

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE
COMMITTEE OF WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORWAY,
WANTAGE ON MONDAY 13 MARCH 2023 AT 7.30 PM**

- Committee members present: Councillor A Crawford (Chairman)
Councillors I R Cameron, A Dunford, A Gilhorne, E L Johnson,
A C Menzies, P O’Leary, J Sibbald. S Third, C Walters and
V Wright.
- Others present: F McNally – Orchard Counselling (up to item 71)
W Jestico – Amegos Theatre (up to item 71)
J Mitchell – Wantage Summer Festival (up to item 71)
S Tilbury and G Rice – Vale and Downland Museum (up to item 71)
A Yates – Town Centre Manager (TCM)
- Town Clerk: W P Falkenau

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Duveen, J T Hannaby, I Sheldon and C H Wills-Wright.

Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other registrable interests and non-registrable interests

Councillor Cameron declared an other registrable interest as the Town Council’s representative on the Vale and Downland Museum Board of Trustees.

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2023

The minutes were approved.

70. Statements and Questions from the Public

None.

71. Briefings by applicants for donations and grants

a) Orchard Counselling (formerly Wantage Counselling)

Ms McNally gave a briefing in support of a grant request for £3,600. This would enable the charity to provide twenty people, residing in Wantage, six free counselling sessions each. After answering questions, Ms McNally was thanked for her briefing.

c) Wantage Summer Festival

Mr Mitchell gave a briefing in support of a donation request for £1,500. This would contribute to the cost of publicising Summer Festival events to the residents of Wantage. After answering questions, Mr Mitchell was thanked for his briefing.

d) Amegos Theatre

Mr Jestico gave a briefing in support of a donation request for £1,000. This would contribute to the cost of the “Young Frankenstein” production in August. After answering questions, Mr Jestico was thanked for his briefing.

b) Vale and Downland Museum (Wantage)

Mrs Tilbury gave a short slide presentation detailing the history of the museum and reporting on its current status and activities. Councillor Cameron made a statement in support of the

museum's application to substantially increase its annual grant. After the answering of questions, Mrs Tilbury was thanked for her presentation. She and the other applicants for the donations and grants left the meeting.

72. Matters arising from the minutes

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

A proposal to permanently pedestrianise the area was due to go to a County Council meeting on 23 March 2023. There would still be the need to settle some issues after the decision was made.

b) Future ownership and maintenance responsibilities for Manor Road Recreation Ground

A response had still not been received from the District Council regarding a breakdown of annual maintenance costs or an indication of likely commuted sum to be offered.

c) Request for CCTV camera in Wallingford Street

The upgrading of the existing cameras had been done. The installation of a camera in Wallingford Street was awaited.

d) Update regarding Kingsgrove Community Hall

The situation was unchanged. Legal agreements were almost complete. A planning application was due to be submitted shortly.

e) Registration of Council land with HM Land Registry

HM Land Registry had advised that it had scheduled to attend to this in August.

f) Update re community bus service working group

Councillor Cameron gave an update on actions being pursued by the working group. There was still a lot of investigation to be undertaken before formal proposals could be made.

g) Application for S106 funds relating to the Town Centre Manager

The funding agreement was due to be considered at the special Council meeting that followed this meeting.

h) Review of London Bridge protocol

The protocol had been updated.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Cameron
IT WAS RESOLVED that the updated protocol be adopted.

i) Asset of Community Value - Wantage Community Hospital

The Clerk had not yet submitted the application to relist the Community Hospital as a Community Asset. **Action: Clerk**

j) Kingsgrove Development surface water drainage

St. Modwen were keen to progress this and meet with representatives of the Town Council. It was agreed that a meeting involving the Planning Committee members, the Letcombe Brook Officer and St Modwen, be arranged. The Clerk was prepare a summary of the Town Council's questions and concerns for referral to St Modwen prior to the meeting.

Action: Clerk

k) Update on arrangements for Coronation Day event

The Clerk had indicated concern regarding the stretch on staffing resource in covering the event from early in the morning to the late evening. A 9 pm finish would mean that the Market Place was unlikely to be cleared until after 10 pm. There were also concerns about the risk of anti- social behaviour. The committee agreed that the finishing time be set at 6 pm.

Action: TCM

It was agreed that coronation pins be purchased for distribution to Wantage primary schools and Fitzwaryn School.

Action: Sibbald

POLICY

73. Minutes of the Climate Emergency Sub-committee meeting held on 20 February 2023 and consideration of draft letter to David Johnston MP.

E, b) Update re initiatives for Town Council to reduce its own carbon footprint

The Clerk was to make payments to the carbon offset scheme for the years after 2020/21.

Action: Clerk

E, c) Update from Mr Wilkin of HARBUG - proposal for signposting for cycling and walking routes

Concerns had been expressed at the recent Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting about the signs creating clutter. It was felt necessary to have the signs to help guide and promote those using walking and cycling routes.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford

SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson

IT WAS MOVED that the £20,000 budget allocated to the Leisure and Amenities Committee be used to fund the signage scheme put forward by Mr Wilkin. This was approved nine in favour, one against.

The Clerk was to ask the Leisure and Amenities to review the signage around the town centre to see if the number of signs could be reduced.

Action: Clerk

F. To consider draft letters to David Johnston MP regarding sewage in river water and sustainable building projects.

The Sub-committee chairman had drafted a letter regarding sewage in river water. It was noted that sewage had recently been dumped into the Letcombe Brook from the Grove Sewage works, It was agreed to include reference to this in the letter.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford

SECONDED BY Councillor Walters

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Clerk and the Sub-committee chairman should modify the letter and the Clerk was to send it.

Action: Dunford/Clerk

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

74. Minutes of the Health Sub-committee meeting held on 23 February 2023

It was noted that Councillor Menzies had given his apologies for absence for this meeting.

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

75. To consider application form for non-Town Council events

The purpose of the form was to ensure event organisers were aware of factors that needed to be considered when organising their event. It was noted that the Clerk in consultation with the Town Mayor, and chairmen of Leisure and Amenities, and Promotion, Communication and Events committees gave approval to holding of events and other activities in the Market Place. Some members had not had sight of the form. It was agreed in principle that a form was required. The draft form was to be referred back to the Promotion, Communication and Events Committee meeting on the following Monday. **Action: TCM**

Management and Finance

76. Accounts for Payment

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Walters
IT WAS RESOLVED that the accounts for payment in the sum of £ 81,808.23 (attached) be approved.

77. General correspondence

None.

Confidential items

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford
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.

78. To consider donation requests

a) Orchard Counselling

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford
SECONDED BY Councillor O'Leary
IT WAS RESOLVED that a grant of £3,600 be made to Orchard Counselling.
(power – information)

b) Wantage Summer Festival

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford

SECONDED BY Councillor Gilhome

IT WAS RESOLVED that a donation of £1,500 be made to the Wantage Summer Festival.
(power – entertainment)

c) Amegos Theatre

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Cameron

SECONDED BY Councillor O’Leary

IT WAS RESOLVED that a donation of £1,000 be made to the Amegos Theatre
(power – entertainment)

b) Vale and Downland Museum (Wantage)

Councillor Cameron, having declared an interest, left the meeting for this item.

It was felt that more could be done by the Museum to balance its books and make changes to attract more visitors eg opening Sundays/changing opening days/hours. The Friends could contribute to operational costs. Consideration could be given to installing solar panels.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford

SECONDED BY Councillor Sibbald

IT WAS RESOLVED that for the first half of the financial year the grant be increased to the level requested ie plus £1,905 and £5,700. The Museum was to be invited to return later in the year to advise on what actions it had taken in response to points raised.
(power – entertainment/information)

79. Staffing update - Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer recruitment

The Clerk was preparing an application pack for referral to the staffing Sub-committee. He hoped this could be finalised in time for the Council meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm

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Wantage Town Council

Accounts for Payment - January to March 2023

Date	Payee	Description	Powers	Ref	£
01/02/2023	Abbey Properties	Market Attendant's garage rent	OA 1985	SO	250.00
01/03/2023	Abbey Properties	Market Attendant's garage rent	OA 1985	SO	250.00
01/02/2023	VWHDC	Rates for cemetery	Burials	DD	333.00
01/03/2023	VWHDC	Rates for cemetery	Burials	DD	333.00
13/02/2023	BNP Paribas	Photocopier lease	LGA 72	DD	179.19
05/12/2022	Barclays	Bank charges	LGA 72	DD	10.90
06/03/2023	Barclays	Bank charges	LGA 72	DD	20.50
21/02/2023	NEST	Pension contribution payments	Office	DD	499.39
21/02/2023	Staff - various	February payroll	Office/OA1985	Bacs	9,126.98
		Total direct debits			11,002.96
24/01/2023	JS Stage & Events	Deposit re screen for Coronation event	Entertainment	Online	1,403.64
23/12/2022	Aasvogel	Cemetery skip hire	Burials	Online	288.00
23/01/2023	BT	Broadband services	LGA72	Online	150.82
31/01/2023	Kingdom signs	Refurbish town entry signs	Highways	Online	2,125.19
31/01/2023	SGW Payroll	Payroll processing January	Office/OA1985	Online	62.64
07/02/2023	7 Design	50% cost of leaflet re town centre businesses	Tourism	Online	177.00
11/02/2023	Aasvogel	Cemetery skip hire	Burials	Online	288.00
13/02/2023	Creative Catering	Refreshments at Volunteers' Reception	Entertainment	Online	760.00
04/02/2023	Haynes of Challow	Bin bags and compost	Highways	Online	72.00
13/02/2023	Peggy Ley	Newsletter design	Information	Online	285.00
14/02/2023	Solopress	Newsletter printing	Information	Online	1,048.59
07/02/2023	Southern Electric	Electricity for storage shed	LGA72	Online	170.61
20/02/2023	Barclaycard	Quickbooks/adob subs, stationery/office items	Office	Online	157.15
23/02/2023	Community Heartbeat	Defibrillator pads	S137	Online	67.20
21/02/2023	HMRC	PAYE for February	Office/OA1985	Online	2,525.78
08/02/2023	Aneta Pochatko	Deposit re facepainting for Coronation Event	Entertainment	Online	50.00
28/02/2023	Red Corner	Photocopier charges	Office	Online	21.71
23/02/2023	Vaughtons	Inscribing Mayor's chain	LGA72	Online	38.04
09/02/2023	VWHDC	Street name plate Church Street	Highways	Online	126.26
02/03/2023	Hazell & Jefferies	Resurfacing Willow Lane	Highways	Online	9,420.00
28/02/2023	SGW Payroll	Payroll processing February	Office/OA1985	Online	62.64
28/02/2024	White Horse Horticulture	Tree clearance at Grove Road, market and cemetery duties, allotment maintenance	LGA72, OA1985, Burials, allotments	Online	3,505.00
14/03/2023	Wantage Silver Band	Donation	Entertainment	Online	10,000.00
14/03/2023	Sustainable Wantage	Grant	Information	Online	10,000.00
14/03/2023	Sweatbox	Grant	Entertainment	Online	28,000.00
		Total cheque/online payments			70,805.27
		Total payments January to March 2023			81,808.23