

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE
BEACON, PORTWAY
ON MONDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2024, AT 7.30 PM**

Council members present: Councillor A Dunford (Town Mayor)
Councillor I Cameron (Deputy Mayor)
Councillors J T Hannaby, A Crawford, A Duveen, R Fitzjohn,
K Morris, P O’leary, S Third, C Walters and V Wright.

Others present: Three members of the public

Clerk: J Evans

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gilhome, Johnson, Menzies and Todd.

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

Councillors Wright and Hannaby for agenda item 76

64. To approve the minutes of the Council meetings held on 4 December 2023 and 12 January 2024

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford

SECONDED BY Councillor Hannaby

It was RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted.

65. Statements and Questions from the public.

a) Update from Sweatbox

Michelle Rozier gave a presentation.

Sweatbox to be added to next Town Council agenda.

Action: Clerk

66. Consideration of request from Wantage Tennis Club

Mike Hadrell gave a presentation looking at whether two of the courts could be used differently. They want to diversify and increase the use of the courts. The Club coach is supportive & the committee is behind the idea. They asked the Town Council to consider the idea positively.

Next steps are to determine feasibility and costings etc. It was suggested that the Vale be approached early in the project as they are the landlords and the Tennis Club need to ensure they approve the changes.

67. Matters arising from the minutes of the Council meeting held on 4 December 2023, 18 December 2023 and 22 January 2024

None

68. Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 4 December 2023, 18 December 2023 and 22 January 2024

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Cameron

SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

it was RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORTWAY ON MONDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2024 AT 7.30 PM

- a) To consider a draft response to the Joint Local Plan

A link to the Joint Local Plan consultation was sent out to all members. It was recommended that members review & send comments to Councillor Johnson.

Action: All Councillors

Clerk to ask Councillor Johnson to circulate his thoughts on the document. **Action: Clerk**
Final response to be agreed by email.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford
SECONDED BY Councillor Wright
It was RESOLVED that the Clerk will send final response.

- b) To consider a public statement on the new shop in the Market Place
One of the issues was the illumination which was quite dramatic. There was no planning application for the signage. This had been reported to planning enforcement. It was noted that there were comments about other backlit signage. It was noted that people were concerned about the content of the shop. Councillor Johnson had produced a response that could be used. Councillor Hannaby will speak to planning officers about the signage. **Action: Councillor Hannaby**

Clerk to draft a public statement which was to be circulated and agreed prior to publication. **Action: Clerk**

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford
SECONDED BY Councillor Walters.
It was RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted.

69. Minutes of the Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting held of 15 January 2024

To receive and consider the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2024.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Hannaby
SECONDED BY Councillor Third
It was RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted.

There had been a site visit to look at the fencing at Stockham Park. The area will be tidied up. A large bough on a pear tree needed addressing and there had been a complaint about a walkway. Councillor Hannaby was dealing with this.

70. Minutes of the Promotion, Communication and Events Committee meeting held on 5 February 2024

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford
SECONDED by Councillor Morris
It was RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted.

The Wantage guide was being revisited, as was the LED screen project. There was no support for change to Wantage Town Council logo.

To consider the receipt of a grant for the installation of history boards in Wantage Town centre.

The size of the boards was larger than anticipated. There was a meeting with District Council & the Vale and Downland Museum. Possible locations were the Victoria Cross Forecourt & King Alfred's Statue. Wantage Town Council did not support the latter. Councillor Crawford Suggested the 2nd one could replace the old sign in Angel Walk.

Power to make a decision on this matter was delegated to L&A committee.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford

SECONDED BY Councillor Wright

It was RESOLVED that the power for this decision be delegated to the L&A committee.

71. Minutes of the Policy, Management and Finance Committee Meeting held on 29 January 2024

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford

SECONDED BY Councillor Wright

It was RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted.

72. Financial Statements to January 2024

The reports had been circulated and were NOTED.

73. General Correspondence

- a) Consultation of merger of Faringdon Learning Trust and Vale Academy Trust

The consultation was NOTED. There was no basis for an objection.
No response to be made.

- b) Request for permission to hold an orienteering event in and around Wantage on 28 September 2025

Agreed and granted. To be put in calendar.

Action: Clerk

- c) Request from St Mowden for approval of tree removal work

A report came out today which had caused concern. To be sent to Mark Bradfield. A site meeting was required to fully understand what needed to be done. Councillors Hannaby, Third, Walters and Wright to attend. The request could not be approved until there had been a site visit. There must be no cost to Wantage Town Council, no changes to drainage, full disposal of trees, and site to be made good after works. **Action: Clerk**

74. District Councillors' Reports

County Councillor

The Hospital project had come to a positive position. A small board was to be set up to push the project forward. Progress will be reported through Wantage Town Council Health sub-committee. The current focus was on getting the CIL money after which the design would be carried out.

District Councillor

Budget work was being undertaken. There would be no cuts to services.

The Hospital group had now formally applied for the £600k CIL funds. A report on the future of the Beacon had been circulated. Councillor Hannaby will attend the cabinet meeting on Friday. Members to send their comments to her by Thursday evening.

Action: All members

Councillor O’Leary reported that Oak Taverns were proposing pop-up pubs in the area. Five were put forward and four were granted permission.

75. Town Mayor’s Communications

a) Big Thank You Event

To be held in church on 21st April – 2pm to 5pm. This would include a short multi-faith service.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

76. Request for Grant Funding from GroW

It was noted that there were five groups and of those that are run in Wantage 70% of the people were from Wantage. Councillor Hannaby left the room. Clerk to establish whether this application was in addition to the normal grant provided. If it was, we should look at this again after the Grove PC grant giving in June.

Action: Clerk

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford

SECONDED BY Councillor Walters

It was RESOLVED to look at this again after the Grove PC grant giving in June.

77. To consider recommendations for a new accounting system.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford

SECONDED BY Councillor Duveen.

It was RESOLVED to sign up to Rialtas

78. To consider changes to Payroll processing.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford

SECONDED BY Councillor Cameron

It was RESOLVED to bring payroll processing in house.

78. Update on Bank Account mandate changes

Update provided and NOTED

The meeting closed at 9.35pm