



Wallingford Town Council

**MINUTES
of a meeting of the
FULL COUNCIL
held on Wednesday, 24 May 2023 at 7.00 pm
in Wallingford Town Hall**

Present

Members

Cllr Mike Acreman
Cllr Daniel Beauchamp (Mayor/Chairman)
Cllr Steve Beatty
Cllr Ailsa Charter
Cllr Mahmood Ebrahimjee (up to Minute 46/23)
Cllr Paul Gibbon
Cllr Susan Hendrie
Cllr Stephen Holder
Cllr Claire Holford (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr Jacki Hoskins
Cllr Mark Hoskins
Cllr Nigel Hughes
Town & District Cllr Katharine Keats-Rohan
Cllr Ros Lester (up to Minute 46/23)
Cllr Diana Margarido

Officers:

Michelle Taylor, Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer
Luke Whitcomb, Meetings Officer
Duncan Kent, Head of Parks and Estates
Jennifer Green, Engagement Manager

Others:

3 members of the public
0 member of the press

29/23

MEETING PROTOCOL

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

30/23

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Town Councillor Marcus Harris, District Councillor James Barlow and County Councillor Pete Sudbury.

31/23 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Ebrahimjee and Lester declared interests in respect of Minute 47/23 below and signed the register.

32/23 **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Mayor reported on the large number of residents and community leaders who had expressed an interest in meeting him since he had been elected the previous week. He also thanked the Council staff team for the organisation of a successful Mayor's Sunday.

33/23 **MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor Lester, and seconded by Councillor Beatty, and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council held on 24 April 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Full Council held on 11 May 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

It was proposed by Councillor Gibbon, and seconded by Councillor Hughes, And

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Annual Meeting on 15 May 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

34/23 **ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

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

35/23 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

One member of the public spoke as part of the discussion of the horse chestnut tree by the Coach and Horses Pub on the Kinecroft. He argued in favour of the tree's retention citing its community value. See Minute 37/23 below.

36/23 **COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

The Council received an oral report from District Councillor Keats-Rohan who had recently been elected to South Oxfordshire District Council.

District Councillor Barlow had sent his apologies. See Minute 30/23.

Councillor Beatty had requested a discussion on the poor condition of the roads in Wallingford and the Council considered a written response from County Councillor Sudbury which cited the impact of the severe winter and the lack of resources.

Given the consensus of concern, it was agreed that this should be a substantive item at the next meeting of the Full Council that County Councillor Sudbury could attend.

Action:

Meetings Officer to schedule item for the next meeting of the Full Council on 26 June 2023 and to alert County Councillor Sudbury

37/23

KINECROFT, COACH AND HORSES, HORSE CHESTNUT TREE

Councillor Holder briefed new Members on the background of this issue and updated the Council on the latest costs of retaining the tree, advised by the appointed arboriculturalist.

There were concerns about the apparent costs of retaining the tree which the District Council's Tree Officer had declared was moribund, especially when compared to the cost of providing other community benefits.

A member of the public, as described in Minute 35/23, spoke in favour of retaining the tree and challenged some of the cost assumptions.

It was proposed by Councillor Gibbon, and seconded by Councillor Charter, and

RESOLVED that the final decision concerning the tree be deferred to the meeting of the Full Council on 23 October 2023 by which time the results of the various interventions could be properly assessed

Action:

Meetings Officer to schedule item for Full Council meeting in October

Parks and Estates Team to progress planting of an additional horse chestnut tree for which permission had already been given for the Scheduled Monument

38/23

AGATHA CHRISTIE STATUE

Councillor Beatty reported on the final countdown to the installation and unveiling of the statue and the associated weekend of activities including the involvement of local pubs and restaurants. Everything was on schedule. The

initiative continued to attract national media coverage. The editorial team responsible for the official Agatha Christie website had agreed to include a permanent feature on the statue.

39/23

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND ESTABLISHMENT OF WORKING GROUPS

(a) Committee membership

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

RESOLVED that the following members be appointed to the Council's committees as shown below:

Finance and Properties

Beatty
Ebrahimjee
Gibbon
Harris
Holford
Hoskins, Mark
Hughes
Keats-Rohan

Parks, Gardens, Allotments and Open Spaces

Acreman
Hendrie
Holder
Keats-Rohan
Lester
Margarido

Personnel

Charter
Harris
Hendrie
Hoskins, Jacki
Keats-Rohan
Lester

Planning

The membership had already been determined at the Annual Meeting on 15 May 2023 (Minute 13/23(c))

Councillor Margarido expressed an interest but at this stage did not commit herself at this stage

Tourism and Economic Development

Acreman
Beatty
Charter
Ebrahimjee
Gibbon
Hoskins, Jacki
Margarido

It was proposed by Councillor Beatty, and seconded by Councillor Margarido, and

RESOLVED that the membership of the Tourism and Economic Development Committee be increased to 8 from 7

(b) Working Groups

It was proposed by Councillor Holder, and seconded by Councillor Lester, and

RESOLVED that the following Working Groups be established to operate in line with the Working Group Protocols agreed at the Annual Meeting (Minute 13/13(b)):

- Town Hall/Heritage Assets
- Arts Grants
- Twinning
- Bull Croft
- The Regal
- Curfew Bell
- Agatha Christie statue
- Britain in Bloom
- Neighbourhood Plan – see Minute 39/23(c) below
- Pancake Race (possibly) – see Minute 40/23 below

Action:

Meetings Officer to circulate list of Working Groups to Members to determine who would like to serve on each (Neighbourhood Plan membership already largely determined)

(c) Neighbourhood Plan

It was proposed by Councillor Hughes, and seconded by Councillor Keats-Rohan, and

RESOLVED that the proposed terms of reference be approved, increasing the membership to 10, and constituting this body formally as a Working Group of the Town Council

Action:

Councillor Acreman expressed an interest in serving on this group and would talk to Councillor Hendrie outside of the meeting to learn more

40/23

NOMINATIONS TO EXTERNAL BODIES

The following appointments were made to these external bodies who had requested Town Council representation:

- Wallingford Regatta – Mr Ken Lester
- Oxfordshire South and Vale CAB – Cllr Keats-Rohan
- Wallingford Carnival Committee – Cllrs Gibbon and Jacki Hoskins
- Cholsey and Wallingford RPS – Cllr Beatty
- Window on Wallingford – Engagement Manager
- Wallingford Sports Trust – Cllr Hughes
- Wallingford Volunteer Drivers – Cllr Lester (Cllr Mark Hoskins also expressed interest)
- Local Transport Representative – Cllr Mark Hoskins
- Oxford Association of Local Councils – Town Clerk
- River User Group – Cllr Acreman
- Castle Meadows Advisory Group – Cllr Margarido
- River Users Network – Cllr Acreman
- Air Quality Steering Group – Cllr Charter
- Wallingford Street Pastors – Cllr Lester
- Friends of Wallingford Day Centre – Cllr Lester
- 966 (Wallingford) Squadron Air Cadets – Mr Mick Kidley
- The Army Cadets had not requested representation, but Cllr Holder offered to serve should they do so
- Pancake Race – Cllrs Gibbon, Jacki Hoskins and Lester, Engagement Manager (this could form a Working Group)
- Walter Bigg Trust/Foundation – Cllr Holford

The Chairman asked the appointed people to check that the external bodies still wanted representation from the Town Council

The Chairman also raised the uncomfortable events before the Town Council Elections surrounding the Town Council's appointment of a Trustee to the Bridge Estate Charity, including the circulation by a former councillor of inaccurate information.

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

RESOLVED that

- (a) The Mayor formally distances the Town Council, and apologises to Mr Bernard Stone, for the derogatory remarks that Giles Cattermole made about as a Town Councillor at a public meeting (Minutes 650/22 and 713/22). Furthermore, the Town Council places on record its thanks to Mr Bernard Stone for his public service;
- (b) The Mayor or Town Clerk make clear to the Trustee that the Town Council has appointed, Ms Deborah Whelan, that she has been appointed to serve as a Trustee to further the interests of the Bridge Estate Charity and not to represent the Town Council

41/22

OXFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

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

RESOLVED that Councillor Keats-Rohan be nominated to serve on the Executive Committee of the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils¹ (OALC) for 2023 to 2027.

42/22

POLICIES

The Chairman explained that this item was being deferred to the next meeting of the Full Council on 26 June 2023.

43/23

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

The Council NOTED the purpose, agenda and arrangements for the Annual Town Meeting on 31 May 2023. A new approach to this event was being adopted. It was already clear that the turnout would be significantly higher than previous years.

The Chairman explained that this event had regrettably needed to be held during half-term due to the restrictions of the pre-election period.

Action:

Promotion of this event to be further amplified and not concentrated exclusively online

44/23

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The following agenda items were identified for future meetings:

- Community spaces within the Town
- David Johnston MP's Crime Summit
- Pedestrianisation of front area of Town Hall (public consultation)
- Legal matter [confidential]
- Condition of roads in Wallingford (when County Councillor Sudbury can attend)
- Policies - adoption

45/23

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was proposed by Councillor Holford, and seconded by Councillor Keats-Rohan, 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 9.18 pm

Minutes of the meeting of the
Full Council held on
24 May 2023,
signed as a correct record

Chairman

2023-05-24 FC minutes DRAFT PUBLIC