#  Minutes of Wotton-under-Edge Town Council Meeting

#  Monday 16THNovember 2020 (remote meeting due to Coronavirus)

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

## In attendance: Town Clerk Ms S Bailey, Assistant Clerk Mrs K Wilson, District Cllrs C Braun, G James, K Tucker

## Public 2

##  T.6104 Apologies for absence Cllrs R Hale, J Turner

##  T.6105 To receive Declarations of Interest/Dispensations Personal interest declared by Cllr J Cordwell (Glos CC consultation on changes/proposed waiting restrictions for Symm Lane).

## T.6106 Public Forum

Mr D Driver spoke about the tree planting agreement for Knapp Field. He confirmed the trees had been delivered by the Woodland Trust and planting would start in groups of two, due to coronavirus restrictions. When second lockdown restrictions are lifted, he would be looking to organise a community event for mass tree planting. The agreement needs to be signed before planting can commence. Mr Driver thought that the Wotton Climate Action Network would be prepared to accept a 5-year term for the Agreement.

*2 members of public left the meeting*

 Cllr J Cordwell spoke about the necessity of the TRO/yellow lines on Symm Lane when the new carpark is built to allow for a timely response for fire crews to exit the fire station. The developer has set aside a sum for TRO costs. The initial consultation will be followed by a formal one in February or March 2021.

## T.6107 To receive reports from County Councillor and District Councillor

Cllr J Cordwell provided a written report and commented on the rising number of coronavirus numbers in the county, with Stroud being at the top of the list.

A District Council report was circulated in advance. District Cllr C Braun spoke about the council’s aim to facilitate the whole district becoming carbon neutral by 2030. The district is keen to help local councils to achieve this goal. There is no specific pot of money available for this, but each case will be looked at individually.

Cllr R Claydon mentioned that current planning applications for new builds do not specify carbon neutral buildings. District Cllr C Braun explained that the new Local Plan should be approved in Spring 2021 which means higher standards could be insisted upon thereafter. The NPPF regulations and the Local Plan determine what can be a required of property developers.

Cllr C Braun also mentioned a new business support grant which had been launched this week and local businesses, looking for financial assistance, should be directed to SDC website.

##  T.6108 Minutes of the Council Meeting of 19thOctober2020 It was resolved to approve these Minutes, all in favour.

##  T.6109 Chairman’s Announcements Cllr R Claydon submitted a report in advance.

* Town clerk recruitment plans are noted.
* Good feedback was received from all, for this year’s simplified Remembrance Day event.
* A report on a visit to look at an Irish Yew in the churchyard.

##  T.6110 Accounts

* 1. **Marchesi Walk**. To approve stream clearance at Marchesi Walk. It is recommended that waders and tools would need to be sterile to prevent harm to the protected crayfish in the stream. It was proposed to approve the quote for £620 with appropriate guidance being issued for the protection of crayfish; agreed all in favour.
	2. **Dyers Brook**. To approve stream clearance at Dyers Brook. It was proposed to approve the quote for £450 with appropriate guidance being stressed for the protection of the crayfish; agreed all in favour.
	3. **CPRE Subscription**. To approve renewal of CPRE Subscription of £36; agreed all in favour.
	4. **To approve renewal of Civic Centre lift maintenance contract**. The cost is £52.50 plus vat/month (currently £50/month); and Town Hall lift maintenance contract cost of £21plus vat/month (currently £20/month). It was proposed to approve the amounts shown; agreed all in favour.
	5. **Budget 2020/21.** Report noted.
	6. **To approve November accounts for payment**. To approve accounts for payment. The Clerk advised of extra payments. It was agreed by all to pay the amounts (net) £7,367 for the Town Council and £1,044 for the Town Trust.

##  T.6111 SDC Code of Conduct

To discuss if WTC wishes to adopt SDC’s new code of conduct, wait for the new national code currently being formulated, or continue with WTC’s own code. To discuss if a working group is required to assess the advantages and disadvantages of each code. It was proposed to carry on with the current code of conduct until further national guidance emerges, agreed all in favour.

##  T.6112 Local Council Award Scheme

To consider whether Council wishes to re-apply for Local Council Award Scheme or wait for new Clerk in post due to data and information to be gathered and submitted. The Council needs to re-apply by 8th January 2021 or its Quality Status will be lost. The Clerk advised if the council applies in December 2020 it will still qualify under various criteria in the documentation, but possibly not from January onwards. It was proposed to place this as an item on December’s agenda and for all Cllrs to respond favourably to requests for help with information; agreed all in favour.

##  T.6113 CiLCA and Training for Assistant Clerk

* 1. **To Authorise CiILCA course & training at a cost of £817 for Assistant Clerk.** It was proposed to authorise this payment; agreed all in favour.
	2. **To consider whether to continue paying for SLCC membership of Deputy Clerk or switch this subscription to Assistant Clerk**.
		1. Cost of subscription for Deputy Clerk £180 pa plus £12 re-joining fee.
		2. Cost of subscription for Assistant Clerk £180 pa plus £12 joining fee.

 It was proposed to switch the subscription to the Assistant Clerk at a cost of £180 pa plus £12 joining fee; agreed all in favour.

* 1. **To fund 3 x £20 Clerks the Knowledge Zoom extra training sessions via GAPTC for Assistant Clerk.** The clerk explained this will give more in-depth information for the Assistant Clerk’s CiLCA Studies. It was proposed to fund 3 X £20 training sessions; all agreed in favour.

## T.6114 Replacement Town Clerk

To agree to bring forward by one week the December Council meeting to Monday 14th December to allow it to approve the selected candidate for appointment as the new Town Clerk without causing any delay. The working group comprised of Cllrs R Claydon, P Barton, M Tucker, and D Thomas will, along with the delegated authority to the outgoing Town Clerk, be undertaking sifting, assessing, interviewing, and selecting a preferred candidate. It was proposed to bring forward the December meeting to 14th December 2020 and combine this with the planning meeting. A further planning meeting could be held on 21st December 2020 if necessary; agreed all in favour.

*Cllr J Cordwell left the meeting*

## T.6115 Glos CC consultation on changes/proposed waiting restrictions for Symn Lane. To consider response to Glos CC consultation by Friday 27th November. The new map was sent out by the Clerk prior to the meeting. It was mentioned that clear access for fire trucks was vital when the new carpark comes into place; that the entrance to the carpark would need to be kept clear for coaches to turn. It was proposed to support the new waiting restrictions; all agreed in favour.

*Cllr J Cordwell re-joined the meeting*

##  T.6116 Council/Trust Buildings in second Lockdown 2020

A document outlined the status of facilities, with the youth centre being available for specific sessions as per National Youth Agency guidelines. It was mentioned that some councils have closed their play areas although Government guidance exempted them from closure. The Clerk confirmed the council’s own play area will remain open, in line with government guidelines and the social distancing and coronavirus notices on the play area are being updated.

##  T.6117 Good Deeds Section: Thanks to Volunteers

To acknowledge recent volunteer work for the benefit of the town/community. No new acknowledgements were noted. Cllr R Claydon passed on Mr and Mrs’s Sweet’s thanks for the Councils’ card.

##  T.6118 Clerk’s Report

A written report was provided detailing all work carried out. No comments received.

##  T.6119 Correspondence

* 1. To note the response email regarding on street parking from Fish out of Water-they feel their concerns were not fully answered ref Wotton’s parking issues**.**

It was noted that parking can sometimes be chaotic with not enough spaces being available. When traffic wardens are absent, some take advantage and park in the taxi ranks or disabled places without disabled badges being displayed. It is felt the traffic wardens are definitely required and the town has free parking in several car parks plus some the street parking which provide a range of parking opportunities.

Brochures/Newsletters for information only: Clerks and Councils Direct November 2020

##  T.6120 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.

Cllr P Barton attended the Wotton Youth Partnership Meeting; The Lions Club are looking to provide coats for KLB students who cannot afford them, Pitmans place play area is causing issues (SDC is dealing with this), three KLB students have national hockey trials and the Climate Change Group are looking to get youth involved.

Cllr M Tucker attended a Rural Market Towns meeting via zoom which highlighted the issues in market towns. The next meeting will be early next year.

Cllr N Pinnegar attended the Walking Festival’s AGM. A new chairman was appointed. The next meeting will be on 26th November 2020.

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##  T.6121 Town Affairs – very brief comments from Members or items for future agenda

Cllr R Claydon mentioned that a parishioner requested a working party to be set up to tidy the churchyard at St Marys.

Cllr T Luker mentioned the wall by Potters Pond is very overgrown with greenery and potentially becoming unstable which is forcing cars out further into the road. The Clerk has already highlighted this problem to Glos CC, which is denying responsibility.

*District Cllrs C Braun, G James and K Tucker left the meeting*

####  **Closed Session** – Under Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960 S1 (2) confidential matters of either a legal, contractual, or staffing nature**.**

Cllr R Claydon proposed entering closed session; agreed all in favour.

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##  T.6122 Tree Quotes

To approve works to trees in St Mary’s Churchyard, Dyers Brook and the Cemetery, as recommended in the Council’s tree survey.

It was recommended by the Clerk to approve the following quotes

1. St Mary’s Churchyard £450 from Treecreeper
2. Dyers Brook £395 from The Tree Fella
3. Cemetery £250 from Tree Management

Proposed to continue with these recommendations; all agreed in favour.

##  T.6123 Tree planting at Knapp Field

To discuss and agree Land Use Agreement proposal via WACAN.

Discussions ensued around permitting dogs onto the site with conditions; the agreement being for five years, the tree maintenance plan, and the use and storage of chemicals on site. It was noted that assign must be erected stating that access is ‘permissive’ only and not a public right of way.

It was proposed to make the agreement subject to five years duration, to add a dog clause, to include appropriate wording regarding tree maintenance and to delegate the tidying up of the document to the Clerk. Voted seven in favour, one abstention; proposal passed.

## T.6124 Town Trust

1. **To consider and approve quote for Contracts Administrator to progress the works to the Town Hall and receive the drawings from Terra Measurement**.

The Chairman commented that the Council is not ready to approve a contracts administrator quote yet and requested that the Clerk make further enquiries. Once the answers are received regarding the roles of all the parties in the project and the costs involved, this item will be brought back to December council.

1. **To note that the scaffolding contract needs to be commissioned, to ensure the safety of the public underneath the Town Hall, for 36 weeks totalling £5,365**.

It was noted that this quote did not include a scaffold alarm, which is considered unnecessary. It was proposed to use UCS and agree the quote for 36 weeks at a cost of £5364.80; agreed all in favour.

1. **To consider funding sources for the Town Hall works above and the future**.

The chairman noted this will be a challenge for the council to raise the funds for this.

There is currently £66,520 available but the expected costs could be as high as £140,000.

It was noted the council was refused a grant for £25,000 from Historic England.

Other ideas were invited by the Chairman. There is an action on all Cllrs to come up with ideas before the budget meeting.

The chairman called for a dedicated group to be formed to move this forward, and Cllrs Thomas and Pinnegar offered some assistance. Other than this, no help was forthcoming to support this very important activity. The chairman suggested approaching Mr P Smith, (an ex councillor) for assistance given his career in civil engineering. No objections.

*This completed the business of the Town Council at 9.15pm*

Signed: ……………………………………Dated: …………………………