

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 11 MARCH 2008
IN THE MAYOR'S PARLOUR, WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL**

PRESENT:

Cllr C Carritt (Town Mayor)	
Cllr Mrs A Cooper (Deputy Mayor)	
Cllr J Cooper	Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore
Cllr W R Edwards	Cllr T Gardiner
Cllr Mrs A Grant	Cllr Mrs S Hazell
Cllr Mrs E Jay	Cllr P Jay
Cllr I Lenagan	Cllr P Redpath
Cllr Mrs T Redpath	Cllr Mrs P Richardson
Cllr B Yoxall	

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

County and District Cllr Ian Hudspeth, Mr Howard Morris (Woodstock and Bladon News) and twenty members of the public.

The Town Mayor, Cllr C Carritt, had previously circulated a proposed re-ordering of the Agenda, which was amended and then agreed by Members at the meeting.

WTC/309/07 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr T Airey,

WTC/310/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr P Jay declared a Prejudicial Interest in respect of Agenda Item No. 11, Proposal by Cllr Mrs T Redpath, as he was a resident in Banbury Road and a Garden Tenant of Blenheim Estates.

Cllr Mrs E Jay declared a Prejudicial Interest in respect of Agenda Item No. 11, Proposal by Cllr Mrs T Redpath, as she was a resident in Banbury Road and a Garden Tenant of Blenheim Estates.

Cllr Mrs S Hazell declared a Personal Interest in respect of Agenda Item No. 11, Proposal by Cllr Mrs E Jay, as she lived on the A44 out of Chipping Norton.

Cllr C Carritt declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item No. 12(iv), planning application in respect of Barn Piece House, as he was a neighbour of the applicant.

WTC/311/07 MINUTES

By eleven votes to one, with three abstentions, the Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 12 February 2008 were received and signed as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

Minute WTC/278/07 Appointment of Administrative Assistant ó insert the word ðoneö after the words ðin caseö.

Minute WTC/292/07 Quotations for Works to Trees at Hensington Road Cemetery ó delete the word ðthisö in the second paragraph.

The Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 26 February 2008 were received and signed as a correct record, subject to the addition of the name of Cllr B Yoxall to those declaring an interest in Minute WTC/306/07, Declarations of Interest, and Minute WTC/308/07, Quotations for Works to Trees at Hensington Road Cemetery.

WTC/312/07 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Mr LM Stratford spoke concerning the appeal against the refusal of planning permission for the demolition of numbers 17 ó 18 Hensington Close and the proposed erection of nine dwellings (Agenda Item No.12(c)). He re-iterated the previously expressed concerns regarding the increase in traffic movements and the consequent safety hazard for children, the possibility of more development in the future, traffic problems in Shipton Road, flooding and sewerage problems, and the impact on existing properties. He reminded the Town Council of the District Council's reasons for refusal.

Dr R McGurrin, Chairman of the Woodstock Action Group, addressed the meeting with regard to the proposed Pye housing development in Shipton Road and the proposed Blenheim Estate Trust development in Banbury Road. (Agenda item No.11). He expressed concern that the Pye application had not come forward for determination, as had been anticipated. He understood that the reason for this was that Pye were awaiting the decision on the Banbury Road application. If permission was granted for Banbury Road, Pye might then seek a reduction in the amount of affordable housing at the Shipton Road site. Dr McGurrin expressed concern at the prospect of an oversupply of market properties at the expense of affordable housing for local people. He asked what the Town Council intended to do about this.

Mr P Snell spoke regarding the application for planning permission in respect of Field Barn, Wootton (Agenda Item No. 12(iii)). He stressed the constraints of their existing site, the long standing ties of the family and firm to Woodstock, the advantages of the new site, and the apparent support of the District Council. A problem existed with regard to a previous link between the existing cottage and a lean-to; it was against current policy for this to be re-instated. The firm recruited staff from the local area. If permission was not forthcoming, the enterprise might have to move to Witney. He asked for the support of the Town Council.

Mr Taylor of La Mia Casa spoke opposing the proposed siting of a refrigerated lorry for the Farmers Market in an on-street parking area (Agenda Item 15). He expressed concern at the loss of parking spaces during this time and the consequent impact on local traders.

Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore advised the meeting of a decision of the District Council to revise the times when the Street Fair vehicles would be permitted to move on to site. Instead of 11am, this would be changed to 1pm as a trial for 2008. If this was not successful, then the timing would revert to 11am for subsequent years. The Town Council was heartened to hear that the District Council had taken note of its concerns, but it was pointed out that 1pm would be of little benefit to the hotels and restaurants in the town.

County Councillor I Hudspeth spoke regarding proposals to site an Incinerator at either Ardley or Sutton Courtenay and the development of an Eco-town on one of two sites in the area. It was noted that if the latter proposal went ahead it might off-set some of the 54,000 extra homes proposed for Oxfordshire. He also reported on the proposed dualling of the Cotswold railway line. Cllr Hudspeth responded to questions on these issues.

WTC/313/07 PLANNING

(a) Applications

(i) Ref: 08/0310/P/FP

Alterations and erection of single storey extension.

Sansoms Farm Studios, Wootton

Oxford School of Drama

Decision: The Town Council supports the application but seeks assurances that car parking arrangements for the School of Drama will not include parking on the public highway.

(ii) Ref: 08/0323/P/FP
Erection of timber summerhouse
The Coach House, 40 Rectory Lane
Mr William Michael Fay
Decision: No comment.

(iii) Ref: 08/0331/P/FP
Conversion of existing farm building and former cottage to provide office accommodation (class use B1). Formation of new vehicular access.
Field Barn, Wootton
Mr Paul Snell
Decision: Unanimous warm support for the application.

(iv) Cllr C Carritt had declared a Personal Interest in this matter.
Ref: 08/0335/P/FP
Erection of detached dwelling and garage
Barn Piece House, Manor Road
Mrs Joy Sharp
Decision: No comment.

(b) Representation Regarding Previous Decision
The Town Council received and considered a letter from Mr and Mrs P Zwart regarding the decision of the Town Council at its meeting on 26 February 2008 on applications concerning the Glove House, 105 Manor Road.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the letter be noted.

(c) Appeal
Ref: 07/1303/P/FP
Demolition of existing dwellings and erection of nine flats with associated parking.
17-18 Hensington Close
Mr J Chia and Mr K Cruickshank

The Council received details of the Appeal hearing against the refusal of planning permission which was to take place on 22 April 2008 at 10am.

RESOLVED

That the Inspector be advised that the Town Council wishes to re-iterate its previously submitted objection to this application.

WTC/314/07 COMPLAINT REGARDING PARTY AT COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Council received and considered a letter of complaint regarding a party held at the Community Centre on 9 February 2008. The Town Clerk reminded the Council of the circumstances surrounding its previous decision to require the presence of personnel from a bona fide security firm at teenage parties and contrasted this to the party in question.

The Town Clerk also reported on a proposed birthday party for 12 ó 13 year old girls at the Community Centre and sought guidance as to the conditions under which this could go ahead.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the action of the Town Clerk in allowing the party on 9 February to go ahead without the requirement for security on the door be supported;
- (b) (By twelve votes to two)
 - that the party for 12 ó 13 year old girls at the Community Centre be approved subject to:
 - (i) the payment of an increased deposit of £200 against the repair of any damage or extra time that the caretaker has to spend in cleaning the hall;
 - (ii) the provision of the names and contact details of three adults who shall be responsible for the keeping of good order at the party.

WTC/315/07 FARMER'S MARKET – ADDITIONAL SPACE

It was reported that representations had been received from the Farmers Market Cooperative (FMC) concerning the lack of space available on the Town Square. However, they were mindful of the lack of any other suitable space and the position of the Town Square which drew more customers than would be the case to a less central location.

The main problem was the refrigerated vans that served the meat traders. They wished these to be re-located in an on-street parking area. Their preference was to locate the van in three parking areas outside Noonans/Dancia/Mia Casa. This would free up more space on the town square for stallholders and customers. The Council considered two options as to how this aspiration could be met.

Although some Members were appreciative of the extra custom that the FarmersøMarket brought to the town and supported the proposal, the majority felt that it would be wrong to restrict on-street parking on busy Saturday mornings.

RESOLVED (By ten votes to three with one abstention)

That the Town Council objects to the two options for the parking of the refrigerated lorry in an on-street parking area for the benefit of the FarmersøMarket.

WTC/316/07 REPORTS/PAPERS OF COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES

(a) Finance Committee

The Town Council received the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 26 February 2008.

RESOLVED

- (i) That a Working Group be appointed to establish new system proposals with regard to Internal Financial Controls, Internal Audit and Risk Assessments, for further consideration by the existing Council;
- (ii) that the Working Party comprise Cllrs P Jay, I Lenagan and T Gardiner;
- (iii) that the RFO invite input from all Members for consideration by the Working Group;
- (iv) that Council then consider such new systems for further recommendation to the incoming Council;
- (v) that the timetable set out in Minute FC34/07 be adopted;
- (vi) that Cllr P Jay, the RFO and the Town Clerk be thanked for the provision of the report on this matter.

(b) Woodstock in Bloom Working Group

The Council received the Minutes of the meeting of the Working Group held on 5 February 2008.

RESOLVED

That a letter be sent to the District Council regarding the provision of cigarette butt boxes outside the pubs in the town and the church yard.

(c) Woodstock Town Plan Steering Group

The Town Council received and noted the Notes of a meeting of the Steering Group held on 7 February 2008.

WTC/317/07 PROPOSALS OR RECOMMENDATIONS

CLRs Mrs E Jay and P Jay had declared Prejudicial Interests in the first Proposal, put forward by Cllr Mrs T Redpath. They left the room and took no part in the debate or the decision.

Cllr Mrs T Redpath, seconded by Cllr C Carritt

As a result of the public enquiry held in 2004, Woodstock now has a site allocated in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan - at Shipton Road. The requirement is that 50% of the development will be for affordable homes.

The developer (Pye) has visited the Town Council on two separate occasions to discuss the emerging design. On the most recent occasion (November 2007) the Town Council was informed that the original intention to submit a planning application in the Autumn 2007 had been delayed on the advice of the planners who had guided them to submit an application in January 2008 as the grant of permission was not possible prior to April 2008. Pye stated that they had taken the opportunity of the delay to discuss a scheme with the planners ready for the January submission.

We are now March 2008 and the application has yet to be submitted.

Pye has advised in writing that it is waiting until after the 'Blenheim scheme' has been decided saying that if consent is given, Pye may **amend the mix of housing within their scheme** – for which the current design allows 44% (only) affordable housing (29 units).

An application to develop at Banbury Road was submitted at the end of October 2007 and was considered by the Town Council only 2 x weeks before the Pye visit. Surprisingly 5 months later this application has not yet been included for determination by the WODC Planning Committee.

I propose that:

- Woodstock Town Council investigates what is going on and seeks written assurances from both applicants that there is no intention for the Banbury Road application to have an effect on the final development of the allocated Shipton Road site.
- The Town Council puts pressure on the District Council not to permit the Pye development to produce less than 50% affordable build i.e. to build 33 affordable units regardless of size / type of dwelling in accord with the West Oxfordshire Local Plan.

RESOLVED

that the Proposal be adopted.

Cllr Mrs E Jay, seconded by Cllr P Redpath

Chipping Norton Air Quality Action Plan and its relevance to the A44, the Lorry Advisory route and Woodstock.

Cllr Mrs Jay had put forward a proposition on this matter but reported at the meeting that this had been superceded as the County Council had erected signs directing heavy goods vehicles off the A44. With the consent of Council she amended her proposal to take this into account and, after discussion, it was amended further by the addition of wording relating to the dualling of the Cotswold railway line.

RESOLVED (By eleven votes to one with Cllr C Carritt voting against, on the basis that the Town Council could not comment on matters relating to Chipping Norton).

We note the proposals put forward by WODC and OCC to cut dangerous nitrogen dioxide levels in Chipping Norton by 2010.

We consider that:

- the alternative route via the Rollrights is too expensive, would ruin an important archaeological site and would create more traffic up and down stream of Chipping Norton
 - the 'pinchpoint' solution would make conditions unbearable near the pinchpoints
 - forecasting that lorries will eventually get cleaner exhausts is wishful thinking
- and
- the proposal that *would* improve conditions has already been agreed to by OCC, just not implemented until very recently. (In its last Transport Plan OCC agreed in the short term to sign HGVs off the A44 and in the long term to consider downgrading the A44.)

We welcome the fact that Oxfordshire County Council has put up signs directing HGVs off the A44 and suggest that the County Council:

1. consider removing the A44's Primary Route status sooner rather than later
 2. work to ensure that Warwickshire County Council withdraws or softpeddles its Freight Quality Partnership Map recommending lorries to use the A44, and does not put up signs up encouraging this.
- Furthermore,

We would like OCC to explain to us what they have done to limit the damage caused by the lack of joined up thinking resulting in WCC's FQP map, and to ensure no signs routing lorries southward onto the A44 have gone ,or will go, up.

We encourage the Department of Transport to bring forward the dual tracking of the Cotswold line as soon as possible.

WTC/318/07 OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

(a) Digitalisation of Burial Records

The Council received and considered a report of the Town Clerk regarding the digitalisation of burial records, including the restoration of the old maps.

RESOLVED

That investigations into this matter do continue.

(b) Membership of Property Group

RESOLVED (By nine votes to three)

That the membership of the Property Group be the members of the former Property Committee.

(c) Steps to the Town Hall

The Town Clerk reported on the latest situation with regard to the repointing etc of the main entrance steps to the Town hall. It was apparent that this situation was deteriorating. Members debated whether a temporary repair would be sufficient or whether a major restoration task was required.

RESOLVED (By eight votes to three)

That Robert Montgomery be asked to consider this situation and, if necessary, draw up two alternative specifications for the different approaches to this problem, in order that prices can be obtained to repair the steps.

WTC/319/07 COMMUNICATIONS

None.

WTC/320/07 QUESTIONS

None.

WTC/321/07 REPORTS FROM OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL

(a) Town Clerk

Various items.

(b) Report of the Responsible Financial Officer ó March 2008

- (i) The Council received the list of payments for February 2008.
- (ii) The Council received Bank Reconciliation Statements (2) for February 2008.

With regard to the expenditure on Christmas Lights, it was agreed that the situation should be considered at the next meeting of the Council.

- (iii) The Council received the Summary and Detailed Income & Expenditure Statements for February 2008.

(iv) Community Centre ó Ground Floor Office 1.

It was reported that the new tenant was now in situ and the first rent payment had been received.

(v) Community Centre ó Ground Floor Room 2.

It was reported that the prospective tenant had enquired whether the Council would agree to a lease for a period of six months in the first instance, with a three month notice period. The RFO had recommended acceptance of this proposal.

RESOLVED

That the request of the prospective tenant be acceded to, subject to her paying any professional fees.

- (vi) Analysis of year to date expenditure.

The Council received and considered a report from The Responsible Financial Officer.

RESOLVED

That the RFO be congratulated on his report, which provides the information requested at the last meeting of the Council.

- (vii) Water

The Council received and noted details of expenditure to Nestle POWWOW, as requested by Members at the January Council meeting.

(viii) Staff Costs

It was noted that, to create further efficiency within the office, arrangements had been made for all staff to be paid on c18th monthly.

(ix) Gas and Electricity ó Buying Consortium

Members received an updating report on investigations into joining a buying consortium in order to ensure that the prices being paid for energy were reasonable.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and that the RFO do take steps to enable the Town Council to join a Buying Consortium at the appropriate time.

WTC/322/07 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

None.

WTC/323/07 WOOD TREATMENT OF TOWN BENCHES ETC

The Town Council received and considered a list compiled by the Chairman of the Strategy Committee of town benches, etc. that were in need of timber treatment.

The Council considered that, given the restricted number of hours that the Environmental Warden would have to spend on this work, groups of Councillors might take over the task in due course.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the CMfE do produce a note as to the method for undertaking these works and that the Town Clerk do consider how this can best be implemented;
- (b) that a sum of £500 be vired from the bus shelters budget of Strategy Committee to fund this work.

WTC/324/07 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The Town Council received a map which showed the sites that had been informally submitted to the District Council for consideration through the new Local Development Framework (LDF). The sites were not proposals.

All the sites submitted throughout the West Oxfordshire District were to be subject to public consultation from the end of March to early May. The District Council would be writing to all Town/Parish Councils inviting comments and providing copies of the consultation material. A planning officer might be able to attend a meeting of the Town Council.

RESOLVED

- (a) that an item be placed on the Agenda for the Extraordinary meeting of the Council to be held on 18 March 2008;
- (b) that the issue be discussed at the Annual Town Meeting on 18 March 2008;
- (c) that Mr Nick Lyzba of Jonathan Philips Partnership be retained as the Council's specialist adviser on this matter and that the District Council be advised accordingly.

WTC/325/07 CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor reported that a quote was being obtained for essential repairs to the Mayoral robes.

WTC/326/07 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED

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/327/07 COMMUNITY CENTRE – GARAGE

The Town Council received and considered a report from the Responsible Financial Officer

RESOLVED

That a report be presented to the next meeting of the Town Council regarding all instances where property belonging to other organisations is stored in either the Town Hall or the Community Centre.

WTC/328/07 INSURANCE

The Town Council received and considered a further report from The Responsible Financial Officer regarding the insurance value of a carpet in the Town Council's possession.

RESOLVED

That Cllr Mrs P Richardson obtain an alternative valuation.

WTC/329/07 RENT REVIEWS – 24 MARKET PLACE AND 6 PARK STREET

The Town Council received an oral report regarding the rent reviews due in March.

RESOLVED

That the action taken by Mr M Baker of Wilsons Commercial be supported.

The meeting rose at 10.35p.m.

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