

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 14 JULY 2009
IN THE MAYOR'S PARLOUR, WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL**

PRESENT:

Cllr P Jay (Town Mayor)	Cllr T Gardiner (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr C Carritt	Cllr J Cooper
Cllr Mrs V Edwards	Cllr A Glees
Cllr Mrs A Grant	Cllr Mrs E Jay
Cllr G Myatt	Cllr E Poskitt
Cllr P Redpath	Cllr Mrs T Redpath
Cllr Mrs P Richardson	Cllr Mrs E Stokes
Cllr B Yoxall	

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

District Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore, Mr H Morris (Woodstock News) and four members of the public.

WTC/63/09 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr I Thomas.

WTC/64/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr B Yoxall declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item No. 9, 2 and 4 Market Street, as his wife was a friend of one of the parties interested in taking on the tenancy of No. 4 Market Street.

Cllr Mrs E Stokes declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item No. 15(ii), Planning Application Ref: 09/0721/P/FP, erection of two dwellings, 25 and 27 New Road, as a relation owned 25 New Road.

WTC/65/09 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 9 June 2009 were approved and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

Minute WTC/38/09 – Leisure and Tourism Strategy – Insert the words “because of redevelopment at the Marlborough School” after the words “was to be re-located there”.

WTC/41/09 – Bowls and Tennis Club Lease – Resolution (b) Insert after the word “Agreed” the words “that the request for the boundary fence to be realigned to run parallel to the rear wall of the kitchen, as indicated on the plan attached to the letter from the Bowls and Tennis Club dated 8 March 2009, be agreed for the period of twenty one years (Approx 15 sq metres in area). This is to be the maximum and only change to the boundary.” – Resolution (c) Insert after the word “Agreed” the words “that the provisions regarding repairs and insurance and access shall continue as existing, as requested by the Club, except that the Council shall remind the club that it is responsible for repair and maintenance of the fence between the club premises, car park and the play ground.”

Minute WTC/55/09 – Woodstock Wanderer Bus Service – Replace the word “twice” with the word “two” and replace the word “rejected” with the words “sympathetically noted”.

WTC/66/09 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Honorary Townsman Robert Edwards addressed the Town Council about the pathway between New Road and the playground. He stated that he had asked for many years for the grass cutting in this

entrance area to be included in the grass cutter's contract and for the litter to be collected by the Environmental Warden but no action had resulted. The Town Clerk reported that this path was not included in the office list of property owned by the Town Council. A schedule compiled for a meeting in December 2003 suggested that the path might be the responsibility of the District Council. The Council agreed to consider this matter under Agenda Item No. 16, Environment.

District Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore advised the Council on the ORCC initiative regarding help in the event of a flu pandemic. She reported on the details of the Public Inquiry into the refusal of planning permission for the development of the former railway station site which was due to commence on 6 October and last for three days. She also provided details of financial assistance which was available to rural communities under the Rural Development Programme, and finally gave details of where and how she and Ian Hudspeth could be consulted by the public on local government matters.

WTC/67/09 *OUTSTANDING BUSINESS*

None.

WTC/68/09 *COMMUNICATIONS*

The Mayor, Cllr P Jay, reported on the successful farewell for Canon R Humphreys. He also reported that he had been invited to join a local area Police Board and indicated that he would submit regular reports to the Council.

WTC/69/09 *QUESTIONS*

None.

WTC/70/09 *REVIEW OF EXPENDITURE 2009/10*

At the meeting of the Council held on 9 June 2009 it was Resolved, inter alia, as follows:

- “(g) That the implications of the report on the 2009/10 Budget Review be noted and a freeze be imposed on all significant expenditure until the next meeting of the Council at least;
- (h) That all Committees meet to review their budgeted expenditure to seek to identify potential savings and that such savings shall be fed back to the July meeting of Council;”

The Council received and considered:

- (a) the Minutes of the meetings of the Mayor's Committee and the Finance Committee held on Tuesday 7 July 2009;
- (b) Minute 14 of the meeting of the Property Working Group held on Tuesday 23 June 2009;
- (c) Minute 14 of the meeting of the Environment Working Group held on 30 June 2009;
- (d) following the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 7 July 2009, a report which set out a quick look at the Original budget for 2009/10, the latest estimate, and the key differences;
- (e) a briefing note and a revised note dated 14 July 2009 from the Chairman of the Finance Committee.

In accordance with the terms of the briefing note referred to in (e) above, it was **MOVED** by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Gardiner

- (a) that the Council should adopt the recommendations of the Working Parties;
- (b) consider the issue of the contingency allocation;
- (c) ask the Property Working Group to bring to the budget round, proposals of how it is going to profile expenditure over the next few years to achieve the re-roofing project in relation to the Park Street properties.

The Council considered the financial situation in great detail and the options that were available. These

included borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board and selling property. Some Members felt that it would be prudent to borrow money whereas others were resistant to the idea until the Council had a better understanding of its financial situation. It was **MOVED** by Cllr P Jay, seconded by Cllr Gardiner

“that the Council should not in the context of the current review of the 2009/10 budget consider any form of borrowing to fund its prospective financial shortfall but should leave open for the future the option of borrowing for suitable capital projects.”

The Motion was put to the meeting and was adopted by thirteen votes to nil.

The Council then considered the corrective action proposed by the Working Parties, as detailed in the Briefing Note referred to in (e) above. The outcome was as follows:

- (a) the proposal to defer the Park Street re-roofing project (£56,700) was adopted by fourteen votes to nil;
- (b) The proposal to defer the masonry repair work and the external painting work at the rear of the Park Street properties (£16,000) was defeated by eight votes to six, and the works therefore remained in the programme. A Member called for a Named Vote, the result of which was as follows:
FOR: Cllrs Myatt, Grant, Edwards, Cooper, Gardiner, P Jay (6)
AGAINST: Cllrs Gleys, T Redpath, P Redpath, E Jay, Yoxall, Stokes, Carritt, Richardson (8)
- (c) The proposals to defer the DDA works (£10,900) and to delete the financial provision for the removal of Japanese Knotweed at OWL (£120), undertake repairs at the Millbank stream (£1,000), and restore memorials at the cemeteries (£1,000) were all adopted.

The Chairman of the Finance Committee summarized the effects of these decisions and a potential saving of £12,858 on VAT payments was noted.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Council should not in the context of the current review of the 2009/10 budget consider any form of borrowing to fund its prospective financial shortfall but should leave open for the future the option of borrowing for suitable capital projects;
- (b) that the Park Street roof project be deferred;
- (c) that the masonry repair works and the external painting works at the rear of the Park Street properties remain in the 2009/10 programme;
- (d) that the DDA works be deferred and the financial provision for the removal of Japanese Knotweed at OWL, undertake repairs at the Millbank stream, and restore memorials at the cemeteries be deleted from the 2009/10 budget;
- (e) that the Property Working Group be asked to bring to the budget round, proposals of how it is going to profile expenditure over the next few years to achieve the re-roofing project in relation to the Park Street properties.

WTC/71/09 PLANNING MATTERS

- (a) Planning Applications
 - (i) Ref: 09/0693/P/RFP
Conversion of existing public house to create dwelling.
The Queens Own Inn, 59 Oxford Street
Decision (By five votes to three): No comment
 - (ii) Ref: 09/0721/P/FP
Erection of two dwellings.
25 and 27 New Road.
Decision: No comment

(iii) Ref: 09/0758/P/FP
Erection of first floor side and single storey front and rear extensions.
14 Manor Road
Decision: No comment

(iv) Ref: 09/0759/P/LB
Internal and external alterations to include erection of first floor side and single storey front and rear extensions.
14 Manor Road
Decision: No comment

(iv) Ref: 09/0793/P/FP
Erection of porch to front elevation.
31 Bear Close
Decision: No comment

(v) Ref: 09/0795/P/OP
Erection of a two storey detached dwelling with associated parking
5 Westland Way
Decision: Object. Overdevelopment and overcrowding.

(b) Section 106 Agreements

The Town Clerk has enquired of West Oxfordshire District Council's Planning Department as to their procedures for Section 106 agreements with developers. The reply from the District Council was reported.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council adopts the practice of asking the District Council to consider contributions which can be justified under the criteria laid down in Circular 5/05 towards specified schemes.

WTC/72/09 ***POSSIBLE FILMING IN WOODSTOCK***

The Council received an oral report from the Mayor on the possible making of a film in the town over two days in early August. The film company would be using the Town Hall in the film and would be using accommodation within the Town Hall for the film crew to rest in etc. The film company had offered to make a substantial donation to the local community in recognition of any disturbance caused by the filming. Problems over car parking spaces and traffic management had been resolved with the assistance of County Cllr Ian Hudspeth and the Council's thanks to Cllr Hudspeth were agreed.

WTC/73/09 ***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/74/09 ***FORMER RAILWAY STATION SITE***

The Council received and noted an updating report from Mr Steven Sensecall on the meeting that he had attended on Wednesday 8 July 2009 with the Planning Officer, Jon Westerman, and representatives of Berkeley Homes. Members noted that one of the key issues, the retention of Mrs

Young's house, had not been considered. It was agreed that it was important to distinguish between the station and the garage, and that the Council was not convinced that the station could not be saved.

The Council then considered Minute 15 of the meeting of the Property Working Group held on 23 June 2009.

A proposal that the Chairman of the Property Working Group and Cllr Mrs T Redpath should undertake an informal meeting with the Council's retained planning consultant Steven Sensecall regarding Berkeley Homes proposals was defeated by seven votes to six.

A proposal that the Council should be willing to discuss directly or indirectly with the developer any modifications of its previous stance regarding affordable housing, the retention of the station, the retention of Mrs Young's house and the canyon-like effect of the new line of development when entering the town was defeated by twelve votes to two.

The Council then received and considered a report from the Town Clerk on the level of involvement to be undertaken by the Town Council at the Public Inquiry into the appeals lodged by Berkeley Homes against the refusal of planning permission for the development of the former Railway Station Site. It was Proposed by Cllr Carritt, seconded by Cllr Mrs Redpath

"That the Council commits up to £10,000 for representation at the Public Inquiry."

The Proposal was adopted by eleven votes to four. A Member called for a Named Vote, the result of which was as follows:

FOR: Cllrs Myatt, Poskitt, Grant, T Redpath, P Redpath, Mrs E Jay, Yoxall, Stokes, Carritt, Richardson, Gardiner (11)

AGAINST: Cllrs Glees, Edwards, Cooper, P Jay (4)

RESOLVED

That the Council commits up to £10,000 for representation at the Public Inquiry.

WTC/75/09 FUTURE OF POST OFFICE SORTING OFFICE

Cllr Yoxall reported on the latest situation and it was

RESOLVED

That the petition containing 397 signatures calling for a reversal of the decision to close the sorting office be presented to Royal Mail when the meeting with representatives of that organisation takes place.

WTC/76/09 2 AND 4 MARKET STREET

(a) Meeting of the Property Working Group, 30 June 2009

The Council received and considered Minute 10 of the meeting of the Property Working Group held on 23 June 2009.

(b) Report from Mr Mark Meeson

The Council received and considered a report from Mr Mark Meeson

RESOLVED

- (i) that negotiations proceed with Mr JP Wheatley in respect of No. 2 Market Street and Mr and Mrs Maybury in respect of No. 4 Market Street, with a view to securing agreement for them to take on the tenancies of the two properties;
- (ii) that the schedule of health and safety issues identified by Mr Meeson at No 2 Market Street be funded by the Town Council, with the addition of damp and rot issues;
- (iii) that two other quotes be obtained for the health and safety works as agreed by the Property Working Group;
- (iv) that a Panel of Members be appointed to sign the contracts in respect of Nos. 2 and 4 Market Street;
- (v) that the Panel comprise of any two Members chosen from the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, the Chairman of Finance Committee, the Chairman of the Property Working Group, plus the Town Clerk.

(c) Updating report

The Council received an up-dating report from Cllr Mrs V Edwards and the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED

That authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to deal with enquiries as to whether the Council will sell items left behind by the previous occupants of 2 and 4 Market Street.

The meeting then returned to Open Session.

WTC/77/09 WOODSTOCK@900

The Council received and considered an updating report from the Mayor. It was noted that a meeting of the “heavy hitters” was to take place shortly. It was also reported that the Public Events Fund was keen to attract projects to support.

WTC/78/09 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER – JULY 2009

The Council received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer

RESOLVED

- (a) List of Payments for June 2009

RESOLVED

that the list of payments made in the month of June 2009 and amounting to £27,754.64 be received and approved;

- (b) Bank Reconciliation Statements (2) for June 2009

RESOLVED

That the Bank Reconciliation Statements (2) for June 2009 be received and noted.

- (c) Summary and Detailed Income and Expenditure Statements for June 2009

RESOLVED

That the Summary and Detailed Income and Expenditure Statements for June 2009 be received and noted.

WTC/79/09 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

None.

WTC/80/09 ENVIRONMENT

(a) Environment Working Group

The Council received the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment Working Group held on 30 June 2009. Minute 14, Budget 2009/10, had been considered under Agenda Item 7, Review of Expenditure 2009/10.

RESOLVED

- (i) that when complaints are received regarding trees where those trees appear to be in good condition that advice be obtained as a matter of course from the County Forester (Eric Douglas) or the District Council Forester (Nick Dalby);
- (ii) that the Warden be sent on a course as soon as possible so that his time can be used more effectively;
- (iii) that the Clerk write to Paul Forrest-Jamieson and explain that there are budget issues and that it would be helpful to have reassurances that the application could be submitted to WREN no later than the September panel meeting;
- (iv) that, as part of the budget process for 2010/11, consideration be given to increasing the grass cutting at the three playgrounds from eight to ten with one additional cut at the football pitch, making a total of £300 additional cost, unless savings can be found from the 2009/10 budget to cover it in the current year;
- (v) that consideration be also given to including provision in the 2010/11 budget for the strimming of the paths at the cemeteries and two “floating” cuts to be used at the cemeteries and the Watermeadows if conditions require.

(b) Play Area Safety Inspection Report 2009

RESOLVED

That the ROSPA play area safety inspection report be referred to the Environment Working Group for detailed discussion and Recommendation back to Council.

WTC/81/09 FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT QUOTES

To report that quotes have been received from the following companies to carry out a Fire Risk Assessment at the Community Centre. Budgetary provision exists for this very important work in the sum of £450.

Name of Firm (In Alphabetical Order)

Chris Lewis Security
Chubb
MCFP

Quotation (In Ascending Order)

£425
£450
£649

RESOLVED

That the Quotation submitted by MCFP in the sum of £425 be accepted.

WTC/82/09 TOWN COUNCIL SUMMER 2009 NEWSLETTER

Contributions were invited for the Summer Newsletter.

WTC/83/09 WOODSTOCK WANDERER BUS SERVICE

Cllr Yoxall reported that no comments had been received from local residents and it was agreed that his comments that had been reported at the last meeting of Council should be forwarded.

WTC/84/09 HELP FOR HEROES

Cllr Yoxall reported on this successful event which had raised £1,357 for the Help for Heroes Appeal. Formal thanks were proposed to Cllrs Yoxall, Grant and Stokes for their organisation of this event.

WTC/85/09 CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

WTC/86/09 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/87/09 PROPERTY WORKING GROUP

The Council received and considered the Minutes of the meeting of the Property Working Group held on 23 June 2009. Minute 10, Update on 2/4 Market Street, had been considered under Agenda Item 9(a) 2 and 4 Market Street, and Minute 14, Budget 2009/10 Relating to Property Issues had been considered under Agenda Item 7, Review of Expenditure 2009/10. Minute 15, Community Centre, had been discussed under Agenda Item No. 10, Former Railway Station Site.

It was reported that a meeting had taken place with Henmans regarding the question of fees. It had been agreed that Henmans would submit a fixed fee for work, where appropriate.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the revised rent in respect of 8 Park Street be accepted with effect from 9 June 2009;
- (b) that the recommendation of the Working Party regarding the sale of the Rectory Lane garage be not adopted and that the Council do continue to rent the garage out;
- (c) that Henmans be advised that the negotiations with the former tenant of No. 2 Market Street be continued on a fixed fee basis with the aim of concluding matters by discussion and agreement;
- (d) that the proposal that Lead Councillors be appointed to have special responsibility for allocated areas of the Working Group's duties be re-considered.

WTC/88/09 PROPERTY MATTERS

The Council received and considered a report from the Town Clerk. The situation with regard to the payment of rents for 6 Park Street was noted.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Town Clerk be authorised to sign the rent review memorandum in respect of 24 Market Place, back dating the rent to 4 February 2009;
- (b) that the change in the lease term in respect of 2 Park Street from sixteen to fifteen years be confirmed.

The meeting rose at 10.20pm.

Signed Date