



WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL

Council Office, The Beacon, Wantage, OX12 9BX

Town Clerk: Julia Evans 01235 763459

www.wantagetowncouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of Wantage Town Council meeting held on 2 December 2024 at 7.30pm in
The Beacon, Portway, Wantage, OX12 9BX
The minutes are draft until approved at the next meeting

Councillors Present:

A Dunford (Chair) | Cameron (Vice Chair), J Hannaby, P Kirby-Harris, A Menzies, K Morris
P O'Leary, S Third, L Todd & C Walters.

In attendance:

Town Clerk: Julia Evans

		ACTION
	Apologies for Absence Councillors A Crawford & T Gilhome	
	Declarations of Interest None	
75	Statements & Questions from the Public None	
76	Minutes of the last meeting 14 October 2024 PROPOSED by Cllr Johnson, SECONDED by Cllr Walters, it was RESOLVED to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting. The minutes were signed.	
78	Financial Statements November 2024 PROPOSED by Cllr Hannaby, SECONDED by Cllr Walters, it was RESOLVED to accept the balance sheet. The balance sheet was signed.	
79	Request from The Parish Church to use the Western Side of the Market Square for a Palm Sunday Event It was pointed out that the PC&E committee had agreed that there would only be a small number of larger events due to the cost and staff effort. It was felt that the Palm Sunday event could be held in the church grounds and that the argument against using the Western End did not hold water. There was also concern that holding the event without closing the road would be dangerous. Concern was expressed about the second to last paragraph in the letter. The information mentioned should have been confidential. The conflict with religious events was also pointed out. Clerk to write back and ask for clarification, explaining that road closures come with a cost, and they would have to pay for this. More detail was required about the situation for Good Friday.	Clerk
80	Wantage PSPO (Public Spaces Protection Order) It was thought that the idea was good but there were questions about how it would be enforced. It was felt that the area needed to be clearly defined and agreed and that drinking alcohol and the number of dogs under one person control were key. It was suggested that going for ASB	

		ACTION
	<p>would cover it but a clear definition of ASB was needed. There was reluctance for an open-ended order. It was pointed out that slide 6 in the presentation outlined the powers of the order.</p> <p>It was agreed to support the proposal. A discussion followed on the area the order should cover.</p> <p>PROPOSED by Cllr Dunford, SECONDED by Cllr Hannaby, It was RESOLVED to support the proposal.</p>	
81	<p>To receive an update on the appointment of a Town Crier.</p> <p>There were 3 applicants. Candidates were to be asked to create a short speech for turning on the lights. They were to be at the Christmas tree in the Market Place for 5.45pm on Friday 6 December.</p>	
82	<p>To receive an update on staff recruitment</p> <p>Initial interviews had been set up for the Market Manager and the Communications Officer. Applications were still being received.</p>	
83	<p>District and County Councillors' reports.</p> <p>a) Cllr Hannaby reported that OCC had undertaken a large reshuffle, and some good officers had been lost. Budgets were being considered but the situation was difficult.</p> <p>b) Cllr O'Leary reported that the refurbishment of the Leisure Centre was going ahead. The parks department had taken on 2 electric vehicles, and they were slowly replacing their fleet. A new waste contract was being considered. There was no news on swimming pool S106 funds. All S106 leisure money for Grove will be given to St John's Academy. Grove have never received any funds for their own leisure projects.</p>	
84	<p>Town Mayor's Communications</p> <p>Had been published on the website.</p>	
85	<p>To confirm the Mayor's Allowance for 2025/26.</p> <p>PROPOSED by Cllr Hannaby, SECONDED by Cllr Johnson, it was RESOLVED that the mayor's allowance would be £4k in the form of a monthly allowance.</p>	
86	<p>To approve the budget and the setting of the precept for 2025/26.</p> <p>The Clerk expressed concern at the large budget deficit. A plan for removing the deficit over subsequent years was discussed. It was noted that consideration should be given to increasing the grant budgets, but it was also felt that more care was required when awarding grants. It was agreed that the precept should be £446,574. The cost per band D would be £79.47.</p> <p>PROPOSED by Cllr Cameron, SECONDED by Cllr Walters, it was RESOLVED that the precept should be £446,574</p> <p>The budget was approved.</p> <p>PROPOSED by Cllr Dunford, SECONDED by Cllr Cameron, it was RESOLVED that the budget was approved.</p>	

