

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE  
COMMITTEE OF WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORWAY,  
WANTAGE ON MONDAY 30 JANUARY 2023 AT 7.30 PM**

Committee members present: Councillor A Crawford (Chairman)  
Councillors A Dunford, A Duveen, J T Hannaby, A C Menzies,  
I Sheldon and J Sibbald.

Others present: M Rozier and S Stephenson – GroW Families  
Two members of the public

Town Clerk: W P Falkenau

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I R Cameron, A Gilhome, E L Johnson, O'Leary, S Third, C Walters and C H Wills-Wright.

**Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other registrable interests and non-  
registerable interests**

Councillors Crawford declared an other registrable interests with regard to Sustainable Wantage.

**To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2022**

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Sibbald  
SECONDED BY Councillor Menzies  
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes be approved and signed.

**56. Statements and Questions from the Public**

S106 Contributions for leisure facilities

A member of the public sought assurances that the S106 contributions, held by the District Council for leisure facilities in the Wantage area, would be spent within the time limits required. There was also concern about the prospect of a delay in paying contribution to leisure organisations whilst the District Council awaited the outcome of a leisure facilities needs assessment survey.

She was advised that the committee was not in a position to give assurances, but that the Chief Executive of the District Council, at the meeting on 24 January, had indicated a confidence that all S106 contributions would be expended within the required time limits. The committee was unaware of any likely delay arising in processing S106 contribution claims from community organisations.

**57. Briefings by applicants for donations and grants**

a) Orchard Counselling (formerly Wantage Counselling)

The representative of Orchard Counselling was unable to attend due to illness. Consideration was deferred until the next meeting.

b) GroW Families

Ms Rozier gave a briefing in support of the request to provide a substantial increase in the annual grant. She advised that numbers attending had increased due to more births in the area and the influx of families from elsewhere. Costs had generally increased.

After answering questions she was thanked for her briefing.

**58. Matters arising from the minutes**

a) Update on plans to pedestrianise western end of the Market Place

Item deferred for consideration as a confidential item.

b) Future ownership and maintenance responsibilities for Manor Road Recreation Ground

A response had not yet been received from the District Council regarding a breakdown of annual maintenance costs or an indication of likely commuted sum to be offered.

c) Request for CCTV camera in Wallingford Street

Updating of the existing cameras was due to proceed that week. The installation of a camera in Wallingford Street would follow later.

d) Update regarding Kingsgrove Community Hall

Legal agreements were almost complete. A planning application was due to be submitted shortly.

e) Registration of Council land with HM Land Registry

A response from HM Land Registry was awaited. The Clerk was to chase. **Action: Clerk**

f) Grant funding for Sweatbox

Information requested by the Clerk had been provided. The Clerk intended to pay the grant before the end of the financial year. **Action: Clerk**

g) Update re community bus service working group

An update by Councillor Cameron was to be provided to the next meeting. **Action: Cameron**

h) Application for S106 funds relating to the Town Centre Manager

The agreement covering the £64,000 contribution had been delayed due to the District Council legal team needing to review the agreement to reflect the introduction of the Subsidy Control Act 2022. The Clerk had been advised on 12 October 2022 that the application had been successful. The Chairman agreed to investigate the reason for the delay in progressing payment and how the procedures followed compared with those of other councils. **Action: Crawford**

i) Vale Community Impact initiative re cost of living crisis

The donation had been paid.

j) Review of London Bridge protocol

The protocol was to be updated and published.

**Action: Sibbald**

k) Changes to bank mandates

The mandates would need to be updated after the election in May and therefore the Clerk did not intend to progress changes prior to then.

**Action: Clerk**

l) Asset of Community Value - Wantage Community Hospital

The Clerk had not yet submitted the application to relist the Community Hospital as a Community Asset.

**Action: Clerk**

m) Kingsgrove Development surface water drainage

More details of the proposed scheme were awaited. There was a prospect that the scheme would affect the land owned by the County Council, rather than the Town Council. The Clerk was to seek an update from the Letcombe Brook Officer regarding works being undertaken relating to the enlargement of the Mably Way Roundabout.

**Action: Clerk**

## POLICY

**59. To consider financial contribution towards cost of Sustainable Wantage's Energy Saving Tips leaflet**

Councillor Crawford had declared an other registrable interest relating to Sustainable Wantage and left the meeting for consideration of this item. Councillor Sheldon took over as chairman of the meeting.

A contribution of 50% of the total cost of printing and delivering the leaflet was being sought.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford

SECONDED BY Councillor Duveen

IT WAS RESOLVED that a contribution to Sustainable Wantage of £1,521.45 be made.

Councillor Crawford returned to the meeting.

**60. Minutes of the Health Sub-committee meeting held on 12 January 2023**

The minutes were noted and the actions approved.

**61. Update on arrangements for Coronation Day event**

A letter had been received from the Secretary of State for DLUHC suggesting that lunch events be held on the Sunday and advising that grants towards events were available from the National Lottery.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Sibbald  
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford  
IT WAS RESOLVED to stick with the event being held on the Saturday and that an application be made for a grant towards the cost from the National Lottery.

**62. Report on meeting held on 24 January 2024 with representatives of the District Council regarding S106 funding relating to leisure facilities**

The report was noted. The needs assessment report from the consultants, due in July, was awaited.

**63. Request for funding of £208 to provide accommodation for English training sessions for Ukrainians**

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Crawford  
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford  
IT WAS RESOLVED that the funding of £208 be provided to cover accommodation costs through to July 2023.

**Management and Finance**

**64. To consider proposed meeting schedule for 2023/2024**

The schedule prepared by the Clerk was noted. The District Council had brought forward the commencement of the election timetable by a week, to 20 March 2023. This meant that three meetings on the schedule would now fall within the pre-election period, previously known as 'purdah'. It was agreed that the meeting schedule be adopted.

**65. To consider internal audit interim report dated 10 January 2023**

The report of the internal auditor (attached) was considered. The Clerk had inserted responses in the column headed "Comments".

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Hannaby  
SECONDED BY Councillor Sibbald  
IT WAS RESOLVED that the responses inserted in the "Comments" column be endorsed.

**66. Accounts for Payment**

There was discussion about the cost of providing the Christmas displays. It was agreed that quotes should be obtained to confirm that the Council was securing suitable value for money.

**Action: Clerk**

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Sibbald  
SECONDED BY Councillor Duveen  
IT WAS RESOLVED that the accounts for payment in the sum of £90,031.90 (attached) be approved.

**67. General correspondence**

None.

**Confidential items**

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford  
IT WAS RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded.

**68. To consider donation requests**

a) Wantage Counselling

Deferred.

b) GroW Families

Councillor Hannaby declared a non-registrable interest and left the meeting for this item.

GroW was seeking to bridge a funding gap of £23,000. The Council had currently included £12,000 in its budgets.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Dunford  
SECONDED BY Councillor Duveen  
IT WAS RESOLVED that a grant of £12,000 be paid in May with a further grant of £4,000 in October with an invitation to GroW Families to return to the Council later in the year when funding from others was more settled.

The Clerk was to ask for the Town Council's logo to be displayed on the GroW Families website and other media. He was also to seek an update on GroW's financial position, in advance of consideration of additional funding later in the year. **Action: Clerk**

**58. a) Update on plans to pedestrianise western end of the Market Place**

The County Council were due to consider making the pedestrianisation a permanent scheme on 23 March 2023. There were two pieces of work that were still to be undertaken relating to the preparation of a Departure from Standards schedule and the conducting of a safety audit. The Clerk had asked Glanvilles to provide a quote for this work.

Glanvilles had advised the Clerk that over a period of time they had undertaken a substantial amount of extra work that had not been covered in their invoices. It was agreed that the Clerk should ask Glanvilles to provide more information on how this had occurred. He was to point out that as a ISO9000 accredited organisation this should have been picked up sooner.

**Action: Clerk**

**69. Staffing update**

The Clerk was gathering information and developing job specifications for Town Clerk/Responsible Finance Officers for consideration by the Staffing Sub-committee.

**Action: Clerk**

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.

**Wantage Town Council**  
**Financial Year 2022-23**

**Interim Internal Audit Observations**

IAC Audit and Consultancy Ltd  
 Audit date: 5 January 2023



**A Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.**

| No. | Audit Test   | Response | Observation  | Recommendation   | Priority | Comments  |
|-----|--|----------|--|--|----------|---|
| 1   | Accounting system opening balances agree to prior Year Annual Return | No       | There is a £15 difference in between the accounting system balance sheet reserves and the Box 7 value stated in the 2021-22 Accounting Statements. This seems to relate to a movement on debtors where the balance has changed (it was £2,870.8 it is now £2,855.80) | Council to review the accounting system opening balances and agree them to the prior years Accounting Statements | Medium   | Will be reviewed and corrected during preparation of year end accounts. |

**B This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.**

| No. | Audit Test   | Response | Observation   | Recommendation  | Priority | Comments   |
|-----|--|----------|---|---|----------|--|
| 1   | Do electronic bank payments require two authorisers for ALL Council bank accounts? | No       | Electronic bank payments may be made on a sole authoriser basis on the Barclays bank account. | The Council to review the controls in place in respect of online bank payments and consider the introduction of dual authorisation for all of its bank accounts.<br><br>The Council to note the high level of risk associated with single authorisation of such payments and ensure that it has robust controls in place in respect of such payments. | High     | It is the Council's policy to proceed to dual authorisation across all accounts. An account has been opened with Unity Trust Bank to help facilitate this.<br><br>The high level of risk is noted. The Council has agreed that others be added to the signatories to accommodate the change. |

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE OF WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORWAY, WANTAGE ON MONDAY 30 JANUARY 2023 AT 7.30 PM

|   |  |     |  |  |   |  |   |
|---|--|-----|--|--|---|--|---|
| 2 | Have invoices been approved as required under Council Financial Regulations? (paragraph 5.3 of the NALC Model Financial Regulations) | No  | The Council is increasingly receiving and storing invoices in electronic format and invoices are no longer physically certified by the Clerk as set out in Financial Regulation 5.3 - this is a certification "to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the council.." | Invoices for payment are submitted by email to the Councilors who will authorise payments.   | The Council to review how the RFO should certify invoices prior to the being paid.<br><br>It may be appropriate for the email from the Clerk requesting payments to be authorised is amended to include wording from the Clerk that "all the attached invoices have been verified and the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the council.." | Medium   | A review will be conducted to identify the best way to achieve certification of invoices.<br><br>The suggested wording will be included in future emails seeking payment authorisation. |
| 3 | Is the tender threshold set at £25,000 consistent with the Public Contract Regulations and NALC Model Financial Regulations?         | Yes | It was noted that tender threshold value stated in Financial Regulations is £25,000, but Standing Orders, section 8, refers to a tender threshold of £50,000.  | The Council to review its Standing Orders and consider setting the tender limit at £25,000 consistent with the level set in Financial Regulations. | Medium  | This is an error. The Town Council has previously agreed that the threshold should be £25,000. |   |

**D The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.**

| No. | Audit Test  | Response | Observation  | Recommendation  | Priority | Comments |
|-----|---|----------|--|---|----------|----------|
| 1   | The Council approved the budget for the year prior to setting the precept | Yes      | Minutes of the meeting of 13th December 2021, at which the precept was set, contain the Clerks estimates of income and expenditure for 2022/23 but do not formally record Council approval of the budget prior to setting the Precept. | The Council to ensure that, in future, Minutes of the meeting at which the budget and precept are to be set records Council approval of both the budget as well as the value of the precept to be raised. | High     | Agreed.  |
| 2   | Level of Reserves were appropriate, their purpose is identified           | No       | It was noted that the level of reserves is high compared to the normal level of annual expenditure by the Council.   | Council to review the level of Reserves to ensure that they are adequate and not excessive.   | Medium   | Agreed.  |

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE OF WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORWAY, WANTAGE ON MONDAY 30 JANUARY 2023 AT 7.30 PM

**E Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.**

| No. | Audit Test   | Response | Observation   | Recommendation   | Priority | Comments |
|-----|--|----------|---|--|----------|----------|
| 1   | Is income due on investments subject to regular check and verification? (Is investment performance regularly reported to Council?) | No       | It's not clear that Council has reviewed interest rate returns on its bank balances (which total over £700,000 as at the date of the interim internal audit). | The Council should review the rate of interest is it earning on its bank balances. | High     | Agreed.  |

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE OF WANTAGE TOWN  
COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORWAY, WANTAGE ON MONDAY 30 JANUARY 2023 AT 7.30 PM

**Wantage Town Council**

**Accounts for Payment - November 2022 to January 2023**

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Payee</b>             | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Powers</b>           | <b>Ref</b> | <b>£</b>         |
|-------------|--------------------------|--|-------------------------|------------|------------------|
| 01/12/2022  | Abbey Properties         | Market Attendant's garage rent   | OA 1985                 | SO         | 250.00           |
| 01/01/2023  | Abbey Properties         | Market Attendant's garage rent   | OA 1985                 | SO         | 250.00           |
| 01/12/2022  | VWHDC                    | Rates for market   | OA 1985                 | DD         | 247.00           |
| 01/12/2022  | VWHDC                    | Rates for Market Place car park  | OA 1985                 | DD         | 404.00           |
| 03/01/2023  | VWHDC                    | Rates for market   | OA 1985                 | DD         | 247.00           |
| 03/01/2023  | VWHDC                    | Rates for Market Place car park  | OA 1985                 | DD         | 404.00           |
| 03/01/2023  | VWHDC                    | Rates for cemetery   | Burials                 | DD         | 331.99           |
| 05/12/2022  | Barclays                 | Bank charges   | LGA 72                  | DD         | 12.10            |
| 09/01/2023  | Barclays                 | Bank charges   | LGA 72                  | DD         | 42.10            |
| 21/11/2022  | NEST                     | Pension contribution payments  | Office                  | DD         | 387.31           |
| 21/11/2022  | Staff - various          | November payroll   | Office/OA1985           | Bacs       | 8,041.65         |
| 21/12/2022  | NEST                     | Pension contribution payments  | Office                  | DD         | 747.32           |
| 21/12/2022  | Staff - various          | December payroll   | Office/OA1985           | Bacs       | 11,754.11        |
| 20/01/2023  | NEST                     | Pension contribution payments  | Office                  | DD         | 499.39           |
| 20/01/2023  | Staff - various          | January payroll  | Office/OA1985           | Bacs       | 9,144.18         |
|             |                          | <b>Total direct debits</b>   |                         |            | <b>32,762.15</b> |
| 16/06/2022  | SGW Payroll              | Payroll processing June 2022   | Office/OA1985           | Online     | 66.12            |
| 01/11/2022  | Window Flowers           | Winter floral baskets  | Tourism                 | Online     | 2,822.40         |
| 10/11/2022  | Peggy Ley                | Design of Christmas market items                                       | OA1985                  | Online     | 30.00            |
| 10/11/2022  | Peggy Ley                | Newsletter design  | Information             | Online     | 225.00           |
| 11/11/2022  | Solopress                | Newletter printing   | Information             | Online     | 1,040.61         |
| 11/11/2022  | Wantage Silver Band      | Remembrance Day support  | Entertainment           | Online     | 300.00           |
| 12/11/2022  | Aasvogel                 | Cemetery skip  | Burials                 | Online     | 288.00           |
| 13/11/2022  | Haynes of Challow        | Bin bags   | LGA 72                  | Online     | 18.00            |
| 17/11/2022  | SGW Payroll              | Payroll processing November  | Office/OA1985           | Online     | 62.64            |
| 17/11/2022  | T&M Oxfordshire          | Contribution re icicle lights power                                    | Tourism                 | Online     | 25.00            |
| 18/11/2022  | Cemetery Devt Services   | Consultants re cemetery extension                                      | Burials                 | Online     | 2,160.00         |
| 18/11/2022  | Deepdale                 | Trees for Market Place   | Tourism                 | Online     | 1,854.00         |
| 20/11/2022  | Green Field Partnership  | Christmas trees  | Tourism                 | Online     | 944.40           |
| 20/11/2022  | Barclaycard              | Quickbooks/adobe/survey monkey subs, stamps, stationery and cable ties | Office                  | Online     | 610.05           |
| 20/11/2022  | Caroline's Angels        | Transport of canopypoles to Oxford                                     | Tourism                 | Online     | 100.00           |
| 21/11/2022  | Benson Sawmills          | Christmas trees delivery   | Tourism                 | Online     | 700.00           |
| 21/11/2022  | Regent Gallery           | Contribution re icicle lights power                                    | Tourism                 | Online     | 28.42            |
| 21/11/2022  | HMRC                     | PAYE for November  | Office/OA1985           | Online     | 1,848.19         |
| 23/11/2022  | Merityre                 | Repair puncture on trolley tyre  | OA1985                  | Online     | 12.00            |
| 24/11/2022  | Castle Water             | Statue area water  | OA1985                  | Online     | 0.30             |
| 26/11/2022  | Lee Thomas               | Wessex Mill project  | Information             | Online     | 1,000.00         |
| 28/11/2022  | HCI Data                 | Website/email url licence fee  | Information             | Online     | 102.00           |
| 28/11/2022  | CDC Electrical           | Installation of Christmas lighting                                     | Tourism                 | Online     | 10,350.00        |
| 28/11/2022  | M Belcher                | Entertainment at Christmas market                                      | Entertainment           | Online     | 600.00           |
| 29/11/2022  | T Csaky                  | Wessex Mill project  | Information             | Online     | 1,200.00         |
| 30/11/2022  | Aasvogel                 | Cemetery skip  | Burials                 | Online     | 288.00           |
| 30/11/2022  | Red Corner               | Photocopier charges  | Office                  | Online     | 52.82            |
| 30/11/2022  | White Horse Horticulture | Cemetery mtce, market duties and Christmas trees instal                | Burials/OA 1985/Tourism | Online     | 1,230.00         |
| 02/12/2022  | Howard Hill              | Entertainment at Christmas market                                      | Entertainment           | Online     | 100.00           |
| 04/12/2022  | BT                       | Phone services   | Office                  | Online     | 61.51            |
| 06/12/2022  | Haynes of Challow        | Cable ties   | Tourism                 | Online     | 27.00            |

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE OF WANTAGE TOWN  
COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORWAY, WANTAGE ON MONDAY 30 JANUARY 2023 AT 7.30 PM

**Wantage Town Council**

**Accounts for Payment - November 2022 to January 2023**

| <b>Date</b>   | <b>Payee</b>              | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Powers</b>      | <b>Ref</b> | <b>£</b>         |
|---|---------------------------|--|--------------------|------------|------------------|
| 07/12/2022  | MJ Productions            | Entertainment at Christmas markets                                   | Entertainment      | Online     | 260.00           |
| 08/12/2022  | Festive Lights            | Additional icicle lights   | Tourism            | Online     | 627.62           |
| 09/12/2022  | Photogenic                | Wessex Mill project  | Information        | Online     | 450.00           |
| 13/12/2022  | Crab Hill Partnership     | Grove Road allotment site rent                                       | Allotments         | Online     | 342.00           |
| 17/12/2022  | Aasvogel                  | Cemetery skip  | Burials            | Online     | 288.00           |
| 19/12/2022  | Mocktails                 | Entertainment at Christmas market                                    | Entertainment      | Online     | 100.00           |
| 20/12/2022  | Howard Hill               | Entertainment at Christmas market                                    | Entertainment      | Online     | 100.00           |
| 20/12/2022  | Barclaycard               | Quickbooks/adobe subs, stationery and Land Registry enquiries        | LGA 72             | Online     | 249.43           |
| 20/12/2022  | Howard Hill               | Entertainment at Christmas market                                    | Entertainment      | Online     | 100.00           |
| 21/12/2022  | SGW Payroll               | Payroll processing December 2022                                     | Office/OA1985      | Online     | 62.64            |
| 21/12/2022  | HMRC                      | PAYE for December  | Office/OA1985      | Online     | 4,182.28         |
| 23/12/2022  | Cemetery Devt Services    | Consultants re cemetery extension                                    | Burials            | Online     | 900.00           |
| 28/12/2022  | L Doscher                 | Entertainment at Christmas market                                    | Entertainment      | Online     | 100.00           |
| 31/12/2022  | Red Corner                | Photocopier charges  | Office             | Online     | 23.87            |
| 31/12/2022  | Glanville                 | Consultant re Market Place pedestrianisation                         | Highways           | Online     | 3,180.00         |
| 31/12/2022  | White Horse Horticulture  | Cemetery mtce, market duties and Christmas market related activities | Burials/OA 1985    | Online     | 1,230.00         |
| 03/01/2023  | Rock Choir                | Re Mayor's Carols  | Entertainment      | Online     | 15.00            |
| 06/01/2023  | CDC Electrical            | Removal of Christmas lighting  | Tourism            | Online     | 3,840.00         |
| 12/01/2023  | Earth Anchors             | Planters for Market Place trees                                      | Tourism            | Online     | 1,908.00         |
| 13/01/2023  | IAC Audit and Consultancy | Interim internal audit   | LGA 72             | Online     | 474.00           |
| 13/01/2023  | Royal British Legion      | Donation relating to wreaths for Remembrance Sunday 2021 & 22        | S137               | Online     | 360.00           |
| 20/01/2023  | HMRC                      | PAYE for January   | Office/OA1985      | Online     | 2,529.58         |
| 20/01/2023  | Barclaycard               | Quickbooks/adobe subs and mobile phone for parking enforcement       | LGA 72             | Online     | 233.37           |
| 20/01/2023  | Vale and Downland Museum  | 4th quarter grant  | Recreation/Tourism | Online     | 6,337.50         |
| 30/01/2023  | White Horse Horticulture  | Cemetery mtce, market duties and Market Place trees                  | Burials/OA 1985    | Online     | 1,230.00         |
| Total cheque/online payments                        |                           |  |                    |            | 57,269.75        |
| <b>Total payments November 2022 to January 2023</b> |                           |  |                    |            | <b>90,031.90</b> |