

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

Committee members present: Councillor A Crawford (Chair)
Councillors I R Cameron, A Dunford, T Gilhome,
J T Hannaby, E L Johnson, K Morris, P O’Leary,
S Third, L Todd and V Wright.

Others present: Mark Rowe (Wantage Tennis Club), Gary Hibbins (TAB),
Geoffrey Rice (Vale and Downland Museum)

Town Clerk: J Evans

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Fitzjohn, P Kirby-Harris, A C Menzies and C Walters.

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

Cllr Johnson for item 34a, Cllrs Hannaby and Cameron for item 34b.

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2023

The minutes were approved and signed.

33. Statements and Questions from the Public

None.

34. Briefings in support of grant applications and updates from grant recipients

a) Statement in support of grant application from TAB (The Abingdon Bridge)

A presentation was given on TAB’s activities. It was noted that they support 51 young people from Wantage.

b) Update from the Vale and Downland Museum

An update on the museum was given. Museum running costs were increasing and matters had been made worse by the recent increase in the minimum wage. A response was provided to the suggestions previously made by the Council: 1) Opening the museum on a Sunday would cost more than expected receipts, so was not cost effective. 2) The Friends do pay for things for the museum but as they are an independent charity the museum cannot control the use of their funds. 3) Cllr Cameron was looking into the possibility of solar panels.

c) Wantage Tennis Club S106 application

A presentation was given on the S106 application which was for two projects: 1) to deal with court subsidence. Tenders had been received and a contractor appointed. £12.5k was required to carry out the work. 2) Repainting the club courts.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford
SECONDED BY Councillor Hannaby
IT WAS RESOLVED to support the S106 application.

35. Matters arising from the minutes

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

A survey to be sent to the businesses was being drafted.

Action: Chair

Neither OCC or the Vale had been able to locate any documentation regarding the taxi rank. Researching was ongoing. Clerk to write to the taxi drivers.

Action: Clerk

Clerk to confirm to Lee Turner (OCC Highways) that the scheme for West End Pedestrianisation was not to go before cabinet in December.

Action: Clerk

b) Registration of Council land with HM Land Registry

No update.

c) Update re community bus service working group

Councillor Cameron gave a progress report. The S106 application was being prepared.

Action: Cameron

d) Asset of Community Value - Wantage Community Hospital

No progress.

Action: Clerk

e) Review of committee arrangements

All committee papers to be stored on Sharepoint for ease of access, Clerk to look into this.

Action: Clerk

POLICY

36. Minutes of the Climate Emergency Sub-committee meeting held on 23 October 2023.

It was not considered appropriate to merge the Earth Day event with the St George's day market.

The minutes were considered, and actions approved.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Walters
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes be approved.

37. Update on Hospital Survey

There had been around 300 responses which were considered to be of good quality. A meeting had been scheduled for 4th December when the results were to be presented.

Management and Finance

38. Accounts for Payment

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Third

IT WAS RESOLVED that the accounts for payment in the sum of £82,244.35 (attached) be approved.

39. Review of budget estimates for 2024/25.

An increase in line with inflation was suggested. Decisions were required on the level of funding for the Museum and Sweatbox. Cllr Hannaby to establish how funding much King Alfred's Academy provides.

Action: Hannaby

Cllr Crawford left the room while the Football Club was discussed. Cllr Third took the Chair. Discussion followed on whether the Football Club should be treated as an organisation for funding purposes. It was felt that funding should be requested.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford
SECONDED BY Councillor Hannaby

IT WAS RESOLVED to include £5k in the budget for Football Club funding with a note that the funds should be requested.

Cllr Crawford returned. There was discussion about museum funding and the level of precept.

40. General correspondence

Clerk to re-circulate information on visits to the CCTV control room.

Action: Clerk

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.

41. To consider requests for donations and grants

a) TAB (The Abingdon Bridge)

A grant of £5,000 was requested. The charity supported 51 young people from Wantage. Cllr Johnson declared an interest and left the room.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Todd

SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

IT WAS RESOLVED that a grant of £5000 be awarded and that TAB be asked to further their links with Sweatbox. It was noted that the funds were required in the next financial year.

The meeting closed at 9.58 pm.
