

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL  
HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 12 FEBRUARY 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 Mrs A Grant
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:**

Mr Howard Morris (Woodstock and Bladon News) and three members of the public.

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

**WTC/265/07 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs T Airey, A Gardiner and Mrs S Hazell, together with an apology for lateness from Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore.

**WTC/266/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Mrs A Grant declared a Prejudicial Interest in Agenda item 11, Proposal Regarding the FarmersøMarket, as she owned a shop in the town.

Cllr R Edwards declared a Personal Interest in Agenda item 37, Ground Floor Office 2, Community Centre.

Cllrs C Carritt, Mrs A Cooper and Mrs T Redpath declared personal interests in Agenda item 9(xi), New Look Local Government Pension Scheme, as they either contributed to or were in receipt of a Local Government pension.

Cllrs C Carritt, Mrs A Cooper, Mrs J Dunsmore, Mrs P Richardson and B Yoxall declared personal interests in Agenda item 20, Maintenance of War Memorial Garden, as the contractor undertook gardening work for them on a personal basis.

**WTC/267/07 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 8 January 2008 were received and signed as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

Minute WTC/238(d) Property ó amend the word ötrestleö in resolution (ii) to öfoldingö.

Minute WTC/239(b)(vi) Community Centre Garage ó replace the words öWith the advice that the garage would no longer be usedö with the words öIf the garage was no longer to be usedö.

The Minutes of the Re-convened meeting of the Council held on 15 January 2008 and the Extraordinary meeting of the Council held on 29 January 2008 were received and signed as correct records.

***WTC/268/07 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA***

Mr AJ Huelin of The Ley addressed the Council with regard to the noise and disturbance being caused by young people playing football in the recreation ground adjacent to his house and garden. Mr Huelin had taken the issue up with the Woodstock Football Club who had set up the goal posts and the pitch, but nothing had changed.

Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore had sent her apologies for lateness for the meeting, but she had submitted a written report on District Council matters which was read to the meeting. This was concerned with a warning issued by Trading Standards about a scam operating in the County whereby a District Council home shopping delivery service was offered to house holders. The District Council did not offer such a service. The report also covered post office closures.

***WTC/269/07 COMPLAINT REGARDING NOISE FROM FOOTBALL FIELD***

As well as speaking in the public participation session, Mr AJ Huelin had written a letter to the Town Council regarding the noise from the football field adjacent to his home, which was received and considered.

It was reported that the new pitch had been established for children, so that they would not play on the senior football pitch. If the new junior pitch was moved to another part of the field, then any noise and disturbance would just be moved to other properties. Although the Blenheim Estate and the football club were the owners and lessees of the land, the Town Council did put money into the venture and therefore had a legitimate interest in this matter.

**RESOLVED**

That Mr AJ Huelin and a representative of the football club be invited to a meeting with representatives of the Town Council to see whether an accommodation can be reached.

***WTC/270/07 CRAFT FAIR***

The Council received and considered emails from Mrs Margaret King, the organiser of the Craft Fairs held at the Town Hall, asking whether the Council would agree to her hiring the Assembly Room only at a special charge of £350 per weekend. Mrs King had stated that she was struggling to fill both rooms, mainly due to the stairs, and was not making a profit on the events.

A Member noted that local boys would be willing to carry items up and down the stairs to help with setting up the craft fair for a reasonable pay. Another Member commented on the need to secure the kitchen room if it was not being hired and to prohibit the use of kettles in the Assembly Room.

Members were mainly sympathetic to the request, although it was recalled that the Assembly Room was hired by other commercial organizations who possibly deserved similar consideration.

**RESOLVED** (By eight votes to three)

That the Assembly Room only be let to Mrs Margaret King for Craft Fairs at a charge of £350 per weekend until October 2008, when the situation shall be reviewed.

***WTC/271/07*** ***OUTSTANDING BUSINESS***

None.

***WTC/272/07*** **COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

***WTC/273/07*** **QUESTIONS**

None

***WTC/274/07*** **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

None.

***WTC/275/07*** **PROPOSALS OR RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cllr B Yoxall

Cllr Mrs A Grant declared a Prejudicial Interest in this item. She left the room and took no part in the determination of the matter.

It was MOVED by Cllr B Yoxall, seconded by Cllr Mrs T Redpath, that "It is evident that there are mixed views among both Woodstock Retailers and members of the public about the Farmers' Market. I propose that the Town Council should carry out a survey, possibly in conjunction with Wake Up to Woodstock, in order to more systematically measure opinion about the desirability of continuing with the market in its present form and location."

Some Members of the Council opposed the Proposal on the grounds that it was wrong to consult other retailers as to whether competition should be allowed in the town, that the District Council had supported the introduction of the market, and that they were part of country life. Other Members felt that there was no reason why traders in the town should not be allowed to comment. It was suggested that a Town Poll might be needed to determine this issue.

**RESOLVED** (by eight votes to three)

That the Proposal be not adopted.

Cllr B Yoxall

It was MOVED by Cllr B Yoxall, seconded by Cllr Mrs A Grant that I propose that the Town Council requests the Town Clerk to arrange a meeting of nominated Town Councillors with the Safer Roads Partnership and County Councillor Ian Hudspeth with a view to progressing, as soon as possible, the provision of speed reactive signs on the A44 in Woodstock.

Cllr Yoxall accepted an amendment to the proposal to include the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Action Group in the meeting.

**RESOLVED** (By eight votes to two)

- (a) that the Proposal, as amended, be adopted;
- (b) that the Council's representatives at the meeting be the Town Council's representatives on the Traffic Advisory Committee and Cllr B Yoxall.

***WTC/276/07 PLANNING***

(a) Applications

None

(b) Decisions

The Council received a report on the decisions taken by the Uplands Planning Committee that related to Woodstock in the period from 16 November 2007. It was noted that the reported comment of the Town Council on the application for signs for the Farmers' Market was not correct.

***WTC/277/07 CONDUCT OF MEMBERS – CONSULTATION***

Members were reminded that the Department for Communities and Local Government was undertaking a consultation on Orders and Regulations Relating to the Conduct of Local Authority Members in England. Council was requested to consider whether any comments should be submitted by the closing date of 15 February 2008

Members noted that all complaints would have to be considered by District Councils in the future, that more complaints were being made, and that the cost would be significant.

**RESOLVED**

That the Department for Communities and Local Government be advised that Woodstock Town Council has considered the Consultation Paper enclosed with Mr Rowsell's letter dated 3 January 2008 and, considering that the whole apparatus of the ethical conduct regime is an unacceptable interference with the freedom of speech of elected local councillors, calls upon Parliament to repeal the legislation that supports it.

***WTC/278/07 APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT***

**RESOLVED**

That Cllrs C Carritt, Mrs A Cooper and Mrs T Redpath be appointed to serve on the Interview Panel for the appointment of the new Administrative Assistant, with Cllr Mrs P Richardson being appointed as Reserve in case one of the three Members is unable to attend.

***WTC/279/07 COMMENTS BOOK AT THE TOWN HALL***

Cllr Mrs A Grant proposed that a Suggestion Box be placed on the table inside the Market Street entrance to the Town Hall for public use. This could be brought to the public's attention in the next newsletter. This would cut down on interruptions to the staff, allowing them to deal with items raised in their own time scale and help bring the Council and the community to a closer working partnership.

**RESOLVED**

That the suggestion be adopted.

***WTC/280/07 TOWN COUNCIL SPRING 2008 NEWSLETTER***

Any Member wishing to make a contribution was invited to send their submission to the Communications Sub-Committee, c/o the Town Hall, by the end of February.

**RESOLVED**

That, in order to avoid accusations of electioneering, all items should be of an informative nature and should, on this one occasion, appear under the name of the Town Clerk.

***WTC/281/07 BUS CONSULTATION MEETING***

At the request of Cllr J Cooper, the Council discussed the bus consultation meeting that had taken place on Wednesday 9 January 2008.

**RESOLVED**

That letters be sent to Stagecoach and the County Transport Team, with a copy to County Cllr I Hudspeth, drawing attention to the disparity in the charges made for a bus journey from Woodstock to Oxford when compared to a journey from Begbroke to Oxford.

***WTC/282/07 COMMUNITY BUS PROPOSAL***

It was noted that, following discussions between Cllr B Yoxall and Philip Newbould of ORCC, it had been reluctantly concluded that, in the light of only minimal community support, the Community Bus proposal could not be sensibly progressed. This did not mean that the aspiration to improve the frequency of the Woodstock Wanderer bus service between Woodstock and Kidlington via the Hensington Estate was to be abandoned.

***WTC/283/07 RISK ASSESSMENTS 2007/08***

It was reported that the Town Clerk had met with the Committee Chairmen and the CMfE and P. The Risk Assessments for 2007/08 had been scrutinised and agreed and were now presented to Council for adoption.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) that the Summary of Risk Assessments and the Action Plans for 2007/08 be adopted;
- (b) that the Councils thanks to the Town Clerk be recorded.

***WTC/284/07 MAINTENANCE OF WAR MEMORIAL GARDEN***

Cllrs C Carritt, Mrs A Cooper, Mrs J Dunsmore, Mrs P Richardson and B Yoxall had declared Personal Interests in this matter.

The Council was advised of details of the work undertaken by Mr David Rodney in looking after the War Memorial Garden and the way in which this was managed. It was apparent that the costs incurred so far this year exceeded the budget provision by approx. £130.

**RESOLVED**

That the quotation submitted by Mr D Rodney for maintaining the War Memorial Garden in 2008/09 be accepted, within the budget limitations.

***WTC/285/07 DOG WASTE BINS***

Members commented on the need for a dog waste bin at Sansoms Lane and that the bin in the Rectory Lane/Cockpit Close area was not being emptied regularly.

**RESOLVED**

That, in the light of recent adverse publicity, a dog waste bin be located on the middle tree at the Horsefairs.

***WTC/286/07 WASTE BINS OUTSIDE COMMERCIAL PREMISES***

Cllr Mrs A Grant expressed concern at the increasing incidence of large waste bins being left in the street outside commercial premises, especially public houses, in the town. This practice was an eyesore and caused environmental problems, and was possibly the result of new rules about recycling and the disposal of commercial waste.

Members agreed that this warranted attention and it was

**RESOLVED**

That a letter be sent to the County Council complaining about this situation, with a copy being sent to County Cllr I Hudspeth.

***WTC/287/07 ENVIRONMENTAL WARDEN***

It was reported that Mr Tony Wright had been appointed as the Council's new Environmental Warden. He had commenced his duties on Monday 4 February and his appointment was subject to a six month probation period.

Mrs Debbie Teanby, former Environmental Warden, had volunteered to continue to deliver post to local Town Councillors and other locations at no cost to the Town Council.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) that the Council's congratulations be conveyed to Mr Wright;
- (b) that the offer made by Mrs Debbie Teanby be gratefully accepted and that the Council's Insurers be advised accordingly.

***WTC/288/07 DIGITALISATION OF BURIAL RECORDS***

Deferred to the next meeting.

***WTC/289/07 REPOINTING WORKS TO PERIMETER WALL. HENSINGTON ROAD CEMETERY***

Council was reminded that the quotation submitted by OG Stonemasonry in the sum of £1,000 plus VAT for the repointing of the pillars etc in the perimeter wall at the Hensington Road cemetery had been accepted. It was reported that, as budgetary provision existed in the sum of £2,000 for such works, the company had been requested to undertake works to this value, plus VAT.

**RESOLVED** (By seven votes to six)

That the action taken be approved.

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

FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAINED
Cllr P Jay	Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore	
Cllr Mrs E Jay	Cllr J Cooper	
Cllr Mrs A Grant	Cllr I Lenagan	
Cllr Mrs T Redpath	Cllr R Edwards	
Cllr P Redpath	Cllr Mrs P Richardson	
Cllr B Yoxall	Cllr Mrs A Cooper	
Cllr C Carritt		
<b>TOTALS</b>		
7	6	0

***WTC/290/07 STORAGE OF WASTE BINS, LAWN CEMETERY***

It was reported that, from an operational point of view, it would be efficient to have the waste bins stored by the road, so that the District Council could empty them. Cllr Mrs A Grant had provided a draft illustration as to how this could be accommodated

**RESOLVED**

that the proposal be accepted subject to the cut into the bank being large enough to accommodate another bin if necessary, to vegetation being provided to hide it, and to it being funded from within the existing Environmental budget.

***WTC/291/07 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/292/07 QUOTATIONS FOR WORKS TO TREES AT HENSINGTON ROAD CEMETERY***

It was reported that quotations had been received from (in alphabetical order) DJ & S Landscapes, JE Miller Services, and Trees and Gardens (Timber) Ltd to undertake works to trees at Hensington Road Cemetery. The quotations, in ascending order, were £2,360 plus VAT, £3,000 plus VAT, and £5,105 plus VAT.

Members requested further information about the tendering process and the specification that had been issued to the companies. Upon receiving information, certain Members declared that the specification was not as comprehensive as was required for a contract of this type and took the view that it was not acceptable. Other Members took a contrary view.

A proposal to accept a quotation that included evidence of public liability insurance and conformity to the relevant British Standard, Arboricultural Safety Council guidelines and the Health and Safety at Work Act was defeated by seven votes to three.

It was

**RESOLVED** (By seven votes to three)

That the Town Council do re-tender for this contract on the basis of a proper specification for the work.

***WTC/293/07 INSURANCE***

**RESOLVED**

That further details be presented with regard to this item.

***WTC/294/07 RENT RE 2 PARK STREET***

The report from the Responsible Financial Officer was noted.

***WTC/295/07 GROUND FLOOR OFFICE 2, - COMMUNITY CENTRE***

Members considered the Report of the Responsible Financial Officer. It was noted that the carpet tiles would be replaced, the funding to come from the 2008/09 budget, and that the room was to be re-painted.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) That a lease be concluded with Clare Charleson on the terms contained in the RFO's report, subject to the services element being re-negotiated on an annual basis;

- (b) That the RFO do report as to whether the conditions relating to repairs/redecoration etc are being complied with as specified in the various leases relating to the Council's properties.

***WTC/296/07 RENT REVIEWS – 24 MARKET PLACE AND 6 PARK STREET***

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

The meeting then went back into Open Session.

***WTC/297/07 REPORTS/PAPERS OF COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES***

(a) Finance Committee

The Council received the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 19 November 2007.

(b) Wall Hangings Trust

The Council received the Minutes of the meeting of the Wall Hangings Trust held on 16 January 2008.

**RESOLVED**

- (i) that the provision regarding a quorum for meetings of the Trust be changed so that four members must be in attendance, two of whom must be Town Councillors, rather than five as currently required;
- (ii) that the Responsible Financial Officer be appointed as Treasurer to the Trust;
- (iii) that two meetings of the Trust be held each year, one in January before the Annual Town Meeting and one in September to prepare a submission for the Town Council's budget process, with further meetings being called by the Chairman if necessary.

(c) Environment

The Council received a report from CMfE covering the need to replace the netting to the activity net at New Road Play Area; the provision of new play equipment at Budds Close, New Road and old Woodstock Play Areas; the replacement of a five bar gate at New Road; recent developments with regard to works at the Water Meadows; and other works. The Council also received a note from the RFO as to how the replacement of the netting to the activity net could be achieved, given that there was no budgetary provision for this urgent work, apart from £400 for re-tensioning.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) That the netting to the Activity net at the New Road Play Area be replaced at a cost of £5,100 including installation;
- (b) That the cost of these works be met from the £400 budgeted for re-tensioning the equipment and, because of savings due to works to be undertaken by the Green Gym and BTCV, the viring of monies as set out in the RFO's report.

**WTC/298/07 REPORTS FROM OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL**

(a) Town Clerk

Various items set out.

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

(i) List of payments for January 2008.

The Council received the list of payments for January 2008

(ii) Bank Reconciliation Statements (2) for January 2008

The Council received the Bank Reconciliation Statements for January 2008

(iii) Summary and Detailed Income & Expenditure Statements for January 2008

The Council received the Summary and Detailed Income & Expenditure Statements for January 2008. A Member noted an apparent disparity between projected and actual expenditure across all budgets and it was

**RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk and RFO do report to the next meeting of Council with the circumstances, the reasons for them, and the remedial action they propose to take.

(iv) Community Centre ó Ground Floor Office 1.

The new lease had been signed by Council and completion was awaited.

(v) Budget 2008

Members noted the report provided in response to concerns raised by a Member at the January Council meeting regarding anomalies in the Budget reporting. The situation would be discussed further at the next meeting of the Finance Committee.

(vii) Subscriptions

Members noted the schedule of subscriptions paid during the current financial year as requested at the January 2008 Council meeting. This would be reviewed early in the life of the new Council.

(viii) Christmas Lights

Members considered a report from the RFO, as requested at the January 2008 Council meeting. Members noted that the expenditure on the lights had come out close to what had been anticipated but there was a significant shortfall in contributions from third parties, which had resulted in an over spend. This was acknowledged but the Council was

encouraged not to lose sight of the benefits that had been brought to the town by the new lights.

**RESOLVED** (By eight votes to one)

That any overspend that exists on this venture at the end of the financial year be met from the budget for Christmas Lights for 2008/09.

(ix) External Audit.

Members noted that The Audit Commission had advised that BDO Stoy Hayward LLP, had been appointed again as External Auditors for Woodstock Town Council for a further five year period commencing with 2007/08 accounts.

(x) New Look Local Government Pension Scheme

Cllrs C Carritt, Mrs A Cooper and Mrs T Redpath had declared Personal Interests in this item.

Members noted the overview provided in the letter dated 29 January 2008 from Oxfordshire Council regarding the revised Scheme which would come into effect from April 2008. There were still no employee members.

***WTC/299/07 SPACE NET, NEW ROAD PLAY AREA***

This agenda item had been covered in the report of the CMfE (Minute WTC/263(c) refers).

***WTC/300/07 EXTENSION OF TIME***

**RESOLVED**

That the provisions of Standing Order 1(b) be suspended in order that the meeting can continue for a further fifteen minutes.

***WTC/301/07 MEMBERSHIP OF PROPERTY WORKING GROUP***

Deferred.

***WTC/302/07 STEPS TO THE TOWN HALL***

Deferred

***WTC/303/07 CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS***

The Town Mayor announced that he would make donations from the Mayor's Charity Account to the NSPCC and Roses Charity in the sum of £50 each. A letter of congratulations would also be sent to Hugo Brunner who was retiring after many years as Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire..

The meeting rose at 10.40p.m.

Signed í í í í í í í í í í í í í í .. Dateí í í í í í í í í í .