

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE OF WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ONLINE USING ZOOM ON MONDAY, 15 MARCH 2021 AT 7.30 P.M.

Committee members present: Councillor A Crawford (Chairman)
Councillors I R Cameron, A Dunford, A Duveen, T Gilhome,
JT Hannaby, E L Johnson, A C Menzies, P M O’Leary,
IL Sheldon and J Sibbald.

Others present: C McCarthy – Grove Rugby Club (up to item 78)
2 members of the public (up to item 88)

Town Clerk: W P Falkenau

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor O Curley, J Goodman., C Walters and C H Wills-Wright.

Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

Councillor Hannaby declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the Wantage Hospital League of Friends, a trustee of the Wantage Nursing Home Trust, a trustee of the Wantage Independent Advice Centre and a Governor of Stockham Primary School.

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2021

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes be approved

77. Statements and Questions from the Public

None.

78. Briefings by applicants for donations and grants

a) Grove Rugby Club

Mr McCarthy reported that following discovery of a number leaks in the Rugby Club pavilion roof, it became apparent that there was a need to undertake major work on the guttering and roof ridge tiles at a cost of over £13,000. Mr McCarthy felt this was too large a sum to take from the club’s reserves. He had looked for funding from other parties but at this stage nothing had materialised. Following questions, Mr McCarthy was thanked for his briefing and he left the meeting.

79. Matters arising from the minutes

a) Update on plans to pedestrianise western end of the Market Place

The highway consultants had updated the plans of a scheme to improve the sight lines at the Alfred Street/Mill Street junction. This had been submitted to the County Council for its acceptance and a response was awaited. The Clerk had invited four consultants to quote for services related to developing a scheme for the Market Place western end. So far only two had responded. Due to the commercial sensitivity the Clerk felt that discussion about the quote should take place in a confidential session. County Councillor Hannaby had informed the Clerk that the County Council might be prepared to take responsibility for the scheme once the plans had been agreed. The Clerk was to confirm this with the County Council. He was to call a meeting of the working group as soon as possible to progress this. **Action: Clerk**

There was to be further discussion later in the meeting in a confidential session.

b) Future ownership and maintenance responsibilities for the Manor Road Recreational Ground

The Clerk had recently met with an officer from the District Council's property team. The officer had only recently been recruited and the Clerk briefed him on the Town Council's wishes. A response from the officer was awaited. It was noted that the government had announced funding for Changing Places facilities. More details of this were needed.

c) Request for CCTV camera in Wallingford Street

The District Council had confirmed that the criteria for a camera had been met and would be making arrangements for its installation. The police had given their support.

d) Town Electorate meeting 12 April 2021

The meeting was being promoted through the newsletter. Representatives of organisations involved in supporting the community during the pandemic had agreed to give briefings. Councillor Dunford was to present the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

POLICY

80. Minutes of Climate Emergency Sub-committee meeting held on 15 February 2021

There was a name error in the minutes that the Clerk was to correct and reissue. Items F&G, Oxfordshire COP26 Climate Alliance and a Solar Streets initiative for Wantage were to be considered in the confidential session. The nature recovery network map had not been distributed with the minutes. The Clerk was to distribute this. **Action: Clerk**

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford
SECONDED BY Councillor Sibbald
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes, as amended, be adopted.

81. Minutes of Health Sub-committee meeting held on 23 February 2021

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Hannaby
SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted.

82. To consider whether to release the £10,000 building project fund to the Wantage Silver Band and to consider whether a further contribution should be made at this stage

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford
IT WAS RESOLVED that the £10,000 be released to the Wantage Silver Band, subject to it making a formal request.

The Club were to be advised that for any further contribution, a donation request needed to be submitted. **Action: Clerk**

83. To consider schedule for replacement of street signs

A list of street name signs requiring attention had been distributed to all councillors. It was agreed that QR codes should be included on each sign.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Hannaby

IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Clerk refer the list to the District Council, asking for a quote for the work involved and whether it would consider co-funding of it. **Action: Clerk**

84. To consider whether to make a financial contribution to the cost of a feasibility study into the removal of silt from the Letcombe Brook by the Mill

The engineer's report was noted. The cost of conducting the survey was £3,815 plus VAT.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford

SECONDED BY Councillor Hannaby

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Town Council should meet the full cost of the survey.

An email from Mr Winch advising of his experiences in desilting the brook by the Mill, was noted.

85. To review schedule of charges

The schedule of charges was noted. For the future the schedule was to be reviewed prior to the budget setting activity each year. **Action: Clerk**

MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

86. Financial Statements to February 2021

Statements to February were noted. Bank balances were currently £676,000. There was a £36,000 surplus, year to date, but there quite a number of large payments to be made in March. The Clerk hoped to present updated statements to the Council meeting.

87. Accounts for Payment.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Sheldon

SECONDED BY Councillor Sibbald

IT WAS RESOLVED that the accounts for payment in the sum of £40,095.59 (attached) be approved

88. 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 temporarily excluded.

Councillor Gilhome left the meeting.

89. To consider donation requests:

a) Grove Rugby Club

The Club's accounts to 31 March 2020 were considered. Councillor Crawford agreed to engage with the District Council to see if S106 funding could be released to fund the roof works. The Clerk was to seek accounts for this year to provide a more up to date financial picture and a breakdown of administrative expenses. It was agreed to refer the request to the Council meeting on 29 March with the hope that the actions above had been responded to. **Action: Clerk/Crawford**

79. Matters arising from the minutes (continued)

a) Update on plans to pedestrianise western end of the Market Place

The Clerk had sought quotes for developing plans from four highway engineering companies. Estimates had been received from two of them but they appeared to cover different stages. There was a need to confirm with the County Council what work was required by the consultants for it to take over responsibility for the scheme. Once this was confirmed, the consultants could be asked to update their estimates. It had been suggested to the Clerk that Falaise Square in Henley provided an example of a scheme that had been developed in a similar way and had ground materials that might be considered for the Market Place western end scheme. It was agreed to refer this item to the full council meeting as an agenda item with the hope that there might be more definite information to consider. The working group was to meet in the meantime. **Action: Clerk**

80. Minutes of Climate Emergency Sub-committee meeting held on 15 February 2021 (continued)

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford
SECONDED BY Councillor Crawford

IT WAS RESOLVED that Mr Wilkin of Harbug be invited to become a full member of the Climate Emergency Sub-committee, It was noted that he met the criteria set for appointing sub-committee members.

Item F - Oxfordshire COP26 Climate Alliance

It was agreed not to sign up to this.

90. Staffing update.

Recruitment of the Mayor's PA/Clerk's Assistant was to be deferred until August.

The meeting closed at 9.39 pm.

Wantage Town Council

Accounts for Payment - January to March 2021

Date	Payee	Description	Powers	Ref	£
01/02/2021	Abbey Properties	Market Attendant's shed rent	OA 1985	SO	100.00
01/03/2021	Abbey Properties	Market Attendant's shed rent	OA 1985	SO	100.00
04/02/2021	Barclays	Bank charges	LGA 72	DD	8.90
08/03/2021	Barclays	Bank charges	LGA 72	DD	8.90
21/02/2021	NEST	Pension contribution payments	Office	DD	374.92
21/02/2021	Staff - various	February payroll	Office/OA1985	Bacs	8,350.27
		Total direct debits			8,942.99
08/02/2021	SGW Payroll	January payroll processing charges	Office/OA1985	Online	66.12
08/02/2021	L Smith	Bus shelter cleaning	Street furniture	Online	129.00
08/02/2021	GEMS Trust	Free school meal grant	S137	Online	150.00
08/02/2021	BT	Telephone services	Office	Online	172.60
08/02/2021	The Conservation Trust	Cemetery hedge	Burials/open spaces	Online	180.00
08/02/2021	Netwise	Website upgrade	Office	Online	199.00
08/02/2021	IAC Audit	Interim audit fee	LGA 72	Online	420.00
08/02/2021	Stockham School	Free school meal grant	S137	Online	450.00
08/02/2021	Fitzwaryn School	Free school meal grant	S137	Online	540.00
08/02/2021	White Horse Horticulture	Various maintenance	Burials/open spaces	Online	650.00
08/02/2021	CDC Electrical	Removal Christmas displays	Tourism	Online	2,010.00
08/02/2021	Vale Academy Trust	Free school meal grant	S137	Online	3,795.00
09/02/2021	Barclaycard	Quickbooks/adobe subs, telephobe	Office	Online	83.90
25/02/2021	SGW Payroll	February payroll processing	Office/OA1985	Online	66.12
25/02/2021	Barclaycard	Quickbooks/adobe subs, telephobe	Office	Online	91.17
25/02/2021	HMRC	Paye January	Office/OA1985	Online	1,793.06
25/02/2021	HMRC	Paye February	Office/OA1985	Online	1,783.45
25/02/2021	Sustainable Wantage	Donation re Covid support	S137	Online	2,500.00
25/02/2021	Ray Collins Trust	Donation re Covid support	S137	Online	10,000.00
25/02/2021	WIAC	Donation re Covid support	S137	Online	2,500.00
11/03/2021	T Donnelly	Allotment Bond repayment	Allotments	Online	25.00
16/03/2021	Glanville	Consuktancy	Highways	Online	2,970.00
16/03/2021	SSE	Shed electricity	LGA 72	Online	50.31
16/03/2021	BT	Telephone services	Office	Online	50.27
16/03/2021	Solopress	Newsletter printing	Information	Online	477.60
		Total online payments			31,152.60
		Total payments January to March 2021			40,095.59