

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORTWAY, WANTAGE ON MONDAY 28 MARCH 2022, AT 7.30 P.M.

Councillors present: Councillor Major J Sibbald (Town Mayor)
Councillors I R Cameron, A Crawford,
A Dunford, A Duveen, T Gilhorne, E L Johnson,
J T Hannaby, A C Menzies and S Third.

Others present:

Clerk: W P Falkenau.

Deputy Clerk: S Sanders

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I L Sheldon, C Walters and C H Wills-Wright.

Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

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 Vale Community Impact and a Governor of Stockham Primary School.

To approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 14 February 2022

The minutes were approved and signed.

89. Statements and Questions from the public

None.

90. Matters arising from the Council meeting held on 14 February 2022

83. 30 a) Update on plans to pedestrianise western end of the Market Place

The Clerk was to ascertain when the builder's skip would be removed from the area.

Action: Clerk

91. Minutes of the Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting held on 28 February 2022

18 (g) Update on request for scalplings at Willow Lane

It was felt that a site meeting with a County Council officer was required to resolve this.

Action: Hannaby

18 (k) Arrangements for weedkilling 2022/23

The Deputy Clerk had been unable to identify another contractor to undertake the weedkilling of the whole town.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Hannaby
SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson
IT WAS RESOLVED to proceed with a whole town weedkilling treatment by Charlton Environmental at a cost of £925.

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

92. Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 14 February and 7 March 2022

31 a) Update of re-installation of the CCTV camera in Wallingford Street.

The District Council had indicated that it hoped that the new equipment would be installed by the end of June. An invoice from the District Council, for the Town Council's contribution to the CCTV cost for the third quarter, had been received. It was agreed that payment be suspended until the CCTV equipment was upgraded and the camera in Wallingford Street installed.

Action: Clerk

Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE)

A number of councillors and the Clerk had met that day with the recently appointed County Council Parking Officer responsible for CPE in the Wantage area. He was going to consider the requests for restriction changes proposed by the Town Council and as appropriate implement them. It was suggested that the officer be invited to the Traffic Advisory meeting to provide a regular update.

Action: Clerk

31 c) 20's Plenty for Oxfordshire – Survey

The deadline for completing the survey had ended. Councillor Johnson agreed to analyse the results. These were to be referred to the County Council to support the request made.

Action: Johnson/Deputy Clerk

33. Neighbourhood Plan

The work on updating the Plan was almost complete. When complete, it was to be distributed to all councillors.

Action: Johnson

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

93. Report by the Deputy Clerk on the activities of the Promotion, Communication and Events Committee

The report was considered.

2. Update on provision of Changing Places Facility in town centre

The District Council was to receive a government grant to provide a Changing Places facility at the Portway car park.

4. HMS Queen Elizabeth Freedom event (July 2022)

The event has had to be postponed due to the situation in Ukraine. This item was to be taken off the agenda.

Action: Deputy Clerk

5. Queen's Platinum Jubilee – Big Lunch Sunday 5 June 2022

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Dunford
SECONDED BY Councillor Third
IT WAS RESOLVED to approve the updated budget, approaching £15,000. The decision to hire a commercial stage and PA services was supported.

8. PA System

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Hannaby
SECONDED BY Councillor Gilhome
IT WAS RESOLVED to proceed with the purchase of the PA equipment at a cost of
£2,150.

13. Newsletter

There had been distribution problems again. It was agreed to investigate whether volunteers
could be recruited to distribute. **Action: Clerk**

14. Wantage Town Magazine

The magazine, that was principally distributed by email, was happy to receive and publish
content provided by the Town Council without charge.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Gilhome
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford
IT WAS RESOLVED that the actions in the Deputy Clerk's report, as amended, be
adopted.

**94. Minutes of the Policy, Management and Finance Committee meeting held on the
14 March 2022**

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

The meeting date was 28 March not 8 March. There had been changes in the responsible
officers at the District Council. The Clerk was to pass them details of previous
correspondence relating to this. **Action: Clerk**

The toilets had been out of service for many weeks. These had now been repaired.

45. Briefings relating to donation requests

The District Council had agreed to give priority to an S106 funding application from VCI.
The donation request had therefore been withdrawn.

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

95. Adoption of Investment Strategy.

A draft strategy document was considered. Reference was to be made to "Council", not
"Full Council". The word "ethical" should be added in the reference to investments.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Third
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Investment Strategy be adopted, subject to the above
changes (attached).

96. To consider arrangements for the Annual Town Electorate meeting to be held on 4 April 2022

St Modwen had agreed to provide a presentation on progress with the Kingsgrove development. Councillors were encouraged to attend.

97. District and County Councillors' reports

District Council

Installation of the electrical vehicle charging points had been delayed by a shortage in supply of a semi-conductor. There was to be a "No mow" day in May.

County Council

The changes in the Health Services were proceeding. The CCG was to be replaced by the ICS. Plans to combine the HOSCs were being opposed. Councillor Hannaby was due to meet the new director of the ICS. The birthing unit at the Community Hospital was due to reopen at the end of March, but this had been postponed. Consideration was being given to the relocation of the Oxford United football stadium to County Council owned land at Kidlington.

98. 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.

99. Other Business

a) Transparency Code

The Mayor agreed to work with the Clerk on updating the website to meet the statutory requirements. **Action: Sibbald/Clerk**

b) London Bridge

The document prepared by the Mayor was reviewed. The Mayor was to make some typographical corrections and distribute. **Action: Sibbald**

c) Ukraine

The Mayor had set up a website form to collect details of those in Wantage offering to host refugees from Ukraine. When there were an appropriate number of Ukrainians arriving, a networking event would be arranged at The Beacon to provide advice. The Mayor intended to work with others to ensure that the needs of hosts and those arriving were suitably attended to. The proposed actions of the Mayor were endorsed.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Hannaby
SECONDED BY Councillor Cameron

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IT WAS RESOLVED to set a budget of £10,000 to meet any oncosts that might need to be met arising from the arrival and hosting of Ukrainian refugees. Expenditure from the budget was to be agreed by the Mayor in consultation with the Clerk.

d) Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) – request to accommodate a Phlebotomy Bus on the Market Square

OUH wished to locate a mobile unit on the Market Square, once a week, to conduct blood tests. This had been suggested to them because there was access to a 13 amp electrical socket. It was agreed that this wasn't a suitable location and the Clerk was to advise that the Community Hospital or the Health Centre would be better locations. **Action: Clerk**

e) Vandalism and anti-social behaviour

It was noted that there had been a number of incidents at the Larkhill allotment site. The police had been involved. The Clerk was liaising with councillors regarding a response to this.

The meeting closed at 9.09 p.m.

WPF

WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL

INVESTMENT STRATEGY

This strategy reflects the current Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments (3rd edition) issued under section 15(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 and effective for financial years commencing on or after 1st April 2018. The Statutory Guidance applies to parish (and town) councils where their total investments exceed or expected to exceed £100,000 at any time during the financial year.

The Town Council acknowledges the importance of prudently investing surplus funds held on behalf of the community. All investments will be made in line with the Council's financial procedures and observations or advice received from the Council's internal and external auditors, supported as necessary by advice from financial advisors the Council chooses to appoint.

The Council will ensure it has adequate, though not excessive, cash resources to enable it to have the level of funds available which are necessary for the achievement of its key objectives. These objectives are:

1. To develop a resilient, sustainable town, with suitable infrastructure, which will provide a home for residents now and in the future
2. To manage the Council's assets efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of the community now and in the future
3. To respond effectively and speedily to the climate emergency
4. To work with community partners to support those who are vulnerable and in need and to create opportunities to increase social inclusivity

Investment Objectives

In making investment decisions, the Council and its officers will focus on the following objectives:

1. The Council's investment priorities are the security of reserves and adequate liquidity of its investments.
2. The Council will aim to maximise income from its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity.
3. The Council will seek to ensure that investment income is consistent one year to the next.
4. Where external investment managers are used, they will be contractually required to comply with this Strategy.
5. In balancing risk against return, this Council is more concerned to avoid risks than to maximise returns.
6. All investments will be in sterling.

Specified Investments

Specified investments are those offering high security and high liquidity, made in sterling and maturation of no more than a year. Such short-term investments made with the UK Government or a local authority or town or parish council will automatically be Specified Investments.

For prudent management of its treasury balances, maintaining sufficient levels of security and liquidity, Wantage Town Council will use:

INVESTMENT STRATEGY - continued

- Deposits with banks, building societies, local authorities, or other public authorities.
- Other recognised funds specifically targeted at the Public Sector, such as the Public Sector Deposit Fund.
- The choice of institution and length of deposit will be specified by the Policy, Management and Finance Committee.

Non-specified investments

These investments have greater potential risk such as investments in the money market, stocks, and shares. Should the Council decide to invest in such funds, the Council will use the services of an appointed FSA accredited financial advisor and the choice of investment company will be reviewed within the first year of every new administration following an election or more frequently if the performance of the investments is not meeting the required objectives. The Council will expect the Investment Manager to invest in a balanced ethical portfolio that will yield a consistent income/growth year on year whilst having regard to the Council's objectives and security of its investments. As well as ethical, the Investment Manager will be encouraged to consider social and/or environmental factors or criteria when selecting, retaining, or disposing of assets. At the end of each financial year the Fund Manager will present a report on the Investment activity to the Council.

Review and Amendment of Regulations

This Strategy will be reviewed annually by the Policy, Management and Finance Committee. The Committee reserves the right to make variations to the Strategy at any time, subject to the approval of the Council.

Adopted 28 March 2022