



Wallingford Town Council

**MINUTES
of a meeting of the
FULL COUNCIL
held on
Monday, 22 April 2024 at 7.00 pm
in Wallingford Town Hall**

Present

Members

Cllr Dan Beauchamp (The Mayor/Chairman)
Cllr Mahmood Ebrahimjee
Cllr Marcus Harris
Cllr Susan Hendrie
Cllr Stephen Holder
Cllr Claire Holford (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr Jacki Hoskins
Cllr Mark Hoskins
Cllr Nigel Hughes (except Minute 727/23)
Cllr Len Pannett
Cllr Christine Sandall

Officers:

Michelle Taylor, Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Luke Whitcomb, Meetings Officer

Others:

Cllr James Barlow, South Oxfordshire District
4 members of the public
0 members of the press

712/23

MEETING PROTOCOL

The Mayor outlined the protocols that needed to be followed in the conduct of the meeting.

713/23

APOLOGIES

Apologies were tabled from Town Councillors Acreman, Charter, Lester and Margarido, Town and District Councillor Keats-Rohan, and County Councillor Sudbury.

It was proposed by Councillor Holford, and seconded by Councillor Hendrie, and

RESOLVED that these apologies be received and accepted

714/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hughes declared an interest in the item minuted as 727/23 below and left the meeting during discussion of that item.

715/23 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor congratulated Mark Brett, the Chair of the local 1155 charity, who was present, on the award of an MBE for his charitable work. The investiture would be at Windsor Castle the following day.

716/23 MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Harris, and seconded by Councillor Pannett, and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council held on 18 March 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

In response to a question, the Mayor explained that an alleged conflict of interest was being explored by the Town Clerk, but that it was as usual ultimately down to the judgement of the particular Member who had disagreed with the allegation at the meeting on 18 March 2024. He also pointed out that the particular Member was not present at this meeting to respond to the other Member's suggestion.

717/23 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Council reviewed in detail progress on 'open' actions agreed by previous meetings of the Full Council.

Of particular note was an update that the feasibility review for The Regal had published on the government's ContractsFinder website on 19 April 2024 and the closing date for tenders was 24 May 2024. The appointment would therefore be made at the Full Council meeting on 24 June 2024. Members had been supplied with a full timetable.

718/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No member of the public chose to speak.

719/23 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

County Councillor Sudbury had tabled a written report which mentioned his work on parking behind the Agatha Christie bench (spoiling the backdrop for photos), the resurfacing of Hithercroft and the desired pedestrian crossing outside the Lidl supermarket.

District Councillor Barlow reported on a community conversation ('The Way Ahead') that was about to be launched on the Joint Local Plan, the extended deadline for the leisure strategy, recent consultation about the splash park and the volume of housing development applications that the District Council was receiving.

720/23

REVISED NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Councillor Hendrie introduced the final text version of the Revised Neighbourhood Plan. The most significant recent additions were the development and inclusion of a built-up area map and support for a new surgery which would include housing for disabled people.

It was proposed by Councillor Hendrie, and seconded by Councillor M Hoskins, and

RESOLVED that the final text version of the Revised Wallingford Neighbourhood Plan be approved

The Mayor thanked the members of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group for the extensive work they had undertaken over many months.

721/23

CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTIVITY

Mark Brett, the Chairman of 1155, explained the work that this local charity were doing to improve the environmental sustainability of their activities, whilst ensuring the events retained their necessary element of fun and enjoyment. Councillor Holder, the Chairman of the Parks, Gardens, Allotments and Open Spaces Committee, was assisting with this work.

722/23

HIGHCROFT ALLOTMENTS

The Council reviewed the final transfer document for the allotments created as part of the Highcroft (formerly Site B) housing development.

It was proposed by Councillor Holford, and seconded by Councillor Sandall, and

RESOLVED that the final transfer document be approved and that the seal of the Council be applied

723/23

TOWN HALL CONSERVATION PROJECT

Councillor Hendrie announced that James McIntosh Architects of Oxford had been appointed as the conservation architects for this key project.

The appointment had previously been confirmed by the Full Council at their last meeting (Minute 712/23), but due to confidential elements this had been

taken in closed session with the intention of announcing the contract publicly at a later date.

724/23

BY-ELECTIONS

The Council discussed the experience of the February by-elections where polling cards had intentionally not been issued and where the Council had been let down by a leaflet distribution. The by-election however had been promoted in multiple other ways.

It was proposed by Councillor Holford, and seconded by Councillor M Hoskins, and

RESOLVED that the previous decision of the Full Council (Minute 331/19) not to use polling cards at by-elections be reversed, leaving all options available in the future

725/23

BILL SCHEDULES

The Council reviewed recent bill schedules and the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer took questions.

It was proposed by Councillor Holford, and seconded by Councillor Ebrahimjee, and

RESOLVED that the bill schedule for February 2024 be approved

It was proposed by Councillor Holford, and seconded by Councillor Hendrie, and

RESOLVED that the bill schedule for March 2024 be approved

726/23

QUARTERLY ACCOUNTS

The Council reviewed the accounts for Quarter 3 of the 2023-24 Financial Year.

It was proposed by Councillor Hughes, and seconded by Councillor Holford, and

RESOLVED that the accounts for Quarter 3 of 2023-24 be approved

The Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer and the Assistant Finance Officer were thanked for their work on these.

Councillor Hughes declared an interest in the following item and the left the meeting.

727/23

GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Council reviewed five grant applications.

It was proposed by Councillor Harris, and seconded by Councillor Holford, and

RESOLVED that grants of £500 to both Wallingford Carnival and Wallingford Fire Station be approved, and that the applications from Brazier's Park, Life Education Bus and Riverside Counselling would not be taken forward. These grants would come from the 2024-25 budget

The Council asked that the amount of the grant applications budget be reviewed at the preliminary budget meeting for 2025-26 (this particular budget had previously been £2500 but was now £1500), and that the promotion of the availability of grants, and the process for awarding them, be reviewed to ensure it was equitable and did not benefit only those in the know.

Action:

- **Schedule review of the amount of the annual grants budget for the preliminary budget discussion on 13 November 2024**
- **Review the way the availability of grants is promoted and the process for awarding them to ensure fairness to all**

Councillor Hughes re-joined the meeting

728/23

MEMBER/STAFF WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

This item was deferred to the next meeting when hopefully more members of the Personnel Committee would be present. It was presently unclear what the conclusion of the discussion at Personnel Committee had been.

Action:

- **Schedule this item for the next meeting of the Full Council (if there was a substantive recommendation to consider**
- **The Mayor to ask Cllr Charter (who was leading on this issue) for clarification of what needed to be discussed by the Full Council**

729/23

PROJECTS

The Council reviewed a document developed by Councillor Holder detailing current Town Council project. This helpfully visualised the work that was presently being undertaken across all areas and indicated capacity

considerations. It also had the benefit of being able to identify priorities and personal objectives. This was a work in progress.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Holder for his work and asked all Members to ensure that had provided the required detail.

Action:

- **Members to send outstanding project details to Councillor Holder**

730/23

FUTURE AGENDA MEETINGS

The following items had already been identified for future meetings:

- Pedestrianisation of front area of Town Hall (Action Log)
- Policies (Town Clerk)
- Governance cycle (Cllr Charter leading)
- Community emergency plan (Mayor leading)
- Biodiversity (Cllr Acreman leading) (now scheduled for May 2024)
- PCSO update – PCSO Sue Harris has requested to speak at the May 2024 meeting
- Rental property portfolio management approach and contract
- The Regal (recurring item) (appointment of consultant to be made at the June 2024 meeting)
- Member/staff working (potentially, an item from Personnel Committee)
- Youth policy (Councillor Sandall leading)
- WTC projects list (updated)
- IT training needs for councillors and officers, including MS Office 365
- Policy for storage of WTC electronic files and documents on MS Office 365 and the 'Z' drive currently by officers and only accessible to them

731/23

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was proposed by Councillor Hughes, and seconded by Councillor Holford, and

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

The meeting ended at 9.31 pm

Minutes of the meeting of the
Full Council held on
22 April 2024,
signed as a correct record

Chairman

