

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 11 JANUARY 2011
IN THE MAYOR'S PARLOUR, WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL**

PRESENT:

Cllr J Cooper (Town Mayor)	Cllr Mrs V Edwards (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr T Gardiner	Cllr Mrs A Grant
Cllr E Poskitt	Cllr P Jay
Cllr P Redpath	Cllr Mrs T Redpath
Cllr A Glees	Cllr Mrs L Glees
Cllr I Thomas	

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Two members of the public.

WTC/217/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs C Carritt, Mrs J Dunsmore, Mrs P Richardson, Mrs E Jay, Mrs E Stokes and County Cllr I Hudspeth.

WTC/218/10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Deputy Mayor declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No. 10 (i) (b): Planning Application 11/0038/P/FP as she uses land that backs onto Hensington Farmhouse.

WTC/219/10 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF:

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 14th December 2010 were approved and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

WTC/200/10 Declarations of Interest: 2nd sentence the word 'Rye' was replaced by the word 'Pye'.

WTC/201/10 To Approve the Minutes of: The first sentence was amended to replace the word 'September' with the word 'November'.

WTC/204/10 Communications: The misspelling in the name of Honorary Townsman I Lenagan's name was amended.

WTC/207/10 Highways and Transport Issues: A capital letter 'A' was added to all references to the A44 group.

WTC/213/10 Meetings of Committees and Sub-Committees (i) Environmental Working Group. The beginning of the second sentence was amended to read Cllr Mrs T Redpath.

WTC/213/10 Meetings of Committees and Sub-Committees (iii) Woodstock Traffic Advisory Committee. The date of the meeting was amended to read 20th October 2010.

WTC/214/10 Property Update (ii) 8 Park Street. The final line in this section was amended to read 'Cllrs P Redpath, Mrs T Redpath, I Thomas and Mrs A Grant (due to a prejudicial interest) left the meeting at 9.45.

WTC/213/10 (iv) Mayor's Committee cont'd (b). The date was amended to 30th September 2011.

WTC/220/10 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

County Council Update

The council received and considered the January 2010 Parish Report from County Cllr I Hudspeth.

The Mayor thanked Mr Bill Oddy, WODC for coming to Woodstock on his day off to help clear snow on 23rd December 2010. He made the council aware that a 'Fun Run' will take place locally on the last Sunday in May to raise funds for breast cancer awareness.

WTC/221/10 COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported that he had received an appreciative letter from the Woodstock British Legion thanking the Town Council for the money raised at the Christmas Carol service. The Royal British Legion is the Mayor's chosen charity for this municipal year and he hopes to make a donation of

£1,000 by the end of this term. He said that the carol service had been a great success and thanked in particular Dulcies Sweet Shop, Cllr Jill Dunsmore, Cllr Elizabeth Poskitt, Mr Jim Grant, Mrs Jane Hibberd and Mr Les Evans. He reported that Andy Mitchell had been thanked as requested by the council for his efforts with the Christmas lights. He said that he is currently asking people for ideas about what they might like to do in Woodstock to celebrate the forthcoming Royal Wedding.

WTC/222/10 QUESTIONS

None.

WTC/223/10 MOTIONS PRESENTED TO COUNCIL

Cllr P Redpath had previously submitted a motion under SO18 that Woodstock Town Council resolve to proceed with the refurbishment of 8 Park Street without further delay by accepting the lowest of the four tenders already submitted; and that the already agreed £8.8k for the project be supplemented by savings in this year's environmental budget. This motion had been seconded by Cllr Mrs A Grant. Cllr P Redpath asked that this motion be withdrawn. Cllr P Jay asked the Mayor to rule on whether this motion could be withdrawn and said that he wanted to propose an alternative motion. The Mayor ruled that the original motion could be withdrawn and that Cllr P Jay could not propose his alternative motion until the next council meeting.

WTC/224/10 COMMUNICATIONS

The Deputy Mayor considered that the Council should utilise its in-house capability, clarify its communications strategy and communicate clear messages to residents. She suggested that the web site should be updated and reported that the Clerk's deputy will be taking over the web site maintenance. She suggested that the web sites potential needed to be maximised and that WTC also utilise other methods of communication in order to better reach residents. Cllr Mrs L Glees supported the Deputy Mayor's suggestions, agreed that a WTC newsletter be re-introduced and considered that WTC should be more pro-active and allay any mis-representations that are made against the Council, Cllrs or staff. The Mayor confirmed that he was happy to continue contributing a monthly contribution to Woodstock & Bladon News and discussion followed about the specific content of some editions. The Deputy Mayor proposed that the current membership of the WTC communications sub-committee be expanded to include Cllr Mrs L Glees. This motion was seconded by Cllr A Glees.

RESOLVED

That Cllr L Glees will join the Communications sub-committee.

Cllr E Poskitt proposed that Cllr L Glees be asked to lead the communications sub-committee and this motion was seconded by the Deputy Mayor.

RESOLVED

That Cllr Mrs L Glees will lead the communications sub-committee.

The Mayor proposed that WTC continue to subscribe to Woodstock and Bladon News. This motion was seconded by the Deputy Mayor.

RESOLVED

That WTC will continue to pay an annual subscription to the Woodstock & Bladon News.

The Mayor proposed that the editors of Woodstock & Bladon News be invited to a meeting with him and the Deputy Mayor.

RESOLVED

That the editors of Woodstock & Bladon News will be invited to a meeting with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

The Mayor asked that all committee chairmen each produce an article by the end of the month for use at the Annual Town meeting.

At this point the meeting was suspended for 10 minutes whilst the fire warden at the Town Hall undertook a routine fire alarm test and evacuation of the building.

WTC/225/10 FINANCIAL ISSUES

(i) To receive the list of Payments for December 2010

Cllr E Poskitt proposed that the list of payments made in the month of December 2010 amounting to £11,478.62 be received and approved. The Deputy Mayor seconded this proposal.

RESOLVED

That the list of payments made in the month of December 2010 amounting to £11,478.62 is approved

(ii) To receive the Bank Reconciliation Statements for December 2010

The Council received and considered the bank Reconciliation Statements for December 2010.

(iii) To receive the Summary and Detailed Income & Expenditure Statements for December 2010

The Summary and Detailed Income and Expenditure Statements for December 2010 were received and considered.

(iv) Bank Mandate

In July 2010 Minute No. WTC/90/10 the Council resolved 'That WTC adopt a system of all 16 Councillors being authorised to sign checks on behalf of the authority'. The current situation relating to the bank mandates was outlined by the Clerk/RFO. It is proving difficult to comply with this resolution. The Mayor therefore proposed that the Council goes forward with the mandate forms that have been currently completed.

RESOLVED

That the Council agrees to progress the mandate forms that have been currently completed in order to bring this matter to a conclusion.

WTC/226/10 PLANNING MATTERS

(i) Planning Applications

(a) Ref: 10/1823/P/FP

1 Vermont Drive, Woodstock
Erection of single storey rear extension.

RESOLVED

That WTC has no objection to this planning application but noted that there was a certain lack of clarity to the drawings.

(b) Ref: 11/0038/P/FP

Hensington Farmhouse, 7 Banbury Road, Woodstock.
Reinstate first floor level window in SW elevation and enlarge existing rear first floor window, reducing height of lobby's lean-to roof beneath. (Retrospective).
The Deputy Mayor declared a personal interest in this planning application as she uses land that backs onto Hensington Farmhouse.

RESOLVED

That WTC has no comment to make about this planning application.

- (ii) Planning Application R3.0167/10
This planning application concerns a Kidlington Waste Recycling Centre. OCC is intending to close several existing local waste recycling sites north of Oxford and concentrate its efforts on a site at Kidlington. Cllr Mrs T Redpath told Cllrs they could view the plans in detail on the OCC web site. She was concerned that although the application includes traffic modelling this had been done before the Water Eaton Park and Ride had been opened and was based on a 2003 survey that had been undertaken during the school summer holidays. Cllr Mrs T Redpath proposed that WTC write to OCC and expresses its concern that the traffic modelling is not sufficient to reflect the current situation. This motion was seconded by Cllr T Gardiner. Cllr P Jay asked that the motion be amended so that members of the A44A group are asked to draft the response for submission before the end of the week. This amendment was accepted.

RESOLVED

That the members of the A44A group will draft a letter to OCC before the end of the week that expresses WTC's concerns about the traffic modelling associated with this planning application.

WTC/227/10 TIME MANAGEMENT REVIEW OF WTC PROCEDURES

Cllr I Thomas asked that item be deferred to an Extraordinary Town Council meeting and the Council agreed to this request.

WTC/228/10 MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(a) Long Term Commission

The council received and considered the report of the Commission on long-term budget options. The report of the Commission noted specific comments made in discussion:

1) tighter controls, especially on property maintenance expenditure, should be put in place to restrain the council from unwitting or reckless acceptance of unbudgeted costs, for example by:-

a) requiring, perhaps by amendment of Standing Order 39, all proposals for significant expenditure or reduction in income to be accompanied by a written budget impact statement specifying how it compares with the council's budget and its expected impact on the council's reserves position, such statement to be confirmed by the RFO;

b) requiring the council's monthly management accounts to be accompanied by a commentary by the RFO highlighting significant deviations from budget;

c) requiring the RFO to deliver by 15th July of each year in writing to the council's committee and working party chairmen a statement of the budgetary provision as in the previous winter's forward plans for their areas of responsibility for the year beginning 1st April next, together with a reminder that this should inform the bids which they make for that year in the usual annual finance committee meeting in September at the beginning of the budget round for the year ahead; and

d) requiring the finance committee to consider whether and how the BIGPIC presentation of the council's budget and reserve prospects could be simplified so as to focus its essential message more clearly;

2) at all times the council should maximise the use of any grants that may be available in support of its expenditure and projects, especially in the context of plans to renew the Community Centre; and

- 3) the specific option of planning to raise the precept by a further £5k in each year cumulatively beyond 2011-12 should be seen as either an alternative or, if needed, as a complement to selling property.

Cllr P Jay proposed that the council resolve:

- (i) to adopt for the purposes of its published budget for 2011-12 the forward planning figures for the years 2012-13 to 2015-16 set out in the alternative paper (budget 2011-12(7)(alternative)) reinforced by tighter controls to ensure that budgets are met as in the specific points made in discussion above and approves for immediate action points 1 a) – d) and 2; and
- (ii) to review the economics of owning a portfolio of property (other than property for its own use as a council), placing the council member for property (CMfP) in charge of this work.

The Mayor seconded this motion. Discussion followed. Cllr I Thomas proposed an amendment to the motion that the recommendations be sent back to the long-term commission. This amendment was seconded by Cllr P Redpath. This motion failed on a vote (3 votes for and 7 against).

Cllr P Redpath proposed that all references to ‘renew’ in relation to the Community Centre be replaced with ‘refurbish’. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs A Grant. The Deputy Mayor asked that this motion be amended so that the word re-model be used instead of refurbish. Cllrs P Redpath and Mrs A Grant agreed to this amendment.

RESOLVED

That all references to renewing the Community Centre would be replaced with re-modelling.

Cllr P Redpath asked that the original motion be broken down into two parts. Cllr Mrs T Redpath proposed an amendment to part (ii) to remove ‘placing the council member for property (CMfP) in charge of the work’. Cllr P Jay accepted this amendment. The council then voted on part (i) of the motion.

RESOLVED (10 votes for, 1 abstention)

That WTC adopt for the purposes of its published budget for 2011-12 the forward planning figures for the years 2012-13 to 2015-16 set out in the alternative paper (budget 2011-12(7) (alternative)) reinforced by tighter controls to ensure that budgets are met as in the specific points made in discussion listed above and approves for immediate action points 1 a) – d) and 2.

The second part of the motion was then discussed. Cllr T Gardiner expressed concern that WTC lacked a mechanism for undertaking the review of owning a portfolio of property (other than property for its own use as a council). He suggested that this go back to the long-term commission and offered to assist. Cllr A Glees asked that this review include members of the long-term commission and PWG.

The Deputy Mayor proposed that she analyse the figures that will be provided by the RFO and Cllr E Poskitt (PWG) offered to check the figures. The Deputy Mayor asked Cllr P Jay (long-term commission) and Cllr T Gardiner (PWG) to assist as well.

RESOLVED (7 votes for, 3 against)

That the Deputy Mayor and Cllr E Poskitt assisted by Cllrs P Jay and T Gardiner will analyse the property figures provided by the RFO.

(b) Woodstock@900

- (i) Minutes of the Woodstock @900 Committee meeting of 12th October 2010
The minutes of the Woodstock @900 Committee meeting of 12th October 2010 were received and considered.
- (ii) Dissolution of the Woodstock@900 Committee
Cllr P Jay thanked Cllr E Poskitt for all of her hard work on the Woodstock@900 Committee. He also apologised to Cllr L Glees and the Woodstock Literary Society for not thanking them for their help before now. He proposed that the Woodstock@900 Committee be dissolved and this motion was seconded by the Mayor.

RESOLVED

That the Woodstock@900 Committee be dissolved.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Mayor proposed 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. This proposal was seconded by the Cllr P Jay.

RESOLVED

That the public be asked to withdraw from the meeting.

WTC/229/10 PROPERTY UPDATE

- (i) Town Hall
Fixed wiring testing and the need for quick release locks on the front doors were discussed. The responsibilities of Carter Jonas require further clarification. The Deputy Mayor told the council that she would be attending a meeting with the Council Member for Property and Carter Jonas in order to clarify the delineation between the work of Carter Jonas and the Town Hall staff in order to achieve consistency.
- (ii) Community Centre
The requirement for an industrial dishwashing machine was discussed. The lunch club has kindly offered to contribute £300 towards this piece of equipment. Cllr T Gardiner proposed that the dishwasher be funded from the Community Centre re-modelling budget and the £300 contribution. This motion was seconded by Cllr E Poskitt but failed on a vote (4 votes for but 5 against).

The Deputy Mayor proposed that she would investigate to see whether it is better to lease or buy a dishwasher, and if feasible action this as a priority matter. Cllr A Glees seconded the motion but asked that this action be brought back to Council at the February meeting. The Deputy Mayor accepted this amendment.

RESOLVED (9 votes for)

The Deputy Mayor will investigate the options for an industrial dishwasher and report back to the Council at the February meeting.

- (iii) Number 24 Market Place
The CMfP updated the Council on progress relating to the leasing of 24 Market Place.
- (iv) 6 Park Street
The CMfP reported that the melting snow had caused the guttering between the sloping parts of the roof to fail. This was not part of the roof that had been re-slatted in 2010. An emergency repair had been organised by Carter Jonas and a long term solution is being sought.

(v) 8 Park Street Refurbishment
Cllr Peter Jay proposed that

- (i) the management and maintenance of council properties (other than those owned for our own use and insofar as the council continues to own such assets) be henceforward left wholly in the hands of our professional advisers (currently Carter Jonas), in accordance with an appropriate contract itself subject to annual review and subject to an annual budget for all maintenance and capital expenditure as fixed by the council in its budget;
- (ii) the Finance Committee be asked to advise whether this requires any amendment of financial regulations;
- (iii) the post of Council Member for Property be allowed to lapse from the Council's annual meeting in May, 2011; and
- (iv) Councillors be reminded every year of Standing Orders 61, 63 and 64.

The Mayor considered this to be a general motion rather than something that specifically related to this agenda item. He therefore asked that this motion be brought back to the February Town Council meeting.

The Deputy Mayor said that that the council should seek to save money but that when doing so it must follow due process. She proposed that WTC seek to revise the current round of tenders due to the costs being considerably in excess of the budget provisioned for this work on 8 Park Street, WTC is mindful of both the need for financial prudence for the foreseeable future and the need to generate income from 8 Park Street and therefore look to create a new reduced specification to meet the aforementioned objectives. This is to be done through our current property outsource consultants. Cllr P Jay seconded this motion.

RESOLVED (8 votes for, 1 against)

That Carter Jonas be asked to revise the current proposal in respect to 8 Park Street in order to try and reduce the required budget.

WTC/230/10 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS
None

WTC/231/10 CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS
None

The meeting rose at 10pm.

Signed Date