

RWBTC/2/2017-2018

25th May 2017

ROYAL WOOTTON BASSETT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council held on Thursday 25th May 2017 at 7.30pm at Manor House, Lime Kiln, Royal Wootton Bassett.

PRESENT: Councillors: Robert Anstee, David Bowler, Steve Bucknell (Mayor), Mary Champion, Mike Farrow (Deputy Mayor), Janet Georgiou, Paul Heaphy, Rebecca Hearne, Nic Hughes, Sue Hughes, Mike Leighfield, Jenny Stratton, Steve Walls, Steve Watts

Officers in Attendance: Johnathan Bourne, Town Clerk, Michelle Temple, Administrative Services Manager, Emily Maiden, Committee Clerk, Kalpesh Patel Accountant and Gill Welsman-Clarke, Administrative Officer.

Question Time

Mrs Allison Bucknell of The Little House, 154 High Street was in attendance at the meeting and asked whether the Town Council had a social media policy, and expressed concerns about the Town Councils current website. It was explained that the Town Council is seeking to redesign and relaunch the website in the near future, and has set aside budget specifically for this purpose.

10. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Marion Sweet and Wiltshire Councillor, Chris Hurst.

11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with sections 10 and 12 of Wiltshire Council's Members Code of Conduct, as adopted by Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council at a meeting held on Thursday 12th July 2012.

RESOLVED to note that no Declarations of Interest were made.

12. WRITTEN REPORTS

The Council received written reports from Wiltshire Police and from Royal Wootton Bassett Age Concern.

The following points were noted in relation to the Wiltshire Police report:-

- The Mayor had recently attended an event with the CCTV volunteers, and was keen to encourage the volunteer operators to note any incidents of littering that are picked up on camera, in order that the Police be notified and a crime reference number provided.
- It would be useful if the Community Policing Team were able to provide regular updates on the crime statistics in the area together with future reports. It was therefore suggested that the local officers be contacted in order to obtain the recent statistics, particularly in relation to car crime.
- Enquiries were made about usage of the two bicycles provided by the Town Council to the local police.

Verbal updates were provided on the recent Area Board meeting and the Parochial Charities. Members noted that a report from the MP was not available due to the dissolution of Parliament for the General Election.

RESOLVED to note the reports.

13. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED to confirm and sign Minutes of meetings of the Council held on Thursday 6th April 2017 [RWBTC/7/16-17] and Thursday 11th May 2017 [RWBTC/1/17-18]. Copies previously circulated.

14. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

Communications from the retiring Mayor – Councillor Mary Champion advised the Council that £7553.88 had been raised for her Mayoral Charity. This was currently being distributed to approximately 20 different youth clubs and organisations within the town. Match funding from the Area Board will allow for schools to nominate children between the ages of 8-16 to attend the youth scheme managed locally by H5 Adventure.

Communications from the new Mayor - Councillor Steve Bucknell advised the Council of a number of events he has attended since his election as Mayor, including the Men's Shed Open Day, Sprint Triathlon, Buckingham Palace Garden Party, the CCTV volunteers' dinner, and the Carnival.

15. TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS

There were no questions either with or without notice received under Standing Orders.

16. APPOINTMENT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

The Council is advised that under Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, a duty is placed on relevant authorities to allocate seats on Committees, Sub-Committees and other bodies in accordance with the political balance on the Council. Parish and Town Councils were exempted from the legislation, as the majority are not

elected on party political lines. Where a Council is elected on party political lines it is recommended that the allocation of seats should reflect the political balance of the Council.

The Council currently comprises 9 Conservatives, 6 Liberal Democrats and 1 vacancy. The Council is therefore recommended to represent each political party on Standing Committees at a ratio of 5 Conservatives to 3 Liberal Democrats.

The Council is asked to appoint Standing Committees as follows:

Amenities Committee – 8 Members including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, unless they decline to serve.

RESOLVED to elect the following Councillors:-

Sue Hughes, Robert Anstee, Mary Champion, Mike Leighfield, Mike Farrow, Rebecca Hearne, Janet Georgiou, David Bowler.

Planning Committee - 8 Members including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, unless they decline to serve.

RESOLVED to elect the following Councillors:-

Janet Georgiou, Steve Watts, Nic Hughes, Paul Heaphy, Robert Anstee, Mike Farrow, David Bowler, Steve Walls.

ADJOURNMENT

The Council Meeting here adjourns to enable the following to carry out their annual business as specified on their respective Agendas:

Amenities Committee [green paper]

Planning Committee [blue paper]

The Council then reconvenes to transact the following business:

Revenue & Resources Committee – 8 Members including the

Mayor, Deputy Mayor, unless they decline to serve, and Chairs of Amenities and Planning.

RESOLVED to elect the following Councillors:-

Mike Leighfield, Mike Farrow, Nic Hughes, Robert Anstee, Steve Bucknell, Marion Sweet, Jenny Stratton, Steve Walls.

ADJOURNMENT

The Council Meeting here adjourns to enable the Revenue & Resources Committee to carry out its annual business as specified on the Agenda [orange paper].

The Council meeting then reconvenes to transact the following business:

17. APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES

The Town Council has established the following working groups as community-based, involving appropriate members of the community who serve alongside Council appointed representatives.

a) Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group

RESOLVED to dissolve the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group.

b) Community Led Planning Steering Group

The Council was asked to consider the future of this Steering Group in light of its desire to create a strategic vision for the town.

RESOLVED to dissolve the Community Led Planning Steering Group.

c) Town Team

The Council received a report on the future of the Town Team from Gillian Welsman-Clarke.

RESOLVED not to appoint new representatives, but agree to take on the projects to be completed by the Town Council, using Town Team monies to fund these endeavours.

d) Town Garden Working Party

RESOLVED to dissolve the Town Garden Working Party but to keep in touch with Persimmon Homes.

e) Community Hub Working Party (Library Project)

RESOLVED to continue with the Community Hub Working Party and reappoint Councillors Mike Leighfield and Marion Sweet.

18. APPOINTMENT OF OUTSIDE REPRESENTATIVES

The Council was asked to make appointments, where necessary, to outside organisations. Circulated the current list of Representatives and expiry dates for their expected Terms of Office.

The Council's instructions were sought.

RESOLVED to make appointments as detailed on the attached representatives list for 2017/18.

19. DEEDS AND TRUST INSTRUMENTS

Report from the Town Clerk detailing the Deeds and Trusts held by the Town Council, which is now in the format of a Land Terrier.

It was noted that it is normal practice for the Council to physically inspect all of its Deeds and Trusts once during each 4-year term.

Bevirs Solicitors acknowledged an error was made on the circulated Land Terrier and so a fresh amended copy was provided to members. Sonya Woolnough offered her firms apologies and suggested that, free of charge, she could do a presentation, which might be particularly useful for new members covering aspects of the Land Terrier.

RESOLVED

- a) that the Report be adopted.
- b) to accept the kind offer from Sonya Woolnough.
- c) to further improve the Land Terrier by asking Bevirs to include maps of the various locations.
- d) to create a publicly accessible version with names and addresses of tenants removed.

20. SUBSCRIPTIONS

Report from the Town Clerk detailing subscriptions recommended to the Council and the renewal dates shown.

The Council was advised that the annual subscription cost for membership of both the Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has increased by 18.5 % and 5.06% respectively since last year; a full explanation of the pricing structure for each organisation is included within the report. Subscription to these organisations is on a joint membership basis only; therefore the Council would be required to sign up to both WALC and NALC if it wishes to continue with the subscription for the forthcoming year, at a cost of £1,335.

The Council is asked whether it wishes to continue with membership of WALC and NALC at the annual cost detailed in the attached report.

RESOLVED

- a) not to continue with the membership of WALC and NALC in the current year but to keep these under review.
- b) further resolved to adopt the remaining membership and renew as they become due.

21. ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Report on the Annual Town Meeting held on Thursday 27th April 2017. Copy circulated.

RESOLVED to note the above report.

22. AUTHORISED SIGNATORIES

It is the usual practice of the Council to appoint the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairs of Standing Committees as authorities to the Council's main bank accounts.

It has been noted that the possibility exists for related Councillors to sign the same authorisation. In order to protect the Councillors concerned from accusations of collusion, it is current practice that the Officers ensure that related Councillors never sign the same documents.

The authorised signatories for the Civic Year 2016-2017 were Councillors Sue Hughes, Chris Wannell, Mary Champion, Mike Farrow, Mike Leighfield, Linda Frost and Marion Sweet.

The Council's Accountant has raised concerns that in view of the difficulties involved with changing bank mandates, the Council may wish to consider asking all Councillors to become signatories at the start of the 4-year team.

The Council was asked to consider arrangements for the forthcoming year.

RESOLVED that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairs of Standing Committees be authorised signatories as usual.

23. MAYORAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Mayor receives many invitations during the Civic Year; the previous Mayor received invites to 114 events. There will be occasions when attending some of these events will not be possible. In such cases, the invitations are passed to the Deputy Mayor, but again, this is not always achievable. It must be remembered that as well as taking on the duties and responsibilities involved in the role, the Mayor will often be holding down a full time job.

It is extremely important that we represent the Town by attending as many events as possible throughout the year. At a meeting of the Town Council held on Thursday 14th May 2009, the Council adopted a policy with regard to Mayoral engagements and resolved to establish a priority order. This order was amended at a meeting held on Thursday 29th May 2014 as follows:-

- Mayor
- Deputy Mayor
- Immediate Past Mayor
- Chair of Revenue & Resources
- Chair of Amenities
- Chair of Planning

RESOLVED to note and confirm continuation of its policy.

24. END OF YEAR INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2016-17

Report from the Council's Internal Auditor, in respect of internal audit work carried out for the previous financial year.

A copy of the report was attached, *Appendix G*.

RESOLVED to note the report.

25. ANNUAL RETURN AND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2017.

Annual Return from Kalpesh Patel, Accountant. Copy circulated.

At a meeting of the Town Council held on Thursday 6th April 2017, the Council reviewed and agreed questions 1-9 on Section 1 of the Annual Return, Annual Governance Statement 2016-17.

The Council was asked to: -

- a) Approve Section 2 of the Annual Return, Accounting Statements 2016-17.
- b) Formally adopt the Annual Return for the financial year ended 31st March 2017, so that this can be forwarded to the External Auditor.

Also attached was a Statement of Accounts, *Appendix I*, which is not subject to audit, but which Members should view as providing not only valuable background information, but also a clear record of both income and expenditure, together with the Council's balance sheet.

Kalpesh Patel was in attendance at the meeting to present the report, and answer any queries.

RESOLVED to adopt the Annual Return and Statement of Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2017.

26. POCKET PARK

Following a visit to the Men's Shed Open Day held on Saturday 13th May 2017, the Mayor has asked that a discussion item be raised on the Council agenda to consider the principle of allowing the Men's Shed Group to utilise Council land in Sparrow Lane.

The current Men's Shed Group has been hugely successful, and the group is fast outgrowing its existing accommodation.

It is anticipated that an appropriate workshop could be constructed in this location, and that the Men's Shed project might in the long term take responsibility for the maintenance of the surrounding area if this is subsequently transferred from Wiltshire Council to the Town Council.

The purpose of the item was to commence a dialogue and see if members wish to consider pursuing this project in principle.

RESOLVED

- a) to offer general support for the idea of allowing Men Shed to use the land at Sparrow Lane once adjoining land is transferred from Wiltshire Council.
- b) to investigate this in future for the concept of local groups adopting other areas of land to maintain.

Meeting closed at 9pm