

WESTBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**AT THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE LAVERTON,
BRATTON ROAD, WESTBURY ON MONDAY, 2nd MARCH 2009 AT 7.00 PM.**

PRESENT: Cllr M Hawkins (Chair)
Cllrs S Andrews, W Braid, M Cuthbert-Murray (7.10 pm),
Mrs G Denison-Pender, Mrs S Ezra, C Finbow, R Hawker,
Mrs C Mitchell, F Morland, J Prickett, Mrs J Read and I Taylor.

Also in attendance: County Cllr Miss F de Rhé Philipe
PC N Holt
Nine members of the public

T.1987 PUBLIC FORUM:

Mr B Evans

- Town Centre Parking
- Town Council Budget 2009-2010
- Administration
- Town Council Website
- Westbury Visitor Centre
- Travel Expenses
- Rent & Rates
- The Laverton Institute
- Project Officer
- Community Safety and Crime Prevention
- CCTV Maintenance Contract
- Highway Planning

Mr M Elliott

Closure of the Post Office, Coopers Foodstores.

Mr P Biggs (submitted written comments)

- Agenda item 14 – unsightly oil patches in the new Market Place
- Agenda item 17 – proposed health services working group

T.1988 ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.
Cllrs A Berrisford, D Hulin and D Windess – business commitments.

T.1989 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. Nil.

T.1990 MINUTES. The Minutes of the Extraordinary Town Council held on the 29th December 2008 and the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on the 5th January 2009 were signed by the Chairman.

Cllr Braid had abstained from voting on the proposed budget for 2009-2010 (T.1969), and asked for this to be recorded on the Minutes of the 5th January.

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T.1991 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES.

- a. **Boundary Committee for England – Electoral Review of Wiltshire: Final recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Wiltshire Council (G.1397).** Noted.
- b. **Members’ matters arising from the previous Minutes.** Nil.

T.1992 POLICE REPORT. PC Holt reported he had no serious concerns regarding crime in Westbury at the moment. There has been a slight rise in reported crime on the West Wilts Trading Estate, but the 27.5% detected crime rate for Westbury is above the national average.

There has been some success in anti-social behaviour following the issue of warning letters to certain tenants, in association with the social housing societies, reminding them of the conditions of their tenancies, has proved effective with low level crime and vandalism ceasing.

Neighbourhood Watch - a structure plan is currently being worked on, and meetings will be held with local co-ordinators in the near future.

Neighbourhood Speed Watch – it is hoped in the coming financial year to obtain new equipment, and to train volunteers in its use, together with speed awareness. They will be backed up by the local police, who will then target offenders who are recorded breaking speed limits more than twice.

Pc Holt thanked Westbury residents, the Town Council and Rygor Group Ltd for their support, and for the 50% donation towards the police van, which has greatly contributed to the successes made over the past year, The grant given to the Bluz & Zuz youth project was also greatly appreciated..

T.1993 WILTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT. County Cllr Miss F de Rhé Philipe reported the new unitary council was still on track, and had set its budget for the coming financial year.

She further assured Members that Wiltshire County Council officers were working on the matter of the closure of Westbury Post Office.

T.1994 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES. The following Minutes were received and noted.

Highways, Planning & Development Committee	-	19.01.09
Highways, Planning & Development Committee	-	16.02.09
General Purposes Committee	-	02.02.09

T.1995 MATTERS ARISING:

- a. **Handbook for new Wiltshire Area Boards (G.1411).** The Group appointed to make recommendations on this handbook will do so at the next General Purposes Committee meeting in time for the response deadline of 10th April.
- b. **Westbury By-Pass – Public Inquiry.** The Clerk reported that he had distributed the letter from the Secretary of State for Transport to members for information only, as he felt the contents should not be made public before the Highways, Planning & Development Committee had time to debate it.

T.1996 TO RECEIVE NOMINATIONS FOR MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR. Cllr Mrs S Ezra was nominated.

T.1997 TO RECEIVE NOMINATIONS FOR THE MAYOR'S DEPUTY FOR THE ENSUING YEAR. Cllr Mrs C Mitchell was nominated.

T.1998 FUTURE OF WESTBURY'S MAIN POST OFFICE. Consideration was given to the following resolution put by Cllr C Finbow:

“This Council resolves to open meaningful discussion with Morrisons, via the Town Clerk, to ensure the future of Westbury's main Post Office and, if the response is negative, then lobby Post Office Ltd to secure the future of this essential service in the town centre, and further that this Council believes that a move of the main Post Office operation from the store to an empty unit in High Street would also secure the future of this vital service, and help the regeneration of the High Street.”

The Clerk reported on his communication with both Morrison's and Post Office Ltd. Morrison's are keen to keep the post office within the store, and will do everything they can to agree an acceptable lease with whoever takes on the sub-post master's licence.

Post Office Ltd has stated its intention to keep a post office in Westbury town centre, but they do not run post offices themselves. Should there be a delay in someone coming forward to take the licence (it takes a minimum of three months to become a licence holder), or due to Morrison's refit of the store, then Post Office Ltd will provide a unit within Westbury, ie a secure portacabin.

It was also understood that interest has been expressed in setting up a post office in one of the empty units in the High Street.

The resolution was approved.

T.1999 It was agreed to suspend Standing Orders in order to allow Mr Martin Elliott, currently employed at the Post Office in Coopers Foodstore, to address the meeting.

Although he did not know Morrison's position on this matter, in his opinion all the required facilities are in situ, and maintaining the post office in the supermarket will be far more viable than relocating it to the High Street.

County Cllr Miss F de Rhé Philipe encouraged the Town Council to keep in touch with Wiltshire County Council, whose officers from its Retail Development Department have built up very good relations with Post Office Ltd during recent post office closures.

T.2000 Standing Orders were reinstated.

T.2001 **COMMUNITIES IN CONTROL: REAL PEOPLE, REAL POWER – CODE OF RECOMMENDED PRACTICE ON LOCAL AUTHORITY PUBLICITY. A CONSULTATION (T.1970).** The following response, as submitted, to the List of Consultation Questions (Annex A of the above document) was agreed:

Chapter 2: Effective communication and publicity

1. Westbury Town Council is not in favour, generally, of publicly funded bodies carrying out large publicity campaigns.

Chapter 3: The Publicity Code

2. No.
3. Only that there should be a proscription on material that carries blatantly political messages.
4. No comment.
5. Yes - inappropriate publicity measures should be specified.
6. No.
7. No.
8. No comment.
9. Yes - unsolicited material has been proven to be counter-productive.
10. No.
11. No.
12. No – this Council questions the need for political assistants in local authority funded posts.
13. No.
14. Yes – it should be re-affirmed that publicity should neither support, nor denigrate any legal political organisation, or independent councillors.
15. No.
16. No.

T.2002 **WWDC – LICENSING ACT 2003 – CONSULTATION ON STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY FOR WILTSHIRE COUNCIL (T.1973) AND NEW WILTSHIRE COUNCIL – LICENSING (G.1412).** The recommended responses to the following licensing consultations were agreed:

1. **Draft Statement of Licensing Policy.**
No comments on text or content – a mature policy.
2. **Gambling Act 2005 – Draft.**
 - a. Paragraph 2.3. Check unemployment rates and remove Bowyers (Trowbridge).
 - b. Does this policy require the two statements in the Draft Licensing Act Policy at paragraphs 1.6 and 1.7?
3. **Draft Policy on Licensing of Sex Establishments.**
 - a. Does this policy require that statements in the Draft Licensing Act Policy at paragraphs 1.6 and 1.7?
 - b. Should there be a statement on the Wiltshire Council area as there is in the above two documents?
 - c. Paragraph 4.b. is ambiguous. Should the word ‘and’ be there?

T.2003 TO APPROVE A WESTBURY TOWN COUNCIL LAUNCH EVENT FOR WESTBURY MARKET PLACE (Saturday, 2nd May 2009). Agreed.

T.2004 FEASIBILITY STUDY INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF RUNNING A REGULAR MARKET AT WESTBURY (P.2670). It was agreed to refer this proposal to the Town Centre Viability Group for its recommendation to the General Purposes Committee.

T.2005 SCHOOL PROJECT GRANTS – 2008-2009. The following grants of £500.00 per school were approved:

- a. Bitham Brook Primary School – Marking out of lines on their new playground area.
- b. Matravers School – To contribute towards the creation of a Science Garden to support teaching in Science. Also to provide a setting to display sculptures by its art students.
- c. Westbury Infants School – Create a mosaic for display in the playground, and then print image on to a canvas bag for each child.
- d. Westbury Junior School – To help with transport for two school trips linked to ongoing projects in the classroom (Roman Baths – Year 3 studying the Romans, and Swindon Train Museum’s exhibition linked to Year 4’s project on World War II evacuees).
- e. Westbury Leigh CE Primary School – To purchase planters/seats for the children to grow herbs and to sit quietly (part of their ‘outside’ classroom).

T.2006 KEY HEALTH ISSUES. The following resolution put by Cllr R Hawker was considered:

“This council resolves to:

1. a. recognise that it is the only democratically-elected body in the town able to formulate and represent, without conflicts of interest, a policy on key health issues facing the town providing it first listens to all relevant views;
 - b. form a Health Services Working Group, comprising up to five town councillors only, to be responsible for obtaining all relevant facts and points of view about key health issues in the town (but without creating co-opted members) as and when key issues arise and to report all its findings promptly to full council meetings to enable the council to formulate its own fully-democratic position on behalf of the whole town on any key health issue;
 - c. call a special public meeting, chaired by the Mayor, as soon as practicable at which all relevant bodies and individuals will be able to express their point of view about the need for a larger doctors' surgery and / or Primary Care Centre in Westbury and how this should be established and on the need for a second doctor's practice and / or second main doctors' surgery in the town and about whether these two aims have any conflict and on the best way forward for the town;
 - d. place an item on the agenda of a subsequent full town council meeting (as soon as possible but on a date to be decided by the Mayor in consultation with the Health Services Working Group) to formulate the council's position on the proposed Primary Care Centre and on the idea of achieving a second doctors practice and / or second main surgery and any related aspect of this;
 - e. require the Health Services Working Group to lobby and /or liaise with the PCT and any other relevant body to help achieve the town council's established health services policy and to report actions and progress to full council meetings.
2. Appoint up to 5 councillors to the new working group.

Cllr Hawker withdrew paragraphs 1.c., 1.d., and 1.e. of his resolution.

Cllr Braid proposed the following amendment:

“This Council recognizing that the PCT and Eastleigh Surgery are each a business and that they are well advanced in negotiations on the future of Health Care in Westbury believe that uninformed debate can serve no useful purpose and may very well jeopardize these delicate negotiations and therefore believe that no debate should take place at this time.”

The amendment was **defeated**.

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Following further consideration, Cllr Hawker withdrew paragraph 1.a. of his proposal.

The remaining paragraphs 1.b. and 2. were also **defeated**.

T.2007 CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE:

- a. **Small Grants 2008-2009 - Acknowledgements.** Noted.
- b. **Wessex Chamber of Commerce – Presidents' and Treasurers' meeting.** Noted.
- c. **Samaritans Bath & District Branch Annual Report and Review 2007.** Noted.

T.2008 THE LAVERTON INSTITUTE TRUST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE. Cllr Prickett thanked Cllr Taylor (who had tendered his resignation) for all his hard work on this committee and for the marked progress made during his chairmanship. It was resolved to defer appointing a replacement for Cllr Taylor until the Annual Town Council meeting in May.

T.2009 TOWN CENTRE VIABILITY GROUP. Nothing to report.

T.2010 WHITE HORSE AREA ACTION GROUP. A consultant has been appointed, whose brief is to review the Group with the aim of it joining the Community Area Partnership, which will be working with the new unitary Westbury Area Board when it is established in June 2009. The consultant will be meeting with interested parties on the 26th March.

T.2011 WESTBURY TOURISM GROUP.

- a. Cllr Prickett reported progress is being made on translating the Westbury tourism leaflet, but there are problems: for example, difficulties are being experienced with translating such terms as “rotten borough” into Polish and German.
- b. It was resolved to defer appointing a replacement for Cllr Taylor until the Annual Town Council meeting in May.

T.2012 CAR PARKS WORKING GROUP. It was resolved to defer appointing a replacement for Cllr Taylor until the Annual Town Council meeting in May.

T.2013 COMMUNICATIONS BY THE TOWN MAYOR. Cllr Hawkins had attended the following events on behalf of the Town Council:

- 4th February 2009 - To open Matravers School Art Exhibition at All Saints Church
- 20th February 2009 - Civic Awards Evening
- 24th February 2009 - Great Western Trust Awards – Westbury First Responders

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T.2014 WESTBURY TOWN COUNCIL BANK ACCOUNTS:

- a. The Town Clerk reported on recent actions taken under authority given by Minute T.1937. The majority of the Town Council's funds are held in the Bank of Ireland, and although the Irish Government had guaranteed all funds in Irish banks for two years, including Irish banks operating in the UK, some disquiet about the future of the Irish economy had been expressed in the press, and in view of the European Bank's limited guarantee of €100,000.00 for banks in the euro zone, it was considered prudent to spread the Town Council's risk, and to date funds have been transferred to Lloyds TSB and Royal Bank of Scotland. Further bank accounts may be opened should it be considered necessary in the future.

In addition, enquiries have been made with Wiltshire County Council whether it is possible to pay the Town Council's precept on a quarterly basis to reduce the funds held in Town Council bank accounts at any one time.

- b. The following members were approved to act as signatories for the purpose of signing cheques in respect of the Town Council's accounts held with the Bank of Ireland, the Royal Bank of Scotland, and Lloyds TSB, and any further accounts that it may be considered prudent to open in the future (T.1937).

Cllr M Hawkins, Town Mayor
Cllr Mrs S Ezra, Town Mayor's Deputy
Mr L J Fry, Town Clerk
Mrs B Mantle, Assistant to the Town Clerk
Cllr S Andrews
Cllr W Braid
Cllr Mrs G Denison-Pender
Cllr C Finbow

It was noted that Cllr I Taylor has requested his name be removed from the list of approved signatories.

T.2015 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS. The addition of the following clause to the Town Council's Financial Regulations was approved.

- 5.5 "In the absence of the Chairman (Town Mayor), the Town Mayor's Deputy be authorised to sign cheques on his/her behalf, and in the absence of the Town Clerk and RFO, the Assistant to the Town Clerk be authorised to sign cheques on his/her behalf."

T.2016 MONTHLY STATEMENT. Noted.

T.2017 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS. On report by the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer it was unanimously resolved to approve the List of Payments made since the last meeting, or to be made, and to confirm the action of the Clerk, the Mayor and one other member in signing the necessary orders for payment and Bank Transfers as follows:-

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2 nd February 2009	-	£33,115.24
2 nd March 2009	-	£8,546.78

T.2018

WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS. Cllr Mrs Denison-Pender informed the Planning Committee will continue during the transition to the new unitary authority, and Cllr Hawker confirmed he always represented Westbury Town Council views to the Planning Committee.

Cllr Mrs Ezra reported there will be an Area Boards Meeting on Tuesday, 3rd March 2009.

Cllr Hawker stated his support of the proposal for additional car parking in Oldfield Park. Wiltshire County Council envisage funding will need to come through the new unitary area boards, as well as other highway projects.

9.10 pm