

ROYAL WOOTTON BASSETT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council held on Thursday 14th December 2017 at 7.45pm at Manor House, Lime Kiln, Royal Wootton Bassett.

PRESENT: Councillors: Robert Anstee, David Bowler, Steve Bucknell, Mike Farrow, Paul Heaphy, Rebecca Hearne, Nic Hughes, Sue Hughes, Mike Leighfield, Jenny Stratton, Marion Sweet and Steve Walls.

Officers in Attendance: Johnathan Bourne, Town Clerk, Kalpesh Patel, Accountant, Michelle Temple, Administrative Services Manager, and Kelly Warren, Administrative Officer.

63. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mary Champion, Janet Georgiou, Caroline Redmond and Steve Watts.

64. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with sections 10 and 12 of Wiltshire Council's Members Code of Conduct, as adopted by Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council at a meeting held on Thursday 12th July 2012.

RESOLVED to note that no Declarations of Interest were received.

65. WRITTEN REPORTS

Written reports were received and circulated at the meeting from the following: -

- James Gray, MP
- Area Board Representatives
- St Bartholomew's Primary Academy Representative Councillor Nic Hughes
- Local Youth Network and Richard Jones Foundation Representative Councillor Sue Hughes

Wiltshire Police had not submitted a report in time for the meeting but it was asked to contact them and request a report.

66. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED to confirm and sign minutes of a meeting of the Council held on Thursday 28th September 2017 [RWBTC/5/2017-2018] and of a meeting of the Council held on Thursday 26th October 2017 [RWBTC/6/2017-2018]. Copies previously circulated.

67. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Christmas Lights and Shopping Event was held on Friday 1st December 2017. Councillor Bucknell thanked all those who had been involved with the event.

The Mayor praised the Town Council Grounds Team for clearing the High Street pavements of snow and ice last week and requested that an e-mail be sent to John Macindoe and his team with thanks from all the Councillors.

The Town Clerk provided updates on the following:

- Lidl – No further updates at this time
- Stone Poppy – The insurance brokers are assisting in the preparation of the Claim
- Community Hub – Waiting on paperwork as there are 2 outstanding legal issues

- Jubilee Lake – The anticipated start date is 15th January 2018
- Neighbourhood Plan – The examination report is due sometime this month and once received it will then be dependent upon any recommendations before going to referendum.

68. TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS

There were no questions received either with or without notice received under Standing Orders.

69. PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED to note the report on a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Thursday 28th September 2017 (P/4/2017-2018), Thursday 2nd November 2017 (P/5/2017-2018) and Thursday 9th November 2017 (P/6/2017-218) copies previously circulated.

70. AMENITIES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED to note the report on a meeting of the Amenities Committee held on Thursday 2nd November 2017 (A/4/2017-2018), copy previously circulated.

71. REVENUE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED to note the report on a meeting of the Revenue and Resources Committee held on Thursday 23rd November 2017 (R&R/4/2017-2018), copy previously circulated.

72. EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2016-2017

RESOLVED to note the External Audit Report for the 2016-2017 financial year, copy previously circulated.

73. ANNUAL ESTIMATES OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Councillors were advised that the effect of Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1982 is that if, when considering budgetary items, any Councillor is in arrears for more than two months with

his/her Council Tax, he/she must declare that Section 106 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1982 applies and neither speak nor vote on the matter before Council. Failure to observe this renders the Councillor liable for prosecution by the Director of Public Prosecutions.

It is the responsibility of the Town Council to levy a precept on Wiltshire Council to cover its costs for the 2018-2019 financial year. Wiltshire Council is charging authority and will collect this on behalf of the Town Council.

Although Standing Committees make budgetary bids and the Revenue and Resources assesses these in making its recommendations to Council, it is the Council alone that has the power to levy the precept. The Town Council can only levy its precept once per year this must be submitted to Wiltshire Council no later than 19th January 2018.

At the meeting of Revenue and Resources Committee held on Thursday 23rd November 2017, it was recommended to levy a Precept of £939,215.00.

The proposed Annual Estimates of Income and Expenditure 2018/2019 Report for the setting of the Precept was previously circulated.

It was recommended that the Council formally set the Precept for 2018/2019 at £939,215.00. This would mean that the charge for a Band D property would be £199.81, which represents an increase of £5, or 2.57% increase from the previous financial year.

RESOLVED to set the precept at £939,215.00.

74. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

All Town and Parish Councils are required to produce Corporate Governance documents, outlining the principles, regulations and processes by which a Council conducts its business. Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council's full suite of Corporate Governance is separated into numerous sections, running to a lever-arch file of papers.

At the meeting of the Revenue and Resource Committee held on Thursday 23rd November 2017 the following Corporate Governance documents were examined, copies previously circulated:

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Community Engagement Strategy
- Environmental Policy
- Training Policy and Statement of Intent for Councillor and Employees
- Value for Money Statement
- Statement how the Council meet its duties in relation to Biodiversity and Crime and Disorder
- Statement how the Council provides Leadership in Planning for the Future of the Community
- Statement on how the Council Manages the Performance of Council as a Corporate
- Statement that the Council Manages the Performance of each Individual Staff Member to Achieve its Business Plan

RESOLVED to adopt the Corporate Governance documents and review these annually as recommended by the Revenue and Resources Committee.

75. WILTSHIRE LOCAL PLAN REVIEW CONSULTATION PAPER

Members received a copy of the Wiltshire Local Plan Review Consultation Paper whereby Wiltshire Council is seeking feedback on any issues that need to be considered in order for them to plan for the period to 2036.

It is in the early stages of consultation which ended on Tuesday 19th December 2017.

The Council RESOLVED to comment as follows:

Wiltshire Local Plan Review Consultation Paper:

Consultation Questions

- 1) Do you agree with the proposed scope of the Wiltshire Local Plan Review set out in Section 4? If no, please explain why and how it should be amended.**

Yes, the Council believes that the scope is what it is. However, the Council is deeply concerned there has been insufficient time to fully

consider the implications of all the documents in particular the inclusion of RWB in the Swindon Housing Market Area.

2) Do you agree with the conclusions of the policy assessment set out in Appendix 2 and the proposed recommendations?

Again, no serious objections, but the Council would like to see how the “replaced policies” will be catered for with “commensurate policies”.

3) Are there other planning policy issues that the Council should consider within the Local Plan Review? If so, what are they and why should they be included?

The Council would like to see new policies for RWB to reflect the provision of a railway station, bypass and health centre all of which are needed in the town.

Swindon and Wiltshire Joint Spatial Framework Issues Paper:

Consultation Questions

1) Do you agree with the proposed scope of the Swindon and Wiltshire Joint Spatial Framework as set out below? If not, please explain why

No, the Council does not believe that RWB should be in the same Housing Market Area (HMA) as Swindon. The town has a very separate and distinct character which for over half a century has led to strong policies of non-coalescence.

2) Do you agree with the proposed objectives for the Swindon and Wiltshire Joint Spatial Framework as set out below? If not, please describe how they should be changed.

The Council agrees with these objectives but specifically for RWB and not for the HMA as a whole which could lead to coalescence.

3) The Swindon and Wiltshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) presents technical evidence of the projected level of

housing needs in the period 2016 to 2036. Do you have any comments on the findings of the SHMA?

The Council is deeply concerned about the technical evidence in this matter. The evidence was exempt when presented to Cabinet and cannot now be found anywhere on the Wiltshire Council website or the Swindon Borough Council website. It is therefore impossible to comment sensibly in respect of this matter.

4) The Functional Economic Market Area Assessment (FEMAA) presents technical evidence of the projected level of need for employment land in the period 2016 to 2036. Do you have any comments on the findings of the FEMAA?

The Council is deeply concerned about the technical evidence in this matter. The evidence was exempt when presented to Cabinet and cannot now be found anywhere on the Wiltshire Council website or the Swindon Borough Council website. It is therefore impossible to comment sensibly in respect of this matter.

5) Do you consider that the methodology proposed in the programme of work to test the sustainability of delivering the scales of growth in each Housing Market Area and each Functional Economic Market Area is robust? If not, in your response please explain why.

No. As the Council has been unable to review the technical data and there has been very limited public consultation the Council cannot comment positively on this matter.

6) The Housing Market Area Profiles present the current Plan's vision for each settlement based on its role and function. Do you think this should change?

The Council is deeply concerned that there will be a need to closely monitor the market town character of RWB. It has a cultural identity which is profoundly separate to Swindon and it is feared that a breakdown in coalescence could lead to a breakdown in the special community spirit in RWB that has been nationally recognised.

7) For each Housing Market Area, strategic issues are also identified. Do you think these are correct and how should Councils respond?

No, these specific issues should be for RWB and not the HMA as a whole.

8) Are there any specific development constraints that you think should be taken into account in the preparation of the Joint Spatial Framework that have not been identified in the Housing Market Area Profiles?

Yes, coalescence, lack of infrastructure in particular roads, education, dental surgeries and the lack of doctors all of which needs to be addressed. The town requires a period of stability to allow the infrastructure to catch up with the development that has already taken place.

9) Are there any specific development opportunities that you think should be taken into account in the preparation of the Joint Spatial Framework that have not been identified in the Housing Market Area Profiles?

Yes. The Council would like to see specific consideration given to the following, provision of a by-pass, a health centre, more school places, mention of social aspects that contribute towards a market towns identity, footpaths, cycle links and safer routes.

10) Do you have any comments on the advantages or disadvantages of any of the following concepts for growth alone or in combination? Are there other options not considered?

- Urban capacity – RWB has already met its housing requirement and needs to catch up on infrastructure.
- Urban extension - RWB has already met its housing requirement and needs to catch up on infrastructure.
- Transport based development – A new settlement at Hullavington might satisfactorily meet this requirement.
- More development at the larger, better served rural settlements – This approach may be beneficial and welcomed by some rural settlements which would need to be assessed individually.
- New settlement(s) – The Council believes this could work quite well.

11) Do you have any further comments to make on the proposed Joint Spatial Framework or matters raised in this Paper?

The Council recognises that this is an early stage of consultation but none the less considers it to be a crucial stage. As such there is not enough detail, time or public consultation to effectively inform this part of the process.

76. COMMUNICATIONS

The Council was asked whether it wishes to issue any Press Releases or other Communications in respect of the Agenda items.

RESOLVED to issue the following communications: -

- The reason for the Precept increase
- Johnathan Bourne 30 years of service
- Wiltshire Local Plan Review Consultation Paper

Meeting Closed 9.50pm