

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE
BEACON, PORTWAY
ON MONDAY, 29 JULY 2024, AT 7.30 PM**

Council members present: Councillors: A Dunford (Chair), I Cameron, A Menzies, K Morris, P Kirby-Harris, P O'Leary, S Third, L Todd

Others present:

Clerk: J Evans

Apologies for Absence: Councillors A Crawford, T Gilhome, J Hannaby, E Johnson, C Walters

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

None

34. Statements and questions from the public

None

35. To approve and sign minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 June 2024, and consider matters arising

The minutes were approved and signed.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Todd
SECONDED BY Councillor Kirby-Harris

It was RESOLVED that minutes were approved and signed

- a) Named substitutes for committees.
Refer to minute reference 40.
- b) Cemetery Extension – Dipping was to be carried out by volunteers. Cllr Morris thought that analysis was usually carried out by Southern Water. Cllr Morris to contact Southern Water.

Action: Cllr Morris

36. To receive the minutes of the following committees

- a) Leisure and Amenities – 1 July 2024

The minutes were presented. There were no questions.

- b) Health Committee – 16 July.

The minutes were presented. There were no questions.

- c) Planning Committee – 8 July.

The minutes were presented and an update given. It was noted that the WELR was to be named King Alfred Way and was to be opened on 26th September. Cllr Kirby-Harris raised a question about the café space at Kingsgrove. He was to discuss with this Cllr Cameron.

Action: Cllr Kirby-Harris

- d) Climate Emergency – 11 July

The minutes were presented and an update given. There had been an agreement to hold a Big Green Week 8-16 June 2025.

- e) Policy, Management & Finance – 15 July

The minutes were presented. There were no questions.

- f) Promotion, Communication & Events 22 July

The meeting was inquorate.

37. To consider a letter regarding fishing in Letcombe Brook.

It was noted that fishing was prohibited in Letcombe Brook. Clerk to ask the Letcombe Brook Project to improve the signage. **Action: Clerk**

38. To consider the Financial Statements for July 2024.

Accepted.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford
SECONDED BY Councillor Cameron
It was RESOLVED that financial statements for July be accepted.

- a) To approve a commercial waste bin for the Market Place. It was agreed to create a Waste Management budget under the Market cost centre and allocate £1200.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford
SECONDED BY Councillor O'Leary
It was RESOLVED to create a budget of £1200 for waste management at the Market Place.

- b) Appointment of Internal Auditor. It was agreed that the PM&F Committee could agree the appointment of the Internal Auditor. Clerk to obtain quotes.

Action: Clerk

39. To approve an increase in the number of named substitutes for the PC&E committee.

It was agreed to increase the number of named substitutes from 2 to 3.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford
SECONDED BY Councillor Cameron
It was RESOLVED that the number of named substitutes for the PC&E committee be increased to three.

40. To appoint named substitutes for the PC&E and other committees.

The substitutes were named as:
PC&E – Cllrs J Hannaby, S Third and C Walters
Health – Cllrs K Morris and L Todd
L&A – Cllrs A Dunford, P Kirby-Harris and K Morris
Planning – Cllr P Kirby-Harris and V Wright
Staffing – Cllr I Cameron
Climate – Cllrs A Crawford and S Third

41. To approve the updated Financial Regulations.

Adopted.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Cameron
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford
It was RESOLVED that the updated Financial Regulations be adopted.

42. To consider the appointment of a Town Crier.

Clerk to establish where the suit was purchased from and the cost. Clerk also to establish who owned the handbell. It was suggested that the interview process take place at the Dickensian Evening. **Action: Clerk**

43. To consider support for the campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries

It was agreed to support the campaign.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Morris

SECONDED BY Councillor Third

It was RESOLVED that the Town Council support the campaign.

44. To consider holding an end of WWII event in 2025.

It was felt that VE day would be the event that more people would respond to but that VJ day must also be acknowledged. It was agreed to hold a celebration type event for VE with something more subdued for VJ day. It was agreed that 10th May would be the most suitable for the VE day event, which was to take place in the Market Place and was to include singing, dancing, 1940s music and food. 17th August was agreed for VJ day, which was to include a church service. To be taken to the PC&E to flesh out these ideas.

Action: Deputy Clerk

45. District and County Councillors' reports.

It was reported that the reservoir was the biggest issue at the District Council. The consultation closes on 28th August and it was agreed that the Town Council should respond. Cllr Johnson had circulated some comments. Cllr Morris to review the comments and add to them. It was agreed to circulate and finalise the submission by email

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Wright

SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

It was RESOLVED that the Town Council response to the proposed reservoir be agreed by email.

Action: Cllr Morris

46. Town Mayor's Communications.

The Mayor reported that she had attended the NHS Mental Wellbeing Centre and Cllr Cameron had attended the unveiling of a plaque at Elmbrook Court in his capacity as Deputy Mayor.

47. Civic Visit to Seesen.

Six people had confirmed attendance. Councillors were asked to confirm by the end of the week if they wished to attend.

48. Local Government Boundary Commission

The Vale had proposed a new arrangement which would leave the number of District Councillors at two, but the Town Council arrangement could change. The County Council proposals were different. It was agreed to comment that the Town Council was happy with the Vale proposal for Wantage and to flag up the discrepancy with the County Council proposal. Cllr Cameron to develop a response.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Cameron

SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

It was RESOLVED that the Town Council comment that it is happy with the Vale proposal for the Boundary Review.

Action: Cllr Cameron/Clerk

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

49. To consider commemorating the long service of the previous Town Clerk.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Wright
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford

It was RESOLVED that to award the previous Town Clerk the Freedom of Wantage.

Clerk to contact the Lord Lieutenant's Office.

Action: Clerk

50. To consider support for Wantage Literary Festival

It was agreed to sponsor the festival with the Gold Package at a cost of £2500. The grant budget was to be increased from general reserves to cover this. The Mayor would decide who should receive the free tickets. The Mayor was to sort out the details

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford
SECONDED BY Councillor Wright

It was RESOLVED that the Town Council would support the festival with the Gold package.

Action: Clerk/Town Mayor

51. Update on plans to pedestrianise the western end of the Market Place.

There was a brief discussion on the meeting with the Business Owners scheduled for 31 July.

The meeting closed at 21.26
