



Wallingford Town Council

MINUTES
of a meeting of the
TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
held on Wednesday, 17 January 2024 at 7.00 pm
in Wallingford Town Hall

Present

Members: Councillor Mike Acreman (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Dan Beauchamp (The Mayor)
Councillor Mahmood Ebrahimjee
Councillor Jacki Hoskins (Chair)

Officers: Michelle Taylor, Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer
Luke Whitcomb, Meetings Officer
Jennifer Green, Engagement Manager
Jo Emmerson, Grants Officer
Fiona Pringle, Events Manager

Others: Councillor Mark Hoskins
3 members of the public
0 members of the press

506/23 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Since the last meeting, Mr Paul Gibbon, the Committee Chairman, had resigned as a Town Councillor.

It was proposed by Councillor Jacki Hoskins, and seconded by Councillor Beauchamp, and

RESOLVED that Councillor Jacki Hoskins be elected Chairman for the remainder of the 2023-24 Municipal Year

507/23 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

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

RESOLVED that Councillor Mike Acreman be elected Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the 2023-24 Municipal Year

508/23 MEETING PROTOCOL

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

509/23 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Charter and Margarido.

510/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

511/23 MINUTES

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Tourism and Economic Development Committee held on 14 June 2023 are an accurate record and be signed by the Chairman

512/23 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee reviewed progress of actions agreed at the last and previous meetings.

513/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public spoke in favour of the creation of a Chamber of Commerce, initially overseen by the Town Council, to share knowledge, best practice and explore opportunities, particularly amongst the many small businesses in Wallingford. The 'ask' of the Town Council was to be responsible for communications and the venue, i.e. the Town Hall. The organisation of events and speakers would be covered by others.

The proponent took questions from Members and the Committee expressed support for this idea.

An email from a member of the public who was unable to attend, was read out by the Chairman. This expressed concerns at some aspects of the recent Christmas Fayre that the Town Council had organised. One of the concerns was that small businesses had been unfairly disadvantaged. These concerns were discussed as part of the item minuted as 517/23 below.

Action:

Council Office Team to get in touch with the proponent to take the idea of a Chamber of Commerce forward

514/23

VARIATION OF AGENDA ORDER

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

RESOLVED that Agenda Items 11 (Local Business Community) and 12 (Twinning) be brought forward and discussed next

515/23

LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The Engagement Manager reported on a recent visitor and local business survey by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils and the Committee agreed that this would serve as effective content for an event for the local business community, possibly for the first meeting of the new Chamber of Commerce (see Minute 512/23 above).

516/23

TWINNING

Councillor Mark Hoskins, the Town Council's appointed lead for Twinning, attended the meeting to report on recent activities to revitalise Wallingford's links with twinned towns in France and Germany. The Mayor, Councillor Holder and Councillor Mark Hoskins had visited Luxeuil-les-Bain in 2023 and contact had been renewed with Bad Wurzach with whom Wallingford School had strong links.

There were also plans to contact the different Wallingford communities in the United States of America, using Judge William Blackstone as a common historical figure.

517/23

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chairman explained that this item would be deferred to a future meeting pending the review of the present committee structure by the Full Council around the time of the Annual Meeting in May 2024

Action:

Include as a future agenda item

518/23

NEW WEBSITE

The Engagement Manager reported that grant-funding had been received to set up a new website to promote Wallingford as a tourist destination, separating out some of the content that was currently sitting within the Town Council website.

The funds needed to be spent by 31 March 2024.

519/23

PAST EVENTS

Christmas Fayre 2023

The Committee reviewed this event held in December 2023. This was the second year that the Town Council had organised the event, the 2022 event having been put together a very short notice.

Various elements of the event had shown significant improvement on the previous year: the encouragement of footfall throughout the day, the presence of food stalls, increased communications and increased entertainment. As ever though there were lessons for the future. The day had sadly been particularly rainy.

The conclusion was that the organising team had been trying to do too much for the amount of resource available. The Working Group had dwindled in size as the event approached.

The Committee welcomed all feedback, including critical, as it would help make future events more successful.

The Committee Chairman and Engagement Manager welcomed the feedback from the correspondent whose email was read out in Minute 512/23. They explained the reasoning behind the positioning of the stalls, and gave assurance that the mapping of stallholders had been done fairly with a numbered system.

The Chairman thanked the volunteers who had helped with the event, some of whom were present at the meeting.

520/23

EVENTS - PRIORITISATION, SIGN-OFF AND IMPACT

The Chairman explained that Councillor Charter had been developing a process for prioritising and signing-off event ideas, determining the Town Council's role in each event, and understanding the true impact of each.

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

RESOLVED that a prioritisation, selection and sign-off process be adopted

Action:

Process and proforma to be circulated amongst Members and Council Office Team when completed

521/23

FUTURE EVENTS

The Engagement Manager explained the events programme for the start of the year which included talks, the Pancake Race and Oxfordshire Artsweek. The main events programme would get underway in May 2024. The summer would include craft fairs and a programme of music events in the Castle Gardens.

There was agreement that the Town Council was currently at or even over capacity and would not be taking on additional events for the remainder of 2024. The possibility of employing part-time staff to assist with events was raised.

522/23

EVENT MARKETING

The Mayor reflected that Town Council communications, included event marketing, had improved dramatically since he had first been elected.

The Engagement Manager explained that event marketing currently included advertisements in Window on Wallingford, posters, newsletters, social media and website

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

RESOLVED that pop-up 'feather' banners be purchased to highlight the Town Council's support of certain events.

Action:

Engagement Manager to order pop-up 'feather' banners

523/23

LOAN OF EVENT MATERIALS

The Committee discussed the loan of event materials and equipment to community organisations and agreed that in the first instance there was a need to audit what the Council currently had, including equipment stored with the 1155 charity and also used by the OX10 Community Group.

Action:

Audit of Council-owned event materials and equipment to be undertaken

524/23

CHARGES FOR 2024-25

The Committee reviewed hire charges for Council-owned spaces.

It was agreed that 'event stalls' needed to be included.

Action:

Add 'event stalls' to list of charges

525/23

TOWN INFORMATION CENTRE

The Engagement Manager reported that footfall had increased by 13% in the third quarter compared to the previous year and sales had been up by 50%, helped by Christmas card.

526/23

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Other than those which had already been identified, there were no future agenda items to note.

527/23

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There was not a need to pass a resolution because the following item on staffing was withdrawn.

528/23

STAFFING

This item was withdrawn by the Town Clerk.

The meeting ended at 8.27 pm

Minutes of the
Tourism & Economic Development Committee
17 January 2024,
signed as a correct record

Chairman

2024-01-17 TED minutes PUBLIC