

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORTWAY, WANTAGE ON MONDAY 17 OCTOBER 2022, AT 7.30 P.M.

Councillors present: Councillor Major J Sibbald (Town Mayor)
Councillors I R Cameron, A Crawford, A Dunford,
T Gilhome, J T Hannaby, A C Menzies,
I L Sheldon, S Third and C Walters.

Clerk: W P Falkenau.
Deputy Clerk: S Sanders

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Duveen, E L Johnson, A Przybysz and C H Wills-Wright.

Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

These were to be given as the meeting proceeded.

To approve the minutes of the Council meetings held on 1 August and 3 October 2022

The minutes were approved and signed.

40. Statements and Questions from the public

None.

41. Matters arising from the Council meetings held on 1 August and 3 October 2022

39. Honorary freedom of the town to Wantage Silver Band

The Town Mayor had presented the freedom scroll to the Band at an event on the 8 October.

42. Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 1 and 22 August, 5 and 26 September 2022

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

43. Minutes of the Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting held on 26 September 2022

13. Cemetery Matters a) Development of improvements to the cemetery extension

The consultants had proposed that the line of the leylandii trees to the north of the extension be removed. The land cleared would provide an additional seventy burial spaces. There were forty seven trees and there was an estimated cost of £500 for removing each tree.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Hannaby
SECONDED BY Councillor Third
IT WAS RESOLVED that the line of trees be removed. The budget amount to be set, and the decision whether to remove in stages or in one go, being determined by the committee.

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

44. Promotion, Communication and Events Committee - To receive a report on the Committee's business from the Deputy Clerk dated 13 October 2022

The Deputy Clerk presented her report.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sheldon

SECONDED BY Councillor Gilhome

IT WAS RESOLVED that the actions detailed in the report be adopted.

45. Minutes of the Policy, Management and Finance Committee meeting held on the 3 October 2022

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford

SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted.

46. To approve the addition of Councillors Cameron and Walters, and the Deputy Clerk as bank signatories

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford

SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillors Cameron and Walters, and the Deputy Clerk be added as bank signatories.

47. To consider adoption of a modified model of the Code of Conduct.

The model had been modified to remove the requirement to declare sundry memberships under Appendix C paragraph c).

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sheldon

SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Code of Conduct, as modified, be adopted.

48. Review of Treasury and Investment Policy, and Investment Strategy.

The Clerk had updated the policy and strategy documents to include reference to building societies. The Council had previously agreed that deposits of up to £85k be placed with building societies which are protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford

SECONDED BY Councillor Walters

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Treasury and Investment Policy, as updated, be adopted.

The words "... or advice received from the Council's internal and external auditors, supported..." were to be removed from the second paragraph in the Investment Strategy.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Cameron

SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Investment Strategy, as amended, be adopted.

49. External Auditor Report and Certificate 2021/22 and Notice of Conclusion of Annual Audit

The Clerk had sent emails to the external auditor on 4 October and 14 October advising that he believed their comments to be incorrect. Neither email had been acknowledged.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Sibbald
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford
IT WAS RESOLVED to record that the Council acknowledged receipt of the external
auditor's report and was awaiting comment on the Council's comments.

50. General Correspondence

None.

51. District and County Councillors' reports

District Council

The District Council was increasing the reduction in council tax, to those eligible, from 91.5% to 100% . The recent Community Day at The Beacon had been a success. Budget setting was due to proceed over the coming weeks, and would be a challenge.

County Council

Budget setting was also proceeding and would be difficult. A number of services provided by the council were likely to be affected by strike action. The introduction of the 20 mph speed limits in Wantage was now due to proceed in the spring next year. The development of a business case for the reopening of the railway station in Grove was still planned.

52. Town Mayor's communications

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

The meeting closed at 8.33 p.m.

WPF
