

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE
COMMITTEE OF WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORWAY,
WANTAGE ON MONDAY 14 MARCH 2022 AT 7.30 P.M.**

Committee members present: Councillor A Crawford (Chairman)
Councillors A Dunford, A Duveen, E L Johnson, A C Menzies,
P M O’Leary, I L Sheldon ,J Sibbald, S Third, C Walters and
C H Wills-Wright .

Others present: One member of the public

Town Clerk: W P Falkenau

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I R Cameron, A Gilhome,
and J T Hannaby.

Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

None.

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2022

The minutes were approved and signed.

44. Statements and Questions from the Public

None.

45. Briefings relating to donation requests

There were no requests to consider. A request had been received from Vale Community Impact (VCI) after the agenda had been published. The Chairman was seeking confirmation from VCI that the request wasn’t urgent. If it was, he would ask for it to be referred to the Council meeting. **Action: Crawford**

46. Matters arising from the minutes

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

Following consideration by councillors of the latest layout plans, the Clerk had recently met with the highways consultant, on site. It had been observed that buses were pulling up by the bus shelter rather than using the full length of the bus stop. This meant that the layout for the taxi rank area could be modified to reflect the extra roadway space available and that all the issues raised by councillors could be addressed. The consultant was to update the plans for referral to the County Council.

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

The District Council Asset Management Group were due to consider this at a meeting on 8 March. It was hoped that the Group would agree to give this a higher priority.

c) Request for CCTV camera in Wallingford Street

There was nothing further to report. The Clerk had requested an update.

An invoice had been received from the District Council for a third quarter instalment of the Council's annual contribution to the cost of CCTV in the town centre. The Town Council had agreed, in June 2020, to contribute to the cost, on the promise that the CCTV camera in Wallingford Street would be reinstated and other cameras upgraded. It was agreed that payment of the invoice be withheld until there was more positive information regarding this. **Action: Clerk**

d) Replacement of street name signs

The Clerk had distributed a schedule detailing the first tranche of street signs to be purchased, at a cost of £2,843.44. It was agreed that the District Council be instructed to proceed with the order. **Action: Clerk**

e) Opening of bank account with Unity Trust Bank

The application was being progressed.

f) Update regarding Kingsgrove Community Hall

Wantage Community Church hoped that heads of terms for legal agreements would be agreed by early April. The agreements would require a modification to the S106 agreement which would be subject to the normal planning approval process. It was unlikely that an outcome could be achieved much before the end of the year.

g) Wantage Choral Society donation.

The event had been held the previous day. Half the proceeds were to be donated to Sweatbox.

POLICY

47. Health Sub-committee update.

There was nothing further to report. The Clerk was to ask Councillor Hannaby to give a report on the recent HOSC meeting to the Council meeting on 28 March. **Action: Clerk**

48. Minutes of the Climate Emergency Sub-committee meeting held on 21 February 2022.

The minutes were considered.

H. Review of progress on Action Plan The Chairman was to call an online meeting of sub-committee members to undertake a review of the Action Plan. **Action: Dunford**

I b) Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) Bill Reference to the assembly had been removed from the open letter. It was agreed that the Clerk should add the Council to the online signatory list. **Action: Clerk**

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford
SECONDED BY Councillor Wills-Wright
IT WAS RESOLVED that the actions in the sub-committee's minutes be adopted.

49. To consider allocation of expenditure against CIL contributions received.

The Clerk suggested that CIL contributions could be allocated to the pedestrianisation of the western end of the Market Place and to the development of the cemetery extension.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford
IT WAS RESOLVED that the CIL contributions be allocated to the above. **Action: Clerk**

50. To consider adoption of Treasury Investment Strategy.

The Clerk was to liaise with the Chairman in preparing a draft document for consideration by the Council. **Action: Clerk**

51. List of direct debits and standing orders.

The Clerk had distributed a document detailing direct debits and standing orders. He was to update this to distinguish between direct debits and standing orders, and indicate whether they were fixed or variable amounts (updated document attached). **Action: Clerk**

52. To consider employment of solicitor to deal with registration of council land with HM Land Registry.

The Clerk advised that HM Land Registry was only set up in the mid 1970s and until fairly recently would only register land/property as and when it was sold. Most of the lands owned by the Town Council were not registered because they were acquired by the Urban/District Councils prior to 1974 and were transferred to the Town Council without the requirement to register. HM Land Registry and the government were now encouraging local authorities to get their land registered. The benefit of registration was that there could be no dispute over ownership.

The Clerk had met with Mr Escreet of Land and Property Registration with a view to seeking his help in the registering. Mr Escreet was formerly a District Council solicitor and over many years had been specialising in getting council owned lands registered. There was a likely cost that could be as high as £5k to £10k. For each piece of land, it would be necessary to demonstrate to, and convince, HM Land Registry that the Town Council had a legitimate claim. The Council had eight pieces of land to register, but this could be reduced if more than one piece could be included in one registration. It was agreed to initially to proceed with two or three pieces of land in order to assess the amount of work involved. **Action: Clerk**

53. To consider a proposal to charge a pitch fee to market traders who fail to attend without giving adequate notice.

It was agreed in principle to support the proposal. The Clerk was to liaise with the Town Centre Manager and consult with the Chairman concerning the notice period required from traders. **Action: Clerk**

MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

54. Financial statements and bank reconciliation to 9 March 2022.

The statements and bank reconciliation were noted. There was a £45k surplus, year to date. With two weeks to go to the year-end, there were still a number of areas where further expenditure would be incurred.

The bank reconciliation was noted. The Town Mayor was to sign the bank statements to confirm that councillors have had sight of them. **Action: Sibbald**

55. Accounts for Payment.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford

SECONDED BY Councillor Sibbald

IT WAS RESOLVED that the accounts for payment in the sum of £27,132.04 (attached) be approved.

56. General correspondence.

a) Request from Grove Parish Council to meet to discuss future leisure needs and ongoing issue of s106 contributions

The Parish Council had requested a meeting be held with four representatives of the Town Council. The purpose of the meeting was to achieve agreement over how leisure related S106 contributions should be spent locally.

It was agreed that in advance of a meeting, the Town Council should have a view on what leisure facilities were required. The Chairman agreed to circulate ideas and proposals with a view to developing a consensus. **Action: Crawford**

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Johnson

SECONDED BY Councillor Sibbald

IT WAS RESOLVED that a meeting with Grove Parish Council should proceed and that the representatives be agreed outside the meeting.

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.

57. To consider donation requests.

None.

58. Staffing update and pay review recommendations from 1 April 2021.

A schedule detailing the effect for Council staff, of the NALC pay review recommendations, had been distributed. An increase of 1.75% across all bands was indicated from the 1 April 2021. Additionally, the Clerk proposed that the Deputy Clerk and Town Centre Manager be moved one level up the pay scale with effect from 1 April 2021 and the Mayor's PA be moved one level up the scale from 1 April 2022. The Town Clerk and his assistant were both at the top of their bands,

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford
 SECONDED BY Councillor Menzies
 IT WAS RESOLVED that the pay rate changes, detailed in the schedule prepared by the Clerk, be approved.

The meeting closed at 8.38 pm.

List of direct debits and standing orders as at March 2022.

Payee	Description	DD or SO Fixed/Variable	Frequency	Amount £	Date last paid
Sturgess Family Trust	Garage rent	SO/Fixed	Monthly	250.00	1 March 2022
Vale of White Horse DC	Cemetery rates	DD/Variable	Monthly over 10 mths	87.00	4 January 2022
Vale of White Horse DC	Market Place car park rates	DD/Variable	Monthly over 10 mths	247.00	4 January 2022
Vale of White Horse DC	Market Place market rates	DD/Variable	Monthly over 10 mths	404.00	4 January 2022
BNP Paribas	Photocopier lease	DD/Variable	Quarterly	179.19	14 February 2022
SGW payroll by BACS	Salary payments to staff	DD/Variable	Monthly	7970.90	21 February 2022
NEST	Pension contributions	DD/Variable	Monthly	358.62	8 March 2022
Barclays	Bank charges	DD/Variable	Monthly	10.90	7 March 2022

DD = Direct debit
 SO – Standing Ord

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Wantage Town Council

Accounts for Payment - February to March 2022

Date	Payee	Description	Powers	Ref	£
01/02/2022	Abbey Properties	Market Attendant's garage rent	OA 1985	SO	250.00
01/03/2022	Abbey Properties	Market Attendant's garage rent	OA 1985	SO	250.00
04/02/2022	Barclays	Bank charges	LGA 72	DD	10.90
07/03/2022	Barclays	Bank charges	LGA 72	DD	10.90
14/02/2022	BNP Paribas	Photocopier lease	LGA 72	DD	179.19
21/02/2022	NEST	Pension contribution payments	Office	DD	358.62
21/02/2022	Staff - various	January payroll	Office/OA1985	Bacs	7,970.90
		Total direct debits			9,030.51
02/02/2022	Barclaycard	Quickbooks/adobe subs, stationery, keys cut and sack truck	Office, allotments, OA1985	Online	163.70
02/02/2022	Community Heartbeat	Beacom defibrillator pads	Office	Online	46.80
02/02/2022	Red Corner	Photocopier charges	Office	Online	15.97
24/02/2022	Barclaycard	Quickbooks/adobe subs, stationery, tables and bench seats	Office, Entertainment	Online	726.96
24/02/2022	Formbar	Market trolley	OA1985	Online	95.82
24/02/2022	Glanville Consultants	Advisor re pedestrianisation scheme	Highways	Online	4,500.00
24/02/2022	HMRC	PAYE February	Office/OA1985	Online	1,551.44
24/02/2022	SGW Payroll	Payroll services February	Office/OA1985	Online	66.12
24/02/2022	Solopress	Jubilee flyers	Entertainment	Online	96.51
24/02/2022	Greenfield Partnership	Christmas trees	Tourism	Online	1,902.00
24/02/2022	VWHDC	Beacon room hire January	Office	Online	336.96
28/02/2022	Aasvogel	Cemetery skip	Burials	Online	288.00
28/02/2022	BT	Broadband services	Office	Online	115.30
28/02/2022	C Andrews	Christmas markets photos	OA1985	Online	75.00
28/02/2022	H Hill	Christmas markets entertainment	OA1985	Online	100.00
28/02/2022	P Ley	Newsletter designing	Information	Online	225.00
28/02/2022	Solopress	Newsletter printing	Information	Online	527.36
11/03/2022	Aasvogel	Cemetery skip	Burials	Online	288.00
11/03/2022	L Bury	Bunting for Jubilee picnic 50% deposit	Entertainment	Online	1,125.00
11/03/2022	Earth Anchors	Bench seats	Street furniture	Online	1,779.60
11/03/2022	Glanville Consultants	Advisor re pedestrianisation scheme	Highways	Online	1,680.00
11/03/2022	L Mercer Riolls	Water trough Larkhill allotments	Allotments	Online	352.00
11/03/2022	Red Corner	Photocopier charges	Office	Online	18.99
11/03/2022	White Horse Horticulture	Market duties, fitting benches, cemetery clearance	OA1985, burials, street furniture	Online	1,940.00
15/03/2022	Ekgraphics	Design of Jubilee event leaflet	Entertainment	Online	85.00
		Total cheque/online payments			18,101.53
		Total payments February to March 2022			27,132.04