

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WANTAGE TOWN
COUNCIL HELD IN THE BEACON, PORTWAY, WANTAGE
ON MONDAY, 3 MAY 2021 AT 7.30 P.M.**

- Present: Councillor J Sibbald (Town Mayor)
Councillors A Crawford, A Dunford, A Duveen, JT Hannaby, E L Johnson,
P M O’Leary, C Walters and C H Wills-Wright.
- Others present: Cadet Corporal G Radcliffe – Wantage Detachment of Army Cadet Force (up to
item 7)
L Radcliffe (up to item 7)
Cadet Flight Sergeant A Dwight – 1861 (Wantage) Squadron, Air Training Corps
(from item 5, up to item 7)
One member of the public.
- Clerk: W P Falkenau.
Deputy Clerk: S Sanders.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I R Cameron, J Goodman, A C Menzies
and I Sheldon.

Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None.

Statements and Questions from the Public

None.

1. Election of Town Mayor

Councillor Sibbald reported that, although not on the agenda, he had published on the Council’s
website a “Town Mayor’s Communications Report” covering the period from the previous
Council meeting. He suggested that for future years this could be an agenda item at the beginning
of the Annual Council meeting. The Clerk was to check Standing Orders to see whether these
needed to be modified to accommodate this. **Action: Clerk**

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Hannaby
SECONDED BY Councillor Wills-Wright
IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Sibbald be Town Mayor.

2. Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Councillor Sibbald signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

3. Election of Deputy Town Mayor

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Johnson
SECONDED by Councillor O’Leary
IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Dunford be Deputy Town Mayor for the ensuing year.

**4. Appointment of Standing Committees, sub-committees and of Committee
Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen.**

Appointment of Standing Committees and sub-committees

Councillors had indicated their committee preferences prior to the meeting. Details had been
distributed.

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SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

IT WAS RESOLVED that the committee and sub-committee memberships be as follows:

- (a) Planning Committee: Councillors Cameron, Dunford, Gilhome, Johnson, Menzies, Sheldon, and Sibbald.
- (b) Leisure and Amenities: Councillors Duveen, Hannaby, Johnson, Menzies, Nunn-Price, O'Leary, Sheldon, Sibbald and Walters.
- (c) Promotion, Communication and Events Committee: Councillors Crawford, Gilhome, Hannaby, Nunn-Price, Sibbald and Wills-Wright.
- (d) Policy, Management and Finance Committee: All Councillors.
- (e) Health Sub-committee: Councillors Crawford, Curley, Dunford, Hannaby, Johnson, Menzies, Sheldon, Sibbald and Walters.
- (f) Staffing sub-committee: Councillors Crawford, Hannaby, Sibbald and Wills-Wright.
- (g) Climate Emergency sub-committee: Councillors Cameron, Crawford, Curley, Dunford, Duveen, Hannaby, Johnson, Nunn-Price, Walters and Wills-Wright.

Appointment of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees and sub-committees

These are as follows:

- (a) Planning Committee:

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald
SECONDED BY Councillor Hannaby

IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Johnson be Chairman of the Planning Committee.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Johnson
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Sibbald be Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee.

- (b) Leisure and Amenities Committee:

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Wills-Wright
SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson

IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Hannaby be Chairman of the Leisure and Amenities Committee.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Johnson be Vice-Chairman of the Leisure and Amenities Committee.

- (c) Promotion, Communication and Events Committee:

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Hannaby
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Wills-Wright be Chairman of the Promotion, Communication and Events Committee.

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ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald
SECONDED BY Councillor Hannaby
IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Gilhome be Vice-Chairman of the Promotions,
Communication and Events Committee.

(d) Policy, Management and Finance Committee:

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald
SECONDED BY Councillor Walters
IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Crawford be Chairman of the Policy, Management and
Finance Committee.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson
IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Sheldon be Vice-Chairman of the Policy, Management and
Finance Committee.

e) Health Sub-committee

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald
SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson
IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Hannaby be Chairman of the Health Sub-committee.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Hannaby
SECONDED BY Councillor Wills-Wright
IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Sheldon be Vice-Chairman of the Health Sub-committee.

f) Staffing Sub-committee

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Hannaby
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford
IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Sibbald be Chairman of the Staffing Sub-committee.

g) Climate Emergency Sub-committee

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Wills-Wright
SECONDED BY Councillor Walters
IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Dunford be Chairman of the Climate Emergency Sub-
committee.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Dunford
SECONDED BY Councillor Wills-Wright
IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Johnson be Vice-Chairman of the Climate Emergency Sub-
committee

5. Appointment of Members on Joint Committees

Flight Sergeant Dwight joined the meeting.

(a) Wantage and Grove Traffic Advisory Committee:

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford
IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillors Cameron, Gilhome and Hannaby, and Sue Thwaite of the
mobility group, be members of the Wantage and Grove Traffic Advisory Committee.

6. Appointment of Representatives on Other Bodies

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald

SECONDED BY Councillor Walters

IT WAS RESOLVED that the following be appointed as representatives on other bodies:

- (a) Vale and Downland Museum (Wantage) – Councillor Cameron
- (b) Letcombe Brook Project – Councillors Crawford and Gilhome
- (c) Vale Community Impact (Independent Advice Centre) – Councillor Walters
- (d) Parish transport representative – Councillor Gilhome
- (e) Executive Committee of Wantage, Grove and District Twinning Association – Councillor Nunn-Price
- (f) Dickensian Evening Working Party - Councillors Hannaby, Johnson, O’Leary and Wills-Wright (Councillor Johnson indicated that he would only participate if it was found that there was a need for him to do so)
- (g) Friends of Sweatbox – Councillor Menzies
- (h) Wantage and Grove Community Led Children’s Services - Councillor Hannaby
- (i) Trustee of Robert Stiles Almshouse – Councillor Sibbald

7. Appointment of Town Mayor’s Cadets

The Town Mayor welcomed Cadet Corporal Grace Radcliffe and Cadet Flight Sergeant Albert Dwight to the meeting. Both had been put forward by their detachments to be the Town Mayor’s Cadets for the coming year. To recognise their roles they had both received pace sticks to be retained for the period of their appointments and the Mayor was in discussion with their detachments about the possibility of them wearing a Mayor’s badge on their uniforms. He was delighted to appoint them as his cadets, representing their detachments and the youth of Wantage, and assisting him with his duties in the year to come.

The cadets thanked the Mayor for appointing them. The Mayor thanked them for participating in the meeting and they then left the meeting.

8. To approve payment of grants for 2021/2022

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford

SECONDED BY Councillor Sibbald

IT WAS RESOLVED that the following grants be paid over, by the Clerk, during the coming year, when they become due:

Dickensian Evening	£1,500
Be Free Young Carers	£5,000
GROW Children’s Centre	£11,025
Vale Community Impact – general (formerly Independent Advice Centre includes £5,000 approved for accommodation)	£10,500
Letcombe Brook Project	£10,000
Wantage Museum - general	£19,000
Wantage Museum - Visitor Information Point	£6,350
Sweatbox	£13,230
Wantage Counselling	£3,150
October Club	£5,000

In 2020/21, the Town Council contributed to Sustainable Wantage’s Wild Wantage project. At the Climate Emergency Sub-committee meeting on 26 April 2021, a proposal was presented to continue the project in 2021/22, with a contribution sought from the Town Council of £2,500, for part funding. To enable the project to proceed without pause it was agreed to refer consideration of this to this meeting.

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ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Dunford
SECONDED by Councillor Hannaby
IT WAS RESOLVED that a donation of £2,500 be made to Sustainable Wantage as contribution towards the cost of the Wild Wantage project for work specifically in the Wantage Parish in 2021/22.

9. Approval of Signatories for Bank Mandate

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald
SECONDED by Councillor Dunford
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor, Committee Chairmen and Town Clerk be cheque signatories, with any three to sign.

10. To approve and sign minutes of the Council meeting held on 29 March 2021, and consider matters arising.

The minutes were approved and signed.

Matters arising

79. Reaffirmation of the Armed Forces Covenant – Receipt of the covenant had been acknowledged and registered.

83. 29 i) Market Place Update – The planters and bench seats were due for delivery within the next two weeks.

92. Update re quotes from highway engineers for Market Place western end pedestrianisation scheme – No quote or estimate had been received from other highway engineers. The only estimate received had been from Glanvilles for £18,800. As agreed at the previous council meeting, Glanvilles had been instructed to proceed with arrangements for permanently pedestrianising the Market Place western area.

11. HOSC meeting follow up – To consider seeking the reopening of the Community Hospital inpatient beds through legal processes.

The patient beds at the hospital had been temporarily closed in 2016. The issue that had caused this had been resolved in September 2020. Although HOSC on a number of occasions had requested that the beds be reopened, they remained closed. At the HOSC meeting the CCG advised it was intending to conduct a study to determine whether the beds were required. The study was estimated to take 17 months to complete.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford
SECONDED by Councillor Johnson
IT WAS RESOLVED to explore what legal remedies the Town Council could take in partnership with others to get the CCG to reopen the community hospital beds.

12. To consider request from Bear Hotel to remove bench and bin from VC Forecourt, during the Coronavirus crisis, and extend area of VC Forecourt covered by its tables (bench and bin to be reinstated when crisis ends)

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Hannaby
SECONDED by Councillor Johnson
IT WAS RESOLVED to approve the removal by the Bear Hotel of the bench and bin from the VC Forecourt during the Coronavirus crisis, to enable it to place more tables on the forecourt, subject to the stone setts being suitably protected. The Clerk and the Town Centre Manager were to settle the specific arrangements. **Action: Clerk**

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13. To declare that an emergency situation exists, where the Town Council is unable to conduct its business through meetings due to the Coronavirus restrictions being in place and the conducting of meetings online not being permissible, Section 26 of Standing Orders “Emergency Consultation Panel” (see below) will apply until the emergency is over.

“26. Emergency Consultation Panel

In circumstances where the Town Council is unable to conduct its business through meetings due to a national emergency, or a similar situation, standing orders shall be suspended and the Clerk, as the Council's Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer shall be given delegated authority to make decisions on the Council's behalf, subject to the agreement of an Emergency Consultation Panel (ECP). The members of the ECP shall be the Town Mayor and the chairmen of the standing committees. The Clerk will be guided by the views of a majority of the ECP. During the period in which these circumstances pertain, the Clerk will have the same authority level as the Council itself.”

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald

SECONDED by Councillor Crawford

IT WAS RESOLVED that due to online meetings from 7 May, no longer being lawful and Coronavirus rules precluding physical meetings being held, an emergency situation will exist from 7 May and that Section 26 of Standings Orders will apply for whatever period the emergency continues.

The meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.

WPF