

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT 7:30 PM
ON TUESDAY 26TH AUGUST 2014
IN THE MAYOR'S PARLOUR,
WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL**

PRESENT:

Cllr C Carritt (Temporary Chair) J Cooper (Mayor)
Cllr M Robertson (Deputy Mayor) Cllr Mrs E Jay

Also in Attendance: Cllrs P Jay, E Poskitt and 3 members of the public.

EC/15/14 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr C Carritt agreed to Chair this meeting of the Environment Committee.

EC/16/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr Mrs E Stokes sent apologies and Cllr L Maybury was also absent from the meeting.

EC/17/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None

EC/18/14 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee held on 24th June 2014 were approved as a true record.

The minutes were then signed by the Chairman of the Environment Committee.

EC/19/14 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA:
None

Two of the members of the public present at the meeting had previously expressed an interest in Agenda Item 9, Highways and Transport therefore the Committee agreed to take this item next.

EC/20/14 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

(i) Relocating the Former Bollards on the Market Square
OCC have yet to relocate the old removable bollard to in front of the War Memorial.

ACTION: Cllr Carritt to follow-up.

(ii) Town Centre Parking Review
A report from Cllr C Carritt about the Town Centre Review was received and considered. Discussion followed.

As a result of the recent OCC statutory consultation 91 objections were received, almost entirely from town centre residents complaining of the lack

of consideration for those without off-street parking. In response to a query about why the status quo could not be maintained it was noted that the results of the separate WTC consultation suggested that the town as a whole supported tighter enforcement and a rationalisation of parking periods.

In order to meet the apparently disparate needs of the town OCC are proposing that some areas of the streets are taken out of the zone entirely (as already occurs in some other existing areas around the centre of the town). Cllr C Carritt proposed, Cllr M Robertson seconded the motion and the EC committee

Recommended (3 votes for and 1 abstention) that Cllr C Carritt:

- 1. Be delegated to discuss modifying the parking review proposals along the lines outlined in this paper (Report to EC 26/08/2014 – Town Centre Parking Review) and report back to Council in due course; and**
- 2. Approach Blenheim Estates to see if they will agree to any overnight parking outside the Blenheim Gate for Town Centre residents.**

(iii) HGV's at Brook Hill

Cllr Carritt updated the Committee upon a recent useful meeting that he and the Deputy Mayor had recently had with Mark Owen, of Owen Mumford to discuss HGV's at Brook Hill. Mr Owen listened to residents concerns and will review the movement of materials between sites and/or with contractors to see if anything better can be done. He will also look at problems arising from drivers getting lost looking for the site and see if a small additional sign might be installed.

The Committee then referred back to the original agenda.

EC/21/14

WATERMEADOWS

(i) Mill Stream Bank Repairs Update

The Mill Stream bank repairs will commence 1st September and are expected to take 1 week to complete.

(ii) Legal Opinion on Liabilities relating to the Mill Stream

Cllr C Carritt has yet to visit Blenheim Estate and look through their papers about the Mill Stream. He passed the Town Clerk a file of papers that had been loaned to him by Honorary Townsman Dr Robert Edwards. These will be copied and returned. The information will then be collated and passed to a barrister for a legal opinion.

ACTION: *The Town Clerk will arrange for the papers to be typed/copied and then returned to Honorary Townsman Dr Edwards.*

(iii) Conservation activities in Woodstock Water Meadows

Cllr Mrs E Jay updated Cllrs about activities that have been undertaken and are planned by the Green Gym (GG), the Oxford Conservation Volunteers (OCV) and The Conservation Volunteers (TCV).

ACTION: *Cllr Mrs E Jay will continue to try and stimulate interest in the Friends of the Water Meadows.*

(iv) Update on the Rural Payments Agency situation

WTC will receive a payment from the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) for grazing land at the water meadows this year but will be unable to make a claim in future years because the assessment criteria have recently changed. Cllr Mrs E Jay is still trying to source suitable livestock to bring back on to the water meadows.

ACTIONS:

1. *Cllr Mrs Jay and the Town Clerk will work with Mr Twiddy from John D Wood to submit the outstanding maps required by the RPA.*
2. *The Communications working group will include an item in the next WTC newsletter inviting any resident with ideas for the sympathetic management of the water meadows to contact Cllr Mrs E Jay.*

(v) Conservation Training and Corporate Events on the Water Meadows

OCV will be raking hay off meadows 5 & 6 on 31 August and will do ditch clearance and coppicing on 7th December. TVC will be bringing a corporate group to undertake general clearance tasks mid-September.

ACTION: *Cllr Mrs E Jay will meet TCV to confirm the arrangements for the forthcoming corporate work at the water meadows.*

(vi) To receive and consider the Risk Assessment and Disability Access Audit

A RoSPA report has been undertaken on the water meadows. This includes a list of 10 recommendations.

ACTIONS:

1. *Cllr Mrs E Jay will review the recommendations.*
2. *The Administrative Assistant will source buoyancy aids and pass this information to Cllr Mrs E Jay for consideration.*

(vii) Routine Review of Fishing Policy agreed on 30th July 2013 (at EC/23/13 (iv))

A total of 14 fishing permits have been issued so far.

EC/22/14

PLAY AREAS

(i) New Road & Budds Close Play Areas Refurbishment Update

The Deputy Mayor reported that the play areas refurbishment is now finished and that both play areas were now open and being enjoyed by local children. The official re-opening event will take place on the morning of 6th September at New Road. The Mayor and County Cllr Hudspeth will officiate.

(ii) Repairs to the Football Pitch in Old Woodstock

The options for the repair of the goal mouths at the Old Woodstock play area were received and considered. It was agreed that something needed to be

done as the pitch is well used, it is a long way for children in Old Woodstock to walk to the New Road play area and the Rosamond Drive play area was the only one that was not receiving considerable investment this year.

ACTIONS:

1. Further quotes will be sought for the repair of both goal mouths.
2. A budget provision for the required work will be included in the 2015/16 budget.

EC/23/14 CEMETERIES

The Committee received and considered an oral update from the Town Clerk including

(i) The Hedging of the Cemetery Extension

The Town Clerk provided an oral update.

ACTION: One quote has already been obtained for hedging and rabbit proof fencing. A further two will be sought.

(ii) The possibility of the Community Payback Team doing some further clearance work at the Hensington Road Cemetery

The Town Clerk is liaising with the probation service to see if the Community Payback Team can come and do vegetation clearance work at Hensington Road cemetery to help maintain the site.

EC/24/14 TRANSFER OF ORCHIDS

Cllrs discussed an email received from the volunteer OWL warden in which he asked for suggestions for suitable sites for the relocation of the orchids from the Marlborough Field.

ACTION: The Town Clerk will arrange a meeting to discuss the options further.

EC/25/14 TREE INSPECTIONS

No progress has been made since the last meeting.

ACTION: Cllr C Carritt and the Town Clerk will draw up the specification for this work.

EC/26/14 REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENT BUDGET

The revised environmental budget was received and considered. The reasons why WTC pay for the grass cutting of the churchyard was discussed.

ACTION: The Town Clerk will ask Rev Daffern to confirm whether this is an open or closed churchyard around St Mary Magdalene Church.

The meeting finished at 9.10pm

Signed.....

Date:.....