

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT 7.50 PM ON TUESDAY 8 JANUARY 2008
IN THE MAYOR'S PARLOUR, WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL**

PRESENT:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Cllr C Carritt (Town Mayor) | |
| Cllr J Cooper | Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore |
| Cllr W R Edwards | Cllr T Gardiner |
| Cllr Mrs A Grant | Cllr Mrs E Jay |
| Cllr P Jay | Cllr P Redpath |
| Cllr Mrs T Redpath | Cllr Mrs P Richardson |
| Cllr B Yoxall | |

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Gerry Walters (Woodstock and Bladon News) and one member of the public.

WTC/230/07 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs A Cooper (Deputy Mayor), T Airey and Mrs S Hazell.

WTC/231/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs A Grant declared a Prejudicial Interest in Agenda item 12(a), planning application 07/2035/P/FP in respect of 51 Hensington Road, as she was joint owner of an adjoining property.

Cllr Mrs T Redpath declared a Personal Interest in Agenda item 13, Premium Bus Routes, as the scheme involved a bus shelter on the A44 in Kidlington Parish. As Parish Clerk to Kidlington she was responsible for this.

Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore declared a Personal Interest in Agenda item 12(a), planning application 07/2035/P/FP in respect of 51 Hensington Road.

Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore declared a Personal Interest in Agenda item 8 (e) Shipton Road Development ó Section 106 Developer Contributions.

WTC/232/07 COUNCILLOR MRS A COOPER

It was reported that Cllr Mrs Cooper, the Deputy Mayor, had left hospital following an operation and was progressing well.

RESOLVED

That the Council's best wishes be conveyed to Councillor Mrs Cooper.

WTC/233/07 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 11 December 2007 were signed as a correct record, subject to the addition of the words 'per annum' at the end of resolution (ii) in Minute WTC/209/07, Budget 2008-09.

WTC/234/07 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore reported that the Marriotts Close development in Witney was underway, with completion due in September 2009. A number of major retailers were to set up in the town as a result, with no decrease in parking provision.

A Member asked why the District Council had undertaken the re-cycling of Christmas trees prior to Twelfth Night.

A Member reported that Cottsway Housing were proposing to re-develop their sheltered housing portfolio and obtained confirmation from Cllr Mrs Dunsmore that the warden situation at Caroline Court was being retained for the time being.

WTC/235/07 OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

(a) Professional Services Outsourcing

Members received and considered the report of the Town Mayor on this matter which had originally been circulated with the Agenda for the meeting of the Council held on 13 November 2007.

The Town Mayor set out his thoughts on the advantages of outsourcing these services, including the release of staff time to deal with other matters; the availability of a one-stop-shop to deal with all property queries; expertise on health and safety, risk assessments, etc; and more reliable forward planning. However, it would cost more than the current practice. Cllr Carritt recognized that this outgoing Council could not commit the new Council to a brand new course of action and therefore he suggested that the Council should not go out for out-sourcing at this time but should enter into discussions with possible partners, with a view to going out to formal tender later.

One Member noted that staff were currently carrying out some of these duties and required further information on whether the Council would be paying twice for the same service, whilst another Member felt that the report lacked objectivity and was dismissive of recent achievements. The increased costs to the Council were mentioned, as was a possible loss of control over property matters.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr C Carritt, seconded by Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore

That the Council seeks preliminary discussions with appropriate Consultants to determine approximate costs and to receive presentations from them.

The Proposal was put to the Council and the voting, by a show of hands, was FOR 6, AGAINST 6. A Member requested a Named Vote, the result of which was as follows:

| FOR | AGAINST | ABSTENTIONS |
|---------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore | Cllr P Jay | |
| Cllr T Gardiner | Cllr Mrs A Grant | |
| Cllr J Cooper | Cllr Mrs T Redpath | |
| Cllr R Edwards | Cllr P Redpath | |

Cllr Mrs P Richardson
Cllr C Carritt

Cllrs Mrs E Jay
Cllr B Yoxall

Totals

6

6

0

Cllr C Carritt gave his casting vote against the Proposal which was declared LOST.

RESOLVED

That the proposal be not adopted.

(b) Meeting re. the Annual Street Fair

The Council received the notes of a meeting held on Tuesday 4 December 2007 regarding the Annual Street Fair. The report had been circulated with the Agenda for the meeting of the Council held on 10 December 2007.

With one Member voting against, the stance taken in the report to encourage the use of more modern diesel motors was adopted. It was agreed that the Town Clerk should write to the District Council accordingly. It was agreed that the suggestion that a Road Traffic Order would be required for the Street Fair in 2008 should be considered at the same time as the item on the Remembrance Day Service and Parade.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and that the Town Clerk write to the District Council as set out above.

(c) Committee System

At the meeting of the Council held on 10 December 2007, Members had received a report from the Town Clerk on matters arising out of the Council's decision to abandon the extended Committee system. Council had dealt with recommendation (a) but the remainder had been deferred to this meeting.

RESOLVED

(i) that it be confirmed that the CMfE and CMfP are members of the Finance Committee, in the same way as the Chairmen of the Property and Environment Committees were;

(ii) that it be confirmed that the Working Groups established at the meeting of the Council held on 20 March 2007 shall continue to function as previously, with the exception of the Disabled Access Working Group which was subsumed into the Property Committee;

(iii) (By eight votes to two)

That a Property Working Group be formed to take on the duties of the former Disabled Access Working Group;

(iv) that the Woodstock in Bloom, Water Meadows, and Cemeteries (Health and Safety) Working Groups, in liaison with the relevant Portfolio Holder, shall report direct to the Council;

(v) (By nine votes to three)

That the number of Members on each Committee be left as it is, with the new Council having complete flexibility to determine their own numbers;

(vi) (By six votes to five)

that the membership of the Strategy Committee remain as it is;

(vii) (By eight votes to three)

That the Town Clerk, in consultation with the CMfE or the CMfP, can progress projects in the same way that the Environment and Property Committees did, subject to the conditions laid down in Minute 38(d)/07 of the meeting of the Council held on 12 June 2007.

(d) Fire Risk Assessment, Town Hall

At the meeting of the Council held on 10 December 2007, Members received a Fire Risk Assessment carried out in respect of the Town Hall, together with the Town Clerk's report thereon. Consideration had been deferred to this meeting.

With regard to the proposal in item A4 of the Fire Risk Assessment regarding the switching off of all electrical appliances, it was PROPOSED by Cllr P Jay, seconded by Cllr Mrs E Jay

That the requirement that all electrical plugs shall be removed from the socket outlets at the end of each day be not accepted.

The proposal was put to the meeting and was adopted by eight votes to four. A Member called for a named vote, the result of which is as follows:

| FOR | AGAINST | ABSTENTIONS |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Cllr P Jay | Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore | |
| Cllr Mrs A Grant | Cllr T Gardiner | |
| Cllr Mrs T Redpath | Cllr J Cooper | |
| Cllr P Redpath | Cllr C Carritt | |
| Cllr Mrs E Jay | | |
| Cllr B Yoxall | | |
| Cllr R Edwards | | |
| Cllr Mrs P Richardson | | |
| TOTALS | | |
| 8 | 4 | 0 |

RESOLVED

- (i) That, subject to the following decisions, the recommendations set out in the Town Clerk's report be adopted and that the Risk Assessment be completed accordingly;
- (ii) That the Town Clerk report to the next meeting of the Council with a revised form of wording for proposal A4 on the switching off and unplugging of electrical equipment;
- (iii) That, in respect of item A6, within the next six months, an inventory of all items in the Cellar be undertaken, a list of all items proposed for disposal be presented to the Council, and that the remainder be organised in a manner which will not cause a fire hazard;

- (iv) That Cllr Mrs S Hazell be requested to investigate whether curtains etc and furniture in the Town Hall are compliant with the relevant British Standards;
- (v) That Firequest UK be requested to report on whether the fire doors in the Town Hall are fitted with combined smoke and heat seals, at a cost of £50;
- (vi) That a Fire Services Action Plan be prepared in the next twelve months, to the extent that it is reasonable and practical to do so.

(e) S106 Land Adjacent to OWL Nature Reserve

At the meeting of the Council held on 10 December 2007, Members received a letter from the County Council with regard to this land. Consideration had been deferred to this meeting.

RESOLVED

That the County Council be thanked for the letter and advised that when the money for the management fund is received, the Town Council will be willing to take over responsibility for the land and the finance, etc., in order that it can be used as an extension to the OWL Nature Reserve.

(f) Footpath from Bear Close to Churchill Close

It was reported that Cllr B Yoxall had received a complaint from a member of the public regarding the state of the above footpath. Cllr Yoxall stated that the uneven levels of the path represented a safety hazard.

This matter has been drawn to the attention of the County Council who stated that this footpath was not adopted. They agreed that the path was in a poor state and was in need of attention. Confirmation was awaited from the District Council that they are not responsible for its maintenance.

A Member reported that he understood that Cottsway were responsible for the maintenance of the footpath. Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore offered to take this up with the District Council, which was accepted.

WTC/236/07 COMMUNICATIONS

The Town Mayor, Cllr C Carritt, reported receipt of communications from the Oxfordshire Council for Voluntary Action seeking a networking event with volunteers in the town with which the Town Council would assist; the County Council regarding the Review of External Transport posts with copies to go to Cllr Mrs A Cooper and Yoxall; the County Council regarding the Review of Provision of Primary Education in Oxfordshire, which Cllr Mrs P Richardson would monitor and include in a relevant item in the Council's newsletter, although there was no apparent impact on Woodstock; Blenheim Estate regarding the 'Wakestock' event of music and extreme sport which was due to take place in late June 2008.

WTC/237/07 QUESTIONS

None.

WTC/238/07 *REPORTS/PAPERS OF COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES*

(a) Finance Committee

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 3 December 2007 be received.

(b) Pye Briefing

The Council receive the notes of the Pye presentation at the meeting of the Council held on 13 November 2007. It was noted that Mr D Jackson had agreed to the request for a dog waste bin.

(c) Shipton Road Development ó Sec 106 Developer Contributions

The Council received the notes of a meeting between representatives of the Town and District Councils held on 17 December 2007. At the request of the District Council it was

RESOLVED (by five votes to two)

That this matter be considered in Confidential Session.

(d) Property

The Council received a report from CMfP concerning the Council's properties in Park Street, Market Street and Market Place, the Town Hall, the Community Centre, the Rectory Lane garage, and the Quinquennial Review.

RESOLVED

- (i) that a report be presented to the next meeting of the Council regarding the rent arrears and the implementation of the revised rent at the Post Office, 2 Park Street;
- (ii) that the Town Mayor include a piece about the missing folding tables from the Town Hall in his next item in Woodstock and Bladon News;
- (iii) that an additional item be included in the Quinquennial Review to obtain an opinion on the Council's paintings and whether conservation work is necessary.

(e) Environment

The Council received a report from CMfE regarding playgrounds, the Watermeadows and Green Lane cemetery.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the Town Clerk and the CMfE meet with Mr P Hempstead to progress the Watermeadows issue;

- (ii) that £850 be vired from the repairs budgets for Old Woodstock and Budds Close recreation grounds to gate repairs at New Road recreation ground, to include the provision of a combination lock.

WTC/239/07 REPORTS FROM OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL

(a) Town Clerk

Please refer to Minutes WTC/243/07 to 244 and 247 to 248 inclusive.

(b) Report of the Responsible Financial Officer ó January 2007

- (i) The Council received at the meeting a revised list of payments for December 2007. It was agreed that an item for leads and connectors coded to Environment should have been coded to Christmas lights. It was agreed that an analysis of the expenditure and income in respect of the Christmas lights should be presented to the next meeting of the Council.
- (ii) The Council received at the meeting a revised Bank Reconciliation Statement for December 2007.

It was agreed that a report should be presented to the Council on the expenditure on the Pow-wow water supplies.

- (iii) The Council received at the meeting revised Summary and Detailed Income & Expenditure Statements for December 2007.
- (iv) Community Centre ó Ground Floor Office 1.

RESOLVED

1. that the new lease between the Council and MCA Chartered Landscape Architects Limited and Mark Cooper be sealed;
2. that Henmanø be authorised to confirm in a letter to the tenantø solicitors that should enforcement action take place that the Town Council will enforce its break clause in the lease.

- (v) Community Centre ó Ground Floor Room 2.

It was reported that the prospects for letting this room were looking favourable.

- (vi) Community Centre Garage.

If the garage was no longer to be used in respect of the pantomime, it was suggested that the letting of the garage might be possible after modest expenditure to enable the property to be made secure. However, a Member pointed out that when the pantomime equipment had been removed from the garage, the bowser would have to be rehoused there.

- (vii) Budget 2008-2009

The Council received the bound copy of the Budget Document for 2008-2009,

together with an Environment Budget Schedule to reflect the decisions reached by the Council and in particular the revised level of budget expenditure relating to the Watermeadows. The Budget 2008-2009 document also included amendments to the probable figures for 2007-8 to more accurately portray rent receipts for 2 Park Street, Community centre letting and DDA works at the Town Hall in the year.

A Member referred to certain apparent anomalies within the Budget papers and it was agreed that the RFO should report to the next meeting.

(viii) Environment Budget re Recreational Grounds

This matter had been dealt with under resolution (ii) of Minute WTC/238/07(e) above.

(ix) Society of Local Council Clerks Membership

RESOLVED

(a) that membership of the SLCC be renewed at a cost of £182;

(b) that a report be presented to the next meeting detailing all of the subscriptions that are paid by the Council.

(x) Business / Credit Card

The Council had previously approved the issue of a card to the Town Clerk. After the matter being raised by the Internal Auditor, further clarification and advice had been sought from NALC. NALC had advised that the facility would contravene current legislation and it was therefore

RESOLVED

that the matter will not be pursued further.

WTC/240/07 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

The new lease between the Council and MCA Chartered Landscape Architects Limited and Mark Cooper was signed and sealed on behalf of the Council.

WTC/241/07 PROPOSALS OR RECOMMENDATIONS

Cllr C Carritt

RESOLVED

Woodstock Town Council instructs the Town Clerk to write to the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council expressing deep concern at the reported removal of County Council financial assistance to the Victoria County History project. Woodstock Town Council asserts that the Victoria County History is an essential historical resource for both personal and civic purposes.

Cllr B Yoxall

Cllr Yoxall withdrew the Proposal set out on the Agenda paper under his name.

WTC/242/07 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore declared that she could not participate in the discussion or decisions on any of the applications before the Council as she was a member of the Planning Committee of West Oxfordshire District Council and might be involved in the determination of the applications in the future.

Cllr Mrs A Grant had declared a Prejudicial Interest in respect of application 07/2035/P/FP (Amended Plans). She withdrew from the meeting and took no part in the discussion or the decision on the application.

Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore had declared a Personal Interest in respect of application 07/2035/P/FP (Amended Plans).

(a) Ref: 07/2035/P/FP (Amended Plans)

Erection of single storey rear extensions. Loft conversion to include dormer window to rear.

51 Hensington Road

Mr and Mrs M Towland

Decision: (i) that the Council believes that the size of the dormer window should be reduced so that there is no water overspill problem for the adjoining property;

(ii) that the District Council be advised that the Town Council wishes this application to be determined by the Planning Committee.

(b) Ref: 07/2231/P/FP

Erection of single storey rear extension.

33 Hensington Road

Mr A Smith

Decision: No comment.

WTC/243/07 PREMIUM BUS ROUTES

Prior to the meeting, Members had received a briefing from representatives of the County Council and Stagecoach regarding the proposals to improve the infrastructure of the Oxford to Chipping Norton bus route, including Woodstock. This included raising kerbs for easy access, new modern low entry buses, provision of new bus lay-bys, real-time bus tracking, new poles and flags, relocation of poles and flags and the provision of new bus shelters or the refurbishment of old ones.

As far as Members were concerned, the major issues centered around the provision of a bus shelter in the lay-by adjacent to the Marlborough Arms Public House, for which a suggestion had been tabled to reverse the bus stop and car parking; the installation of real-time information boards; and the cleaning of other bus shelters. Mr C Baylis had advised Members of his opposition to the proposal to site a bus shelter outside his shop adjacent to the Marlborough Arms and the pelican crossing on the grounds of safety, business accessibility and aesthetics.

The Council considered this matter in great detail. A proposal that the County Council and Stagecoach should proceed with their consultations was defeated by eight votes to four. A proposal to reject the idea of a bus shelter outside the Real Wood Company premises but to site two benches on either side of the road at the existing bus stop locations, with real-time tracking signs on poles if necessary, was defeated by six votes to four. It was eventually PROPOSED by Cllr Mrs E Jay, seconded by Cllr Mrs A Grant

that the County Council be advised that the Town Council is opposed to the proposal to provide a bus shelter in the centre of this heritage town on a cramped site.

The proposal was put to the meeting and the voting, by a show of hands, was

FOR the proposal 7, AGAINST 4. The proposal was declared CARRIED.

A Member called for a Named Vote, the result of which was as follows:

| FOR | AGAINST | ABSTENTIONS |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Cllr P Jay | Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore | Cllr R Edwards |
| Cllr Mrs A Grant | Cllr T Gardiner | |
| Cllr Mrs T Redpath | Cllr P Redpath | |
| Cllr Mrs E Jay | Cllr B Yoxall | |
| Cllr J Cooper | | |
| Cllr Mrs P Richardson | | |
| Cllr C Carritt | | |

TOTALS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 7 | 4 | 1 |
|---|---|---|

RESOLVED

- (a) that the representatives of the County Council and Stagecoach be thanked for attending and making presentations to Members;
- (b) that the principal of a premium bus route for route 20/20A be supported;
- (c) that the County Council be advised that the Town Council is opposed to the proposal to provide a bus shelter in the centre of this heritage town on a cramped site.

WTC/244/07 FARMERS MARKET

Further to Minute 227 of the last meeting, the Council received a plan showing the extent of the proposed expansion of the market.

RESOLVED (By seven votes to five)

That the proposal be accepted, subject to:

- (a) That a clear 2 metre passage be provided for pedestrian access through the Shambles (i.e. between the hardware shop and the Town Hall) and that this 2 metre access should take account of possible queues at stalls.
- (b) That no stall should be set up across the frontage of the access to the Bridal Shop or its display windows

WTC/245/07 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

That in view of the special or confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.

WTC/246/07 EXTENSION OF TIME OF FINISHING OF MEETING

RESOLVED

That Standing Order No 1(b) be suspended in order that the meeting can continue for another fifteen minutes.

WTC/247/07 SHIPTON ROAD DEVELOPMENT – SEC 106 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore had declared a Personal Interest in this matter.

The Town Council agreed by seven votes to three on proposals to put to the County Council with regard to the disbursement of S.106 monies that might be forthcoming as a result of the Shipton Road development going ahead. It was further agreed that the Town Plan Steering Group should be advised of the Council's proposals.

WTC/248/07 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Further to resolution (c) of Minute 207 of the last meeting, the Council received a draft Job Description for the new post of Administrative Assistant. Due to the lateness of the hour it was

RESOLVED

That the meeting do adjourn and re-convene at 7.30pm on Tuesday 15 January 2008 to consider this matter and the other outstanding items on the Agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.50p.m.

Signedí í í í í í í í í í í í í í í .. Dateí í í í í í í í í í .