

# 18th October 2016

Minutes of the proceedings of the **TOWN COUNCIL** held this day in the **MAIN HALL, TOWN HALL, WOKINGHAM**, from 7.30pm to 8.25pm.

## **PRESENT:**

Chairman: Cllr Mrs G S Hewetson (Mayor)  
Cllrs: M Ashwell, M Bishop, C J Bowring, Mrs UK Clark, , D O H Davies, Mrs A N Drake, L Forbes, C R George, S C Gurney, T Lack, D G Lee, P M Lucey, C D Moore, J P Mirfin, J P McGhee-Sumner, S Odedra, M L Richards, I L Shepherd-Dubey, S Steatham, A N Waters, R J Wyatt.

## **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Jan Nowecki – Town Clerk  
Nicky Harmsworth – Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)

## **PRAYERS**

Reverend Anna Harwood from All Saints Parish Church led the prayers this evening.

## **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs N Campbell-White, M Monk and K G Morgan.

## **MEMBERS' INTERESTS (Agenda Item 2)**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC (Agenda Item 3)**

Cllr Shepherd-Dubey asked the following question;

Since overnight and Sunday car parking charges have started in Wokingham there has been an increase in people parking in the surrounding roads around the Town Centre in the evenings, instead of using the central car parks, which remain virtually empty. This has been causing significant problems for local residents coming home from work, who now find themselves unable to find space to park. Many residents feel that these overnight charges are destructive to our evening economy, especially when the Bracknell Lexicon opens and Wokingham starts to regenerate itself, not to mention when we start using Civil Parking Enforcement.

In addition, in Wokingham people who attend the local churches in the Town Centre on a Sunday are now expected to pay £1 for parking, even though there are very few shops open and they are not competing with retail users.

Woodley Town Council are currently conducting a car parking trial, due to end March 2017, where they don't charge overnight or Sundays. Instead the much smaller sum of 10p is added to the first chargeable hour of parking during the day and the cost difference is shared amongst many more people. This means that people are able to park and use the Oakwood Community Centre, the pubs, bars and restaurants for free during the evenings. The two Supermarkets and the Library are also open Sundays, with people able to park for free.

At the Wokingham Borough Council Executive meeting (28/07/16) a councillor for Twyford asked if the Woodley Car Parking trial was successful, could it be extended to other Towns? The executive member for Transport (Malcolm Richards) said that the trial would be judged on feedback from local residents, businesses and if it met the financial need. He also said he was not aware of any other Towns or parishes that wished to participate?

So, would Wokingham Town Council like to consider asking Wokingham Borough Council if it would like to take part in a similar trial, maybe with some local modifications?

Cllr Lee responded that Cllrs were aware that Wokingham Borough Council was the worse funded Authority and overnight and Sunday car parking charges were a way of increasing income for the Borough. The trial had been discussed at a Planning and Transportation committee and although he sympathised with residents, especially on a Sunday, he said that the trial in Woodley Town Council should be allowed to finish at the end in March 17 and then feedback could be obtained. Cllr Richards indicated that he would be happy to feed back to Full Council at that point.

Cllr Gurney did note that some car parks appeared empty compared to when they were free and hoped that revenue obtained for the evening charges were covering the staffing costs for enforcement.

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK/Cllr RICHARDS**

#### **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING**

##### **(Agenda Item 4)**

It was proposed by Cllr J McGhee-Sumner and seconded by Cllr R J Wyatt and the following was

**RESOLVED  
29442**

that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Council Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2016 (pages 15214 to 15216) be confirmed as a true and correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

#### **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

##### **(Agenda Item 5)**

The Mayor advised that since the issuing of the agenda it had become clear that under Agenda 12c, Market Development Working Party, some confidential, financial and commercial information would be shared and therefore she intended to request a resolution to exclude any members of the press and public and this agenda item would be moved to the end of the agenda. Items 13 & 14 would be taken before that.

The Mayor then advised that she had been adding information onto her Facebook page and encouraged Cllrs to take a look at her page if they use it. The Mayor was delighted to advise that Wokingham Town had achieved a Silver Gilt award in the Thames & Chiltern in Bloom competition for the 4<sup>th</sup> year running and a sign had been erected on the Reading Road to note this achievement. It was also wonderful news to hear that the Community Garden at Cockpit Path had achieved a National Award.

The Mayor's list of engagements dated 25<sup>th</sup> July to 16<sup>th</sup> October were received and noted.

#### **CIVIC COMMITTEE MEETING**

##### **(Agenda Item 6)**

Cllr Mirfin advised that a typing error had been made on the Civic minutes tabled.

It was proposed by Cllr P Mirfin and seconded by Cllr J McGhee- Sumner and the following was

**RESOLVED  
29443**

that:

- a) the minutes and the following recommendations of the Civic Committee meetings held on the 30<sup>th</sup> August 2016 (pages 15217 to 15220) be received;

- b) Flag Flying
  - To continue raising the Union Jack in line with the calendar of UK flag days set out in the Flag Institute.
  - To continue to raise the Commonwealth, Armed Forces and St. George's Day flags but no other flags.
  - WTC to be included on the mailing list to receive notifications from the Department for Communities and Local Government on significant occasions, e.g. recent attack in Nice, so that we are notified when the Prime Minister asks for all Whitehall Government Buildings to lower their flags to half-mast. They advise that local authorities may choose to follow suit. This will ensure a consistent approach.
  - Agreed flag procedures for WTC to be noted for future reference, e.g. in standing orders.
- c) Mayor Making:
  - Mayor Making and Civic Sunday events are combined in the Council Calendar into one event with effect from May 2017.
  - The adjourned evening part of the meeting to be held on the following Tuesday evening.
  - Churches used for the service should continue to be rotated to include Norreys Church and Corpus Christi.
  - The school that the Mini-Mayor attends should be asked to provide a choir at the Mayor Making ceremony.
  - A small sub-committee should be set up to discuss the revised layout in the main hall and the type of refreshments required after the ceremony.

The Mayor asked for a vote and 21 were in favour and 1 Councillor abstained.

**ARTS & CULTURE COMMITTEE MEETING  
(Agenda Item 7)**

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs G S Hewetson and seconded by Cllr A Waters and the following was

**RESOLVED  
29444**

that the minutes and any recommendations of the Arts & Culture Committee held on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2016 (pages 15221 to 15223) be received

**PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
(Agenda Item 8)**

It was proposed by Cllr D Lee and seconded by Cllr A Waters and the following was

**RESOLVED  
29445**

that the minutes and any recommendations of the Planning and Transportation Committee meeting held on the on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2016 (pages 15224 to 15226) and 11<sup>th</sup> October 2016 (pages 15242 to 15243) be received.

## **AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **(Agenda Item 9)**

It was proposed by Cllr Ashwell and seconded by Cllr T Lack and the following was

**RESOLVED  
29446**

that the minutes and any recommendations of the Amenities Committee meetings held on the 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016 (pages 15227 to 15232) be received.

Cllr Ashwell advised that a Town Centre breakfast meeting was being held at the Borough on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October at 8.30am and that Councillors were welcome to attend.

## **FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **(Agenda Item 10)**

It was proposed by Cllr D O H Davies and seconded by Cllr P Lucey and the following was

**RESOLVED  
29447**

that the minutes and any recommendations of the Finance and Personnel Committee meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2016 (pages 15233 to 15241) be received.

## **STRATEGY WORKING PARTY**

### **(Agenda Item 11)**

It was proposed by Cllr D O H Davies and seconded by Cllr S Gurney and the following was

**RESOLVED  
29448**

that the notes and any recommendations of the Strategy Working Party meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016 be received.

## **ANNUAL RETURN – CONCLUSION OF AUDIT MARCH 2016**

### **(Agenda Item 13)**

The External Auditors certificate and opinion regarding the completion of the annual return for the year ended 31 March 2016 was received and it was noted that there were no matters, to which attention should be drawn. The Mayor thanked the RFO for her involvement in obtaining this outcome.

## **COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

### **(Agenda Item 14)**

Reports were received from Councillors who represent the Town Council on the following outside bodies

- 1) Wokingham United Charities – Cllr Wyatt advised that if anyone was aware of an individual in need that may benefit from a financial helping hand to let him know and he would pass details onto the Trustees.
- 2) Emmbrook and Woosehill NAG – Cllr Bishop advised that due to lack of volunteers this group had been dissolved. As this had originally been set up by the Police the Town Clerk was requested to discuss with the Police at her next meeting.
- 3) JAC – Cllr Shepherd-Dubey advised that as part of the Town Centre regeneration JAC would be leaving their premises in Peach Street and were desperate to find new premises and asked if anyone becomes aware of a suitable premise to let her know
- 4) WBC Planning Meeting
- 5) CAB - The Mayor was pleased to note that WBC's charges for the premises in Erfstadt Court had been reduced

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

**MARKET DEVELOPMENT WORKING PARTY  
(Agenda Item 12)**

The Town Clerk's progress update 17 was received

It was proposed by Cllr P Lucey and seconded by Cllr D O H Davies and the following was

**RESOLVED  
29449**

that the notes and any recommendations of the Market Development Working Party meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2016 be received.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs G Hewetson and seconded by Cllr D Lee and it was

**RESOLVED  
29450**

that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted i.e. commercial and financial it was advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and instructed to withdraw.

Cllr Lucey gave a verbal update from WBC's Co-ordination Board meeting held on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

- The feasibility study for the Market Place had come back from contractors indicating a higher cost than is currently budgeted. The board agreed to continue through the pre-construction phase of the project in order to determine the final cost estimate. Following this both councils will make their final decision.
- There is a possibility that an extraordinary full council may need to be called as and when any further decisions need to be made
- Councillors are welcome to attend the Market Place Working Party meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> November when the Project Manager will be attending.

**CHAIRMAN**