

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE OF WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ONLINE USING ZOOM ON MONDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 7.30 P.M.

Committee members present: Councillor A Crawford (Chairman)
Councillors I R Cameron, A Dunford, A. Duveen, T Gilhome, J Goodman, JT Hannaby, E L Johnson, A C Menzies, P M O'Leary, J Sibbald and C H Wills-Wright.

Others present: Sabiene North of Be Free Young Carers (up to item 27)
2 members of the public (up to item 39)

Town Clerk: W P Falkenau

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor O C Curley, I L Sheldon and C Walters.

Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

Councillor Hannaby declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the Hospital League of Friends and a Trustee of the Wantage Nursing Home Trust.

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2020

The Clerk clarified that the minutes were accurate but that he had misspoke at the meeting. He had stated that a payment to Sweatbox had been made, when in fact it had not been at the time of the meeting.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Sibbald
SECONDED BY Councillor Menzies
IT WAS RESOLVED THAT the minutes be approved.

26. Statements and Questions from the Public

None.

27. Briefings by applicants for donations and grants

a) Be Free Young Carers

Sabine North thanked the Council for their previous donations. She then provided an update on how their services had changed as a result of the Covid-19 situation. All of the services provided by Be Free Young Carers had now been moved online but their face to face respite sessions would be resuming in October. Due to the current situation many of their fundraising opportunities have been lost and, with 75 young carers now to help, further support was required. She was thanked for her briefing and she left the meeting.

28. Matters arising from the minutes

a) Update re CCTV

The Clerk had emailed again Inspector Cain at Thames Valley Police but so far no formal support for a CCTV camera in Wallingford Street had been given. The Clerk was to chase for a response. **Action: Clerk**

b) Update on opening accounts with financial institutions

The Chairman had given the Clerk details of a bank to contact. The Clerk was to progress this. **Action: Clerk**

c) Update on plans for part pedestrianisation of the Market Place

A meeting of the Market Place Pedestrianisation working group had been called to discuss what improvements would be needed to the western end pedestrianised area, if the closure was to become permanent.

d) Youth Community Project

The Clerk was to contact Ms Hicks of Sweatbox to discuss what progress has been made since the start of the new school year. **Action: Clerk**

e) Market Policies and Procedures

The procedures were yet to be updated. As the fees were currently waived this was not an immediate issue and will be updated once charges were reinstated. **Action: Clerk**

f) Future ownership and maintenance responsibilities for the Manor Road Memorial Park

An online meeting had taken place with a property officer at the District Council to discuss future responsibilities for the Manor Road Memorial Park and the public toilets in the Portway car park. The officer had been recently recruited to the role and was prioritising her work to Abingdon and Wallingford. It was hoped she would be able to consider properties in Wantage by the end of October.

g) Reopening the High Street Safely Fund

No invitation had yet been received for a nomination to the steering group which would oversee the projects. The Town Centre Manager has been in dialogue with a District Council Economic Development Officer regarding the utilisation of the fund.

h) Update re Kingsgrove Community Hall

The Community Church were in discussion with St Modwen about providing funding to increase the size of the hall. St Modwen hoped to provide an update within 2 months.

i) Temporary part pedestrianisation of the Market Place

A survey was being conducted with a deadline for completion of 31st October. The responses will be reviewed and further discussions will take place after this.

POLICY

29. To consider email dated 12 August 2020 from Wantage & District Chamber of Commerce regarding parking in the town centre.

The Chamber of Commerce had published a letter addressed to the Town Council, and other parties, raising concerns about parking and raising the need to safeguard its provision in the town centre. The Clerk had received an email from Mr Shepherd of the Chamber, expressing particular concern about the proposal to temporarily pedestrianise the northern end of Newbury Street and the prospective loss of more parking spaces. Councillor Goodman, the Chairman of the Chamber, also mentioned that the provision of a significant number of additional parking spaces within the town centre should equally be an aim of the Town Council. It was noted that these were matters that would come under consideration as part of the review of the outcome of the survey under item 28 i).

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Sibbald

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, should send a formal response to the Chamber of Commerce taking account of the discussion in the meeting,

Action: Clerk/Chairman

30. To consider whether to extend waiving of market tolls beyond end of September

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Gilhome

SECONDED BY Councillor Hannaby

IT WAS RESOLVED that market tolls be waived to the end of November.

31. Minutes of Climate Emergency Sub-committee meeting held on 7 September 2020.

E f) Update re Action Plan

An action plan had been distributed. It was proposed that the first item to be addressed should be to calculate the carbon footprint of the Council and identify ways reductions could be made.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford

SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Clerk provide within a month the information required to calculate the carbon footprint of the Council.

Action: Clerk

E h) Update from Mr Wilkin of HARBUG - request for a sign at the bottom of Lark Hill directing cyclists to the cycle path from Lark Hill to Lockinge.

Councillor Hannaby agreed to ask the County Council's Highways Officer whether the County Council could install the sign.

Action: Hannaby

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford

SECONDED BY Councillor Gilhome

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Climate Emergency sub-committee should purchase and install a sign, if the County Council was unable to do so.

The minutes as updated were adopted.

32. Report from the Health Sub-committee meeting held on 23 September 2020.

The pipework at the Community Hospital had been replaced, removing the legionella risk.

The maternity unit was due to reopen on 1st October. The League of Friends had re-decorated the maternity unit in preparation for its re-opening. The Health Trust had indicated that it would not be viable to re-open the beds at Wantage Community Hospital at this time but that further consultation would have to take place. The Clerk was to call a further meeting of the sub-committee as soon as possible.

Action: Clerk

33. To consider update to "Sundry Policies"

The policies had been updated with regard to flag flying days and giving more detail concerning the Town Council's property. Reference to allotment shed bonds was also to be removed.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Sibbald

SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson

IT WAS RESOLVED that the updates to "Sundry Policies" be adopted.

34. To consider London Bridge procedures.

This was moved to be dealt with as a confidential item.

35. Covid-19 situation update.

Despite the reservations of the District Council, relating to the Covid-19 risk, the Riding Master for the October Fair was still keen to proceed. He was confident that he could meet all the obligations arising from Covid-19. Whilst he had provided a plan, a Covid-19 risk assessment was still awaited.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Johnson

SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

IT WAS RESOLVED that a Covid-19 risk assessment be required from the Riding Master by the end of the week. A decision on whether to allow the October fair to proceed was to be delegated to the committee chairmen, based on whether the risks were deemed acceptable.

It was noted that the Dickensian Evening had been cancelled but the Christmas lights would still be installed as usual. The Town Mayor announced that the Carols service would still proceed but would be pre-recorded virtually over Facebook live. Discussions were had regarding additional market days in the Western end of the Market Place, in the run up to Christmas. The Town Centre Manager had been speaking with traders and local crafts people regarding Christmas markets and further discussions were to take place.

MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

36. To consider response to the Internal Audit report of 29 July 2020.

The auditor raised a number of points regarding petty cash, employment contracts and CIL money. The report was noted, and either the Clerk would deal with them or refer them to whatever committee or sub-committee had responsibility. **Action: Clerk**

37. Financial Statements to September 2020.

The Financial Statements were considered. There was a year to date surplus of £197k versus a full year projected budget deficit of £4k. There were shortfalls in market and fair incomes due to Covid-19. A Town Centre Manager contribution of £17k had been received in the previous financial year. A second contribution due in the current financial year was likely to be deferred to the next financial year. Overall, the financial position of the Town Council remained satisfactory.

38. Accounts for Payment.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Sibbald

SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

IT WAS RESOLVED that the accounts for payment in the sum of £60,060.17 (attached) be approved

39. General correspondence

None.

Confidential items

ON THE PROPOSITION of the Chairman

IT WAS RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press be excluded.

34. To consider London Bridge procedures.

The procedures were noted. It was agreed that they were suitable and that they be adopted. The Town Mayor was thanked for his work in preparing them.

40. To consider donation requests

a) Be Free Young Carers

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Sibbald

SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson

IT WAS RESOLVED that a donation of £5,000 be made to Be Free Young Carers. This was to be paid as one amount, rather than by instalments.

Action: Clerk

Other business

The Town Mayor reported that he had put forward a number of names for awards.

The meeting closed at 9.22 pm.

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Wantage Town Council

Accounts for Payment - July to September 2020

Date	Payee	Description	Powers	Ref	£
01/08/2020	Abbey Properties	Market Attendant's shed rent	OA 1985	SO	100.00
01/09/2020	Abbey Properties	Market Attendant's shed rent	OA 1985	SO	100.00
21/08/2020	NEST	Pension contribution payments	Office	DD	387.05
21/09/2020	NEST	Pension contribution payments	Office	DD	386.35
21/08/2020	Staff - various	August payroll	Office/OA1985	Bacs	8,645.30
21/09/2020	Staff - various	September payroll	Office/OA1985	Bacs	8,638.90
01/08/2020	VWHDC	Cemetery Rates	Burials	DD	75.00
01/08/2020	VWHDC	Rates for Market	OA1985	DD	247.00
01/08/2020	VWHDC	Rates for car park	OA1985	DD	404.00
01/09/2020	VWHDC	Cemetery Rates	Burials	DD	75.00
01/09/2020	VWHDC	Rates for Market	OA1985	DD	247.00
01/09/2020	VWHDC	Rates for car park	OA1985	DD	404.00
		Total direct debits			19,709.60
23/07/2020	L Smith	Cleaning bus shelters	Street furniture	Online	65.00
23/07/2020	White Horse Horticulture	Cemetery/play area grass cutting and mtce	Burials/open spaces	Online	1,185.00
23/07/2020	SGW Payroll	July payroll processing charges	Office/OA1985	Online	73.08
23/07/2020	Barclaycard	Laptops, Covid-19 items, Qickbooks	LGA72/S137	Online	2,287.45
14/08/2020	M Merchant	Design of Covid-19 items	S137	Online	110.00
14/08/2020	Oxford County Council	West end MP closure order	S137	Online	3,468.00
14/08/2020	P Ley	Dummy newsletter	Information	Online	255.00
14/08/2020	Roy Breakspear	Skips for cemetery	Burials	Online	400.00
14/08/2020	Solopress	Covid-19 banners and leaflets	S137	Online	659.43
07/09/2020	SGW Payroll	August payroll processing charges	Office/OA1985	Online	69.60
07/09/2020	White Horse Horticulture	Cemetery/play area grass cutting and mtce	Burials/open spaces	Online	2,015.00
07/09/2020	Wantage Army Cadets	Donation	Recreation	Online	1,500.00
07/09/2020	Barclaycard	Laptops, Covid-19 items, Qickbooks, flags, postage, keys	LGA72/S137, allotments	Online	2,013.41
07/09/2020	IAC	Internal audit services	LGA72	Online	420.00
28/09/2020	Crab Hill Devt Ltd	Rent for Grove Road allotments	Allotments	Online	3,836.40
28/09/2020	Wantage Silver Band	Bugler	S137	Online	140.00
28/09/2020	BT	Telephone services	Office	Online	90.32
28/09/2020	HMRC	2nd quarter PAYE	Office/OA1985	Online	6,064.99
28/09/2020	Barclaycard	Mobile for TCM, Covid-19 items, Qickbooks, staionery	LGA72/S137	Online	965.89
28/09/2020	Sweatbox	50% annual grant	Recreation	Online	6,800.00
28/09/2020	October Club	Annual grant	Leisure	Online	3,150.00
28/09/2020	Be Free Young Carers	Balance of 2019/20 grant	Tourism	Online	2,500.00
28/09/2020	Hime Start Southern	Donation	Leisure	Online	2,000.00
28/09/2020	Defibstore	Defibrilator battery - The Beacon	S137	Online	282.00
		Total online payments			40,350.57
		Total payments July to September 2020			60,060.17