Oakham Town Council

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**MINUTES OF A FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF OAKHAM TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12th March 2025 AT 6.30 P.M. IN THE TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Cllrs: S-A. Wadsworth, P Ainsley, E Tempest, C. Nix, M Brookes, C Clark, A Douthwaite

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** C. Evans (Clerk) , Members of the public 1

Cllr P Ainsley opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

For the duration of this evening's meetingand IAW with Standing Orders para 3i, and as Chairman I waive the requirement to stand when speaking unless you wish to do so.

He sadly had to report that Alf Dewis a previous Mayor for Oakham Town Council (2015-16) had passed away.

 And on a happier note he welcomed Cllr E Tempest to her first meeting.

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**The meeting will be recorded.**

**04/25-01 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCES**: Cllr H Williams and S Pryer have not given their apologies.

Acceptance of absentees without notification

**Proposer Cllr Tempest, seconder Cllr Douthwaite. Carried**

**04/25-02 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)

None

**04/25-03 DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** An opportunity for members of the public to speak in accordance with Standing Orders 1 (d)- 1(i)

None

**04/25-04 MINUTES:** To confirm the accuracy of the minutes from the meeting held on 12th February 2024. The Chair noted that Cllr Brookes concerned over minor amendments which the Clerk had corrected.

**Proposer, Cllr Clark seconder Cllr Brookes. Carried**

**04/25-05 COUNCILLOR’S QUESTIONS:**

Cllr S-A Wadsworth was aware that the Cycling Event (CiCLE) would be centred at Oakham and raised the question would OTC or Carolyn Acton be interested in organising stalls etc for the day?

**04/25-06 CHAIRMANS/CLERKS REPORT:** Chairman reported a busy period.

**Tuesday, 18th February** The town clerk and I met with Rutland Webdesigner in Uppingham to progress the design of the OTC website. It was agreed that a provisional design/prototype would be presented at the next retailers' meeting later this month.

**Wednesday, 19th February**, a Teams meeting with David Edwardes of Placemake to discuss the Oakham Place Shaping draft plan. Meeting attend by SAW, PA and Town clerk. Members of the ESWG were invited.

**Monday 24th February**, attend a meeting at RCC for a Town Centre Place Shaping - Workshop (Oakham) with the objective: Prepare a draft list of short, medium and long term interventions that will contribute to achieving vision objectives. The meeting was attended by officers and portfolio holders from RCC as well as SAW, Chris Clark, me and town clerk on behalf of OTC.

**Thursday 27th February**, meeting at Victoria Hall to discuss the boiler replacement and drafting of the Funding Agreement. Meeting attend by SAW, me and Tom. Discussed at item 18.

**Friday 28th February and 4th March** meeting at ROL house with Oakham in Bloom to discuss funding and design of the Planter enhancements. See item 14

**Saturday 1st March** – Meeting with visitors from Barmstedt and the twinning association. Chris Clark attended.

**Sunday 2nd and Monday 3rd March** Meetings with the Oakham Smallholders Association (OSA) and the Oakham Home Garden and Allotment Society (OHGAS) to finalise and agree details of the lease. Further discussion in agenda item 13.

**Thursday 6th March** Toilet refurbishment pre-start meeting with the contractors, RCC officers, Eddisons, Town clerk and myself.

**Monday 10th March** Virtual meeting with James Faircliffe and Placemake to discuss the development of the Princess Avenue garages into two affordable bungalows.

Town Clerk reported that the work started at Church Street Toilets has started and Portaloo’s are available, and work should be completed by May

Two dog bins replaced in Princess Avenue and the majority of other broken waste bins in Oakham approved by Oakham Town Council have been replaced by Biffa. There is a deep clean ongoing also by Biffa, so any issues please highlight to the Office Staff.

Graffitti removed from Bandstand. Advertisements in the media have now been placed for new Councillors.

### 04/25-07 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

 None

**04/25-08 BANK STATEMENTS:** To consider and approve the bank statements for February 2025.

8.1 Rialtas bank reconciliation

8.2 HSBC Current account

8.3 HSBC Deposit account

8.4 Year to Date Spend

The Chair proposed that 8.1 to 8.4 be taken as one item and requested a proposer.

**Proposer, Cllr Brookes seconder Cllr Wadsworth Carried**

8.5 Spend/Transfer over 5K requiring approval

Cllr M Brookes requested a public notice for the Toilets Refurbishment is placed on the notice board , web site and Public Tender Finder website. Therefore he requested that Council remove the references to anticipated spend into April May to Eddisons. This was agreed. Therefore the amended paper was presented.

**Proposer, Cllr Brookes seconder Cllr Wadsworth. Carried**

8.6 CIL /UKSPF budget update

The Town Clerk presented the two spreadsheets for CIL and UKSPF budget with spent and spend anticipated.

The Town Clerk highlighted that there was some uncertainty in some of these allocations for example if the Cutts Close roundabout might not be spent this financial year. UKSPPF figures are Net not Gross.

There was a debate over the unfortunate timing of this spend being so late in the financial year

**Proposer, Cllr Clark seconder Cllr Douthwaite. Carried**

**04/25-09 EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES**

The Chair presented the first of two policies. The First is the Email policy regards use of official email policy. Cllr Brookes referred to the fact that the .gov.uk account has to be used, concerned over the lack of confidentiality if a constitute contacts a councillor.

Cllr C Clark stated that a Councillor needs to obtain a consent from residents before acting on their behalf.

**Proposer Cllr Douthwaite seconder Cllr Tempest. Carried**

The Chair then introduced the Communications policy which is an update from the existing policy.

Cllr Clark raised concern over communication response times. Cllr Nix agreed although there could be an auto email response. Cllr Douthwaite highlighted the need for a press liaison spokesperson.

**Cllr Clark proposed, and Cllr Brookes seconded deferral of this agenda item to Staffing and Media Committee. Carried**

### 04/25-10 BEACON LIGHTING:

Cllr Wadsworth introduced this celebration of VE day , encouragement of Councils to light a beacon in Cutts Close on 8th May at 9:30 and High Sheriff and Lord Lieutenant to the event. Cllr Brookes disappointed on scale of event.

**Proposer, Cllr Wadsworth seconder Cllr Brookes Carried**

### 04/25-11 FLAG FLYING:

Cllr Brookes introduced this agenda item which is simple but can be amended. Cllr A Douthwaite requested that on St Georges day we fly the England Flag Cllr C Clark requested a RAF flag on Battle of Britain day and look into Armed Forces day and Rutland day.

Cllr Clark also requested the passing of Mayors of Oakham the flag is at half mast policy

The Chair requested that this became the amended proposal

**Proposer, Cllr Clark seconder Cllr Nix. Carried**

The Council then voted on the substantive motion

**Proposer, Cllr Ainsley seconder Cllr Clark. Carried**

### 04/25-12 OAKHAM FLOWER DISPLAY CONTRACT:

The Town Clerk introduced this item which is the Final Year of a three-year contract with WindowFlowers Ltd . The Council can see this is only 300 pounds the budget approved for the same display as last year.

To proposal therefore is that the cost (£15,803) is acceptable as the budget set is for this financial year is £15,500.

**Proposer, Cllr Wadsworth seconder Cllr Douthwaite. Carried**

**04/25-13 ALLOTMENTS LEASE**

The Chair introduced this item and stated historically the lease has been for seven-year periods. Thes lease have now been adjusted in terms of RPI indexed. Both OSA and OHGAS have agreed the same lease terms.

Cllr Wadsworth enquired if the Council should take over running the allotments. The Chair was concerned over the workload over managing these sites.

Cllr Brookes requested that the Veterans part of paragraph 9 is removed from the leases.

**Proposer, Cllr Brookes seconder Cllr Wadsworth. Failed**

The substantial proposal is that

It is recommended that the annual rent for the next 7-year period for the Oakham Smallholder’s Association is set at £135 per annum.

It is recommended that the annual rent for the next 7-year period for the Oakham Home Garden and Allotment Society is set at £570 per annum

**Proposer, Cllr Ainsley seconder Cllr Williams. Carried**

**04/25-14 OAKHAM IN BLOOM**

The Chair and Clerk had met with Oakham in Bloom and a planter has been installed on Gaol Street to demonstrate the enhancement. Cllr Wadsworth preferred dark wood instead of plastic.

The proposal is that council authorises Oakham in Bloom to proceed with the enhancements of six identified planters in dark brown wood at a cost of £1662.50, excluding VAT. Funding will come from the UKSPF.

**Proposer, Cllr Nix seconder Cllr Douthwaite. Carried**

**04/25-15 WMI GRANT REQUEST:**

The Town Clerk introduced this grant request. Cllr Clark has a non-pecuniary interest in this item. The Town Clerk stated this would be from next financial year where the budget is set at 3k, and the request is for 2.2 k

There followed a debate over the possible damage to the memorial from the cleaning and the high proportion of the fund from next years grant budget.

The Town Clerk highlighted that the Church Wall needs repair next financial year which could be 17K plus

Proposal is this grant application is refused and an investigation as to the necessity of the cleaning is undertaken by Oakham Town Council and funded internally if required.

**Proposer, Cllr Brookes seconder Cllr Wadsworth Carried**

**04/25-16 SAVE RUTLAND CAMPAIGN :**

Cllr Brookes has issued an amendment substantially the same agenda paper but the budget is reduced to £30 pounds for flyers as follows

A. Formal Statement: The Chairman of Oakham Town Council, on behalf of the Council, will issue a formal statement supporting the Save Rutland Campaign. This statement will highlight the Council's commitment to preserving Rutland's identity and emphasise the importance of its ceremonial county status.

B. Public Engagement: Oakham Town Council will engage with the local community to raise awareness about the Save Rutland Campaign. This will include hosting public meetings, distributing informative materials, and encouraging residents to sign the campaign petition.

C. Petition Support: Oakham Town Council will support the collection and submission of signatures for the Save Rutland Campaign petition. The petition will be presented to Parliament to demonstrate the strong support from Oakham and Rutland residents and local authorities for maintaining the county's ceremonial status.

D. Collaboration: Oakham Town Council will collaborate with other local authorities and community organisations to advocate for the preservation of Rutland's ceremonial county status. This will involve coordinating efforts, sharing resources, and presenting a united front in discussions with government officials.

E. Ongoing Advocacy: Oakham Town Council will continue to advocate for Rutland's identity and ceremonial county status beyond the initial campaign efforts. This will include staying informed about related policy developments and actively participating in discussions and initiatives that impact Rutland's future

F. Banners: Oakham Town Council approve the display of banners to support The Save Rutland Campaign at Centenary Field, Barleythorpe Road, and across the High Street by the Mill Street roundabout attached to the Christmas light wires.

G. Budget: Production of leaflets £30

**Proposer, Cllr Ainsley seconder Cllr Brookes. Carried**

 **04/25-17 RISK ASSESMENT:**

The Town Clerk presented this agenda item making clear how important it is that Councillors review it at least once a year. Cllr Nix stated that within this document the review period should be explicitly given , to which the Clerk agreed.

Cllr Clark also requested a high medium low so high likelihood and high impact need to be focussed on and requested a green, amber red colour for low , medium and high codes. This was agreed.

The Proposal is that the Council accept the attached Risk Assessment table with an annual review and a colour code added.

**Proposer, Cllr Clark seconder Cllr Brookes. Carried**

**04/25-18 VICTORIA HALL IMPROVEMENTS :**

The Chair stated that on the 12th February meeting of the Full Council agreed to cover the costs of a replacement boiler at Victoria Hall. The conditions specified in that authorisation have now been met.

1. Three suitable quotations have been received from East Goscote Plumbers, Robert Cliff Ltd and R F Blount. R F Blount has been chosen as the preferred supplier at a total cost of £12742.20 inc VAT
2. A suitable grant agreement has been agreed upon and will be signed by both parties before work starts.
3. R F Blount has confirmed that they will invoice OTC directly and will register the boilers with the manufacturer and Gas Safe in the name of Victoria Hall.

**Proposer, Cllr Ainsley seconder Cllr Brookes. Carried**

**MEETING CLOSED 8.35 PM**

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: 9th April 2025**