

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORTWAY, WANTAGE ON MONDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2021, AT 7.30 P.M.**

Councillors present: Councillor Major J Sibbald (Town Mayor)  
Councillors I R Cameron, A Crawford, A Dunford,  
J T Hannaby, E L Johnson, P O'Leary, A Przybysz,  
S Third and C Wills-Wright

Others present:

Clerk: W P Falkenau.  
Deputy Clerk: S Sanders

**Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Duveen, T Gilhome, A Menzies, I L Sheldon and C Walters.

**Holding of a minute's silence**

The meeting stood in silence for a minute in remembrance of former councillors H K Brew, A Chynoweth and G Stokell, and Sir Frank Williams who had all recently died.

**Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests**

None.

**To approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 11 October 2021**

The minutes were approved and signed.

**57. Statements and Questions from the public**

None.

**58. Matters arising from the Council meeting held on 11 October 2021**

43.3 Cemetery

A formal proposal had been received from Cemetery Design Services.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford  
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

IT WAS RESOLVED to proceed with the site assessment T2 at a cost of £4,500 and soil management and waste classification works at a further cost of £1,074. **Action: Clerk**

Mayor's Christmas Carols

The event planned for the 8 December had been cancelled.

**59. Minutes of the Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting held on 25 October 2021**

c) Allotment Holders' Meeting held on 21 October 2021 (online by Zoom)

It was confirmed that these were intended to be informal networking meetings and that tenants should attend committee meetings to raise any matters of concern or to seek information. Details of the business relating to allotments were published in the committee meeting minutes, which were published on the Council's website.

d) Other Cemetery Matters

It was suggested that, when visiting the cemetery, members of staff and councillors should consider wearing one of the Council's bodycams.

9 h) Market Place Update

There was a need to ascertain whether the temporary closing order for the western end could be extended. **Action: Clerk**

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Hannaby  
SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson  
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes, as amended, be adopted.

**60. Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 11 October and 1 November 2021**

11 October 2021

D. b) P21/V2546/RM. St.Modwens had confirmed that it was not its intention that the cycle paths be removed from the development.

1 November 2021

16. To consider holding a meeting with David Harrison, Senior Public Transport, Oxfordshire County Council.

A meeting had been arranged for 10 December 2021.

14. Civil Parking Enforcement.

The introduction of the enforcement seemed to be having an effect. Details of how to refer parking problems were to be included on the Council's website and in the next newsletter.

**Action: Clerk**

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Johnson  
SECONDED BY Councillor O'Leary  
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes, as amended, be adopted.

**61. Minutes of the Promotion, Communication and Events Committee meeting held on the 15 November 2021**

10. a) Update on plaque to record Pride in Wantage recipients

Rather than a traditional plaque, the Clerk was looking at the use of a frame into which a printed sheet could be inserted and when necessary updated. This would be of similar style to the frames used for the twinning certificates displayed in the lift lobby on the ground floor of The Beacon.

10. e) Update on Town Newsletter

Feedback on the distribution had been mixed.

12. f) Volunteers' Reception

This was to be held on Friday 18 March 2020.

12. g) Dickensian Evening 3 December 2021

The Clerk was to ask the organisers to ensure that the road closure was not lifted until all the stalls had been cleared from the highway. **Action: Clerk**

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Wills-Wright  
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford  
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes, as amended, be adopted.

**62. Minutes of the Policy, Management and Finance Committee meeting held on the 8 November 2021**

18. Health Sub-committee

Government policy was to pursue a “Home First” strategy that involved priority being given to discharging patients directly to their own homes, with support, rather than transitioning through a community hospital or nursing home. An online meeting of sub-committee members was to be held on the 6<sup>th</sup> December to consider further actions. It was suggested that Dr Davies be invited to participate to report on the extension to the health centre. The Clerk reported that Dr Davies had given an extensive briefing at the online Newbury Street Patient Group AGM on the 11 November and this had been recorded. He agreed to acquire a copy of the recording for councillors and sub-committee members to view. **Action: Clerk**

22. To consider recommendations from Planning Committee concerning changes to parking restrictions.

Although the resolution indicated that the changes were to be progressed, with the exception of the residents parking zone in Grove Street, this did not mean that a residents’ parking scheme was not going to be pursued at all. The paragraph below the resolution indicated “An amnesty on enforcing waiting restrictions in Grove Street was to be requested, pending dialogue with the residents and others concerning the introduction of a parking scheme ...”. The committee was to consider whether the minutes needed to be amended to clarify this. **Action: Crawford**

23. To consider recommendations from Planning Committee regarding areas to be put forward for 20 mph speed limits.

The request had been submitted to the County Council.

27. d) Ray Collins Charitable Trust

The completed donation request form had been received.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford  
SECONDED BY Councillor Wills-Wright  
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes, as amended, be adopted.

**63. Review of Risk Assessment**

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald  
SECONDED BY Councillor Hannaby  
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Risk Assessment adopted on 10 February 2020, and reviewed on 8 February 2021 be approved without change.

**64. Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations**

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald

SECONDED BY Councillor O'Leary

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Standing Orders adopted on 22 March 2020, and reviewed on 8 February 2021, be re-adopted without change.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald

SECONDED BY Councillor Hannaby

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Financial Regulations adopted on 8 February 2021, be re-adopted without change.

**65. To note and approve the entering into a lease, for a 21 year term for the Larkhill allotment site and to confirm the Clerk's authority to act on the Council's behalf in this matter.**

A draft of the proposed lease with the County Council was noted. The lease was due to follow on from the previous lease that expired in September 2020. The rent commenced at £530 per annum and would increase by RPI at three yearly intervals. The terms were generally unchanged from the previous lease. The Clerk had received a quote of £1,250 from Freeths solicitors to act on the Council's behalf.

Councillor Johnson declared a non-pecuniary interest as a tenant at allotment site.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald

SECONDED BY Councillor Third

IT WAS RESOLVED to proceed with the lease and to instruct Freeths to act on the Council's behalf at a cost of £1,250. They were to be advised that the Clerk had authority to act on the Council's behalf in these matters.

**66. To note and approve the entering into a lease, for a three year term, for a garage to the rear of 44 Market Place to support the market**

Abbey Properties were offering a lease on a garage, to the rear of the TSB property, at a rent of £3,000 per annum. This was more conveniently placed for the attendant than the current wooden shed. Given the short term and the level of financial commitment the Clerk did not feel there was a need to employ a solicitor.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald

SECONDED BY Councillor Crawford

IT WAS RESOLVED to proceed with the lease.

**67. District and County Councillors' reports.**

District Council

Details of the council tax base for 2022/23 for each parish had been published. A hardship fund of £150,000 had been set up which was to be administered by the Vale Community Impact and the Citizen's Advice Bureau. Much attention was being given to budget setting.

County Council

Work had been done on a homelessness strategy. The bid for £50k to progress the reopening of the Grove railway station had been unsuccessful. There were to be cuts to bus services across Oxfordshire, although the Wantage services were not so badly affected. The County Council would be applying the maximum increase permitted to its council tax charge.

**68. 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.

**69. To consider request for a donation towards the cost of the Wild Wantage Project.**

The donation request had been received too late for consideration at the Policy, Management and Finance Committee meeting.

Councillors Crawford and Johnson declared non-pecuniary interests as members of Sustainable Wantage.

The Town Council had previously provided funding for the first six months of this project. The Clerk was to seek copies of maps that were due to be an output from the project.

**Action: Clerk**

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Hannaby  
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford  
IT WAS RESOLVED that a donation of £3,840 be made to Sustainable Wantage to fund the cost of progressing further the Wild Wantage Project.

The meeting closed at 8.47 p.m.

WPF

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