

**MINUTES OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING,
MONDAY 18th MAY 2020 AT 7PM** (*first remote Zoom meeting due to coronavirus*)



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

In attendance: Town Clerk Ms S Bailey, Information Officer Mrs J Wyatt, District Cllrs K Tucker, C Braun, G James. No public.

T.6002 Apologies for absence. Noted from Cllr S Smith

T.6003 To receive Declarations of Interest/Dispensations now or as soon as known. Personal interests declared by Cllr N Pinnegar Bear St garage accounts, and Cllr R Hale accounts UTEA and Chipping Hall item.

T.6004 Public Forum

Cllr C Braun reported that she had taken part in a telephone meeting about the OK Path lighting and will share the meeting notes with the Town Council.

Cllr Cordwell had circulated a written County Council report in advance. He commented that six county councils have been declared bankrupt. There are plans to reopen Horsley Recycling Centre towards the end of May; visits by appointment only. A District Council report was circulated in advance.

A discussion followed about whether it was appropriate for the Town Council to provide funding to WAMA to support the provision of free food boxes to local residents, following SDC's decision to refuse funding. Concerns were discussed that other providers of this service were already operating, the system could be open to misuse if safeguards were not in place and that expectations could be raised that provision should continue after the Covid-19 crisis. Although the funding application from WAMA did not specify an amount, the cost to the Town Council could be considerable. Some other parish councils' support for the project was noted, since 40% of WAMA's activities are outside of Wotton, as well as the fact that other funding sources are available. Due to time sensitivity, this funding request item will be added to the May Planning Committee agenda.

T.6005 Minutes of the Council Meeting: 16th March 2020 - it was **resolved** to approve these Minutes, seven in favour and two abstentions.

23rd March (Extraordinary) 2020 - it was **resolved** to approve these Minutes, six in favour and three abstentions.

Cllrs N Pinnegar and R Hale left the meeting.

T.6006 Accounts

a) To approve May payment schedule and ratify April schedule.

It was **resolved** to approve the May payment schedule, agreed all in favour (£2,925 net Town Trust, and £23,812 net Town Council) and **resolved** to ratify the April schedule, agreed all in favour, (£2,062 net Town Trust, and £33,679 net Town Council).

b) To note end of year budget report. Noted; however the list of earmarking proposals will be formally agreed at a subsequent meeting and also provision possibly needed for pandemic related expenses, e.g. loss of income due to building closures.

Cllrs N Pinnegar and R Hale returned to the meeting.

T.6007 Hill Road – to consider the use of land requests.

A request from the resident of an adjoining property for access to the land to enable works to extend his home was considered, along with two proposals for the future use

of the land, namely for housing or a community orchard. No objections were raised to the request for access to the land, subject to a formal agreement being drawn up to cover issues such as storage, damage, and any financial considerations. It was suggested that the Town Council should look to obtaining the best consideration from the land including considering a planning application before making any decision on its future use. This will be deferred until council can meet in person to discuss in detail. It was **resolved** to delegate the matter to the Clerk to allow the request for access to the land subject to appropriate conditions being agreed, all in favour.

T.6008 Procedures

- a) To confirm that all current councillor appointments remain in place until May 2021 Annual meeting and that there will be two Town Councillor vacancies to notify to Stroud District Council this week.

All councillors are to remain in post until next May unless an Annual Meeting is held or the regulations change. It was considered to be preferable to wait until an Annual Meeting can be held in person rather than arrange this via Zoom due to the likely length of the meeting. The option to hold an Annual Meeting at some point is to be kept open. The legal process of advertising the two councillor vacancies is underway and co-options could be confirmed at the June or July meetings depending on interest received. It was **resolved** that councillors should retain their current appointments until such time as an Annual Meeting is held or until next May, agreed all in favour.

- c) To resolve to adopt supplementary Standing Orders (draft circulated in advance) to meet the statutory requirements for the holding of remote meetings, lasting until May 7th 2021 or the repeal of the legislation. It was noted that provisions to hold an Annual Meeting are covered in the supplementary Standing Orders. No other comments. It was **resolved** to adopt the Standing Orders, agreed all in favour.

Cllr R Hale left the meeting.

T.6009 Chipping Hall -To ratify quarterly rental assistance request due damaging effects of lockdown on fundraising capabilities. UTEA's request for a three-month rent holiday was agreed under delegated powers after informal consultation with all councillors. It was noted that this request covers the 2nd quarter of calendar 2020 only. It was **resolved** to ratify the quarterly rental assistance to UTEA, all in favour.

Cllr R Hale returned to the meeting.

T.6010 Wotton Pool – To ratify financial assistance due to damaging financial effects of lockdown and consider the extent of financial support now needed from the Town Council. It had previously been agreed to continue the four SLA payments of £3,500 to Wotton Pool to enable them to furlough staff and continue to maintain the pool in a good state of repair. Wotton Pool has since received assistance of £10,000 from SDC. Additionally, they may be possibly be making provisional plans for a limited reopening. It was **resolved** to make the first two payments totalling £7,000 but to retain the remainder as 'Pool' earmarked funds to be released in future if necessary, agreed all in favour. The Town Clerk will liaise with Wotton Pool regarding the decision.

T.6011 S106 Funding – To approve the use of £1438, S106 monies for Symn Lane play area replacement rocking beam and replacement A frame benches at Holywell, funding designated for recreational use only from building developments. Time period is expiring shortly for spending this funding which must be on recreational projects as agreed by the Planning Authority. It was agreed that the two projects represent a

suitable use of the funding, with the second satisfying the requirements of the Council's Action Plan on climate change, since the proposed benches are made from recycled materials. It was **resolved** to approve this use of the funds, agreed all in favour.

T.6012 Clerk's Lockdown Report – Noted. The Town Clerk commented that all staff are working well under the current arrangements. Good progress is being made with the building work and decorating is in progress. Other works, such as installation of carpets, town hall survey, civic centre doors, and insulation are planned, but will need to be spaced out to maintain distancing and limit the number of people in the building. A query was raised about whether the tree nursery allotment plot is progressing - Town Clerk confirmed that this was indeed being dealt with by the Administrator. The issue with the water supply at the New Road allotments is still to be fully resolved as the building contractors nearby where the pipe was cut are only just starting work again. A query was raised about whether the Planning Meeting due to be held on 26th June will go ahead via Zoom. It was confirmed that arrangements are being made for this to take place via Zoom.

This completed the business of the Town Council at 20:30pm

Signed: Dated: