

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE
BEACON, PORTWAY
ON MONDAY, 25 MARCH 2024, AT 7.30 PM**

Council members present: Councillor I Cameron (Deputy Mayor)
Councillors E Johnson, L Todd, J T Hannaby, S Third, A Crawford,
K Morris, P Kirby-Harris

Others present: A Yates, Town Centre Manager

Clerk: J Evans

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Menzies, A Dunford, C Walters, T Gilhome and V Wright

Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interests, other registrable interests and any non-registrable interests.

None

80. To approve the minutes of the Council meetings held on 12 February 024

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Third
SECONDED BY Councillor Kirby-Harris
It was RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted and were signed.

81. Statements and Questions from the public.

None

82. Matters arising from the minutes of the Council meeting held on 12 February 2024

a) Sweatbox – it was confirmed that Sweatbox would be getting the usual grant. CLOSED

83. Matters arising from the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 12 February 2024

To receive and consider the minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2024.
A meeting was held with the developers regarding the RM application. Clerk to request a copy of the design guidance for the Kingsgrove Estate from the vale. **Action Clerk**

The planning officer was to be contacted about the ground levels as they appear to be different to the original application. **Action Cllr Johnson**

The minutes were approved.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Johnson
SECONDED BY Councillor Third
It was RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted and were signed.

A request had been received about road drainage. Access appears to be an issue. There is a strip of land owned by WTC which the developers would like to be transferred to OCC. It was suggested that OCC could be given right of access over the land. Clerk to contact OCC about this. **Action: Clerk**

84. Minutes of the Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting held of 26 February 2024

To receive and consider the minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2024.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORTWAY ON MONDAY, 25 MARCH 2024 AT 7.30 PM

There had been communication with allotments holders about trees.
The minutes were approved.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Hannaby
SECONDED BY Councillor Kirby Harris

It was RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted and were signed.

85. Minutes of the Promotion, Communication and Events Committee meeting held on 18 March 2024

To receive and consider the minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2024.

The Minutes not available. c/f to the next meeting.

Action: Clerk

86. Minutes of the Policy, Management and Finance Committee Meeting held on 11 March 2024

To receive and consider the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2024.

The minutes were approved.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Hannaby

It was RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted and were signed.

Update on Earth Day

It was reported that a number of exhibitors from the local community had been arranged. Speakers will present upstairs at the beacon. A draft poster has been produced. Cllr Wright to finalise this.

Action Councillor Wright

Update on hospital

Cllr Hannaby had met with the architect. Plans were to be produced. It was hoped these would be available in April. Cllr Hannaby and County Cllr Jane Hanna had met with the health commissioners who were very positive about the hospital. It was pointed out that they still needed to consult about their plans, and they were reminded that a community event had been promised in April.

To consider the adoption of the General Power of Competence

An explanation of the GPC was given. It was noted that it did not give rise to any risks or liabilities.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Johnson

It was RESOLVED that the GPC be adopted

To review the draft Terms of Reference for the Council committees.

It was noted that the Terms of Reference for the Climate emergency committee needed to be fleshed out. Delegated authority to each committee was proposed. It was also recommended that Health and Climate emergency sub-committees become full committees.

It was proposed that that the terms of reference be adopted and were to be reviewed by the new committees after the Annual Council meeting.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford

SECONDED BY Councillor Cameron

It was RESOLVED that the terms of reference be adopted.

It was noted that the council does not currently engage with licencing applications. Clerk to ask the Vale about this. Responsibility to be with the planning committee. **Action Clerk**

87. Financial Statements to February 2024

EMR proposal.

The proposal had been circulated. It was felt that some revenue items should not be included. Clerk to check the figures for the cost for the leylandii removal. Cllr Crawford and the Clerk were given authority to agree what should be included.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Cameron

SECONDED BY Councillor Hannaby

It was RESOLVED that Councillor Crawford and Town Clerk have authority to agree what should be included in EMR.

88. General Correspondence

- a) **To consider working with the Chamber of Commerce regarding the condition of shop buildings in the town centre.**

It had been noted that landlords and tenants were not looking after their properties. It was suggested that a letter be sent to all landlords and tenants to remind them of their obligations. It was pointed out that the Vale didn't have any grants available to assist them at the moment. There was uncertainty over what a letter from the Town Council would achieve. It was noted that the properties had different tenures and most of them don't belong to the Chamber of Commerce. While there was agreement with the sentiment of the suggestion there was uncertainty over what could realistically be achieved. There was concern over the erosion of the conservation area and discussion followed on this matter. In summary it was agreed that the council would like to see an improvement, but the issue was how to achieve this.

Action: A Yates to investigate the Rural Prosperity fund.

89. District and County Councillors' Reports

The hospital has been the main focus of recent work. There has been an enquiry on HIF1. Cllr Hannaby had attended the active travel meeting and had asked for a report about the railway strategy. There were proposals for a station at Grove. Cllr Cameron had been to the PTR meeting which had also discussed this and it seemed to be very positive.

Action: Clerk to obtain a recording of active travel meeting.

90. Town Mayor's Communications

There will be a visit to Seesen in September when there is to be a major festival in the town. Clerk to ask the Mayor for more details.

It was noted that the volunteer's reception went very well and the catering was excellent. It was suggested that not all the volunteers were being invited. An improved list of invitees was required. The current list of invitees was to be circulated to all councillors for review.

Action: Clerk to liaise with Mayor's PA.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

91. Request for donation from Wantage Guides

£5,500 was requested. To be put before the PM&F committee. Clerk to ask them to attend.

Action: Clerk

92. Request for additional grant funding from Wantage Town Football Club.

Cllrs Crawford and Hannaby declared an interest and left the room. The Clerk to ask the football club to put in an application for the extra funding and ask them to attend the next PM&F meeting.

Action: Clerk

93. Approval to release Wantage Silver Band grant in a single payment.

Approval was given.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Cameron

SECONDED BY Councillor Kirby-Harris

It was RESOLVED to release Wantage Silver Band grant in a single payment

94. Kingsgrove retirement apartments.

The developer has offered the opportunity to meet with the project team. It was pointed out that this would be a change to the outline planning application, which was for a pub/restaurant. Clerk to ask the developer to attend a planning committee meeting with their plans.

Action: Clerk

The meeting closed at 9.30pm
