

Wisbech Town Council



WISBECH TOWN COUNCIL

4 September 2023 – 7.30 pm – Council Chamber, Wisbech Town Hall

All members of the council are hereby summoned to attend for the purpose of considering and resolving the business to be transacted at the meeting, as set out below.

Members of the public and press are welcome to attend the meeting.

(A period not exceeding 15 minutes is made available at the beginning of the meeting, where residents so require, to raise issues relating to matters over which the council has duties, powers or influence (see notes at the end of the agenda).

AGENDA

1. To receive members' apologies for absence.
2. Remembrance - to note the death of Penny Stocks (who had been Secretary of the Wisbech in Bloom Team; a team that had been honoured by Wisbech Town Council in 2018 with the Freedom of the Town) and, at the invitation of the Mayor, to stand in silence for one minute in her memory.
3. To receive members' declarations of disclosable pecuniary, non-disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in relation to any agenda item (see guidance notes at the end of the agenda).
4. Wisbech Community Farm – to receive a presentation from the Director of Operations at People and Animals UK CIC on the far-reaching community work taking place at the community farm currently and this CIC's aspirations and plans to deliver further community development through the use of this facility.
5. Fenland District Council - to receive information in relation to District Council activities relevant to Wisbech.
6. Cambridgeshire County Council - to receive information in relation to County Council activities relevant to Wisbech, including the outcome of the Town Council's applications for Local Highway Improvement schemes for 2023/24.
7. Cambridgeshire Constabulary – to consider any matters relating to crime and disorder in Wisbech, for reference to the local policing team.
8. To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting of Wisbech Town Council held on 24 July 2023 (to be circulated).
9. Minutes of committees – to receive, for information, the minutes of committee meetings held since the last meeting of the Town Council, as follows:
 - (1) Planning and Community Infrastructure Committee – 24 July 2023 (circulated previously)
 - (2) Planning and Community Infrastructure Committee – 14 August 2023 (attached).

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10. Appointment of committees – further to minutes 13/23 (at which Council appointed its committees for the municipal year 2023/24) and 36/23 (at which Councillor Hoy stated that if any particular councillor has a desire to serve upon a particular committee, she would be happy for that matter to be considered), to consider a proposal from the Leader of the Council that
- Councillor Monger be appointed to membership of the Wisbech Town Centre Committee (in place of Councillor Hoy)
 - Councillor Read be appointed to membership of the Community Events and Festivals Committee (in place of Councillor Human).

11. Appointments to outside bodies – to consider an invitation from the Wisbech Corn Exchange Conservation Trust (WCXCT) for the Town Council to appoint two members to serve upon this Trust.

12. Motion to Council: Mr Balsevics.

Councillor Patrick to propose:

“Following the conviction of Ex-Mayor Aigars Balsevics on a charge of rape, that his name be struck from the Mayoral role of honour and his photograph removed from the mayoral chamber”.

13. Motion to Council: Weeds on the public highway.

Councillor Hoy to propose:

“To Cambridgeshire County Council.

Please accept this formal objection on behalf of Wisbech Town Council to the change in weedkilling policy that was implemented by the County Council this year.

Our roads, cycleways and footpaths are in a dreadful state due to the explosion of weeds since this policy change. This has an unacceptable detrimental effect upon the look, usability, and cost of repair to our highways.

Wisbech residents are angry at how you have made our community look. Those who attempt active travel are angry at the state of the weed ridden paths that they must dodge.

The Town Council is deeply concerned at the effect that this will have on flash flooding, as gullies and drains become blocked by weeds. This council is also aware of the poisonous danger posed to horses by the rapid increase in Ragwort in our area.

As a council we cannot understand the short-sighted financial nature of this decision, as short-term gain will be overshadowed by future repair bills. The Town Council is further dismayed that the County Council would implement such a devastating cut to a vital service with no consultation with our council. This blatant attempt at cost shunting onto our council is unacceptable.

Wisbech Town Council, therefore calls upon those whose decision this was, the “joint administration” to reverse its disastrous policy.

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The Town Council asks that

- the Chief Executive, Stephen Moir, takes urgent action to remove weeds across the County
 - the Chair of the Highways Committee issues a public statement to reverse this dreadful decision and explain the immediate actions that the County Council will be taking to address this situation
 - the Monitoring Officer investigates how a major cut to services was allowed to take place without engagement with Town and Parish Councils”.
14. Waste bin – Councillor Hoy to propose that the council purchases such a bin for installation at Larksfield, Wisbech.
 15. Mayor’s report – to receive information in relation the activities and events attended by the Mayor since the last meeting of the Town Council.
 16. Leader of the Council’s report – to receive information from the Leader of the Council on matters affecting the town.
 17. Clerk’s report – to include: any updates on projects/initiatives; correspondence received by the council which is of relevance to members; advance notice of events/activities etc.
 18. Date of next meeting - to note that the next meeting of Wisbech Town Council is scheduled for 16 October 2023, to commence at 7.30 pm, at the offices of Wisbech Town Council.

Members of the Town Council: Councillors Edwards, Foice-Beard, Hoy, Human (Chairman/Town Mayor), Imafidon (Vice-Chairman/Deputy Town Mayor), Ketteringham, Meekins, Monger, Oliver, Patrick, Pehlivanova, Rafique, Read, Roy, Sagoo, Tanfield, Tierney and Wallwork.

Agenda issued and published (on 29 August 2023) by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T Jordan'.

**Mr T Jordan, PSLCC
Clerk to Wisbech Town Council
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NOTES:

The Council Chamber is situated on the first floor of the Town Hall and access is available via a stair-lift if required. However, if wheelchair access is required, please contact the office, on 01945 461333, so that the necessary arrangements (the installation of temporary ramping) can be made.

Members of the public, representatives of the press and councillors may film, audio-record, take photographs and use social media to report on meetings as they take place and the council shall make reasonable provision for this to happen. Those who wish to report on meetings in this way are advised to contact the Town Clerk in advance of the meeting so that any arrangements, if necessary, can be made. Further information regarding the situation is displayed on a notice at the entrance to the Council Chamber and in the guidance below.

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Guidance for the public attending Town Council meetings

Open Forum

A period not exceeding 15 minutes is made available at the beginning of the meeting, where residents so require, to raise issues relating to matters over which the council has duties, powers or influence.

There is no facility for a dialogue between members of the public and councillors during a meeting of the Town Council. If an issue raised by a member of the public during the Open Forum is the subject of an item on the agenda for the meeting, the comments of the member of the public may be taken into account by the council when discussing that item. If that is not the case, the matter could, if members consider appropriate, be the subject of an item on the agenda for a future meeting.

The Open Forum section of the agenda is not a mechanism for members of the public to make personal attacks upon members of Wisbech Town Council. Furthermore, if a member of the public is of the opinion that a Wisbech Town Councillor has, through his or her actions, brought the office of councillor into disrepute, the member of the public should refer the complaint to the Monitoring Officer at Fenland District Council; not raise it publicly at a meeting of the Town Council.

Recording of meetings

Members of the public, representatives of the press and councillors may (under the provisions of the Local Government and Accountability Act 2014 and the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014) film, audio-record, take photographs and use social media to report on meetings as they take place and the council shall make reasonable provision for this to happen.

The legislation and regulations allow the recording, broadcasting and use of social media to report on council, committee and sub-committee meetings if conducted in a non-disruptive manner during the course of the meeting. Such rights do not extend to the recorded material being used: out of sequence; in a way that misinterprets the proceedings; in a manner that misinterprets the views of those speaking at the meeting.

This means that there is a possibility that proceedings at this meeting are being recorded in some way by persons in attendance.

The Chairman of the meeting (Town Mayor) has the right to ask any person to leave a meeting or to suspend a meeting if the actions of those in attendance, including councillors, are deemed to be sufficiently disruptive to impede the business of the meeting.

Disturbance to meetings

The council's Standing Orders state that "If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings of any meeting, the Chairman (Town Mayor) may, after warning, order that the person(s) be removed from the meeting and may adjourn the meeting for such period as is necessary to restore order.

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Exclusion of the public from meetings for confidential items of business

To exclude the public (including the press) from a meeting of the Council, it is necessary for the following proposition to be moved and adopted "that, in accordance with the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting for item number(s), which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) as indicated"

Notes on members' interests

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

- (1) Members are required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest and, unless the member has obtained a dispensation, he or she cannot discuss or vote on the matter at the meeting and must leave the room whilst the matter is being debated or voted on.
- (2) A member has a disclosable pecuniary interest if it
 - (a) relates to him or her, or
 - (b) is an interest of -
 - (i) the member's spouse or civil partner; or
 - (ii) a person with whom the member is living as husband and wife; or
 - (iii) a person with whom the member is living as if civil partners and the member is aware that the other person has the interest.
- (3) Disclosable pecuniary interests include -
 - (a) any employment or profession carried out for profit or gain;
 - (b) any financial benefit received by the member in respect of expenses incurred carrying out his or her duties as a member (except from the Council);
 - (c) any current contracts with the Council;
 - (d) any beneficial interest in land/property within the Council's area;
 - (e) any licence for a month or longer to occupy land in the Council's area;
 - (f) any tenancy where the Council is landlord and the member (or person in (2)(b) above) has a beneficial interest;
 - (g) a beneficial interest (above the specified level) in the shares of any body which has a place of business or land in the Council's area.

Other Interests

- (4) If a member has a non-disclosable pecuniary interest or a non-pecuniary interest, he or she is required to declare that interest but may remain and participate in discussion and voting.
- (5) A member has a non-disclosable pecuniary interest or a non-pecuniary interest where -
 - (a) a decision in relation to the business being considered might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing of the member or a member of his or her family or a person with whom the member has a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the council tax payers, rate payers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which the member has been elected or otherwise of the authority's administrative area, or
 - (b) it relates to or is likely to affect any of the descriptions referred to above but in respect of a member of the councillor's family (other than specified in (2)(b) above) or a person with whom the member has a close association and that interest is not a disclosable pecuniary interest.