#  Minutes of Wotton-under-Edge Town Council Meeting

#  Monday 18TH January 2021 (remote meeting due to Coronavirus)

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

## In attendance: Deputy Clerk Mrs Y Milsom, Assistant Clerk Mrs K Wilson, District Cllrs C Braun, G James, K Tucker

## Public 1

##  T.6153 Apologies for absence Cllrs P Barton and J Turner

##  T.6154 To receive Declarations of Interest/Dispensations None

## T.6155 Public Forum

A member of the public involved in WACAN had been asked by the Town Council for suggestions for the Gloucestershire County Council Ash Tree Dieback replanting project. She explained that:

* 400 trees have been planted at Knapp field as part of WACAN’s agreement with the Town Council but there was room for approximately half a dozen more.
* Other potential areas for consideration are:
	+ Old London Road – 400 metres of hedging
	+ Holywell Leaze
	+ Streamsfield

## T.6156 To receive reports from County Councillor and District Councillor

Cllr J Cordwell provided a written report, which had been circulated in advance and which included details of Electric Vehicle recharging opportunities.

A District Council report was circulated in advance. Cllr R Claydon noted three points of interest – Carbon Neutral 2030, CIL Payments, Universal Basic Income. Cllr C Braun gave more information and answered questions on CIL Payments and Cllr Tucker would forward CIL information that he had provided for North Nibley Parish Council.

##  T.6157 Minutes of the Council Meeting of 14th December 2020

## It was resolved to approve these Minutes, all in favour.

##  Minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting of 21st December 2020

## It was resolved to approve these Minutes, all in favour.

##  T.6158 Chairman’s Announcements Cllr R Claydon submitted a report in advance. There were no questions or comments.

*It was agreed by all to bring forward item 9 on the agenda*.

## T.6159 Ash Dieback Replacement Project

Four sites were mentioned as potential planting sites: Old London Road, Holywell Leaze, Sreamsfield and Knapp Field. It was resolved to agree to the suggested planting on Old London Road; not agree to planting at Holywell Leaze or Streamsfield at this time due to the potential effect on the views from those sites(and with no opportunity for site visits to find acceptable solutions); and to ask for input from Dominic Driver in respect of further planning at Knapp field. Agreed, all in favour.

*1 member of the public left the meeting*

##  T.6160 Accounts

* 1. **To approve hire of outgoing Clerk S Bailey on a locum basis** until a new Town Clerk is in place, at a cost of £20/month for authorisation of banking payments only. Approved, all in favour.
	2. **To approve appointment of internal auditor S Tasker**. It was resolved to appoint S Tasker as independent internal auditor in respect of Town Council and Town Trust for the financial year 2020/21 at a cost of £225 and £200 respectively. Agreed, all in favour.
	3. **To note completion of Councillor quarterly internal audits***.* Thanks were given to Cllr M Tucker for completing this task for the periods April – June 2020 and July – September 2020. Audit completion noted.
	4. **To approve Assistant Clerk and Administrator attendance at SLCC WordPress seminar** at a cost of £30 member and £35 non-member. Approved, all in favour.
	5. **To approve essential maintenance work on the fire systems/fire extinguishers as follows**
		1. *Civic Centre at a cost of £857.20*
		2. *Town Hall at a cost of £611.63*
		3. *Youth Centre at a cost of £281.92*

 It was resolved to approve all in favour. Cllr Claydon requested the Deputy Clerk to check if the Chipping Club Room was also up-to-date with its fire systems checks.

* 1. **Budget 2021.** Report noted.
	2. **To approve January accounts for payment**. Extra payment details were circulated. It was resolved to pay the amounts (net) £10,541.43 for the Town Council (with the proviso that the amount due for works to workshop lights was checked before the payment was made) and £4,261.29 for the Town Trust. Approved, all in favour.

##  T.6161 Budget & Precept 2020

* 1. **To approve Budget and set Precept for year 2021/22.** The budget sheet as agreed at the informal budget meeting in December had been circulated. It was resolved to approve a total budget figure of £368831, and precept of £328027 for the financial year 2021/2022, agreed all in favour.
	2. **To approve price increases for Town Council and Town Trust facilities from 1st April 2021**.

Price increases to the cemetery charges and allotment rent, as discussed at the informal budget meeting, had been circulated and were approved, all in favour.

* 1. **To approve grants awarded for Year 2021/22.** A document showing the grants agreed at the informal budget meeting was circulated and it was resolved to approve as presented therein, agreed all in favour.

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##  T.6162 Good Deeds Section: Thanks to Volunteers

To acknowledge recent volunteer work for the benefit of the town/community. Cllr T Luker requested that Robert Mann be thanked for his work in tidying the footpath from Holywell Leaze to Holywell Farm Bridge. A card will be sent.

##  T.6163 Clerk’s Report

The next written report to be provided when the new Clerk is appointed.

##  T.6164 Correspondence

Brochures/Newsletters for information only: The Door Story 2020 and The Clerks & Council Direct January 2021. Noted.

##  T.6165 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 R Claydon attended the following meetings - Greenway Steering Group and Beaumont Le Roger. Details were covered in his Chairman’s Report.

Cllr N Pinnegar attended the following meeting – Wotton Walking Festival. This is scheduled for May, but whether it goes ahead will depend on government restrictions, with the final decision to be taken at Easter.

Cllr D Thomas advised that the Councils application for the decarbonisation scheme had been rejected. He had approached the local MP to look into the constraints of the scheme.

##  T.6166 Town Affairs – very brief comments from Members or items for future agenda

Cllr T Luker mentioned that the OK Path has had some lights damaged and that hedge clippings had been left next to the path from recent hedge cutting. The Buildings Manager will look at the path and report back.

## T. 6167 Planning Item – S.20/2766/TCA 29 Long Street

As a time extension had been received on this application it was agreed to move this item to the planning meeting to be held on 25th January 2021.

*All District Cllrs and Mrs K Wilson 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**.**

It was proposed to enter into closed session; agreed all in favour.

## T. 6168 Appointment of new Clerk

1. To update on the recruitment of the new Clerk and agree the way forward. Satisfactory references had been received and it was resolved to appoint Ms A Durn on the same terms of the offer given on 21st December 2020, which had at that time been conditional on those references. Agreed all in favour.
2. To agree interim staffing arrangements. The office would be short-staffed until the new clerk could take up her position. Councillors were asked to limit the amount of work directed to the office during this period. It was resolved to appoint the Deputy Clerk Mrs Y Milsom to the temporary position of Acting Clerk for this period at the same salary rate of the former Town Clerk, pro rata; and to authorise overtime for staff rather than time in lieu for extra hours worked for this interim period. Agreed all in favour.

# TOWN TRUST MATTERS

### T.6169 Town Trust Minutes.

### To approve compilation of Town Trust Minutes dated July – December 2020 and Town Trust Meeting Minutes dated 1st September 2020. It was resolved to approve these Minutes, agreed all in favour.

It was resolved to exit closed session, agreed all in favour.

*This completed the business of the Town Council Meeting at 8.30pm*

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