Oakham Town Council

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**MINUTES OF A FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF OAKHAM TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11th DECEMBER 2024 AT 6.30 P.M. IN THE TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Cllrs: P Ainsley, C. Nix, S Wadsworth, C Clark A Douthwaite, H Williams, M Brookes

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** K. Geraghty (Deputy Clerk) and three members of the public.

Cllr P Ainsley opened the meeting and welcomed all present. He went on to state that for the duration of this evening's meeting and in accordance with Oakham Town Council Standing Order 2i, there is no requirement to stand when speaking unless the councillor has a desire to do so.

There then followed a statement to mark the passing of Cllr Paul Buxton as follows:
*It is with deep sadness that we mark the passing of Cllr Paul Buxton at home on the night of December 7th.*
*Paul was a passionate member of Oakham in Bloom focusing on creating attractive, engaging public spaces. He also contributed significantly to the Stroke Club, offering support and hope to many.*
*Paul was known for his commitment, kindness, and positive spirit.*
*His contributions to the community have left a lasting impact, and he will be greatly missed by all who knew him.*
*Therefore, I feel it is wholly appropriate to start the meeting with a minute’s silence for reflection. If able, could you all please stand.*

**Order of Business:** Item 10, STAFF PAY AWARD, will move to the last item of the day to follow item 15, CAMBRIDGE BUILDING SOCIETY ACCOUNT.

**11/24–01 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCES:**

Cllr Chatfield and Cllr Pryer indisposed

Proposed Cllr Wadsworth, seconder Cllr Nix, carried.

**11/24–02 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS’ INTERESTS AND APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION:** Reminder to Members to disclose either a Pecuniary Interest or Other Interest in any item on the agenda. The clerk cannot advise members on this. Members are personally responsible for declaring an interest. Members are respectfully advised to read the Code of Conduct for more information.
Councillors are also responsible for ensuring that their Registers of Interests are up to date (within 28 days of any changes).

Cllr Ainsley declared a pecuniary interest in item **11, CHAIRMANS ALLOWANCE,** and that he would hand over to the deputy clerk and leave the chamber for the duration of the item.

**11/24–03 DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** An opportunity for members of the public to speak in accordance with Standing Orders. None.

**11/24–04 MINUTES:** To confirm the accuracy of the minutes from the meeting held on 13th November 2024.Correction from Cllr Brook.
Proposed Cllr Wadsworth, seconder Cllr Williams carried.

**11/24–05 COUNCILLOR’S REPORTS**: Email from Cllr Brookes to all councillors regarding financial matters.

**11/24-06 CHAIRMANS/CLERKS REPORT:**

**Chairman's report:**

**As mayor the council I attended the following external meetings:**

**Thursday 14th November**:
a. A virtual meeting with RCC, OTC councillors and PlaceMake to discuss Oakham Place Shaping.

b. Meeting with RCC and ESWG to progress the ideas stemming from the inaugural meeting of retailers. Output included free Saturday car parking in December and shop window decoration. Cllr Brookes has done an excellent job on a vacant retail unit in the Market Place.

**Friday, 15 November:** a meeting was held with the chair of VH trustees and Joanna Burrows to test the waters for closer cooperation. This will be further discussed under agenda item 12.

**Friday, 27th November:**Meeting with RCC planners and David Edwards of Placemake at the dance studio on Princess Avenue to discuss our pre-planning application.

**Friday 24th November:** A very damp Christmas Lights switch on

**Thursday, 28th November:** met with the clerk and Ellie Gilbert, RCC Estates Officer, to progress the estate handover to OTC. We are still waiting for an update from RCC following those discussions.

**Thursday 5th December:** Cllr Clark and myself attended as the representatives of the Town Twinning Association attended an informal meeting at the Wheatsheaf in Oakham

**Notice of emergency Expenditure**

I have authorised expenditure under Financial Regulations 4.5 extreme risk to property to remove a fallen tree. The cost for tree removal is £1300 plus VAT. This includes removal and disposal of all arisings. The cost lies outside the current budget for Planting and Tree Surgery.

**11/24-07 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:** Cllr Williamsref Canal Talk & guided walk when the weather is better.

**11/24-09 BANK STATEMENTS:** To consider and approve the bank statements for September 2024.

9.1 HSBC Current account
Approval, proposed Cllr Ainsley, seconder Cllr Wadsworth carried. 1 abstention

9.2 HSBC Deposit account
Approval, proposed Cllr Clark, seconder, Cllr Wadsworth carried. 1 abstention.

9.3 Rialtas bank reconciliation
Approval, proposed Cllr Wadsworth, seconder Cllr Williams carried 1 abstention.

9.4 Year-to-date spend:
Deferred for clarification, proposed Cllr Ainsley, seconder Cllr Nix carried, 1 abstention.

**11/24-11 CHAIRMANS ALLOWANCE:** To consider the allocation to the chairman of the council for this year.

Handover to Deputy Cllr Nix: Cllr Ainsley left the room 19:11pm

Paper deferred to the next meeting as money has been left from the previous Mayor.

Agreed to look after the Mayor until January 2025 interim allowance for events £500.

Proposed Cllr Brookes, seconder Cllr Clark, carried 1 x abstention.

Cllr Ainsley returned and resumed the chair at 19:26pm.

**11/24-12 VICTORIA HALL JOINT WORKING WITH OAKHAM TOWN COUNCIL:**

Cllr Douthwaite will attend Victoria Hall meetings alongside the chairman. Cllr Douthwaite is co-opted onto the ESWG.

1. That council agree in principle to investigate a more formal relationship with Victoria Hall trustees to ensure longer-term sustainability.
Proposed Cllr Williams, seconder Cllr Wadsworth, carried unanimously
2. An amendment was proposed: That council approves initial funding of £3000 to obtain legal advice (budget from next year) and no expenditure without approval.
Proposed Cllr Brooks, seconder Cllr Williams, Motion Fell
3. There then followed a vote on the original proposal: That council approve initial funding of £3000 to obtain legal advice and guidance to investigate and recommend options for closer collaboration between OTC and VH

Proposed Cllr Clark, seconder Cllr Douthwaite, Motion carried.

### 10/24-13 CHURCH STREET TOILETS RENOVATION:

The item was deferred until the next meeting to be held on the 8th Jan 2024 for further information and confirmation as follows:

1. Despite verbal assurances from LRAC, council was not content to proceed without written assurance that correct tender procedures had been followed, in particular that there is no requirement to post to the Contracts Finder -website
2. Need revised estimate to include the fitting of PV panels.

Proposed Cllr Williams, seconder Cllr Wadsworth, carried unanimously

### 11/24-14 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS: In the Finance meeting it was agreed Cllr Douthwaite would become the new Chairman.

1. Following further recommendations by the Finance Committee, it was proposed that the new Finance Regulations be modified by the addition of two bullet points to section 1.4. as follows:
* “Council” refers to Oakham Town Council.
* “Effective financial, operational and risk management” means proper and robust financial management of Oakham Town Council.

Proposed Cllr Clark, seconder Cllr Douthwaite, carried with 2 abstentions

### A further amendment was proposed that the new financial regulations be adopted without delay. Proposed Cllr Brookes, seconder Cllr Wadsworth, the motion Fell.

1. There then followed a vote on the original proposal:
Following the recommendation of the Finance Committee, adopt the revised OTC Financial regulations v3. The adoption of the revised Financial Regulations will be invoked when the transfer to Lloyds Bank is complete.
Proposed Cllr Clark, seconder Cllr Douthwaite, carried, 2 abstentions

**11/24-15 CAMBRIDGE BUILDING SOCIETY ACCOUNT:** Remove existingsignatories on the CambridgeBuilding Society Account (no longer with the council) & replace them with Chris Evans (Town Clerk), Kathy Geraghty (Deputy Clerk) and Cllr Paul Ainsley (Chair).

Proposed Cllr Ainsley, seconder Cllr Wadsworth, carried unanimously

**11/24-10 STAFF PAY AWARD:**

An amendment to the original proposal was made as follows:

1. The Council is asked to note the National pay agreement.

2. That subject to a satisfactory performance review and recommendation from the Staffing Committee that from now on, the Handyman’s salary will be altered to reflect the National pay award given on the 1st of April.

Proposed Cllr Ainsley, seconder Cllr Wadsworth, carried unanimously

**Meeting Finished 20:20pm**

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS: 18:30 8th January 2025**

Signed………………………………………………….. Date………………….