

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND
FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN WANTAGE CIVIC HALL, PORTWAY, ON
MONDAY, 23 MARCH, 2009, AT 7.30 P.M.**

Present: Councillor B H Armitage (Chairman)
Councillors Mrs P Brundle, A J Geden, Ms N J Hanna,
Mrs J Hannaby, P Kent, J Morgan, P M O'Leary, Mrs J Reynolds,
Major J Sibbald, Mrs L Todd and Dr I C E Turcu.

Clerk: Mr W P Falkenau.

Ms Sally Wallington (Letcombe Book Project Officer) to Item 69(b)

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Crawford, E C Goldsmith, M Green and Mrs E A Turner.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Mrs Hannaby and Kent declared personal and prejudicial interests as members of the Committee responsible for the Letcombe Brook Project. Councillor Morgan declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 70(b), his wife being a member of a community organization that made use of the Civic Hall.

Minutes of Meeting held on 2 February, 2009

It was noted that the word "February" had been misspelt in the header.

Item 62.57 of Council minutes of 23 February 2009 : Alfred's Bath

It was noted that it was intended that the Bath should be maintained to a suitable standard on an on-going basis.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Armitage,
SECONDED by Councillor O'Leary,
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes, as amended, be approved and signed.

68. Statements and Questions from the Public

None.

69. Reports from Community Officers

(a) PC Darren James – Thames Valley Police

PC James was not in attendance.

(b) Ms Sally Wallington – Letcombe Brook Project Officer

Ms Wallington commented on her written report which had been referred to the previous meeting. She reported on actions being taken to alleviate flooding, and the work undertaken to maintain Alfred's Bath. She advised that the boardwalk at the Bath was in poor condition and required attention; there was a need to direct water-flow away from the walkway; the trees at the bottom end of the stream required attention by a professional contractor. The problem of the public feeding the ducks along the Letcombe Brook was discussed. Ms

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND
FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN WANTAGE CIVIC HALL, PORTWAY, ON
MONDAY, 23 MARCH, 2009, AT 7.30 P.M.

Wallington agreed to provide a supply of the leaflets concerning this. The Committee gave her a vote of thanks for the work that she was undertaking. Ms Wallington left the meeting.

70. Matters Arising

(a) Vale and Downland Museum Trust

A successor to Tony Hadland (the Museum's Administrator) had been recruited. It was agreed to write to Mr. Hadland thanking him for his work at the Museum, and wishing him well for the future. **Action : Clerk**

(b) Community Group Discounts – Wantage Civic Hall

Councillor Morgan declared a personal and prejudicial interest, and left the meeting for this item. The Clerk had prepared a schedule based on information provided by the District Council and Civic Hall users identifying the likely on-costs arising from the withdrawal of the community discount to existing users. Most of the groups involved drew membership from the wider community area surrounding Wantage. The population within Wantage itself represented only a third of the whole local community.

The Committee felt that rather than adopt a set policy covering all organizations, each group should be looked at on an individual basis and any support given based on the merits of the individual organization. Consideration needed to be given to the extent to which a grant might be for the purpose of encouraging use of the Civic Hall as opposed to providing financial support to the recipient organization. It was agreed that the Committee Chairman, with the Town Mayor and Clerk, should consider and make recommendations on actions to be taken. **Action : Armitage/O'Leary/Clerk**

(c) Town Council Website

The photographic competition had finished at the end of February. The Clerk had not yet had the opportunity to consider the photographs from three entrants. He would refer these to Councillors, **Action : Clerk**

Councillor Kent was arranging to take photographs of Councillors for inclusion in the Town Council website. **Action : Kent**

(d) Alfred's Bath

The Clerk was seeking quotes for the on-going maintenance of the Bath. **Action : Clerk**

(e) Invitation to Seesen for Civic Visit in April, 2009

A party of ten would be visiting Wantage from 23 – 27 April, 2009. The Town Mayor was arranging a programme of visits and activities for the group.

(f) King Alfred's Statue - Replacement of Plaque

The Clerk had not yet ascertained whether the cost associated with the replacement of the plaque would be covered by insurance. Roger Humphries had not yet installed the plaque. Urgent attention was to be given to getting the axe repaired. **Action : Clerk**

POLICY

71. Minutes of the Joint Economic Forum Meeting held on 12 February, 2009

4(b) – French Markets

The price of goods had seemed expensive due to the fall in the value of the pound. The market was less well attended than previously.

4(d) – Undercroft Car Park in Mill Street

It was noted that Sainsbury's were responsible for dealing with the faults. The Clerk was to write to the company complaining about its failure to deal with this. A copy of the letter was to be sent to David Buckle, the Chief Executive of the District Council. He was to ask Sainsbury's to give urgent attention to getting the undercroft car park completed and put into operation. **Action : Clerk**

4(g) – Pedestrian Crossing at Limborough Road Development

The County Council was claiming that the Section 106 contribution of £40,000 was merely for the provision of a centre island, not a full crossing. This seemed at odds with the planning application for the Willow Grange development to relax the condition within the planning approval that a crossing be installed before the development proceeded. The Clerk, and Councillors Mrs Hannaby and Major Sibbald were to check back on what was included in the plans and the Section 106 agreements. **Action : Clerk/ Hannaby/Sibbald**

72. Future of Wantage Civic Hall

Councillor Richard Webber, the member of the District Council's Executive with responsibility for leisure, economy and property, had requested that an informal meeting be held with Town Councillors to get their views concerning the future of the Hall. It was agreed that the Clerk should arrange a meeting. **Action : Clerk**

73. Consideration of Arrangements concerning Provision of Christmas Lighting Displays

As previously reported to the Council, the Displays Committee was intending to arrange for a three-year contract for the provision of hiring Christmas lighting displays. The contract would cover delivery, installation and removal. The contractor had provided lights in Grove Street and Mill Street in 2008, and it was expected to extend coverage in future years. The contractor had drawn up a formal contract which cited the Town Council as the contracting party. This raised issues concerning the formal status of the Displays Committee and the responsibility of its members concerning contractual arrangements. There was a need to consider whether the Town Council should be more formally involved in the arrangements for Christmas lighting and floral displays. After discussion, it was agreed that the current level of involvement should be maintained and the Displays Committee encouraged to continue to operate under its independent status.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Mrs Hannaby,
SECONDED by Councillor Armitage,
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Clerk should have further discussions with the Chairman of the Displays Committee concerning its legal status. **Action : Clerk**

74. Wantage Market Place Lay-out Proposals : Next Stages

Two concept lay-out plans had recently been presented to the Planning Committee. It was agreed that these would be suitable for proceeding with a public consultation. There was a need for a narrative explanation relating to each of the plans giving more information on traffic flow and how the lay-out might operate. Information on each plan needed to be consistent.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Armitage,
SECONDED by Councillor Mrs Hannaby,
IT WAS MOVED to proceed to public consultation on the two plans at the earliest opportunity. The Clerk was to arrange this within six to eight weeks. This was approved 11 in favour, 1 against.

Councillor Mrs Hannaby was to investigate whether the District Council would be able to use its topographical software to provide plans of the existing lay-out which could be laid over the concept plans.

Action : Hannaby

It was proposed that alongside the consultation, the Clerk should proceed to seek quotes for future work outlined in the letter received from BHP Harwood dated 11 March, 2009. This was to cover –

- topographic survey of Market Place and approach roads
- preparation of a more detailed lay-out on a survey basis
- preliminary design of pinch-points including discussions with highway authority
- development of pc (provisional costs) estimates for the construction works associated with the two schemes.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Armitage,
SECONDED by Councillor Mrs Hannaby,
IT WAS MOVED to proceed to seek quotes as detailed. This was approved 10 in favour, 2 against.

MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

75. Consideration of Request for Financial Support in Placing Illustrative Posters in the Windows of Empty Shop Premises

An email had been received from Mr Jim Hetherington, Chairman of the Wantage and District Chamber of Commerce, seeking funding support for the installation of vinyl photographs on the Woolworths building at a cost of £740. The Committee felt that more cost-effective ways of dressing shop windows could be found, possibly utilising displays from voluntary organization such as Wantage Stage Musical or the Summer Festival. It was agreed not to provide funding for the dressing of the Woolworths window. It was felt that property-owners and landlords should be doing more themselves to improve their premises' appearances. It was agreed to refer an item to "What's On in Wantage" advising that the Town Council supports the decorating of empty shop windows, and inviting the owners and landlords to respond. It was noted that the Chairman of the Environmental Committee, supported by a working group, was to conduct a survey of signage in and around the Town Centre.

76. Consideration of Arrangements for Provision of Financial Support to Organizations Affected by the Reduction of Community Discounts to Users of the Civic Hall

This item had been dealt with under Item 70(b).

77. Requests for Donations

Wantage West Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) :
Letter dated 31 January, 2009

A letter had been received seeking a donation towards the cost of producing a newsletter for the Neighbourhood Action Group. Councillors Mrs Brundle and Mrs Hannaby declared personal and prejudicial interests as members of the Neighbourhood Action Group, and left the meeting for this item. The Committee felt that it was the responsibility of the police to publicise the activities of NAGs, and that they had sufficient funds to do so.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Armitage,
SECONDED by Councillor Dr Turcu,
IT WAS MOVED that no donation be made to the Neighbourhood Action Group. This was approved 8 in favour, one against. **Action : Clerk**

78. Accounts for Payment

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Armitage,
SECONDED by Councillor Morgan,
IT WAS RESOLVED that accounts for payment in the sum of £22,162.35 be approved.

79. General Correspondence

(a) Visit to Culham Laboratory :22 April, 2009

An invitation had been received for Councillors to visit the Culham site on 22 April, 2009. Councillors Mrs Brundle, Morgan, O'Leary, Mrs Reynolds, Major Sibbald and Dr Turcu would visit.

(c) Community Policing Awards : 2009

It was agreed to nominate Special Constable Hugh Reid and Community Police Officer Sue Harris.

Confidential Items 80, 81 and 82

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Armitage,
SECONDED by Councillor Dr Turcu,
IT WAS RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded, and they were instructed to withdraw.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Armitage,
SECONDED by Councillor Dr Turcu,
IT WAS RESOLVED that the resolutions made in confidential session be adopted.

The meeting closed at 9.55 p.m.

Wantage Town Council

Accounts for Payment - February to March 2009

Date	Payee	Description	Powers	Ref	£	£
18/03/2009	DD Leasing	Qtr charge re photocopier	Office	DD	£	121.43
		Total direct debits			£	121.43
10/02/2009	WP Falkenau	February salary	Office	304342	£	321.85
10/02/2009	Mrs M Eagan	February salary	Office	304343	£	545.20
10/02/2009	Mrs H Kell	February salary	Office	304344	£	721.80
10/02/2009	Mrs P Legge	February salary re January	Office	304345	£	126.06
10/02/2009	Mrs K Rose	February salary	Office	304346	£	369.65
10/02/2009	Mrs C Tomlinson	February salary	Office	304347	£	470.18
10/02/2009	Mr D Legge	February salary re January	OA 1985	304348	£	286.18
10/02/2009	Mr J Winch	February salary re January	OA 1985	304349	£	337.28
10/02/2009	Mr Z Islam	February salary re January	OA 1985	304350	£	246.56
10/02/2009	W Breakspear	Cemetery waste skips	Burials	304351	£	552.00
		Clear footpath at allotments/repair cemetery fence	Allotments/burials	304352	£	825.36
10/02/2009	Mr P Harris	Photocopying charges - January	Office	304353	£	11.93
10/02/2009	Red Corner	Rock salt	Burials/LGA 1972	304354	£	46.00
10/02/2009	TVE Sales	Betjeman Lane street sign (JET grant)	Highways	304355	£	139.15
19/02/2009	Falcon Signs	Rock salt	Burials/LGA 1972	304356	£	55.20
19/02/2009	TVE Sales	Wantage leaflet (JEF item)	Tourism	304357	£	577.00
19/02/2009	V&D Museum Trust	Hire of Christmas displays	Tourism	304358	£	3,836.40
19/02/2009	Festive Lighting	Election costs	LGA 1972	304359	£	3,270.61
19/02/2009	VWHDC	Grant	Tourism	304360	£	890.00
19/02/2009	Wantage Dickensian Evening	Cancelled	-	304361	£	-
	Cancelled	Office maintenance 2007/08	Office	304362	£	1,758.29
23/02/2009	VWHDC	Donation	Recreation	304363	£	500.00
23/02/2009	Wantage Town FC	Donation	Recreation	304364	£	500.00
23/02/2009	Wantage 1861 ATC	Stationery	Office	304365	£	72.17
23/02/2009	Viking Direct	Licence for French Market (JEF item)	Allotments	304366	£	21.00
26/02/2009	VWHDC	March salary	Office	304367	£	321.85
09/03/2009	WP Falkenau	March salary	Office	304368	£	545.20
09/03/2009	Mrs M Eagan	March salary	Office	304369	£	721.80
09/03/2009	Mrs H Kell	March salary re February	Office	304370	£	114.60
09/03/2009	Mrs P Legge	March salary	Office	304371	£	282.72
09/03/2009	Mrs K Rose	March salary	Office	304372	£	470.18
09/03/2009	Mrs C Tomlinson	March salary re February	OA 1985	304373	£	251.28
09/03/2009	Mr D Legge	March salary re February	OA 1985	304374	£	304.64
09/03/2009	Mr J Winch	March salary re February	OA 1985	304375	£	246.56
09/03/2009	Mr Z Islam	Photocopying charges - February	Office	304376	£	30.90
09/03/2009	Red Corner	Telephone	Office	304377	£	87.71
09/03/2009	BT	Cemetery rubbish clearing Jan-Feb	Burials	304378	£	135.00
09/03/2009	White Horse Horticulture	Cut back trees on boundary line	Burials	304379	£	1,440.00
09/03/2009	Crosscut Tree Surgeons	Stationery	Office	304380	£	39.97
09/03/2009	Viking Direct	Water for allotments, cemetery and market	Allot/burials/OA 1985	304381	£	236.57
09/03/2009	Thames Water	Reimburse donation Choral Society	Recreation	304382	£	50.00
23/03/2009	Cllr P O'Leary	Footpath clearance and sundry mtce	Allotments/highways	304383	£	239.00
23/03/2009	Mr P Harris	Room hire JEF	LGA 1972	304384	£	43.07
23/03/2009	VWHDC					
		Total cheques			£	22,040.92
		Total payments February to March 2009			£	22,162.35