



2010/2011 – 50

WISBECH TOWN FULL COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of the Full Council of Wisbech Town Council held on
Monday 4 April 2011 at 6.00 pm.

Present: Cllr N A Meekins, Town Mayor; and Cllrs Mrs CR Cox; JR Farmer; AR Green; M Hill; Miss S Hoy; Mrs JR Jolley; Mrs YP Lawrence; Mrs VM Macrae; PB O'Dell; DC Oliver; and HB Wegg.

In attendance: E Murat (Town Clerk); and G Garford (Fenland District Council).

There being no members of the public at 6.00 pm members were given the opportunity by the Mayor to check the minutes of the meetings tabled this evening.

The main meeting commenced at 6.10 pm

154. Apologies and absences

Apologies and reasons for absences were received from the following Councillors:

Cllr Fulcher – attending another meeting
Cllr Patrick – work commitments
Cllr Wheeler – attending another meeting
Cllr Wright – wife convalescing

On a proposal from Cllr Oliver and seconded by Cllr O'Dell the above absences were APPROVED.

There were also two Councillors who were absent without apology: Cllr Frusher; and Cllr Parker.

155. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interests

156. Minutes of the meeting of Full Town Council held on 28 February 2011

On a proposal from Cllr Oliver and seconded by Cllr Mrs Cox the minutes of the above meeting were AGREED.

157. Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 28 February, 14 March and 28 March 2011

On a proposal from Cllr Miss Hoy and seconded by Cllr O'Dell the minutes of the above meetings were ADOPTED under delegated authority.

Members NOTED the minutes of the FDC Planning Committee held on 9 March 2011 (unavailable at the last WTC Planning Committee meeting), together with details of a meeting of FDC Planning Committee due to take place on Wednesday 6 April to consider application no F/YR11/0069/EXTIME for Land North of 27-29 Norwich Road being renewal of Planning permission F/YR07/1227/F. The Deputy Clerk has the details of the application should any members wish to see them.

158. Minutes of Allotments Committee held on 14 March 2011

On a proposal from Cllr Hill and seconded by Cllr Mrs Macrae the minutes of the above meeting were AGREED by Allotments Committee, and then APPROVED by Full Council.

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159. Minutes of the Civic Amenities and Mayor's Charity Committee meeting held on 28 March 2011

On a proposal from Cllr Oliver and seconded by Cllr Hill the minutes of the above meeting were AGREED by the Civic Amenities and Mayor's Charities Committee, and then APPROVED by Full Council.

160. Fenland District Council matters.

Gary Garford, Director from FDC, was in attendance and was able to answer questions as detailed below. Additionally, papers were circulated with detailed answers to some questions raised at the last Town Council Meeting, and the CCTV report for March, which members NOTED. Members also NOTED the following correspondence from FDC.

- a) Minutes of the meeting looking into the lead up to the Olympics Fenland wide (displayed on the notice board).
- b) Terms of reference for Fenland's Tourism and Culture Partnership (circulated)
- c) Tourism & Culture Strategy (displayed on the notice board)
- d) CCTV up-date February 2011 (displayed on the notice board)
- e) Information and posters about the Census (displayed in notice board outside building)
- f) Results of consultation (FDC services) (circulated by email)
- g) Reminder Agents & Candidates briefing on 8 March for local elections (circulated by email)
- h) Part minutes of Wisbech & District Neighbourhood Forum – 29/11/10 (circulated by email)
- i) Confirmation that the Town has free use of Wisbech Park as the venue for the Wisbech Rock Festival on Sunday 5 June, and the Wisbech Bring & Share on Sunday 7 August.
- j) Email from Bob Ollier asking us, just for their records, to confirm the Charity that received any profit from last year's festivals, and how much it was - for Audit purposes. He has been informed that there were no surpluses. The actual spend on both festivals in 2010 was £11,892.03, which was £392.03 overspent. We had £5,000 budgeted from Wisbech Town Council + £2,000 from Fenland District Council + £4,500 from Awards for All - This year (2011) we have £8,000 budgeted from Wisbech Town Council – with no commitment of any additional funding from other sources at this time. The Town Council has made the commitment to use for charitable purposes any surpluses this year. Also we have asked for FDC to relax the DPPO in the park on both those days, by the temporary use of Bob Ollier's license, and enquired what FDC needs from the Town Council to facilitate the relaxation.
- k) CrimeBuster (Rural Community Safety Engagement) bus timetable for the villages is displayed on the notice board.

Mr Garford then responded as follows to a series of questions raised by members:

- i) GG will find out when the consultation is due to take place on the DPPO's in Wisbech, and report back to the Town Clerk.
- ii) The Rose & Crown and the White Lion have both been sold to different parties. GG will find out the details when they are available and report back to the Town Clerk.
- iii) FDC have had £3 million in government subsidies cut (approx 20%). All areas of the District Council are being considered for savings and any proposals for staff losses will go to Staff Committee at the end of April. Once the Council has considered its position there may be more information available about the staff losses.
- iv) FDC have made safe Constantine House and been able to undertake some cosmetic work. FDC have no powers to do more than they have done at this time.

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161. Cambridgeshire Constabulary matters.

Members NOTED the following from Cambridgeshire Constabulary being the reports related to Inspector Andy Sullivan's report at the last meeting of Town Council.

- a) Wisbech & District Neighbourhood Profile February 2011 (circulated by email)
- b) Press Release '16 Arrests' (circulated by email)

162. Mayor's update

On a proposal from Cllr Oliver and seconded by Cllr Green members AGREED that the town's Annual Assembly will now take place on Monday 9 May 2011 at 6.30 pm, as a variance to Standing Orders, following the local elections on Thursday 5 May 2011 to avoid concerns arising out of 'Purdah', and that in future the Annual Assembly will take place in June or July. Cllr Meekins as the Mayor will be chairing the Annual Assembly.

On a proposal from Cllr Oliver and seconded by Cllr Green members AGREED to up-dating Standing Orders in relation to the date of the Annual Assembly, so that instead of 'shall be held on a Monday in April' it should be as follows: 'The Wisbech Town Annual Assembly (Annual Town Meeting) shall be held between 1 June and 31 July (inclusive). Proceedings must not begin before 6.00pm', and to account for agreed changes in Financial Regulations changes to legislation, in time for the next full council meeting.

Some Mayoral engagements have already been booked for the new Mayor, amongst which are the opening of the Wisbech Rock Festival at 12 noon on Sunday 5 June 2011, and the Wisbech Bring & Share Festival at 12 noon on Sunday 7 August 2011.

The Mayor's charity bag-pack at Tesco's on Saturday 19 March raised a total of = £819.37. Bringing the total raised by the Mayor and available to be distributed at the Mayors Distribution to £3300.

The Mayor met a visitor to the town on Saturday from Essex, who couldn't praise the town enough, immediately followed by a local who had entirely the opposite to say about the town.

The Mayor thanked and applauded the work of the various cadet units who helped him with his bag pack at Tesco's. He especially enjoyed the preview of College of West Anglia students work at the Boathouse, and reminded members of Richard Barnwell's investiture on Friday, and of visit of The Princess Royal to Octavia Hill's Birthplace House on Tuesday.

163. Town Clerk's up-date

Members NOTED the following items in addition to the work the Town Clerk's office is doing with Fenland District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council dealt with elsewhere on the agenda, and items as circulated by email to members and hard copies put into the boxes of those members without email (over the past month).

- a) The Allotments Inspector has handed in her notice and will finish on 31 March 2011. The post of Assets Supervisor, initially for 6 ½ hours per week, has been advertised in Wisbech Town Matters. This post will cover caretaking of our assets generally.

On a proposal from Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr Oliver members AGREED the review of the Allotments Inspector post as above, and AGREED that the hours may be increased as justified by increased use of the Council Chamber, and/or the acquisition of additional assets.



- b) Our Future Jobs assistant finished work with us on Friday 25 March 2011. He has had an exit interview with a Cambridgeshire County Council officer who has assured Joseph that he will do his best to provide him with job opportunities and/or training opportunities.
- c) A copy of Issue 6 of Wisbech Town Matters is attached.
- d) Our solicitor has been instructed to contact FDC's Solicitors to finalise the Market Place acquisition. The Town Clerk has queried with the deputy Chief Executive of FDC, the alleged proposition ostensibly from an FDC officer that the transfer should be delayed due to Purdah constraints. A meeting has been set for Monday 11 April at 6 pm between members and officers of FDC and WTC, which the Town Clerk will be attending.
- e) We are seeking to have a meeting with Alan Brace who is working with the local MP Steve Barclay to discuss a range of local issues.
Alan Brace initially wishes to meet with the Mayor, Leader and Town Clerk.
- f) Whiting & Partners who provide our payroll services have been instructed to prepare our end of year contribution return.
- g) Whiting and Partners have also been instructed to action the following variations from 1 April 2011 in line with members agreement and contracts of employment: Town Clerk 37 hours at point 40; Deputy Clerk 37 hours at point 25; Beadle 30 hours at point 21; the allotment supervisor termination of employment 31/3/11; admin assistant (Future Jobs) termination of employment 26/3/11.
- h) A notice about the Wisbech Youth Council Club Night (to be held at the Wisbech Institute courtesy of Cllr Oliver), has been sent by the Chairman of the Youth Council (previously circulated).
- i) Traffic Survey staff request (circulated by email).
- j) Declaring Interests Flowchart (previously circulated).
- k) Wisbech & District Chamber of Commerce invitation to AGM (previously circulated).
- l) The Town Clerk & Deputy Clerk attended Heritage Lottery workshops in Spalding on 4 March. There may be opportunities for Wisbech Youth Council, which the Deputy Clerk will pursue in her voluntary role as Clerk to the Youth Council.
- m) The document 'resolving workplace disputes' – Government Consultation is available on www.SLCC.co.uk and clicking on 'Consultation'.

164. Wisbech Rock Festival (Sunday 5 June 2011) and Wisbech Bring & Share Festival (Sunday 7 August 2011).

Members NOTED that the Town Clerk has begun organising the festivals and that he has booked the following for both festivals:

- Both Festivals are in the Mayor's diary for the Mayor to open each at 12 noon.
- Wisbech Park has been booked for both dates (free) courtesy of Bob Ollier (see item 160 (j) above).
- The Fairground has been booked for both festivals, which includes free use of their generator (courtesy of Donald Gray).
- St John's Ambulance has been booked to provide all First Aid cover (free).
- Bubble Pulse Sound has been booked to provide the sound for both festivals.
- First round of publicity in 'Wisbech Town Matters' has been done.

The Town Clerk also reported that he is in negotiation with Art & Soul magazine with regard to booking of bands for the Rock Festival, and with Fenland Arts Association with regard to booking arts and performers for the Bring & Share Festival. He has written to many of the members of the Wisbech Youth Council reminding them of the festival dates and asking them to make a note in their diaries for Stewarding of both events.



165. Office Opening Hours.

On a proposal from Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr Oliver members AGREED that from 1 April 2011 the offices of Wisbech Town Council will open to the public from 9.00am to 3.00pm Monday to Fridays inclusive. Members NOTED that the opening hours until 31 March 2011 were 9.30 am to 12.30 pm.

166. Bound minutes

Members NOTED that copies of the minutes of this Town Council to the end of April 2010 have been bound into book form. From May 2008 to April 2010 copies of all associated committees have also been collated (ready for binding) to include Finance & General Purposes; Planning; Allotments; Civic Amenities; any working parties; and Wisbech Youth Council where appropriate. Also bound into the books are the Council's policies and procedures as they have been agreed: Financial Regulations; Staff Handbook; Civic Handbook etc.

On a proposal from Cllr Farmer and seconded by Cllr Green, members AGREED to ask the Town Clerk to have copies bound up-to-date annually, and that the bound books form the Council's reference source for all decisions made by this Council. Members may refer to them during normal office opening hours, but they must not be taken off the premises. Members NOTED that all these records are also available on the Council's website www.wisbechtowncouncil.org.uk , and that it is the Deputy Clerk's intention to archive the originals as soon as we have agreement with Cambridgeshire County Council of where the repository will be.

167. Wisbech Town Green

Members NOTED that the Town Clerk has met with the director of Octavia Hill's Birthplace House, and the owner of the former Kawasaki site (immediately adjacent to The Green). He has a letter from the site owner agreeing to the Town Green (adjacent to the former Sessions House) to be re-instated as The Town Green. The Town Clerk has given the necessary permission to the Street Pride Co-ordinator from FDC to begin work clearing the hoardings that have been erected around part of The Green, and to begin clearing the site.

On a proposal from Cllr Oliver and seconded by Cllr Farmer members AGREED to ask the Town Clerk to Register 'The Green' as The Town Green with Cambridgeshire County Council, and NOTED that The director of the Octavia Hill Birthplace House; the owner of the former Kawasaki site; and a senior partner in Bowser Ollard and Bentley have confirmed that they will support the registration.

168. Insurance

Members NOTED that the Town Council's Insurance is linked to the Corn Exchange by agreement, and that the owner of the Corn Exchange contributes 80% to the total insurance premium each year. Members also NOTED that the Town Council changed insurers two years ago from Zurich to WPS (Aviva) by competitive tendering, and entered into a three year contract with Aviva. Last year Aviva breached that contract by seeking to increase the total insurance premium by over 50%. The Town Clerk was able to negotiate this last year and have it reduced to £8925 for 2010/2011 (with the Corn Exchange share being £7140), but WPS made a number of stipulations of ourselves and the owners of the Corn Exchange which led to substantial additional expenditure. With the changes proposed by WPS and AVIVA we were left in a position where the 3 year contract with those insurers lapsed, which has given us the opportunity to seek alternative competitive quotations. The Town Clerk

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Also realistically valued our assets requiring the following variances in light of changes over the last four years to:

- Increase of public liability from £5million to £10million
- Increase of official indemnity from £250,000 to £10million
- Increase of wages and salaries from £45,000 to £55,000 to reflect the increases agreed by Council
- Increase of insignia and antiques valuation (especially the paintings and the chains of office) from £61,000 to £251,000

The Town Clerk took quotations from WPS (Aviva); Zurich; and 'Giles' (through Nat West Bank):

- 'Giles' were unable to compete – having tested the market and taken advice from underwriters.
- WPS (Aviva) have presented a renewal figure of £11,148.87 per annum from 7 April 2011.
- Zurich have presented a premium figure of ££9076.12 per annum from 7 April 2011.

Members NOTED that Zurich is, therefore, the recommended insurer.

In addition the Town Clerk has been able to negotiate a three year and a five year contract price as follows from Zurich:

1 year £8562.37 + IPT = £9076.12
3 year £8136.98 + IPT = £8625.20 further annual saving of £450.92
5 year £7724.73 + IPT = £8188.22 further annual saving of £887.90

The Town Clerk has presented this information to the owners of the Corn Exchange, and Norman Jacobs MBE has agreed for the Town Clerk to: continue as his agent in the matter of insurances for the Corn Exchange linked to the Council's insurances; continue contributing the same proportion of the cost as last year - being 80% of the total cost; allow the Town Clerk to negotiate a three or five year deal on our behalf.

Members NOTED that the 5 year option offers the best savings with nearly £4500 saving across the term, and that Mr Jacobs has already forwarded to the Council a cheque for 80% of the premium from Zurich to cover the year 7 April 2011 to 6 April 2012 on the basis of the five year option - being £6550.58

Zurich will also offer the Council other benefits and service enhancements such as having our own account manager so that we will have easy communication with them, and any questions or changes can be dealt with quickly and efficiently. They will also meet with the Town Clerk as part of their constant review and monitoring service.

On a proposal from Cllr Oliver and seconded by Cllr Miss Hoy members AGREED to approve the quotation from Zurich under the five year option, recognising that this is a variance on the Council's Financial Regulations, which would normally require a review in three years (on the basis that this option provides exceptional value for money), and AGREED to authorise the Clerk to accept the five year option on behalf of the Council to commence 7 April 2011, and to bank the cheque from Mr Jacobs.



169. Mayor Making, and the selection of Mayor elect and Deputy Mayor elect – plus the declarations from all Councillors following their elections.

Members NOTED that the annual Mayor-making ceremony is scheduled for Friday 13 May 2011 at 12 noon – after Mayor-making the meeting will be adjourned until Monday 16 May at 7.30 pm. All members (newly elected) will be expected to attend, and formal agendas will be distributed on Tuesday 10 May at the latest.

Due to the local elections on Thursday 5 May it is not possible to formally have a Mayor elect. On a proposal from Cllr Mrs Macrae and seconded by Cllr Oliver members AGREED the following:

In order to ensure the smooth running of Mayor-making the Civic secretary (Deputy Clerk) will be sending out invitations in good time to senior ranking dignitaries, such as the local MP and the High Sheriff; and all Councillors' spouses/partners, together with the spouse of the Town Clerk.

In order to maintain the numbers within the chamber to 60 (within Fire Safety limits) – there are 16 further places available and it is customary for the Mayor elect to have ten guests, and the Deputy Mayor elect to have six guests.

There will have to be a meeting for Councillors on Tuesday 10 May at 10 am in the Council Chamber for us to brief Councillors and for Councillors to complete and sign their declarations. All Councillors will be expected to attend. Until Councillors declarations are signed they cannot be Councillors by law. All Councillors will also be given a briefing about Mayor-making. All members will be given up-dated Standing Orders; Financial Regulations; Civic Handbook; Code of Conduct; and a briefing about the obligations and responsibilities of being a Town Councillor.

At that time members will also establish who is to be Mayor elect and Deputy Mayor elect.

The Town Clerk will send out a briefing paper/agenda to all candidates for Wisbech Town Council seats once we have their details – on the basis that 'If you are elected to serve on Wisbech Town Council you are summoned to attend at the Council Chamber on Tuesday 10 May at 10 am' – and the reasons why.

An induction pack for every Town Councillor will also be prepared.

170. Cancellation of Town Council Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 26 April 2011

Members NOTED that the Full Council meeting scheduled for Tuesday 26 April 2011 will now no longer be necessary. The business allocated or anticipated for 26 April has been distributed between this meeting (as well as being a special meeting to consider the Council's Insurance requirements), and the forthcoming annual meeting due to re-commence on Monday 16 May 2011 at 7.30pm following Mayor-making on 13 May 2011.

171. Annual Accounts

Members are NOTED that we have received the Annual Return documentation from Moore Stephens the External Auditor, which includes a form for us to complete providing advanced notification of change to Intermediate status, which is for planned income between £200,000 and £1 million. Members NOTED that this change was anticipated as referred to in previous F&GP minutes, and that aspects of Financial Regulations were amended accordingly, and Standing Orders are to include changes to Financial Regulations.

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The Town Council's change of status from small to intermediate will become formal from April 2012. In anticipation of this and to ensure the smooth running of the Town Council members NOTED that this council, whilst ensuring adequate and appropriate financial checks and balances, and in line with Internal Audit recommendations presented to the last F&GP meeting has prepared for the changes by giving the Clerk delegated authority to spend up to £250 – with further authority to spend up to £1, 500 in consultation with two of the four cheque signatories of the council. On a proposal from Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr Oliver the Annual Return is to be completed, approved by members, and returned to the Auditors by 6 June 2011, having been prepared for members' consideration in time for the Annual Council Meeting on Monday 16 May 2011, with up-dated Financial Regulations.

172. Change to Committee structure

Members dealt with the following parts to item 172 individually NOTING that they would be implemented by the Town Clerk in readiness for the preparation of the Committee timetable for the next Civic year to be presented to the Annual Meeting of the Council on 16 May 2011.

- a) Members NOTED that Fenland District Council Planning committee meets once every three to four weeks. On a proposal from Cllr Miss Hoy and seconded by Cllr Oliver members AGREED to alter the frequency of the Town Council's Planning Committee meetings to one every three weeks to be more in line with Fenland District Council.
- b) On a proposal from Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr Oliver members AGREED to change the name of 'Finance & General Purposes' Committee to 'Resources' Committee to more accurately reflect its responsibilities as the Council's Committee for dealing with all matters of Finance, Property and Personnel Resources of the Council, and that this is varied in Financial Regulations, and Standing Orders, together with the variations to delegated authority.
- c) On a proposal from Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr O'Dell members AGREED to limiting the number of members on each committee to eight voting members (with the Chairman's casting vote as normal to decide any tied votes), with the exception of Resources Committee where membership will continue to be: the Mayor; past Mayors (who are serving Councillors); and Chairmen of Standing Committees (not working parties); and that this is varied in Standing Orders. Members NOTED that the necessary variations to Standing Orders will be actioned and an up-date circulated to all elected members at the meeting set for Tuesday 10 May in preparation for the Town Council's Annual meeting on 16 May 2011, and that the Clerk will prepare variations to reflect this Council's decisions.

The names of the Councillors, who will serve on each committee is to be decided at the annual meeting on 16 May 2011, but it would be helpful if the Town Clerk was given a list at the meeting on Tuesday 10 May 2011.

- d) There was a comprehensive debate as to whether the Council continued with having an Allotments Committee as a Standing Committee of the Council. On a proposal from Cllr Meekins and seconded by Cllr Oliver it was AGREED to remove this item, and that Allotments Committee remains a Standing Committee of the Council.

173. Three part elections on 5 May 2011

Members NOTED that following a meeting of Town & Parish Clerks on 17 March at Fenland Hall we have been advised that there will be three elements to the elections on 5 May:

- Referendum on the voting system for Members of Parliament
- All-out district elections for Fenland District Council
- All-out Town Council elections for Wisbech Town Council

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174. Purdah guidance (circulated by email on Friday 19 March 2011)

Members NOTED the guidance regarding their responsibilities during the period of Purdah (circulated on 19 March 2011), which contains advice on pre election publicity and the significance of Purdah. The local elections and referendum are to be held on Thursday 5 May 2011. The final date for the giving of a notice of an election is 25 March 2011.

175. Closure request for Street Party

The Town Council has had a request from a resident of Sixth Avenue asking for permission to close Sixth Avenue in Wisbech, so that they are able to hold a Street Party on the Royal Wedding Day (29th April 2011) from 13.00 to 21.00hrs. They have had the green light from Cambridgeshire County Council and have contacted the Police, Fire and Ambulance Services. On a proposal from Cllr Green and seconded by Cllr O'Dell this was AGREED.

176. Letter from Christopher Graham Information Commissioner

Members NOTED that the Information Commissioner is offering services to enable local authorities to discharge their duties under Data Protection on specific issues; good practice; research; training; media and getting involved with public consultation. For more information members may follow the link on www.ico.gov.uk or call their helpline on 0303 123 1113.

177. Correspondence from Cambridgeshire County Council – Members NOTED the correspondence circulated by email with a hard copy for those members without email.

- a) Invitation to attend consultation event at Meadowgate School (circulated)
- b) Cambridgeshire Library service Review letter (circulated)
- c) Petition to save libraries (circulated)

178. Correspondence General – Members NOTED the following on the notice board.

- a) 'So you want to be a Parish or Town Councillor' leaflet
- b) 'All about Local Councils' booklet
- c) 'It takes all sorts' booklet
- d) 'Your Services Your Council Tax' booklet
- e) 'Your Cambridgeshire' magazine
- f) 'And its Goodbye from us – leaflet from Inspire east – who are rebranding as CENE – Community Empowerment Network East (it will continue to be run on a completely voluntary basis).
- g) 'Cambridgeshire Fens' magazine (copy circulated in everyone's box)
- h) 'BIG' magazine from the national lottery
- i) 'Clerks & Councils Direct' magazine
- j) 'Cambridgeshire Pride' magazine
- k) 'The Clerk' magazine
- l) 'Inside Housing' magazine
- m) Environment agency new Flood Warning initiative – with door knocking in Wisbech up to 31March 2011 – where some residents may be signed up to a basic flood warning system.
- l) Fenland Arts Association - Fenland Has Talent poster (circulated)



The meeting closed at 7.05 pm

Signed.....

Dated.....