

20th March 2023

Minutes of the proceedings of the **CIVIC COMMITTEE** meeting held on this day in **the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Wokingham** from 19:30 to 20:45pm.

PRESENT

Chair: Cllr R Bishop-Firth (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: J Ainslie, M Ferrai, T Lloyd, K Malvern, P Lucey.

IN ATTENDANCE

Civic Officer

Mayor's Attendant

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Cllr David Lee (Chair), Cllr T Lack and D King

MEMBERS' INTERESTS (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

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

No questions were received.

CIVIC COMMITTEE MINUTES (Agenda Item 4)

It was proposed by Cllr P Lucey and seconded by Cllr K Malvern and it was

**RESOLVED
30591**

that the Minutes of the Civic Committee meeting held on 21st November 2022 (pages 16653 to 16656), be received as a true and correct record and that they be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

COMMITTEE'S BUDGET (Agenda Item 5)

A report on the Committee's budget expenditure to 28th February 2023 was received and noted.

A request was made to change the wording of the 'Chairman's Allowance' to the 'Chair's Allowance', and members asked the Civic Officer to pass this request to the Finance Officer.

CIVIC AWARDS (Agenda Item 6)

The committee received the Civic Officer's report offering an update following the most recent process.

The report explained that the Civic Award Selection Committee has found it very difficult to support nominations for organisations as all charitable groups offer valuable support to our community in different ways and they have felt it has been far too difficult to recognise some and not others.

It was felt by the Selection Committee that a better approach may be to offer support to organisations on a more ongoing basis with visits from the Mayor, as it has often done in the past, and maintain the Civic Award process as recognising individuals only.

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



**RESOLVED
30592**

It was proposed by Cllr R Bishop-Firth and seconded by Cllr K Malvern and it was that WTC should revert back to the Civic Award Process allowing nominations to be made for individuals only, and not organisations. The process should continue to ask for two people to make a nomination.

The Mayor should continue to support and visit organisations on an ongoing basis to offer thanks as required.

Members also discussed that the number of nominations received in the most recent process was fewer than recent years, and it was suggested that ideas to help further promote this are discussed at a future Civic meeting.

ACTION: Civic Officer

ROAD NAME REQUEST (Agenda Item 7)

Following a request received, the Civic Committee considered adding the name 'Paul Gallagher' to the list of proposed names and requested that this is passed to the Planning and Transport Committee for referral to the Wokingham Borough Council. Members suggested that, if approved, it would be appropriate for his name to be used in any new roads in the Emmbrook area.

ACTION: Civic Officer

HERITAGE OPEN DAY (Agenda Item 8)

The committee received the Civic Officer's report offering an update about this year's theme.

The report explained that the Council's Open Day would be held on Saturday 9th September and the theme set by National Heritage Open Days this year is 'Creativity Unwrapped.'

Members offered some suggestions for the Civic Officer to consider and explore, whilst planning the event including the following:

- Sharing amongst the community to see who might be interested in working with us or taking part
- Discussing with local Arts groups

ACTION: Civic Officer

MAYOR'S CHAIN AND BADGE OF OFFICE (Agenda Item 9)

The committee received the Civic Officer's report offering an update about the Mayoral chain and badge of office.

The report explained how this is a very distinctive and valuable item in its historic collection, and WTC is its custodian and is responsible for its preservation for our future generations. It noted the following challenges:

- It is extremely heavy for our Mayors to wear, particularly our female Mayors

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



- The badge often catches on Mayor's clothing
- It is showing more and more signs of wear and more frequent repairs are needing to be made
- Each time the chain is sent away, the process of taking shields and adding new ones is likely to be weakening the chain
- Keeping the chain and badge in regular use, without making any changes no longer feels like an option as its maintenance could become more and more expensive and it could in the long term become irreparable.

Members discussed the following options below which were presented in the report, along with other ideas such as getting in touch with BBC's The Repair Shop:

- adding a velvet collar to the chain and badge to add protection
- considering if the process of adding new shields for each Mayor should be continued
- reducing how often it is worn and for the Mayor to wear the Mayoress/Consort chain and badge when the robe is not worn
- purchasing a new chain and badge

It was proposed by Cllr R Bishop-Firth and seconded by Cllr J Ainslie and it was

**RESOLVED
30593**

that the Civic Officer should investigate the idea of getting in touch with The Repair Shop but in any case, the repairs to the badge of office and box should be made regardless.

The other decisions around the future of how WTC maintains and preserves the chain and badge should be deferred and brought to an Extraordinary Meeting before the end of the Council year to include as many Past Mayors as possible, the current Mayor if available, as well as any other interested Councillors.

The Civic Officer was asked to develop the ideas further and arrange an Extraordinary Meeting before the end of the municipal year.

ACTION: Civic Officer

INFORMATION ITEMS (Agenda Item 10)

It was noted that a replacement soldier silhouette has been purchased to replace the one that was vandalised and will be positioned in Elms Field for the Remembrance period again this year along with the other silhouette.

COMMITTEE INFORMATION (Agenda Item 11)

There were no information items.

- a) No information was raised by members.
- b) No specific information was identified for marketing.

CHAIR'S SIGNATURE _____

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



CHAIR'S INITIALS _____

Civic Committee 20/03/2023

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