposts using the opportunity to switch to LED's. A document was circulated with three quotations for straight bulb replacement of all posts, or conversion to LED's, and replacing photocells or installing one photocell at workshop. After analysis and discussion, it was proposed by Cllr John Cordwell and seconded by Cllr M Tucker and agreed by all that LED bulbs are chosen along with one central photocell at the workshop and that Scott Price offers the most cost-effective quotation at £1864. Furthermore, the non working lamp along the civic centre side footpath will be investigated when the contractor is on site with the Clerk given delegated authority to reinstate to working order along the lines of the above preferences.

*Cllr J Turner left the room*

**T.5972 Office Re-organisation** – To approve quotes for building works and identify budget funding source. The Clerk circulated a document which explained the quotes obtained and gave details of the specification for works. It was proposed by Cllr June Cordwell and seconded by Cllr R Hale and agreed by all to appoint PJB Building to undertake the office reorganisation works, cost of £4124. Other small works will need to be arranged in due course and the carpet quotes will be on the March agenda.

*Cllr J Turner returned to the room*

**T.5973 To confirm budget source for Civic Centre electric reception doors.** A document was circulated highlighting various budget underspend areas for consideration for the many current capital works projects being undertaken at the moment. It was proposed by Cllr R Claydon and seconded by Cllr T Luker and agreed by all that delegated authority is given to the Clerk to appropriate spending to the budget areas where considered necessary with the priorities of a) current year budget funding b) relevant earmarked budgets for that heading c) general reserves which will be replenished from any underspend areas in the new FY. Thus individual other budget headings (even if underspent) will remain relevant for comparative purposes in future budget compilations.

*Proposal to exit closed session by Cllr R Claydon, seconded by Cllr John Cordwell, agreed by all*

*This completed the business of the Town Council at 9.55pm*

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