



Wallingford Town Council

**MINUTES
of a meeting of the
FULL COUNCIL**

**held on
Monday, 25 September 2023 at 7.00 pm
in Wallingford Town Hall**

Present

Members

Cllr Mike Acreman
Cllr Steve Beatty
Cllr Dan Beauchamp (The Mayor/Chairman)
Cllr Mahmood Ebrahimjee
Cllr Marcus Harris
Cllr Susan Hendrie
Cllr Stephen Holder
Cllr Jacki Hoskins
Cllr Mark Hoskins
Town & District Cllr Katharine Keats-Rohan
Cllr Ros Lester
Cllr Diana Margarido

Officers:

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

Others:

County Councillor Pete Sudbury
9 members of the public
0 members of the press

247/23

MEETING PROTOCOL

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

248/23

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Town Councillors Charter, Gibbon, Holford and Hughes, and County Councillor Barlow.

249/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

250/23 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported on Bunkfest, which had attracted especially large crowds this year, his presentation of medals to children who had taken part in the Library's recent reading initiative, his attendance at the Wilding Andrew memorial service, the Murder Mystery Extravaganza celebrating Agatha Christie, including the unveiling of the statue and bench, and the selection of a Christmas tree at Christmas Common.

The Council expressed its thanks to the Bunkfest management team and their large army of volunteers.

251/23 MINUTES

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council held on 21 August 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

252/23 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

253/23 MAYOR'S CADET

The Mayor presented Corporal Noah Clarke of the RAF Cadets with his Mayor's Cadet badge and the Council expressed their congratulation through a round of applause.

The Mayor thanked the previous RAF Cadet, Callum Mackenzie, whose family had moved away from the area.

254/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Two members of the public spoke about next year's 80th anniversary of the Wilding Andrew crash. They were keen to restore the cairn memorial by then, including ensuring that it was registered as a war memorial, and for the town to lay a plaque in memory of the crew at the International Bomber Command in Lincoln. They asked for the Council's support with both of these initiatives.

A third member of the public spoke in favour of the introduction of a 20 mph speeding limit across the town and encouraged the Council to use this moment

to change the culture of the town in favour of increased walking and cycling, including between the town and surrounding villages. He spoken as part of Minute 257/23 below.

Action:

Both the restoration of the cairn and the plaque at the Lincoln memorial to be discussed at the meeting of the Full Council on 23 October 2023

255/23

COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Councillor Keats-Rohan reported that the District Council's Cabinet had signed a letter of support for the new application for clean bathing water status and that a high number of users had been recorded over the summer, new training for councillors on planning (although an insufficient number of places were currently available), applications could now be made for capital grants, the resolution of an issue with a dog waste bin, and a new event for children on the Kinecroft in February 2024.

Councillor Sudbury spoke to a number of highways issues later in the agenda (Minutes 257/23 to 260/23), but also undertook to progress the triangle of land on the Kinecroft (which was in the Action Log), his support for the Town Council's objection to proposed development of land at the end of Winterbrook Land and the County Council's recycling of road materials to help keep road maintenance costs within budget.

The Council thanked their District and County counterparts for the repairs to the steps on Wallingford Bridge, which had been a long time in coming, improvements to paths in the Radnor Road area and the organisation of a highways innovation day for local councillors.

256/23

COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH

The Group Co-ordinator, Ms Lynda Bowyer, presented a report of the surveys undertaken over the summer. The Group had concentrated on strategic spots identified by their members and other residents,

Locations could not be disclosed due to police guidelines.

The Community Speedwatch Group strongly supported the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit across the town (see Minute 257/23 below).

Speeding remain a topic of high concern in the surgeries organised by the District Councillors and had also been highlighted a topic of major public concern by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

257/23

SPEED LIMITS

The Council discussed the merits of introducing a blanket town-wide 20 mph speed limit, or a more targeted use of this speed limit.

Councillor Sudbury took questions from members of the Council. He had proposed the original motion increasing the use of the 20 mph limit within the county at the County Council.

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

RESOLVED that the County Council be asked to consult Wallingford residents on the introduction of a blanket 20 mph speed limit across the town

This was by majority vote.

258/23

CONDITION OF WALLINGFORD'S ROADS

Concern was once again expressed about the condition of Hithercroft and Wantage Roads. Although at least one of these appeared in a County Council maintenance schedule, it was unclear when the work would be done.

County Councillor Sudbury undertook to speak to the relevant department.

259/23

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT SCHEME

Councillor M Hoskins updated the Council on the plans to develop a community transport scheme. Working with the Grants Officer, he had identified potential grant funding of up to £50k.

The Council gave their support for such a grant application and also asked Councillor M Hoskins to investigate whether there were any appropriate under-utilised vehicles belonging to other local authorities, such as Oxfordshire Social Services.

260/23

CYCLING UK WALLINGFORD

The Council considered a request by Cycling UK Wallingford.

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

RESOLVED that permission be granted for the portcullis (not the Town Crest) to be used by Cycling UK Wallingford on their range of cycling kit

261/23

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Councillors Hendrie and Keats-Rohan updated the meeting on the revision of the Neighbourhood Plan which was currently in progress. The working group were currently at Stage 1, Public Awareness, which involved seeking public input; several other stages would follow. The group were aiming to submit the revised document to the District Council by June 2024.

262/23

TREE PORTFOLIO

The Council considered a proposal to establish a new Working Group.

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

RESOLVED that a Trees Working Group be established on the basis of the submitted terms of reference, allowing members of the public to become active participants, provided it takes on board the advice of the Council's subject matter experts such as Think Trees, and that it report into the Parks, Gardens, Allotments and Open Spaces Committee, and through that committee, to the Full Council

263/23

TOWN HALL CONSERVATION PROJECT

The Town Clerk confirmed that £14k had been earmarked within the budget for the conservation architects and that contact with nearby councils who had successfully secured Public Works Loans still needed to happen.

Councillor Keats-Rohan reminded Members that planning permission would be necessary to apply for a Public Works Loan and that the involvement of conservation architects with the former was essential.

264/23

BULL CROFT, ARCHAEOLOGY

Councillor Holder reported on the archaeological work required for the planning applications and quotations that had been received.

It was proposed by Councillor Holder, and seconded by Councillor J Hoskins, and

RESOLVED that the contract be awarded to ADAS based on their quotation of £18,047 (excluding VAT), dated 24 August 2023

Councillor Keats-Rohan abstained on this vote.

265/23

CURFEW BELL EVENT

The Council reviewed this new public event which had been organised to celebrate the awarding of an additional hour before curfew to Wallingford in 1069. At least 1k people had attended during the course of the day.

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

RESOLVED that the Curfew Bell event be run again in 2024 and that the funding of the event is considered at the budget meeting of the Full Council on 13 November 2023

Action:

Curfew Bell event to be itemised for the Council's budget meeting

266/23

REMEMBRANCE MONTH

Councillor Beatty reported on plans for a national campaign to raise awareness of homeless veterans. The campaign's development was at an early stage but it was expected to gain momentum during 2024, including activities that could be undertaken locally to form a 'Remembrance Month.'

The Council agreed that all those who had lost their lives, including those in armed and emergency services, and civilians, needed to be remembered.

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

RESOLVED that a newly-designed flag (mainly comprising poppies) be flown from the Town Hall throughout November 2023, using the simpler of the two designs put forward by Councillor Beatty

Action:

Local branch of British Legion must be kept informed by those working on this

267/23

WALLINGFORD FAIRY TRAIL BOOK

The Council noted the publication of this new book by local author Greg Ryder. All proceeds were going towards the charitable work of Helen and Douglas House in Wallingford

268/23 **BILL SCHEDULE – JULY 2023**

The Council reviewed this schedule.

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

RESOLVED that the bill schedule for July 2023 be approved

269/22 **QUARTERLY ACCOUNTS**

This item would be deferred to the next meeting of the Finance and Properties Committee, as they were not yet ready.

270/23 **EXTERNAL AUDIT/ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) FOR 2022-23**

The Council considered the outcome of the External Audit.

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

RESOLVED that the results of the External Audit be noted and the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer and the Council finance staff be thanked for their work

271/23 **FUNDING OF COUNCILLOR ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

The Council discussed how community engagement activities undertaken by individual councillors or groups of councillors could be funded, following a previous discussion concerning the Council's entry into the Raft Race.

The Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils (OALC) had confirmed that the cost of many of the activities discussed at the last meeting would traditionally fall to individual parish councillors. They had however drawn attention to a new option for councillors to be paid allowances, provided it was the same allowance for all councillors.

The Council were not in support of the introduction of allowances.

It was proposed by Councillor J Hoskins, and seconded by Councillor Margarido, and

RESOLVED that a community engagement budget be created for 2024-25 that could be drawn by upon by agreement at Council, and that this be included at the forthcoming budget meeting on 13 November 2023

Action:

Schedule this item at the forthcoming budget meeting of the Full Council

272/23

MEDIA RELATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The Council considered the latest iteration of a proposed policy, together with guidelines that had been prepared for individual councillors.

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

RESOLVED that the Media Relations and Social Media Policy be approved

273/23

COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

Councillor Beatty confirmed that he wished to continue serving on the Tourism and Economic Development Committee, but confirmed his resignation from the Public Arts Group,

The Chairman reported that two vacancies currently existed on the Parks, Gardens, Allotments and Open Spaces Committee,

Councillors Acreman and Holder volunteered to be members of the new Trees Working Group (see Minute 262/23 above).

274/23

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The following items were identified for future meetings:

- A presentation by the Wallingford Food Bank (October 2023)
- A presentation by the Citizens' Advice Bureau
- Pedestrianisation of front area of Town Hall
- Community Emergency Plan (included in the Actions Log)
- Horse chestnut tree, Coach and Horses, Kinecroft – final decision (October 2023)
- IT server in Town Council Office – funding for replacement (October 2023)
- Red kites – nuisance issues/discouragement from feeding. The Chilterns Conservation Board (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) are due to have a strategic discussion on 27 September 2023 about the matter with stakeholder bodies including the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), Natural England and local Wildlife Trusts.
- Legal matter [confidential]
- International Bomber Command – laying a plaque in memory of the crew of the Halifax Bomber (RCAF's 426 'Thunderbird' Squadron), 1944
- Wilding Andrew cairn memorial – restoration in time for the 80th anniversary (2024)

- Marking the 80th anniversary of D-Day (2024)
- Murder Mystery Extravaganza (celebrating Agatha Christie) – review

275/23 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

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

276/23 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS [CONFIDENTIAL]

The Council reviewed ‘open’ actions relating to confidential items.

277/23 THE REGAL [CONFIDENTIAL]

The meeting ended at 9.56 pm

Minutes of the meeting of the
Full Council held on
25 September 2023,
signed as a correct record

Chairman

2023-09-25 FC minutes DRAFT PUBLIC