

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN WANTAGE CIVIC HALL,
PORTWAY, ON MONDAY, 2 MARCH 2009, AT 7.30 PM**

Committee Members Present: Councillor Mrs J Reynolds (Chairman)
Councillors B Armitage, A Geden, E Goldsmith
Mrs J Hannaby, J Morgan, P O’Leary, Major J Sibbald
and Mrs L Todd

Other Councillors Present: Councillors Mrs P Brundle and P Kent

Deputy Clerk Mrs H Kell

Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs E Turner.

Declarations of Interest

None

Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 January 2009

The minutes of the meeting held on the 19 January 2009 were approved and signed.

27. Statements and Questions from the Public

None

28. Matters Arising

(a) Bus Shelter, Harcourt Road

The Deputy Clerk reported that a verbal costing of £2,565.45 had been received for the removal of the concrete bus shelter in Harcourt Road. Confirmation had also been received from the District Council that it would not contribute to the removal of the shelter.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Mrs Reynolds

SECONDED BY Councillor Mrs Hannaby

IT WAS RESOLVED that an application be made to Oxfordshire County Council for the 2009/10 financial year for help towards the cost of removal of the bus shelter.

(b) Seat, Seesen Way

The Committee noted that the previously preferred replacement seat for Seesen Way was now not available. The Committee noted that the following two metal seats –

- (i) Ollerton, metal seat with arms £573 + £60 delivery;
- (2) Street Furniture SS011 with arms £498 + delivery

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ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Mrs Hannaby
SECONDED by Councillor Mrs Reynolds
IT WAS RESOLVED that confirmation be sought from the District Council's
Conservation Officer, Mr Grant Audley-Miller that Seesen Way is not in the Conservation
Area and that the seats being considered would be appropriate. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

29. Market Place Items – including Matters Arising

(a) King Alfred's Statue

(i) Bronze Plaque

The Committee noted that Mr Humphries had not contacted the Conservation Officer
with regard to the fixing of the bronze plaque to the statue.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Mrs Hannaby
SECONDED by Councillor Mrs J Reynolds
IT WAS RESOLVED that a letter be sent to Grant Audley-Miller, the District
Council's Conservation Officer to request confirmation as to the approved method of
fixing the plaque to the statue. Contact should also be made with Mr Humphries to
ascertain if the mounting of the plaque had been done. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(ii) Identification Gel

Following discussion concerning the benefit of using identification gel on the bronze
plaque,

ON THE PROPOSITION of the Chairman, Councillor Mrs Reynolds
SECONDED by Councillor Major Sibbald
IT WAS RESOLVED to obtain advice as to the success of using identification gel.
Action: Deputy Clerk

(iii) Damage to King Alfred statue 24 December 2008

The Deputy Clerk reported a verbal estimate of £2,460 had been received for the
repair to the broken axe handle from Cliveden Conservation. A stainless steel rod
would now be put in the handle to strengthen it.

ON THE PROPOSITION of the Chairman, Mrs Reynolds
SECONDED by Councillor Armitage
IT WAS RESOLVED that a claim for the cost of the repair be made to the Council's
insurance company.

It was also recommended that a letter be sent to the CCTV section of Thames Valley
Police requesting confirmation of the ongoing CCTV coverage of the statue.

Action: Deputy Clerk

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(b) French Market

The Deputy Clerk reported that an Alcohol and Entertainment Licence had been applied for for the French Market which was to be held on Sunday, 15 March. Posters had been produced and sent to all local Parish Councils, local Schools, the Museum and Library. The Committee wished to express its thanks to the office staff for all their work with regard to the French Market.

30. Initiatives which could be undertaken to revitalise the town centre

The Committee noted that the Council had set aside £10,000 in its 2009/10 budget to support initiatives to revitalise the town centre. At the Council meeting held on 23 February 2009, the members supported a request from Wantage in Bloom for a budget of £600 to provide floral displays on the railings outside the Waitrose store and the old Woolworth store. Members voiced their concern at the number of empty shops around the Market Place and also the un-kept condition of some shops. Other proposals discussed included a reduction in business rates for new ventures. Councillors were aware that Government legislation covered business rates. Proposals such as art displays in empty shops were considered.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Armitage

SECONDED by Councillor Mrs Hannaby

IT WAS RESOLVED that advice be sought from the Clerk as to whether the Council's insurance would cover art displays in empty shops. A letter should also be sent to the District Council on behalf of Wantage Town Council requesting consideration be given to reduction in business rates for new ventures. A further letter was to be sent to the Conservation Officer requesting him to contact owners of shops within the town where cleaning and repair of the premises was necessary. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

31. Cemetery Items – including Matters Arising

(a) Tree work southern boundary

The Deputy Clerk reported that work to trees on the southern boundary had now commenced.

(b) Tree works and vehicular entrance improvements to Chain Hill Cemetery

The Committee noted that an application had been made to Wantage Joint Environmental Trust for a grant of 25% of the previously agreed costs of £3411.98 for improvement work to the cemetery.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Mrs Hannaby

SECONDED by Councillor Armitage

IT WAS RESOLVED that notices be placed at both the vehicular and pedestrian entrances to the cemetery giving the public four weeks notice of commencement of the improvement work. Also, a letter was to be sent to undertakers and stonemasons.

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It was agreed that notices of the dates of the refurbishment work should be placed in both the Wantage Herald and Wantage and Grove Review. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(c) Other Cemetery Matters

The Committee noted that an inspection of the cemetery and Alfred's Bath would take place on Sunday, 8th March 2009, commencing at 10 a.m. at Chain Hill Cemetery.

32. Any Other Business

(a) Wantage Library

The Committee noted a request for a fingerpost sign to the library at the junctions of Grove Street, the Sainsbury's development and the junction at Grove Street and Stirlings Road.

ON THE PROPOSITION of the Chairman, Mrs Reynolds
SECONDED by Mrs Hannaby

IT WAS RESOLVED that a letter be sent to Oxfordshire County Council enquiring into the suitability of the requested positioning of the fingerpost. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

The Committee also requested that costings for the fingerpost be obtained and a request for the funding of the fingerpost be put on the next agenda of the next Joint Environmental Trust. The Committee also recommended a working party be formed to consider appropriate areas for new signage within the town. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(b) Policy for future grit provision in the town and cemetery

The Committee proposed a meeting be held with Oxfordshire County Council officers to consider suitable areas for new salt bins. The Committee also considered the policy for salting of the cemetery and town centre.

ON THE PROPOSITION of the Chairman,
SECONDED by Councillor Armitage

IT WAS RESOLVED that every November, Town Council staff should ensure that there is sufficient salt/grit in the bins at the cemetery and sufficient stored in the shed for town centre use if inclement weather occurs. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

The meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.

WPF/HK/CT