

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORTWAY, WANTAGE ON MONDAY 11 OCTOBER 2021, AT 7.30 P.M.

Councillors present:	Councillor Major J Sibbald (Town Mayor) Councillors A Crawford, A Dunford, A Duveen, T Gilhome, J T Hannaby, E L Johnson, A Menzies, P O'Leary (part), I L Sheldon, C Walters and C Wills-Wright
Candidates for co-option:	P Kirby-Harris, M Le Sueur, A Przybysz, S Third and V Wright (up to item 57)
Others present:	PC D James (part – up to item 41) 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 and J E Nunn-Price. Councillor P O'Leary had sent apologies for late arrival.

Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

None.

To approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 2 August 2021

The minutes were approved and signed.

41. Statements and Questions from the public

None.

PC Darren James had recently left the Wantage Neighbourhood Police Team after over twenty three years of service in Wantage. In recognition of his contribution to the community, and especially to the safety of the town, the Town Mayor presented PC James with the Pride In Wantage Award. He thanked him for being an active supporter of organisations and events in the town, and often going above and beyond that required of his office.

PC James thanked the Mayor and the Council for the honour. He had enjoyed his time in Wantage and wished everyone well for the future. He then left the meeting.

42. Matters arising from the Council meeting held on 2 August 2021

26 a) P21/V0412/FUL Fire Station, Radio Station at Ormond Road, OX12 8DU Upgrading of existing telecommunications equipment.

It was agreed that a report on the work involved in convincing the County Council not to permit the proposal to proceed without further evidence, was to be published on the Town Council's website. A letter, advising of this, was also to be sent to residents in the immediate vicinity.

Action: Clerk

43. Minutes of the Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting held on 13 September 2021

3. Cemetery

There were S106 contributions from the housing development in Denchworth Road which were available to contribute to the costs of developing the cemetery extension for burial use.

Councillor O’Leary arrived.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Hannaby

IT WAS RESOLVED to employ the consultants Cemetery Design Services, at an initial estimated cost of £5,500, to deal with the formalities involved in developing for use the cemetery extension.

4. d) Arrangements for Christmas decorations 2021

The quote for the additional lighting had come out higher than indicated in the minutes.

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

IT WAS RESOLVED to proceed with the additional lighting items at a cost of £1,874.

4. c) Street Name Plates

It had been agreed by the Policy, Management and Finance Committee that QR codes should be included on the street name plates.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Hannaby
SECONDED BY Councillor Sheldon

IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes, as amended, be adopted.

44. Planning Committee

a) Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 20 September 2021

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

b) To note responses to consultations.

Comments on the following consultations had been submitted:

- Let’s talk waste and recycling (closed 27/9/21)
- Oxfordshire 2050 Plan (closed 8/10/21)
- Oxford – Cambridge Arc (closing 12/10/21)

45. Minutes of the Promotion, Communication and Events Committee meeting held on the 4 October 2021

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Wills-Wright
SECONDED BY Councillor O’Leary

IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted.

46. Minutes of the Policy, Management and Finance Committee meeting held on the 27 September 2021

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor O'Leary
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted.

47. To receive the External Auditor Report and Certificate 2020/21 and Notice of Conclusion of Annual Audit

The receipt of the External Auditor Report was noted. The content had been recorded at the Policy, Management and Finance Committee meeting under agenda item 11. The Notice of Conclusion of Annual Audit had been posted on website and notice board on 28 September. The Council expressed its extreme disappointment that the auditor had commented on the review of Code of Conduct, when the Council had reviewed it on 8 February 2021, which was within the period covered by the audit.

48. Appointment of internal auditor for the year 2021/22 – Kevin Rose of IAC Audit.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford
IT WAS RESOLVED that Mr Rose be re-appointed as internal auditor for the current financial year.

It was agreed that an internal auditor selection process should be followed for the next financial year.

49. Review of schedule of charges.

A schedule dated 22 September 2021, detailing the charges currently being applied by the Council, was reviewed.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Duveen
SECONDED BY Councillor Walters
IT WAS RESOLVED that the schedule of charges be accepted without change.

50. Review of Treasury and Investment Policy.

The Treasury and Investment Policy was reviewed.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Menzies
SECONDED BY Councillor Crawford
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Treasury and Investment Policy be adopted without change.

51. Review of Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct was reviewed.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Duveen
SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Code of Conduct be adopted without change.

52. To consider proposal to open online bank account with Unity Trust Bank.

The Unity Trust Bank online accounts have the facility to require payments to be authorised by more than one person. The opening of an account would facilitate an improvement to the Council's payment controls.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford

SECONDED BY Councillor Sheldon

IT WAS RESOLVED to open an online bank account with the Unity Trust Bank.

Action: Clerk

53. District and County Councillors' reports.

District Council

There were plans to instal electric vehicle charging points in District Council car parks. It was hoped that these would be in place by the end of March. The introduction of civil parking enforcement was proceeding from 1 November. A Strategic Property Review had been completed. It was the role of an Asset Management Group to prioritise actions relating to this. The District Council's Climate Emergency Advisory Committee has developed a policy for third parties to plant trees on District Council land. There was a form to be completed, to apply. Schemes should also be registered under the Queen's Green Canopy initiative. Details of these tree planting matters were to be reported on the Town Council's website.

Action: Clerk

County Council

There had recently been a locality meeting which covered issues relating to the area covered by Faringdon, Wantage, Shrivenham and Harwell. Proposals concerning a reservoir between East Hanney and Steventon had re-emerged and there was a need for the Town Council to make comment. Bus infrastructure had been improved in the north of the county. There was a need for some in the south of the county. A meeting was being arranged with Mr Harrison, the County Council's public transport officer.

54. Town Mayor's communications.

The Town Mayor's communications were available to view on the Town Council's website.

Confidential items

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald

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, and they were instructed to withdraw.

57. To consider candidates for co-option as councillors (item taken out of order)

Each of the five candidates were invited to join the confidential session, one by one, and each made a three minute statement in support of their application, and answered questions. The Mayor thanked each of the candidates for their attendance and advised them that they would be informed of the outcome in a matter of days. The candidates left the meeting after answering questions.

In a first ballot, the votes for each candidate were: P Kirby-Harris - 1, M Le Sueur - 2, A Przybysz - 3, S Third - 3, and V Wright - 3.

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It was agreed that a second ballot be taken with only the candidates who received three votes in the first ballot taking part. In the second ballot the votes were A Przybysz - 4, S Third - 4, and V Wright - 3.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald

IT WAS RESOLVED that Mr Przybysz and Mr Third be co-opted as councillors to fill the casual vacancies. (Mr Przybysz – Segsbury Ward, Mr Third – Charlton Ward).

55. To consider request for a donation towards the cost of holding the Dickensian Evening.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sheldon

SECONDED BY Councillor Menzies

IT WAS RESOLVED that a donation of £2,000 be made towards the cost of holding the Dickensian Evening event.

56. To consider request for a donation from Wantage Army Cadets.

The request had come in just after the Policy, Management and Finance Committee (PM&F) meeting. After the agenda for this meeting had been published, the Cadets had advised that their request was not urgent and could be postponed until the next PM&F meeting.

The Clerk was to ask the Cadets whether the equipment to be purchased could be made use of by other community organisations. **Action: Clerk**

58. Staff recruitment.

The job vacancies were being advertised.

The meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

WPF
