



Wokingham Town Council

Town Hall, Market Place, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 1AS
Tel: 0118 978 3185 www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk
Town Clerk: K. Hughes

This Council Meeting is open to the Public and Press
Please notify the Officer or Chair if you wish to record the meeting

7th January 2025

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of the **Civic Committee** to be held in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Wokingham** at **7.30pm** on **Monday 13th January 2025** for the purpose of considering and resolving upon the subjects and matters set out in the agenda below.

Yours sincerely

K Hughes
Town Clerk

Contact Officer Graham Winder, Civic Officer
Direct line: 07590 863352 Email: civic@wokingham-tc.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive any declaration of interests from Members on the business about to be transacted.

3 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC

The Chair to answer questions raised by members of the Council or public.

This is an opportunity for the people of Wokingham to ask questions of, and make comments to, the Town Council. Members of the public are requested to restrict their questions and comments to three minutes. Questions which are not answered at this meeting will be answered in writing to the person asking the question. To ensure an informed response, please send your questions to the Town Clerk at least three working days prior to the meeting.

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) To receive and resolve the minutes of the proceedings at the meeting of this Committee held on 25th November 2024 (pages 17098 to 17102), copy attached, as a true and correct record.
- b) To receive and resolve the minutes of the proceedings at the meeting of the Civic Award Selection Committee held on 13th December 2024 (pages 17118 to 17119), copy attached, as a true and correct record.

5 CIVIC AWARDS EVENT

To receive a verbal report on the upcoming Civic Awards event scheduled for Friday 24th January 2025.

6 MONITORING REPORT

To receive the Monitoring Report dated 6th January 2025 (copy attached), for information.

7 COMMITTEE'S BUDGET

To receive an update on the Committee's budget as of 31st December 2024 (copy to follow).

8 INFORMATION ITEMS

9 COMMITTEE INFORMATION

- a) To receive information items raised by members, which have been notified to the Civic Officer in advance.
- b) Identify any specific items for marketing purposes.
- c) The date of the next meeting is Monday 24th March 2025.

Civic Committee: Cllrs Adrian Betteridge, Rachel Bishop-Firth, Phil Cunnington, Warren Dixon, Sally Gurney, Alwyn Jones (Vice-Chair), Keith Malvern (Chair), Adrian Mather and Tony Lack.

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, all persons attending this meeting are hereby notified that this meeting will be recorded. The purpose of recording proceedings is that it acts as an aide-memoir in assisting the clerk of the meeting in the compilation of minutes. The recordings are held in a secure location and deleted once it has been resolved that the minutes are a true and correct record.

In accordance with The Openness of Local Government Bodies regulations 2014, persons attending this meeting may make their own recordings of the proceedings subject to the Council's Policy on Filming, Recording & Reporting on Council and Committee Meetings (copy available on request).

25th November 2024

Minutes of the proceedings of the **CIVIC COMMITTEE** meeting held on this day in **the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Wokingham** from 19:30 to 20:26pm.

PRESENT

Chair: Cllr K Malvern (Chair)

Councillors: S Gurney, A Jones (Vice-Chair), A Betteridge, R Bishop-Firth and P Cunnington.

IN ATTENDANCE

Civic Officer

Mayor's Attendant David Dunham

Town Clerk

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Cllrs T Lack, W Dixon and R Comber

MEMBERS' INTERESTS (Agenda Item 2)

Cllr A Jones asked for it to be noted that he is a member of the Wokingham Lions Club and Wokingham Society.

Cllr K Malvern asked for it to be noted he is a member of Wokingham Society.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC (Agenda Item 3)

No questions were received.

CIVIC COMMITTEE MINUTES (Agenda Item 4)

It was proposed by Cllr K Malvern and seconded by Cllr A Jones and it was

**RESOLVED
30957**

that the Minutes of the Civic Committee meeting held on 23rd September 2024 (pages 17054 to 17058), be received as a true and correct record and that they be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

MONITORING REPORT (Agenda Item 5)

The Monitoring Report dated 18th November 2024 was received and noted.

a) Application of UV film to Town Hall windows to protect its historical items from further damage and preserve for the future.

The Town Clerk reported that we are still awaiting a visit from the Heritage Officer to view the UV film on the windows and to offer a steer on next steps. There is an item in the F&P pack next week for additional budget as costs are coming in more expensive. We will report back on this if it is included.

b) To consider the purchase of a new mayoral badge and chain of office at some point in the near future.

To consider options in due course.

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____

Civic Committee 25/11/2024

17098



c) Beating the Bounds Walk

The Lions have confirmed that they will store the event items and we can come back to them at a future date and request another event per the Council's decision.

d) Consider opportunities at Remembrance to make the wreath laying ceremony more visible to a wider audience

Covered under Item 7.

e) Consider request for a plaque from Wokingham Lions Club

The Town Clerk offered an update on a conversation between the former Civic Officer and Wokingham Lions on this matter.

f) Consider how to make the Remembrance Service more multi-faith

This will be a future consideration.

g) Ten years since REME left Wokingham

Covered under Item 8.

Cllr Gurney asked if the Mayoral Chain replacement item should be removed from the Monitoring Report as no action is likely during current term. Town Clerk agreed to remove the item as there is an Earmarked Reserve line for this.

ACTION: Civic Officer

COMMITTEE'S BUDGET (Agenda Item 6)

A report on the Committee's budget expenditure to 31st October 2024 was received and noted.

The Town Clerk noted that there is an expenditure on computer software update which was due to a required update for Wokingham History app. This is likely to be needed in future years and there is now a budget request for this for 2025-26.

The Town Clerk also drew attention to the budget line for Christmas Music and the need for a discussion around this. The event this year is booked for the 7th December and is being run for the second year by Morearts. Morearts have indicated their intention to cease operations at the end of this financial year.

Morearts will therefore not be available to run the event in 2025. As this will be the new Civic Officer's first year organising events like Heritage Day (now later in September) and Remembrance to plan for in November plus REME commemorations (see Item 8) proposed in October, the Town Clerk flagged up that he is unlikely to have the capacity to organise the Christmas Music event as well.

Members discussed the following:

- Could an organisation obtain a Culture and Community Grant to organise an event? The Town Clerk agreed that the venue could be made available, for example to the Mayor's Charity, to run a fundraising event, but there would be very limited Civic Officer capacity to get involved.
- Should the event be passed to the Arts and Culture Committee? There was broad agreement with this approach.

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____

Civic Committee 25/11/2024

17099



- Members discussed the background of the event. It was noted that:
 - The event had changed format and audience demographic over the years
 - A single-event Christmas music and singalong is now being delivered.
 - The event is run as a fundraiser for the Mayor's Charity, and the Town Clerk shared that last year around £200-250 was raised.
 - Tickets are limited to around 75 attendees and that whilst a bigger venue was considered, it was agreed that, as a free event, it should not compete with other festive fundraising concerts held at this time.
 - Approaching other charities to run the event could potentially conflict with its existing role as a fundraiser for the Mayor's Charity, who will change each year.
 - Should the council focus on collating and sharing the details of other local Christmas events in the town area, and promoting these instead, rather than running its own?

Following discussion, it was agreed that the event should be offered to the Arts and Culture Committee to run. The Town Clerk will liaise with the A&C Officer to add this to a future committee agenda for discussion.

ACTION: Town Clerk

REMEMBRANCE 2024 FEEDBACK (Agenda item 7)

Cllr Dixon, in giving his apologies asked for his feedback to be included as follows:

'I would like to pass on how well I personally felt the Remembrance event was planned and executed and the feeling that the attendance/ visibility was much better.'

The committee reviewed the feedback gathered after the event with the following additional notes and comments:

- Thanks to the Mayor's attendant for his work in making the event more inclusive.
- The event worked well, including the wreath laying in the main service rather than having the two elements separate.
- Positive that those watching the parade could see the wreaths
- Some seating issues in the church which could be reviewed for next year
- Consider whether to read out wreath laying organisations before or as they are laid
- Choir music finished before the completion of the wreath laying, which lasted 10 minutes.
- Consider whether the sermon element of the service could be focussed around an individual named on the war memorial?
- Parade return to the town hall was well attended
- Behaviour and discipline of the unformed groups was exceptional
- Consider ways to ensure the Mayor's thanks to the various groups involved, at the end of the parade when returning to the town hall, are well received

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



- Images of the wreaths at the altar shared on social media were very powerful
- The 11am events outside the town hall on the Sunday and on Armistice Day were well attended.
- Consider reaching out again to other community groups for inclusion in the event

Cllr Jones commended the Mayor's Attendant for organising a ceremony to bring wreaths back to the Town Hall with dignity, reflecting those that lost their lives for this country.

The committee discussed and noted Cllr Croy's recent article in Wokingham Today, which was included with other feedback in the agenda pack.

Chair was passed a card with the Poppy Appeal total to date which was £82,309.36. Chair commended progression from last year.

The Town Clerk asked for a steer on whether the Working Group for changes to the wreath laying wishes to meet again to review those changes for next year while the memories are fresh. Members supported this suggestion. It was therefore agreed that the Civic Officer will schedule a meeting for Cllrs Jones and Betteridge plus the Mayor's Attendant and the Honorary Parade Marshal, to review the wreath laying feedback and propose any changes for next year.

ACTION: Civic Officer and Town Clerk

MAINTAINING LINKS WITH REME (Agenda Item 8)

The chair invited the Town Clerk to give Committee an update on REME.

The Town Clerk confirmed a meeting took place with Retired Major Wright-Rivers of the REME association after remembrance to talk through their request for marking the 10th anniversary of the garrison leaving the town. The Town Clerk reported a request for an event in October 2025, during half-term, to mark the anniversary, plus some opportunities to display Wokingham related items from the REME museum at our Museum open days.

An event could include local ACF groups and dignitaries, with drill demonstrations in Market Place, and would finish with refreshments in the town hall.

No budget is requested but could be covered by Civic Receptions as it is not expected to be a costly event. REME will also contribute to costs.

Cllr Betteridge noted the active REME veterans' association in the area. He asked if we have any contacts with the Military Wives Choir. The Town Clerk offered to contact Arborfield and Newland Parish Council to see if they have a contact.

Civic will report further when the event details start to firm up.

ACTION: Town Clerk and Civic Officer

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____

Civic Committee 25/11/2024

17101



INFORMATION ITEMS (Agenda Item 9)

- a) A representative from The Wokingham Lions has advised that they have managed to store the beating posts etc. and shared the following: *I suspect that the Lions would be happy to organise another Beating the Bounds on the same terms as this year. It currently looks like the applications for the autumn walk will be significantly down on the normal level which is not surprising as we mailed our normal walkers and perhaps they did Beating the Bounds as an alternative. Receiving a fee for the Beating the Bounds would therefore offset the reduced income from the Autumn Walk.*
- b) Civic Award process:
- Nick Fellows, Chief Officer at Wokingham Volunteer Centre will join the selection committee in place of Roger Ilett (former District Scout Charman) as Roger has advised he wishes to step down.
 - The President of the Wokingham Lions Club, Andy Goffin will join the selection committee in place of the CEO of Citizen Advice as the new CEO has not responded to a request to join the committee.
 - Philip Bell, Chief Exec at Involve, will join the selection committee as a new member in place of the editor of the Wokingham Today paper as the new editor has not responded to a request to join the committee.
 - Cllrs attending the selection meeting are Cllr K Malvern, Cllr W Dixon, Cllr S Gurney and Cllr R Comber.

Town Clerk further noted that Awards Selection meeting is on Friday 13th December with nomination deadline of 29th November.

Concerns were raised about the timing of the meeting and a possible clash with a funeral expected to be attended by some on the panel.

Meeting is booked for one hour and there are 11 nominations to date.

Civic to investigate starting meeting earlier e.g. 11.30am.

ACTION: Civic Officer

COMMITTEE INFORMATION (Agenda Item 10)

- a) No information was raised by members.
- b) No information was identified for marketing purposes. However, it was suggested by the Civic Officer that Councillors begin to help sharing information about the Civic Award process to encourage nominations.
- c) Cllr Jones asked for the Poppy Appeal total to be publicised.
- d) It was noted that the next meeting will be on Monday 13th January.

ACTION: Civic Officer

CHAIR'S SIGNATURE _____

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



13th December 2024

Minutes of the proceedings of the **CIVIC COMMITTEE** meeting held on this day in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Wokingham** from 11.30am to 13.05am.

PRESENT

Chair: Cllr R Comber (Chair)
Councillors: W Dixon, S Gurney

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs Lucy Zeal (High Steward of Wokingham)
Rev Catherine Bowstead (Churches Together in Wokingham)
Mr Phil Bell (CEO, Involve)
Mr Andy Goffin (President, Wokingham Lions Club)
Mr Nick Fellows (CEO, Wokingham Volunteer Centre)
Katy Hughes (Town Clerk)

ELECTION OF CHAIR (Agenda item 1)

Cllr R Comber was nominated and accepted the Chair for the meeting

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillor Keith Malvern and Andrew Cranidge (The LPA Commander)

MEMBERS' INTERESTS (Agenda Item 3)

3 members advised that they knew certain individuals and did not participate in the votes for these individuals.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 4)

It was proposed by Lucy Zeal and seconded by Catherine Bowstead and it was

**RESOLVED
30972**

that the minutes of the Civic Committee meeting held on 6th December 2023 (pages 16889 and 16890) be received as a true and correct record and that they be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC (Agenda Item 5)

It was agreed that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and instructed to withdraw.

PART TWO

CIVIC AWARD NOMINATIONS (Agenda Item 6)

- a) The nominations for Civic Awards were received and scrutinised by the Committee.
- b) Nine individual nominees were identified to receive a Civic Award.

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____

Civic Committee 13/12/2024

17118



One further individual should receive a letter from the Mayor in recognition of their work.

The Civic Officer should notify all accordingly.

c) The following feedback was received about the process, from committee members and representatives:

- To consider including a question at the end of the form to understand where individuals had heard about the awards
- A discussion was held around other award schemes run locally around the same time, though members noted that with 14 nominations, other schemes did not seem to have any detrimental impact on the level of nominations this year.
- Members noted the broad range of nominations received this year
- Members recommended that some nominees who were not successful this year be encouraged to reapply next year
- Members noted some areas where response information was duplicated on forms and suggested that an optional box be added to ask for any other information those nominating would like to share in support of the application.

ACTION: Civic Officer

CHAIR'S SIGNATURE _____

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____

Civic Committee 13/12/2024

17119



WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Monitoring Report: Civic

Date: 6th January 2025

Date Action Agreed	Item for Action (to include any resolution number)	Person Actioning	Proposed Completion Date	Progress
26.09.22	Application of UV film on Town Hall windows to protect its historical items from further damage and preserve for the future.	CO and Buildings Officer likely to be involved	ASAP	<p>F&P approved £10,000 for financial year 2023-202 which has been carried over.</p> <p>There have been challenges with making contact with Conservation Officer, to ensure this is supported by WBC, hence the delay.</p> <p>Officers have now met with Conservation Officer (WBC-CO) and UV samples are in place in the Council Chamber, as suggested by him, for further discussion.</p> <p>Following an updated quotation, a request was made in Sept 2024. to F&P for an additional £4000, due to increased costs over time.</p> <p>Awaiting the WBC-CO to visit and view the UV film on the windows, and to offer a steer for next steps. Followed up again 15.11.24. Meeting date scheduled for December cancelled by WBC-CO new meeting date awaited.</p>
18.09.23	<p>Beating the Bounds walk - an historic event essentially carried out in the past to ensure the knowledge of the parish boundaries was maintained and passed from generation to generation. It was suggested that this could be undertaken in 2024 as a trial, and Councillors should fully support in their own wards.</p> <p>Subsequent discussions revolved around holding this event once every council term with the support of the Wokingham Lions (WL), or following a significant change to the town boundary.</p>	F&P	Not set	<p>Request made to F&P for £4,000, to offer to Wokingham Lions Club to manage and co-ordinate this.</p> <p>Decision was made at F&P 21/11/23 to support this financial request and for it to be taken from general reserves.</p> <p>WL have confirmed they are storing the items. Future decision required regarding further iteration of this event and associated budget required.</p>

WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Monitoring Report: Civic

Date: 6th January 2025

20.09.23	Consider opportunities at Remembrance to make the wreath laying ceremony more visible to a wider audience.	Civic	Nov 2024	A further meeting of the Wreath Laying Working Party to be convened plus Hannah Higginson from the Churches to explore possible refinements based on feedback. Meeting scheduled for afternoon of 16 th January.
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WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Monitoring Report: Civic

Date: 6th January 2025

18.03.24	Consider request for a plaque from Wokingham Lions Club.			<p>The Civic Officer thanked the Wokingham Lions Club for their proposal and advised them that the Council is currently considering how it can manage the wreath laying ceremony differently and they would be kept updated of any plans that are made.</p> <p>Following the minutes from the March civic meeting, the Civic Officer advised the Lions Club of the trial plan to include the wreath laying ceremony in the Church service this year, and that the civic committee will reflect on this new approach after Remembrance this year, whilst also taking into account their request for a plaque.</p> <p>To revisit again following Remembrance and then update Wokingham Lions 'Club accordingly.</p> <p><i>Following this year's Remembrance Sunday, Lyn Baily from the Lions Club advised the Civic Officer that they fully supported the wreath laying in the Church and if this continued, they can see no benefit from progressing with this request.</i></p> <p><i>Civic Officer recommends to remove this item from the monitoring report if the committee decides to retain the wreath laying at All Saints Church / external venue to the town hall.</i></p>
23.09.24	To consider how the Remembrance service can be more multi-faith	tbc	Not set	To consider in due course.

WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Monitoring Report: Civic

Date: 6th January 2025

23.09.24	10 years since REME left Wokingham	CO and TC	Not set but aim would be to deliver in 2025	<p>CO, TC and Cllr A Betteridge met with the REME Corps Secretary on 12.11.24.</p> <p>Suggestions of an event in October 2025 to mark the anniversary of the Freedom of the Town.</p> <p>TC to check room availability. Event would be proposed to be outside in Market Place involving a military display, involving local ACF and some local dignitaries, including senior Army Officers.</p> <p>Contact has been initiated with local ACF groups and further details to be outlined in due course.</p>
06.01.25	More Arts Christmas Music Event	CO and TC, A&CO	Dec 2025 (event date)	<p>More Arts have confirmed they will cease to operate from end of March 2025.</p> <p>TC has determined that the CO will not have the capacity to take this event back in-house, so the event has been offered to the A&C Committee; awaiting view of the A&C committee at their January committee meeting.</p>

Wokingham Town Council Principles

**Enriching
Community**

Creating and supporting opportunities to bring our community together and help it to thrive.

Fostering Town Pride

Protecting, enhancing and celebrating what's good about our council, our community, our town and our heritage. We will learn from our past, acknowledge where there's room for improvement, and prepare for the future.

Being Sustainable

Working to reduce our negative impact on our local environment and use our financial resources and physical assets as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Involving everyone

Striving to ensure the council's events, activities and democratic processes are open, accessible and welcoming to everyone in our community.

The Council's principles are noted here as a useful reference for members in discussions at Council meetings as they should always be considered.