



**Minutes of Wotton-under-Edge Town Council Meeting  
held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 7.00pm in the Civic Centre**

**Present:** Cllrs R Halpin (Deputy Chair), M Tucker, J Cordwell, D Thomas, B Britton-Griffiths, E Edwards, R Greenup, F Hulls, M Jeffery

**In attendance:** A Durn (Town Clerk), P Wilson (Buildings and Facilities Manager); Stroud District Cllr C Braun; plus 1 member of the public

**T.7716 To receive Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted for Cllrs L Hewish, J Lewis, P Underwood, and District Cllrs L Cohen, G Kitchen, and C Braun (late)

**T.7717 To receive Declarations of Interest and requests for Dispensations**

None received

**T.7718 To approve the Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026 and the ExtraOrdinary Town Council meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**

It was RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026 and the ExtraOrdinary Town Council meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

**T.7719 Public Forum**

A member of the public raised a query and objection over the inclusion of outgoing longstanding Councillors and former Chairmen of the Town Council having a page in the Wotton Directory on their reflections of 20 years and 18 years as a Town Councillor

The member of the public left the meeting

**T.7720 To receive reports from County Councillor and District Councillors  
County Cllr L Cohen had circulated the following report:**

**Headlines**

- Across the patch
- Grassroots fund projects supported so far
- Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) approves £698.4 million budget
- Council welcomes government investment in specialist SEND support
- Love where you live
- Safety of pre-school children and open windows
- Celebrating over a year of Youth Hubs supporting young people across Gloucestershire
- New Gloucestershire Business Board launched to drive economic growth
- Funding allocated to local employers for apprenticeship training

**News**

**Across the patch..**

It's been another busy month; here is just some of the work done locally supporting the community:

- **Agreeing Grassroots fund applications** (see below) and arranging to showcase supported projects.
- **Support to Kingswood Parish Council (PC)** with questions to full council regarding installation of a Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS), progress with TRO and consultation with PCs on proposed developments and highway mitigation. In principle agreement for TRO.
- **Query also from Stinchcombe** about VAS policy. Question raised with GCC director about lack of clear policy or definitive response. Guidelines to be issued in the new financial year.
- **Liaison with Highways** to address issue of potholes in Long Street. Work completed and done at 5am to avoid disruption to traders.
- **Taits Hill** – continue to support opposition to development. Email to GCC and Stroud District Council (SDC) officers strongly expressing concerns.
- **Youth provision** in Wotton and Kingswood ongoing work – liaison with senior cabinet member.
- **Arranged meeting with North Nibley** councillor and Highways to look first hand at road issues around North Nibley/Waterley Bottom following closure of Rushmire Hill. Positive response by Highways Manager and remedial works in hand.
- **Support for Stinchcombe Children’s Day.** Half term Not So Secret Book Club attended by over 100 children at newly renovated village hall. Activities included making robots, snakes, glove puppets, bracelets and Mother’s Day cards. Lots of paint, glue and inspiration, stories and books.
- **Coombe Road speed survey** arranged.
- **Support implementation of Kingswood section of Greenway** – ongoing.
- **Support for Early Learning Unit in Bloor Homes Kingswood planning application** – ongoing.
- **Progress Thornbury tip access** – ongoing discussions ongoing with PC to find solution
- **Visit all schools and local organisations** -arrangements being made.
- **Meet with each Parish and Town Council** - to review and set priorities. I regard these as important to structure my work with all the local councils and I will be monitoring progress regularly and discussing needs for ongoing support.

### **Grassroots fund projects supported so far**

I have given my support to the following projects and will be arranging to visit and see them in action. There is still a small pot of money left for other projects, and I would encourage groups to think widely about possible ideas. Do feel free to speak to me directly if you think there is a local initiative that could benefit.

Synwell Playing Field Assn - Improve toddler area
Mens Shed - Fit out the remaining two containers and install solar energy power source

Allsorts - Keep the Hub open, safe and welcoming – covering essential costs while sustaining outreach sessions across the county

Wotton In Bloom - make the main streets of the town more attractive by installing containers of summer flowers.

Parent and Carer Alliance - Sensory play and support at the Vibe.

North Nibley – play area improvements

Inspire Therapeutic Services – mental health support services

JFMC Hopkins Hall – improvements to pavilion and changing facilities on village field

The Keepers – set up Creative Wellbeing Group
Wotton Town Council - Symn Lane playground project
Hillesley School – outdoor pre-school at Forest School
Stroud Area Community Energy Network - Fund a part-time Community Coordinator for local Community Energy Network
Wotton Pride – application pending
Hillesley Tennis Club – application pending

### **Council approves £698.4 million budget**

Gloucestershire County Council has approved its ambitious £698.4 million budget for 2026/27. The spending plans for 2026/27 will see spending rise by more than £33.3 million on 2025/26 levels, to almost £700 million.

The £698.4 million proposed budget includes significant investment by the council to improve road safety, education for young people, and continued support for the most vulnerable people in the county.

An additional £15 million is proposed to be spent over the next three years on improving the quality and safety of the county's roads. In addition, £2 million will be spent on improving road safety over the next two years.

A total of £21.1 million will be spent on delivering the new special schools in Gloucester and Cheltenham, allowing more young people to be educated closer to home. A further £2.7 million will be invested in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services.

Towards a total investment of £57 million, there will be £6.55 million committed next year towards the building of three new care homes in the county.

Household Waste Recycling Centres across the county will benefit from improvements with £3.9 million set to be invested over the next four years.

Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service will see £2.5 million spent on new frontline vehicles, £1.5 million towards a new training facility, and £1.3 million to make improvements to Cinderford Fire Station.

The budget has been approved following a public consultation. This consultation saw 44 per cent of respondents support the proposals to increase Council Tax and the Adult Social Care Precept. The proposed increase reflects unavoidable pressures on the council and supports the continued delivery of essential services.

The budget proposes raising an additional £27.4 million to help fund services through a Council Tax increase of 2.99% and a further 2% increase in the Adult Social Care precept, which will specifically support work with the most vulnerable adults in the county. Based on a band D property, residents would pay an additional £1.61 each week.

The council is also looking at the way it works to generate more income, reduce costs and make its money go further. This will create £32.3 million in savings for the council's budget in 2026/27.

The Liberal Democrat administration welcomed input from all county councillors and groups, we believe in working collaboratively to achieve the very best outcomes with our very tight budgets. Several amendments to the budget were proposed by The Green Party and Labour and agreed and adopted as part of the council's spending plans.

- £10,000 to provide short-term flexible help for young people's travel costs
- £110,000 to fund a zebra crossing to link two sections of the Cam and Dursley 'Green Way'
- £80,000 to make improvements to Public Rights of Way
- £80,000 to sponsor two care leavers to undertake the Level 3 Youth Qualification for two years
- £100,000 to maintain the funding of the Community Climate Grant, to support community-led environmental projects
- £20,000 to fund Particulate Matter monitors in high-risk schools

### **Council welcomes government investment in specialist SEND support**

Gloucestershire County Council has welcomed the Government's announcement of additional investment to support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), recognising that the reforms build on strong foundations already in place locally.

The Government has said that every child with additional needs will benefit from better, more tailored support, backed by £4 billion of national investment to make every school more inclusive and improve outcomes for children with SEND.

Mainstream schools will receive a share of £1.6 billion over three years to boost inclusion, while a further £1.8 billion will help provide better access to external support.

Under the new plans, pupils' special educational needs will be met through a layered system of support. Education, health and care plans (EHCPs) will be reserved for children with the most complex needs, with schools creating Individual Support Plans (ISPs) for pupils with less complex needs. These will be guided by new national inclusion standards and a statutory duty for schools to set out their approach to inclusion. The ['Every Child Achieving and Thriving'](#) white paper and associated [SEND consultation](#) outline proposals expected to take effect from 2029.

Gloucestershire enters this next phase of SEND reform from a position of strength.

The county already has:

- A well-established Graduated Pathway
- A SEND & Education Inclusion Strategy which was extended to September 2026 to align with national reform
- A multi-agency SEND & Inclusion Local Area Partnership (SILAP) with active governance and a strong improvement plan

The reforms align with Gloucestershire's existing direction of travel – the partnership's approach which is embedded locally as best practice is becoming national policy. The county council is committed to continuing to ensure children receive the help and support they need and will work with children, families, schools and partners to deliver these changes.

## **Love where you live**

We all love our beautiful part of the country and are fortunate to live here. Everyone deserves to live in a clean environment.

The Great British Spring Clean will take place from **13 to 29 March 2026**. This is a great chance to encourage residents to get involved and tackle litter. Many Parish Councils will have their own days arranged for residents to get together and tidy up their streets and communities. As important, these can be a social event and build connections.

But it's not just about litter or one-off events. By taking care of the immediate area where you live, you can help improve your environment. This might be by keeping drains clear of leaves, tackling overgrown vegetation or tidying a verge. Small collective actions can make a big change and build relationships in local communities so everyone can feel good about where they live.

If anyone is interested in setting up a local group the following are worth contacting;

[Homepage | Keep Britain Tidy cleanupuk | Home](#)

## **Safety of pre-school children and open windows**

As the weather is improving, we start to open windows and enjoy more fresh air, however..

Parents often see falls from windows as 'freak' accidents but the statistics belie that view. In fact, nationally, one child under ten is admitted to hospital every day after falling from a building – often from open windows but also from balconies. In the last six years, [16 children under 11 have died](#).

Why are pre-school children at particular risk?

Pre-school children are particularly susceptible to falls from a height:

- They are curious and want to see what's happening outside but have no real understanding of danger.
- They can take parents by surprise by a sudden breakthrough in their development. You think they don't climb but, before you know it, they can clamber up on furniture or haul their toy box across the floor and open a window. And accidents can happen very quickly, when your back is turned or you're distracted for a minute.
- Small children are built differently to adults – their heads are proportionally much bigger than ours, so they have a different centre of gravity. This means that, if they lean out of a window, they may topple out. And when they land, their head takes much of the impact.

Practical safety advice

- Keep low furniture away from windows so that children can't climb up and fall out – even on the ground floor
- If you can, install window restrictors (to limit how far they can open) or locks
- If you opt for a lock keep the keys somewhere you can find them in case there's a fire and you need to get out
- If your window won't lock or you need to open the window wider because of heat or cooking, don't leave young children alone in the room
- Keep young children away from balconies unless they are supervised and keep balcony doors locked when not in use.

Window locks and restrictors save lives. [Child Accident Prevention Trust | A safer world for all our children](#)

### **Celebrating over a year of Youth Hubs supporting young people across Gloucestershire**

Gloucestershire County Council is celebrating over a year of impact from its commissioned Youth Hubs, delivered in partnership with three not-for-profit organisations working across the county.

Together, these services form the Gloucestershire Commissioned Youth Service (GCYS) which is a coordinated network that offers early help, prevention, and positive opportunities for young people aged 11 to 25.

GCYS launched in October 2024 to ensure young people feel safe, supported, and able to thrive within their local communities. Over the past year, delivery partners The Children's Society, Family Action, and Gloucestershire Gateway Trust, have created vibrant and welcoming youth spaces across the county.

Since opening, the Youth Hubs combined have welcomed over 14,000 visits from young people, supporting them with their mental health, education and learning new skills. They offer specialist youth support groups for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Youth Hubs are inclusive spaces where young people can build confidence, make connections and get support. They also provide holiday activities during the spring, summer and winter holidays with activities including sports, art and outdoor learning. Beyond the hub spaces, staff are also able to reach young people where they live and collaborate with local partners to provide support.

Youth Hubs will continue to expand their offer in 2026, with new programmes, more targeted support, training for young people and staff, and more opportunities to enable young people to shape services in their area.

### **New Gloucestershire Business Board launched to drive economic growth**

A new Gloucestershire Business Board (GBB) has been established to give local businesses a stronger voice in shaping the county's economic future.

The Board replaces the previous Economic Growth Board and will take a more dynamic, business-led approach to supporting growth, investment and innovation. It will provide strategic oversight of Gloucestershire's economic development agenda, ensuring that business insight directly informs countywide policy and major investment decisions.

The GBB will be co-chaired by Cllr Julian Tooke, cabinet member for business, economic development, planning and infrastructure at Gloucestershire County Council, and Rob Stemp, an experienced cyber security leader, entrepreneur and board advisor.

Membership will include around 12 to 15 senior business leaders representing key sectors, alongside representatives from education, local government, and the voluntary and community sector.

The Board will oversee business engagement across the county, including the Growth Hub network, sector-specific business engagement, and Invest in Gloucestershire. It will also advise the City Region Board and Leadership Gloucestershire on strategic economic issues.

### **Funding allocated to local employers for apprenticeship training**

Gloucestershire County Council is helping more local employers train and develop their staff by allocating a share of unused apprenticeship funding.

Large organisations such as GCC pay into a national Apprenticeship Levy, which can only be spent on apprenticeship training. If these funds are not used within two years, the money is taken back by the government.

To make sure this money stays in Gloucestershire, the county council chooses to transfer a share of its unused funds to local employers each year. This means smaller organisations, or those who have used up their own funding, can still take on apprentices or upskill their workforce at no extra training cost.

Since 2019, the council has transferred over £1.5 million to local employers. Most of this support has gone to adult social care and early years childcare – sectors that continue to face challenges recruiting and keeping staff. Apprenticeships in health, construction, engineering, education and, more recently, youth support services, have also been given support.

Demand has grown significantly, as between April 2025 and January 2026, more than 200 applications for support were received. That is expected to reach around 250 by the end of March.

Each year the county council publishes its funding pledge on the national apprenticeship website. Gloucestershire employers can apply online, and only organisations based in the county are eligible, ensuring the funding benefits local people and businesses.

Any queries to be sent to County Cllr L Cohen.

The Stroud District Councillors report was deferred to later in the meeting when District Cllr C Braun joined the meeting

#### **T.7721      Accounts**

- a) The transfer of funds (UT Instant Access to UT Current Account) was noted
- b) It was RESOLVED to agree to the following changes to the Town Council Unity Trust Bank Accounts (Current & Instant Access)
  - i) Addition of Locum Deputy RFO (agreed January)
  - ii) Addition of Cllrs L Hewish and R Halpin (agreed February)
  - iii) Addition of Cllr M Tucker
  - iv) Removal of Cllrs P Smith and R Claydon who resigned
- c) It was RESOLVED to agree to add Cllrs L Hewish, R Halpin, M Tucker as signatories to the CCLA savings account
- d) It was RESOLVED to approve quote from Otis Elevator company to update the alarm system in Civic Centre lift
- e) It was RESOLVED to approve bespoke Councillor training from Gloucestershire Association of Local Councils and to support the Town Clerk in CiLCA training
- f) It was noted that Cllr D Thomas & J Lewis will carry out next quarterly audit on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026
- g) The timetable for Independent Internal Audit was noted
- h) The changes to the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/2026 Assertion 10 were noted
- g) The Budget 2025/26 report was noted.
- h) It was RESOLVED to approve the March 2026 accounts for payment

**T.7722 CCTV Upgrade**

The proposal was reviewed. It was RESOLVED to agree to Redhand to upgrade the CCTV system and cameras for Wotton Under Edge

**T.7723 Dissolution of Wotton Under Edge and District Recreational Trust**

The solicitor's responses were reviewed. A query was raised on the impact on insurance on taking on the liability.

**T.7724 Water Quality Monitoring**

The proposal and agreement from Wessex Water for monitoring the water quality at Dyers Brook was reviewed. It was RESOLVED to approve the agreement with a request that the vehicular access would only be through Durns Road.

District Cllr C Braun joined the meeting

**T.7725 Synwell Village Green**

The proposed management plan to increase the biodiversity of Synwell Green was reviewed. It was RESOLVED to agree to the management plan.

**T.7726 To receive report from District Councillors**

**District Cllrs C Braun, G Kitchen, and L Cohen had circulated the following report:**

**Wotton-under-Edge, North Nibley & Stinchcombe**

Along with residents' casework and in addition to council meetings at Ebley Mill and elsewhere, Cllrs Kitchen, Braun & Cohen attended the regular council meetings at [North Nibley](#), [Stinchcombe](#) & [Wotton-under-Edge](#).

**Council meetings**

*Link to meeting agenda and documents in the committee title.*

**[Full Council - 19th February 2026](#)**

**Annual budget meeting**, to agree the final SDC budget and also the council tax for 2026/27. Council tax comprises four elements - to pay for the county council, district council, Gloucestershire police, and the parish or town council services. Council tax rates vary from parish to parish, depending on the parish precept. The final council tax figures for Stroud district parishes can be found [here](#).

This budget will increase the council tax by 2.99% (£7.27pa) to £250.35 at Band D, an increase of under 14p per week for the services provided by Stroud District Council.

The budget identifies funding for priority initiatives as well as support or ongoing services and includes a commitment of £1.3million to community services, health and well-being and community safety initiatives.

Social and affordable rents for council houses will increase by 4.8% in line with national rent guidance limits. The Council will be investing a further £9.9million in new council homes for next year. Nationally, Stroud District is in the top 30 council house builders in the country, building more council homes than Manchester.

It was noted that the final local government financial settlement from the Government, announced only a few days before the budget was finalised, will mean reduced funding for the following two financial years from 2027.

The **Council Plan** which sets out the priorities for the Council, has undergone an annual review, and the updated version for 2025-2029 was approved ([link](#)).

The **Council Constitution** was updated to reflect some minor changes and councillors voted to change the rules for council meetings, to bring them in line with committee meetings, meaning that councillors will no longer be required to stand when they speak in the meeting.

Council agreed to support a national [letter](#) about **proposed planning reforms** to the Secretary of State, asking the Government to remove the proposed restriction which would prevent councils in their Local Plan from requiring developers to build new homes to net zero operational standards, higher than the national minimum standard.

The **Civic Timetable** setting all the dates for council and committee meetings in 2026/27 was approved ([link](#)). Meetings of the Development Control Committee which deals with planning applications, will henceforth be scheduled more frequently, on a monthly cycle.

**Documents approved were:**

- The General Fund Budget, Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Plan.
- The Council's Treasury Management & Investment Strategies for 2026/27.
- The Council Tax Support Scheme for 2026/27 - providing up to 100% support for vulnerable residents (currently over 5,000 households in the district benefit from this scheme).

- [Video recording](#)

**[Environment Committee - 26th February 2026](#)**

- **Contaminated Land** Inspection Strategy approved. SDC must survey and locate any potentially contaminated land then produce a strategy that explains how it will identify and assess those sites, carry out inspections, and secure remediation when required. To date, it is estimated that 450 of the 1746 sites currently identified have been investigated remediated or deemed suitable for use. The updated strategy details the complete procedure from detection through assessment to clean-up.
- **Climate & Nature Decision Tool.** A new tool was approved that will provide summary information about the impacts of any decision on aspects of climate, nature and the environment to inform significant decisions taken by the Council and its officers

**Member Reports included:**

- **Climate Leadership Gloucestershire.** Selected three of five grant applications (total £80k) for climate projects in Cheltenham and Tewkesbury and funding for the Gloucestershire Nature & Climate Fund. Work was noted on the climate impact and adaptation aspects of the new GCC Spatial Development Plan. The group also endorsed the letter opposing limits on local authorities setting net-zero standards for new buildings and referenced recent briefing notes by the group on Warm Homes and the National Planning Policy Framework consultation.
- **Gloucestershire Resource & Waste Partnership** This group takes a collaborative approach across district & county councils to share best practice, trial a range of initiatives & work towards more unified waste arrangements in

preparation for unitarisation, retaining local specialisms where these are beneficial.

- Communications will be focused on two recycling priorities to support the new 'Simpler Recycling' arrangements: food-waste and flexible plastics, leveraging national campaigns.
- Reported steady reductions in household waste with just over half of waste now recycled, and this recycling rate is above the national average. Aim to further increase recycling, driven by carbon-metric targets and upcoming incineration taxes.
- Explored improvements such as smaller bins, less-frequent collections, and differentiated regimes for flats, with benchmarking against top-performing regions like Wales (an exemplar through consistency & Govt. investment).
- Piloting a "Fast Food litter" app (for rollout in spring), proposal for the voluntary code of practice for food-on-the-go to be mandatory, and a fuel-station plastic glove-removal trial by Tesco was successful and councils will request that it is rolled out nationally.
- **Lower Severn Internal Drainage Board**
  - Secured an additional £2m loan from the Public Works Loan Board for pump projects amid rising construction costs.
  - Highlighted ongoing works: 2,750 home residential development at Berkeley, land-owner enforcement at Tockington and drainage maintenance at Lydney.
  - Noted funding pressures after the Environment Agency ends its flood-defence maintenance program and rising electricity costs for pump operations.
  - Raised concerns with Ofgem over the volatility of electricity bills for drainage boards, emphasising limited progress from those discussions.
- **Minchinhampton & Rodborough Commons Advisory Committee**
  - Completed a visitor-journey audit of Rodborough Common (late 2025); identified need for dog-walker signage and cohesive visitor messaging.
  - Faced reduced National Trust funding, prompting greater reliance on volunteers and staff-led maintenance.
  - Launched a grazing-recruitment drive to replace retiring grazers and sustain ecological management.
  - Scheduled a public talk, 7pm 18 March 2026 at Rodborough Community Hall, by Prof. Chris Short on environmental governance.
  - Marking Day 2006 celebration on 16 May 2026 details to follow.
- [Video recording](#)

#### Other news

- **Council reorganisation** - Residents are encouraged to [share their views](#) about the three proposals to reorganise the district councils and county council in Gloucestershire before a Government consultation closes on 26 March.
  - **For info** - A majority of Stroud District Councillors (including the three Wotton ward councillors) voted to support a single unitary council for Gloucestershire. This is due to the disadvantages that would arise, for

residents in Stroud district, if the county is split into two unitary councils for the East and West, and due to the extra cost, complexity and duplication that dividing county council services would cause.

- **Crowdfunding** Stroud District Council invites community groups to [explore crowdfunding support](#) with free workshops. There will be two free online workshops in early March to get ready for the Spring 2026 funding window on [Wednesday 4 March, 12–1pm](#) and [Thursday 5 March, 6–7pm](#) Project creators will need to have their crowdfunding page live on the Stroud Funding platform by 6 May 2026.
- **Canal clean-up** restores pride in Stroud’s waterways. SDC has been carrying out a targeted clean-up operation along sections of the Stroudwater Navigation to remove graffiti and repaint areas where marks cannot be safely cleaned away. This work is helping to improve the look and feel of the area and is partly funded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Gloucestershire. To report graffiti or damage in our district, please visit [www.stroud.gov.uk/report-it](http://www.stroud.gov.uk/report-it)

District Cllr C Braun encouraged everyone to complete the Local Government Reorganisation consultation. She reported on the Stroud Lido repairs. She reported on the funding opportunity for the District Council Climate Change grants with a maximum of £4999.

District Cllr C Braun was thanked for her report and for attending and answering queries.

#### **T.7727 Election of Membership to Committees, Working Groups, and Partnerships:**

Concerns were raised about the time availability of Councillors for Working Groups, Committees, and Community Organisation representation.

The following Councillors were put forward:

- a) Planning Committee – All Councillors
- b) Remembrance Parade Working Group – Cllrs M Tucker, B Britton-Griffiths
- c) Allotments Working Group – Cllrs J Lewis, D Thomas, R Halpin
- d) PROW/Amenity Areas Working Group – Cllrs J Cordwell, J Lewis, R Halpin
- e) Town Regeneration and Events Working Group – Cllrs F Hulls, B Britton-Griffiths
- f) Commemoration Working Group – Cllr D Thomas, P Underwood
- g) Finance and Special Purposes Committee – Cllrs L Hewish, R Halpin, M Tucker, D Thomas, J Cordwell
- h) Strategic Planning Working Group – Cllr J Cordwell, R Halpin
- i) Car Park Working Group – Full Council
- j) Climate Change Working Group – All Councillors

#### **T.7728 Appointment of Representatives to organisations:**

- a) Wotton & District Recreation Trust – Cllrs M Tucker, B Britton-Griffiths
- b) Beaumont-le-Roger Society – Cllr L Hewish, B Britton-Griffiths

- c) Wotton Youth Partnership - defer
- d) Wotton-under-Edge General Charities – Cllrs J Lewis, E Edwards, F Hulls
- e) Wotton-under-Edge Combined Charities – Cllr E Edwards, F Hulls
- f) Wotton Community Sports Foundation – Cllr E Edwards, R Greenup (sub)
- g) Snow Warden – Cllrs R Halpin, E Edwards
- h) Water Course Warden – Cllrs R Halpin, E Edwards
- i) Wotton Area Climate Action Network – Cllr D Thomas, F Hulls (sub)
- j) Rural Services Network – Cllr M Tucker
- k) Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum – Cllr M Tucker (Director)
- l) Synwell Playing Fields Committee – Cllr J Lewis
- m) Wotton-under-Edge Swimming Pool – Cllr E Edwards, R Greenup (sub)
- n) Wotton in Bloom – Cllr M Tucker
- o) Under The Edge Arts – Cllr R Halpin
- p) Greenway Group – Cllr M Tucker

Cllrs D Thomas, M Jeffery, and F Hulls would hold a Solar Panels Working Group. The Keepers Community Hub to be asked if they wish to have a Town Councillor representative as a Trustee.

#### **T.7729 EV Chargers**

Cllr D Thomas asked the Council to pursue the installation of ev-chargers in the new Symn Lane car park if the Town Council accepts handover. It was RESOLVED to ask Gloucestershire County Council on including the car park into their ev-charger programme.

#### **T.7730 Commemoration**

Cllr D Thomas would work with Cllr P Underwood on commemoration nominations and proposals.

#### **T.7731 Projects**

##### a) Town Hall & Chipping Hall

The first validation certificate was agreed to be signed off. Works have commenced on removing the rotten timbers and preparing stonework and windows. Agreement on use of the Town Hall by hirers and the contractor was achieved with some hirers transferring to other venues including the Civic Centre.

##### b) Symn Lane Play Area Improvement Project

The installation of the new equipment is near completion with an opening launch being prepared for the start of the Easter holidays.

##### c) Symn Lane Car Park

The Town Council's consultant, Stripe Consulting, has had the first meeting with the developer and his Project Manager raising queries to be resolved. Cllr M Tucker to attend a meeting with the Town Clerk, Gloucestershire County Council Lighting Manager and contractor W&N Adams.

##### d) Solar Panel Project Civic Centre

The structural engineer has carried out an initial assessment. It was agreed for him to write up a feasibility report.

#### **T.7732 Brief reports from Councillors**

Cllr D Thomas reported that Wotton Area Climate Action Network (WACAN) held a public social evening on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at the Chipping Hall and went through their major projects planned for 2026. It was well attended.

**T.7733 EXEMPT: Prior to consideration of the following agenda items, councillors are invited to pass the following resolution: Pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by S100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that its consideration would involve the disclosure of exempt information**  
It was RESOLVED for the Public and Press to leave the meeting

P Wilson (Buildings & Facilities Manager), and District Cllrs C Braun left the meeting

**T.7734 Bequest**

The responses were reviewed and discussed. It was RESOLVED to agree to the professional report recommendations and the other beneficiary responses.

**T.7735 Staffing Report**

It was reported that the Assistant Clerk had resigned from the Town Council. It was RESOLVED to agree to her last day being the 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026 which includes annual leave and TOIL. The Town Council thanked her for all her hard work over the 20 years she had been at the Council.

The Town Clerk reported on the impact of the Town Council decisions on staffing over the last 4 years and on the recent resignations. There followed a heated discussion and a dispute on the Town Clerk's advice from the external employment law team. The Town Clerk sought clarification and Cllr Greenup stated that she had contacted the lawyer direct. The Town Clerk reminded all Councillors that Councillors do not have the authority to contact professional advisors, consultants, or contractors as that is one of the roles of the Town Clerk as Proper Officer, such behaviour can cause unauthorised invoices being presented to the Town Council and can cause disputes.

Due to the length of the meeting, the Town Council RESOLVED to suspend Standing Orders to enable the completion of the agenda

It was RESOLVED to call a Finance and Special Purposes Committee to review salary grading evaluation

**T.7736 Clerk's Report**

The Town Clerk reported that she looked forward to the bespoke training. There were no further actions requested.

The meeting ended at 10.25pm

Signed:

Date: