

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WANTAGE TOWN
COUNCIL HELD IN THE BEACON, PORTWAY, WANTAGE
ON MONDAY, 15 MAY 2023 AT 7.30 P.M.**

Present: Councillor J Sibbald (Town Mayor up to item 2) (part)
Councillor A Dunford (Town Mayor from item 2)
Councillors I R Cameron, A Crawford, R Fitzjohn, T Gilhome, T Hannaby,
P Kirby-Harris(part), K Morris, P M O’Leary, S Third, L Todd, C Walters and
V Wright.

Others present (up to item 4):

Cadet Flight Sergeants A Dwight and J Topping – 1861 (Wantage) Squadron, Air
Training Corps
Corporal S Jenks - Wantage Detachment of Army Cadet Force
Four members of the public.

Clerk: W P Falkenau.

Deputy Clerk: S Sanders.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Duveen, E L Johnson and A C Menzies,

**To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other registrable interests
and non-registrable interests**

These were to be given as the meeting proceeded.

Statements and Questions from the Public

None.

1. Election of Town Mayor

Councillor Sibbald expressed his thanks to the Council staff for their support over the past four years. He also thanked the councillors who stood down at the recent election for their work during their terms of office.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor O’Leary
SECONDED BY Councillor Cameron
IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Dunford be Town Mayor.

2. Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Councillor Dunford signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillor Dunford took over as chair of the meeting.

3. Election of Deputy Town Mayor

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Hannaby
SECONDED by Councillor Dunford
IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillor Cameron be Deputy Town Mayor for the ensuing year.

4. Appointment of Town Mayor’s Cadets

Councillor Kirby-Harris arrived.

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The Town Mayor and Mr Sibbald thanked the cadets for the support given over the past two years. Cadet Flight Sergeant Albert Dwight was stepping down as a Mayor's Cadet. He was thanked for his service. Thanks were also given to Cadet Regimental Sergeant Major Grace Radcliffe who was not present at the meeting and was also stepping down.

Cadet Corporal Sophie Jenks and Cadet Flight Sergeant Jacob Topping were appointed as the new Town Mayor's Cadets. The Town Mayor welcomed them and advised that she looked forward to working with them over the coming year.

- 5. Appointment of Standing Committees, sub-committees and of Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs.**
- 6. Appointment of Members on Joint Committees**
- 7. Appointment of Representatives on Other Bodies**

Councillors had indicated their preferences prior to the meeting.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Walters

IT WAS RESOLVED that the committee and sub-committee memberships, memberships of joint committees and representatives on other bodies be approved as follows:

Appointment of Standing Committees and sub-committees and Chairs and Vice-Chairs

- (a) Planning Committee: Councillors Cameron (Vice-Chair), Crawford, Gilhome, Johnson (Chair), Menzies, Third and Wright.
- (b) Leisure and Amenities: Councillors Duveen, Fitzjohn, Hannaby (Chair), Kirby-Harris, Menzies, O'Leary, Third (Vice-Chair) and Todd.
- (c) Promotion, Communication and Events Committee: Councillors Crawford, Dunford, Gilhome (Chair), Walters and Wright (Vice-Chair).
- (d) Policy, Management and Finance Committee: All Councillors. Councillor Crawford (Chair), Councillor Third (Vice-Chair).
- (e) Health Sub-committee: Councillors Crawford, Dunford, Fitzjohn, Hannaby (Chair) and Wright.
- (f) Staffing sub-committee: Councillors Crawford (Vice-Chair), Dunford (Chair), Gilhome, Hannaby and Johnson.
- (g) Climate Emergency sub-committee: Councillors Dunford, Kirby-Harris, Johnson, Morris, Walters (Vice-Chair) and Wright (Chair).

Appointment of Members on Joint Committees

- (a) Wantage and Grove Traffic Advisory Committee:

Councillors Cameron, Gilhome and Third and Sue Thwaite of the mobility group.

Appointment of Representatives on Other Bodies

- (a) Vale and Downland Museum (Wantage) – Councillor Cameron
- (b) Letcombe Brook Project – Councillors Fitzjohn, Gilhome and Kirby-Harris
- (c) Vale Community Impact – Councillor Walters
- (d) Parish transport representatives – Councillors Cameron, Gilhome and Todd

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- (e) Executive Committee of Wantage, Grove and District Twinning Association – Councillor Hannaby
- (f) Dickensian Evening Working Party - Councillors Hannaby, O’Leary and Third.
- (g) Friends of Sweatbox – Councillor Kirby-Harris and Menzies
- (h) Wantage and Grove Community Led Children’s Services - Councillor Walters
- (i) Trustee of Robert Stiles Almshouse – Councillor Johnson

8. To approve payment of grants for 2023/2024

A memorandum from the Clerk dated 10 May 2023, advised:

The following were included as grants in the budgets for 2023/24. Grants are normally paid in May or close to the date of the event to which they relate. The larger grants, exceeding £5,000, are generally paid by two instalments 50% in May and 50% in October. The grants to the Vale and Downland Museum are paid quarterly.

Dickensian Evening	£2,000
Be Free Young Carers	£5,000
GROW Children’s Centre	£12,000
Vale Community Impact – general (includes £5,000 approved for accommodation)	£12,000
Letcombe Brook Project	£11,000
Wantage Museum - general	£20,000
Wantage Museum - Visitor Information Point	£6,350
Sweatbox	£15,000
October Club	£6,000
Orchard Counselling	£3,500
Sustainable Wantage	£10,000
Wantage Silver Band	£10,000
Wantage Summer Festival	£2,000

- a) At the Policy, Management and Finance Committee meeting on 30 January 2023, in response to a request for £28,000 as grant funding in 2023/24, it was agreed that a grant of £12,000 be paid to Grow Families in May with a further grant of £4,000 in October with an invitation to GroW Families to return to the Council later in the year, when funding from others was more settled.
- b) At the Policy, Management and Finance Committee meeting on 13 March 2023, in response to a request by the Museum for a higher grant, it was agreed 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 at the meeting.
- c) In 2022/23 a grant payment of £28,000 was paid to Sweatbox, against a budget of £13,500. This was agreed at a Policy, Management and Finance Committee meeting on 18 July 2022. The additional grant was cited as being ‘a one off’. The recently appointed Sweatbox manager has advised that she thought the higher grant would be ongoing.
- d) No grant was paid to the Dickensian Evening in 2022/23. Normally the Dickensian Evening will apply for the grant, when and if it is required.
- e) Orchard Counselling and Wantage Summer Festival have only recently received grants for the coming year, these having been approved in March. It would be appropriate not to make any further payments until requested in 2024.

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ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Dunford
SECONDED BY Councillor Hannaby
IT WAS RESOLVED that the following grants be paid over, in accordance with the Clerk's memorandum of 10 May 2023.

9. Approval of Signatories for Bank Mandate

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford
SECONDED by Councillor O'Leary
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor, Committee Chairmen, Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Councillor Walters be bank signatories, with any three to sign.

10. To approve and sign minutes of the Council meetings held on 27 March 2023, and consider matters arising.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Dunford
SECONDED by Councillor Wright
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes be approved and signed.

11. To consider financial statements and bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2023.

The statements and bank reconciliation were reviewed. It was noted that £64,000 had been received after the year-end relating to the Town Centre Manager S106 contribution. A proportion of this related to the prior year. The Clerk was to consider whether some of the contribution should be included as a debtor in the year-end accounts. **Action: Clerk**

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Dunford
SECONDED by Councillor Gilhome
IT WAS RESOLVED that the statements and bank reconciliation be accepted.

Councillor Dunford signed and initialled the bank reconciliation as evidence of review.

Confidential items

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Dunford
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.

Major Sibbald and others left the meeting.

12. Town Clerk recruitment.

The deadline for applications had ended on the previous Friday. Members of the Staffing Subcommittee were to conduct initial interviews.

The Town Mayor, in closing the meeting, welcomed councillors that had been newly elected and expressed thanks to Major Sibbald for his hard work as Town Mayor over the past four years.

The meeting closed at 8.18 p.m.

WPF
