



WISBECH TOWN COUNCIL

20 and 23 May 2022

MINUTES OF MEETING

Friday 20 May 2022 (12 noon)

Present: Councillors Balsevics, Hill, Hoy, Human, Imafidon, Ketteringham, Lynn, Maul, Meekins, Oliver, Patrick, Pehlivanova, Rackley, Tibbs, Tierney, Topgood and Wallwork

Apologies: Councillor Prest.

Members and guests were seated in the Council Chamber to await the Mayoral party, which entered at 12 noon.

The outgoing Mayor, Councillor Lynn, opened the meeting.

1/22 Election of Chairman of the Town Council (to be known as Town Mayor) for the municipal year 2022/23

Members decided, unanimously, on the proposal of Councillor Tierney, seconded by Councillor Tibbs, and there being no other nominations, that Councillor Wallwork be elected as Chairman of Wisbech Town Council and Mayor of Wisbech for the municipal year 2022/23 and that she paid an annual allowance of £3,100 in relation to the performance of that role.

The Chairman/Mayor read and signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office in relation to that position. In addition, she swore her allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, her heirs and successors.

Following her election as Chairman/Mayor, Councillor Wallwork gave a short speech. She commented that it is an incredible honour to be elected as the Mayor of her beloved home town and it is something that one never thinks is achievable.

The Mayor mentioned that she does not take-on projects half-heartedly and, hence, she promises to give the town of Wisbech and its residents everything that she is able to give. She commented that she hopes to be able to undertake her Mayoral duties to a standard which is befitting the role and that she aims to support and promote Wisbech and its residents to the best of her abilities.

Members were thanked by the Mayor for electing her to this position and she commented that she would do her best to make everyone proud.

2/22 Outgoing Mayor

Councillor Hoy, the Leader of the Council, paid tribute to the outgoing Mayor, Councillor Lynn, before inviting him to give a speech about his Mayoral Year (2021/22).

Councillor Hoy expressed the opinion that Andrew Lynn had performed very effectively the role of Town Mayor during the municipal year 2020/21 and that his wife, Reema, had performed the role of Mayoress in the same manner. Councillor Hoy commented that the Andrew and Reema's two foster-sons, Davidas and Kieran had brought some fun the Mayoral couple's activities. She mentioned the birth of Andrew and Reema's son during Councillor Lynn's term as Town Mayor and commented that she believes that this is only occasion that a Mayor of Wisbech had become a parent during his/her Mayoral year.



Councillor Hoy went on to say that Councillor Lynn had, during his Mayoral year, been a great support to her as Leader of the Council and that their working together had helped in the delivery of projects which are of benefit to the town.

Councillor Lynn thanked members for electing him to the position of Mayor for the previous municipal year. He commented that being the Mayor of Wisbech had been one of the greatest honours of his life; as a boy, growing-up in Wisbech, it had not been something that had ever expected as being achievable; his Mayoral year had been an amazing experience.

Councillor Lynn expressed his thanks for the support that he had received from many people during his Mayoral year, including Council staff and the Mace Bearer.

The point was made by Councillor Lynn that he had, in addition to making various financial donations to organisations and groups during his Mayoral Year, been pleased to have been able to hand-out three cheques (each of £1,200 each) at his Mayor's at Home event on 7 May 2022.

Councillor Lynn paid tribute to his wife and family for their support, without which he would not have been able to have undertaken effectively the role of Town Mayor.

Following the speech from Councillor Lynn, he and his wife, Reema, were invited by the Mayor to be presented with a Past Mayor's badge and a Past Mayoress' badge respectively.

3/22 Election of Vice-Chairman of the Town Council (to be known as Deputy Town Mayor) for the municipal year 2022/23

Members decided, unanimously, on the proposal of Councillor Meekins, seconded by Councillor Rackley, and there being no other nominations, that Councillor Human be elected as Vice-Chairman of Wisbech Town Council and Deputy Mayor of Wisbech for the municipal year 2022/23 and that he be entitled to claim the travelling allowance agreed by council.

4/22 Adjournment of the meeting until 7.30 pm on 23 May 2022

Members decided, unanimously, that the Annual Meeting of Wisbech Town Council be adjourned (at 12.30 pm) until 7.30 pm on Monday, 23 May 2022.

Monday 23 May 2022 (7.30 pm)

Present: Councillor Wallwork, Chairman (and Town Mayor); Councillors Balsevics, Hoy, Human, Imafidon, Ketteringham, Lynn, Oliver, Pehlivanova, Prest, Rackley and Tierney.

Apologies: Councillors Hill, Maul, Meekins, Patrick and Tibbs.

Public Participation: None requested.

5/22 Signatories to the council's bank accounts

Members considered authorising a number of councillors to act in the capacity as signatories to Wisbech Town Council's bank accounts.

Members decided, unanimously, on the proposal of Councillor Oliver, seconded by Councillor Lynn, that the Chairman of the Town Council (Town Mayor), Vice-Chairman of the Council (Deputy Mayor), Leader of the Council and the Chairmen of the Council's Committees be authorised as bank account signatories, with at least one of the signatories to a cheque (or to authorise BACS



payments) being the Chairman of the Council (Town Mayor), Vice-Chairman of the Council (Deputy Mayor), Leader of the Council or the Chairman of the Resources Committee.

6/22 Cambridgeshire Constabulary

Members took the opportunity to consider any matters relating to crime and disorder in Wisbech, for reference to Cambridgeshire Constabulary.

Councillor Lynn expressed his thanks to Acting Inspector Morris and Sergeant Arnold for both the additional policing patrols around Walsoken and for arranging for officers to speak with the operators of shops within that area; actions which had been undertaken in response to matters which had been raised by members at the last meeting of the council (minute 136/21 refers).

Members decided that the comments of Councillor Lynn be noted and that the Clerk would forward those comments to Acting Inspector Morris and Sergeant Arnold.

7/22 Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 19 April 2022

Members decided, unanimously, on the proposal of Councillor Oliver, seconded by Councillor Lynn, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of 19 April 2022 be confirmed and signed.

8/22 Minutes of committees

Members received, for information, the minutes of committee meetings held since the last meeting of the Town Council, as follows:

- (1) Planning and Community Infrastructure Committee – 19 April 2022
- (2) Joint meeting of the Wisbech Market Place Management Committee and the Resources Committee – 19 April 2022
- (3) Planning and Community Infrastructure Committee – 3 May 2022
- (4) Resources Committee – 3 May 2022
- (5) Wisbech Market Place Management Committee – 10 May 2022
- (6) Planning and Community Infrastructure Committee – 16 May 2022.

Members decided that the contents of these minutes, including the decisions made by the committees, be noted.

9/22 Membership of Committees for 2022/23

Members considered the appointment of members to the committees of the council for the municipal year 2022/23.

The Clerk informed members that it is proposed, to rationalise decision-making processes and to incorporate additional service activities and aspirations, that the Assets Management Committee, the Wisbech Castle Management Committee and the Wisbech Market Place Management Committee be replaced by a Wisbech Town Centre Committee (to have responsibilities for matters such as local economy issues (e.g. footfall counters, Shop Watch Radios scheme etc), Wisbech Market Place, Horsefair Shopping Centre toilets, the Town Hall and Wisbech Castle) and an Environment and Public Spaces Committee (to have responsibilities for such matters as Town Council activity at Wisbech Park, allotments, other council assets and the anti-incinerator campaign).

Councillor Tierney expressed his support for the proposal to replace the Assets Management Committee, the Wisbech Castle Management Committee and the Wisbech Market Place Management Committee with a Wisbech Town Centre Committee and an Environment and Public



Spaces Committee. He expressed the opinion, with which there was concurrence by other members, that, given the progress which had been made over the last four years regarding the operation, restoration and development of Wisbech Castle, that it no longer needs a specific committee; similarly, now that the Market Place enhancement scheme is underway, the Market Place no longer needs a specific committee.

Members decided, unanimously, on the proposal of Councillor Lynn, seconded by Councillor Ketteringham, that

- (1) the Assets Management Committee, the Wisbech Castle Management Committee and the Wisbech Market Place Management Committee be replaced by a Wisbech Town Centre Committee and an Environment and Public Spaces Committee;
- (2) the Clerk to the Council would produce Terms of Reference for the new committees, for consideration at a future meeting of Wisbech Town Council;
- (3) the membership of the council's committees for the municipal year 2022/23 be as set out in the appendix to these minutes.

10/22 Dates of meetings for 2022/23

Members considered the setting of dates for meetings of the town council and its committees for the municipal year 2022/23. The Clerk had circulated to members, in advance of the meeting, a schedule of proposed dates.

Members decided, unanimously, on the proposal of Councillor Tierney, seconded by Councillor Lynn, that the dates of the meetings of the town council and its committees for the municipal year 2022/23 be as proposed on the list which had been produced by the Clerk.

11/22 Clarion Housing

Councillor Human proposed that the bi-annual attendance at meetings of Wisbech Town Council by appropriate representatives of Clarion Housing (which had operated between April 2016 and December 2018) be re-introduced.

Councillor Human reminded members that representatives of Clarion Housing had attended meetings of Wisbech Town Council over a period of more than two years but this had ceased, given that tenants' issues and concerns had subsided. He commented that tenants' issues and concerns appear to be emerging again and, consequently, he feels that the bi-annual attendance at meetings of Wisbech Town Council by appropriate representatives of Clarion Housing should be re-introduced. He made the point that such attendance also provides the opportunity for Clarion Housing to share with the council its plans for future improvement and development of its housing stock.

Members decided, unanimously, on the proposal of Councillor Human, seconded by Councillor Lynn, that the Clerk would seek to achieve re-introduction of the bi-annual attendance at meetings of Wisbech Town Council by appropriate representatives of Clarion Housing.

12/22 Clerk's report

The Clerk reported to members on: updates in relation to council projects/initiatives; correspondence received which would be of interest to councillors; advance notice of events/activities etc.



Projects and service delivery

Community Support

The Clerk continues to work with other agencies locally, via the Fenland Diverse Communities Forum, to develop “messages” to encourage people to access Covid-19 vaccinations and to undertake Covid-19 tests etc.

Council officers continue to share other partners’ information and undertake “sign posting” to other services/organisations as appropriate.

Wisbech Market

Following various changes during the last year or so due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Wisbech Market has been operating “as normal” since 12 April last year and trading levels at Wisbech Market now are generally remaining at the “pre-lockdown” levels.

Officers will be looking at ways to seek to increase the level of trading at Wisbech Market following completion of the Market Place enhancement scheme.

Market Place enhancements

The construction works required to deliver the long-awaited and much-anticipated enhancement scheme for Wisbech Market Place began on 19 April 2022.

The construction works are anticipated to have a duration of 10 weeks.

The construction work began at The Globe end of the Market Place and the contractor “changed ends” on 16 May 2022. The finished section of the Market Place – which has new surfacing, benches and planters (with bins still to be installed) – was “handed back” to the council on 16 May and has been used for market trading activities since that date. Not surprisingly, a number of operational issues have arisen during the period of the works but these are being addressed as they arise.

Further information in relation to the delivery of this scheme is contained within the minutes of the meeting of the Wisbech Market Place Management Committee which was held on 10 May 2022.

Allotments

The council’s allotments remain popular; the council continues to attract additional tenants. The council has several applications pending but there has been a delay in the allocation of plots because of the temporary reduction in officer resources. This situation is being addressed now that the council’s new Customer Services and Liaison Officer is in post.

Community events and festivals

The council’s Community Events and Festivals Working Party is busy planning activities for 2022; in fact, it met earlier today. The next event will be a Queen’s Platinum Jubilee celebration on 3 June 2022, which, not surprisingly, is at a very advanced stage of planning. Further activities for 2022 will include the WisBEACH Rock Festival and the Christmas Lights Switch-on event.

The Town Clerk submitted on 13 May 2022 an application to the Arts Council, for several thousands of pounds, to expand this year’s WisBEACH Rock Festival to increase, if the application is successful, the creative and cultural offer of the event.



Town Hall/office

Maintenance work to the Town Hall is undertaken as necessary; all essential works are up-to-date. Arrangements have been made for re-painting of the front door to the building.

Toilets

The Town Clerk has signed the lease between New River Retail and Wisbech Town Council for the council to take-on the operation of the toilets at the Horsefair Shopping Centre. He has received information today from the solicitors engaged by New River Retail that the landlord is now ready to sign the lease.

The Town Clerk met last week with the Manager of the Horsefair Shopping Centre to discuss several associated operational issues - such as installation of necessary meters for utilities, ensuring that all items of equipment (such as hand dryers) are in working order etc – necessary to achieve opening of the toilets.

The new Wisbech Town Centre Committee will be meeting later this evening to discuss, among other matters, agreeing the arrangements for “staffing” of the toilets at the Horsefair Shopping Centre.

The Town Clerk will be meeting tomorrow with a building maintenance contractor to discuss further external repairs to the toilet block at Exchange Square.

Wisbech Castle

Numerous pre-booked events (including paranormal evenings, escape room events, weddings etc) are taking place at Wisbech Castle. There is a steady “stream” of enquiries for holding events and activities at Wisbech Castle. Having regard for the level of volunteer capacity to “staff” events, a couple of months in this calendar year are deemed to be fully booked.

Weekly “organisational planning” meetings at Wisbech Castle were introduced this month, to ensure the efficient and effective operation of activities/bookings. New booking forms are being produced and associated processes are being reviewed.

The new Wisbech Town Centre Committee will be meeting later this evening to discuss, among other matters, reviewing the fees and charges for bookings at Wisbech Castle.

Councillor Tierney expressed the opinion that the recent filming at Wisbech Castle, for inclusion in a forthcoming television programme, should have a positive impact upon future enquiries/bookings.

Correspondence

The Town Clerk has received a copy of a letter sent by the Planning Inspectorate (PI) to Fenland District Council (FDC), informing FDC that the PI had received notification that the application by Medworth CHP Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Medworth Energy from Waste Combined Heat and Power Facility on land to the West of Algores Way, Wisbech is likely to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 7 June 2022.

The letter from the Planning Inspectorate states that it will be inviting the Local Planning Authority (that being Fenland District Council) to submit an ‘Adequacy of Consultation Representation’, to which the Planning Inspectorate must have regard in deciding whether to accept an application.



The point is made in the letter from the Planning Inspectorate that it has 28 days from the date of receipt of the submission to decide whether to accept the application.

Given the short statutory time limit for the Acceptance stage, the Planning Inspectorate will be seeking a representation from Fenland District Council (FDC) within 14 calendar days of the date of its invitation. FDC is happy to include within its submission any comments from Wisbech Town Council.

Councillor Human, Chairman of Wisbech Town Council's Anti-Incinerator Working Party, informed members that he is liaising with Swann Edwards Architectural Services, the company which is providing (free-of-charge) support to the working party, regarding future support that the council may need to oppose this incinerator proposal.

Members decided that the situation be noted and that Councillor Human and the Town Clerk would continue the dialogue with Swann Edwards Architectural Services in relation to this matter.

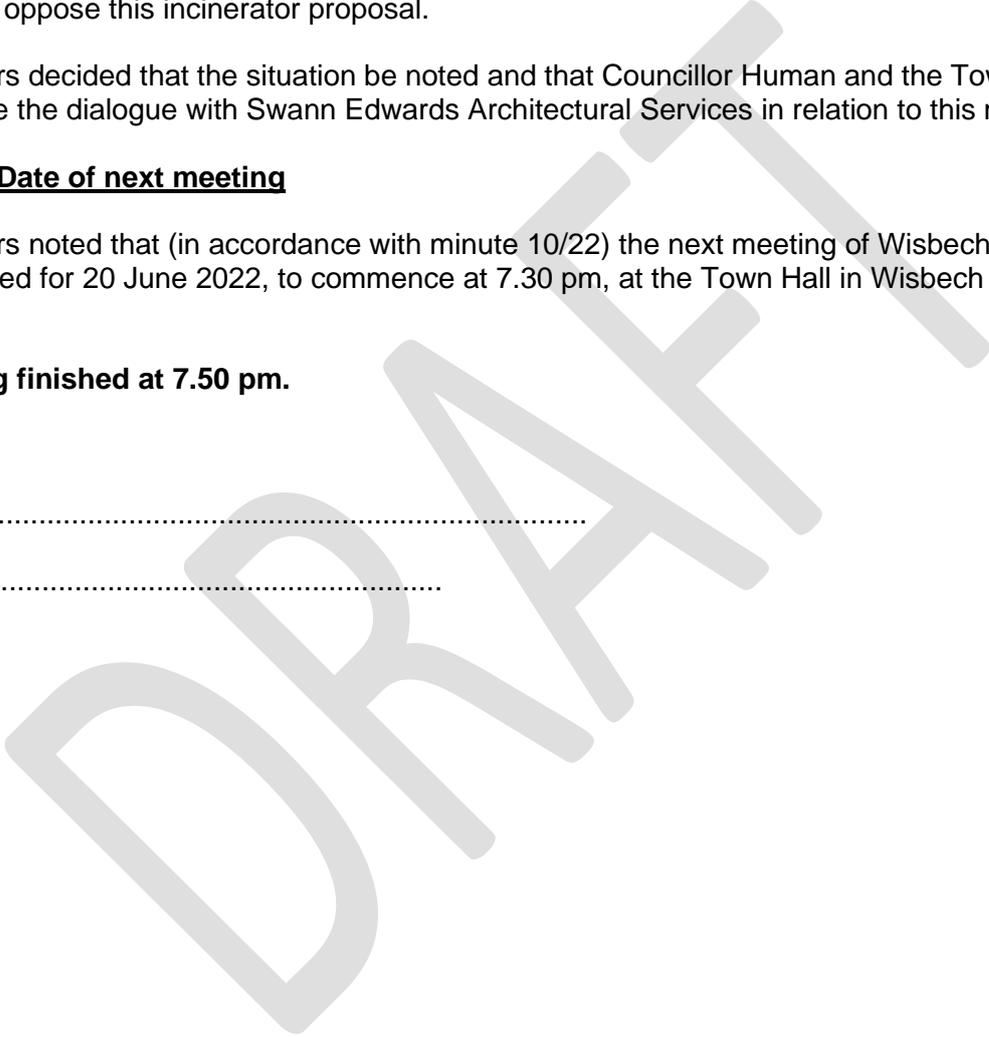
13/22 Date of next meeting

Members noted that (in accordance with minute 10/22) the next meeting of Wisbech Town Council is scheduled for 20 June 2022, to commence at 7.30 pm, at the Town Hall in Wisbech

Meeting finished at 7.50 pm.

Signed

Date





MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES 2022/23

(Minute 9/22 refers)

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Councillor Hill
Councillor Hoy
Councillor Lynn
Councillor Oliver
Councillor Tibbs
Councillor Tierney
Councillor Wallwork

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Councillor Hill
Councillor Imafidon
Councillor Ketteringham
Councillor Oliver
Councillor Prest
Councillor Rackley
1 vacancy - Conservative

ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC SPACES COMMITTEE

Councillor Human
Councillor Imafidon
Councillor Meekins
Councillor Oliver
Councillor Prest
Councillor Rackley
Councillor Tierney

WISBECH TOWN CENTRE COMMITTEE

Councillor Hoy
Councillor Lynn
Councillor Maul
Councillor Oliver
Councillor Prest
Councillor Tierney
Councillor Wallwork

STAFFING AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Councillor Human
Councillor Maul
Councillor Oliver
Councillor Pehlivanova
Councillor Tierney



Councillor Topgood
Councillor Wallwork

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND FESTIVALS COMMITTEE

Councillor Hoy
Councillor Ketteringham
Councillor Maul
Councillor Oliver
Councillor Tierney
Councillor Topgood
Councillor Wallwork

DRAFT