

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2011
IN THE MAYOR'S PARLOUR, WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL**

PRESENT:

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

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Three members of the public.

WTC/215/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Mrs E Stokes and E Poskitt.

WTC/216/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr B Yoxall declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 15 (b) ii, Strategy Working Group, Severe Winter Weather because his wife sustained an injury during severe winter weather on Christmas Eve 2009.

WTC/217/11 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF:

The Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 15th November 2011 were approved and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

WTC/169/11, Declarations of Interest: It was noted that Cllrs Mrs P Richardson, Mrs A Grant and Mrs E Stokes had declared personal interests in Agenda Item 16c (ii) Meetings of Committees and Sub-committees (c) Finance Committee (ii) First Draft Budget 2012/13 as they are members of the Youth Club Committee.

WTC/171/11, Public participation (i) The Future of the Oxfordshire Museum: The sentence 'Cllr Mrs P Richardson considered that the museum is a key contributor to the 'Wake Up To Woodstock' footfall.' Had the following words inserted before the full stop 'and suggested that a list of volunteer slots be considered'.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 22nd November 2011 were approved and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

WTC/196/11, Community Centre: The words 'and the bar' were added to the end of the first sentence of the third paragraph. Page 114 the minutes were amended to record that it was Cllr E Poskitt who noted the complaint of the tenant about noise and not Cllr Mrs E Jay. The first sentence of the sixth paragraph was amended and the word 'period' inserted after the word 'limited'.

WTC/201/11, Freeman and Townsman: The following sentence inserted after the first sentence 'These were seconded by the Deputy Mayor'.

WTC/203/11, Property Update. (v) The references to 24 Market Street were amended to read '24 Market Place'. (ix) Extension of Town Hall Wedding Licence, the following sentence was inserted at the end of the first sentence 'Cllr A Glees was concerned about the provenance of the double booking.'

The Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 29th November 2011 were approved and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

WTC /209/11 Budget 2012/13 (a) Pay Award: The following words were deleted from the second sentence 'whether the government is able to pass laws on local government pay and asked'. The following sentence was inserted after the second sentence 'Cllr P Redpath said that we are living in stringent times and that this issue should be reviewed at a more appropriate time.' (c) Marriage Licences: Mid way down the second paragraph on page 122 the minutes were amended as follows 'Cllr Mrs A Grant reminded the council that the Finance Committee had brought the additional licensing to council.....' This paragraph was further amended to record that it was Cllr Mrs A Grant and not Cllr Mrs E Jay who had 'reminded Cllrs that it was something that had been considered at the end of the last meeting and so was already approved'.

WTC/211/11 Grants and Donations: The references to the 'Oxford Community Woodland' were amended to read 'Oxfordshire Woodland'.

WTC/218/11 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No residents wished to address the Council at this meeting.

Mr Trevor Hendy and Ms Carol Anderson were present at the meeting therefore the Mayor asked the Council to agree to take agenda item 9, 'The Future of the Oxfordshire Museum' next and Cllrs agreed to do so.

WTC/219/11 THE FUTURE OF THE OXFORDSHIRE MUSEUM

Cllr A Glees thanked Ms Anderson for showing him the Woodstock Room on the second floor of the museum. He considered it to be very good but suggested that it might benefit from better signposting from the first floor. Cllr A Glees queried whether there were things in the Muniment Room that could be considered for inclusion in the Woodstock Room. Cllr A Glees proposed that a meeting be held between representatives from the County Museum, Honorary Townsman John Banbury and Cllrs to discuss possible items for inclusion. The Mayor seconded this proposal but asked that it be amended so that Ms Anderson meet Honorary Townsman John Banbury to determine whether there is anything that might be of interest to the museum then, if so, this matter be brought to Council for consideration. This amendment was accepted by Cllr A Glees.

RESOLVED

That Ms Anderson meet Honorary Townsman John Banbury to determine whether there is anything that might be of interest to the museum from the Town Hall archives then, if so, this matter be brought to Council for consideration.

The Deputy Mayor noted the 40% cut in museum funding and said that there is a common objective to generate additional funds to help the museum. Cllr B Yoxall offered to help with a county-wide fund raising/PR Campaign to help fund this gap. Cllr B Yoxall pointed to the potential of using Oxfordshire celebrities from various areas of interest such as business and sport as well as the arts and further suggested that it might be appropriate to approach the Duke of Marlborough with a view to arranging a celebrity function at Blenheim, possibly timed to coincide with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, with the profits going to the Museum Service. He also suggested exploring the possibility of tapping EU funding via the office of Catherine Bearder M.E.P. in Park End Street, Oxford. Mr Hendy has already met with Mr John Harwood and discussed ways of getting more people involved and will meet him again in the New Year. He thanked the Deputy Mayor for his offer of help and asked him for the contact details of local MEP's.

***ACTION:** The Deputy Mayor will pass the details of local MEP's to Mr Hendy.*

Cllr P Redpath suggested that the Green Gym could help in the museum garden if WTC would contribute the funding for this. Cllr P Redpath proposed that of the 24 annual Green Gym sessions paid for by WTC, the council could divert 4 sessions for 12-15 people to work for four hours in the Museum Gardens. The Mayor seconded this motion.

RESOLVED (13 votes for, 1 Cllr did not vote)
that of the 24 annual Green Gym sessions paid for by WTC the council could divert 4 sessions for 12-15 people to work for four hours in the Museum Gardens.

***ACTION:** Cllr P Redpath will work with the Green Gym and the Museum and arrange for 4 sessions of the Green Gym to be undertaken in the Museum gardens during 2012.*

It was suggested that the next WTC Newsletter might include an invitation to people to become volunteers and help the Museum. Ms Anderson said that a part time volunteer co-ordinator has been appointed by the museum and will start work next week. This person will produce a programme in the New Year and then approach the Town Clerk and request that this information be included on the Town Council web site and in the next WTC newsletter.

WTC/220/11 *REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS*

(i) Report from District Cllr J Cooper

Cllr J Cooper has followed up on Cllr C Carritt's motion that WODC be asked for assurances that where offenders are identified the district council will take robust action to ensure compliance with the law and that such actions will be applied equally to residential and commercial properties. Cllr J Cooper confirmed that WODC do not enforce this policy. Cllr J Cooper reported that on 7th December WODC had considered the 2012/13 grants for the voluntary sector and decided that there will be a £25k reduction in the amount paid to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). This equates to 11.5% of the previous grant and takes no account of inflation. The Mayor proposed that WTC write to WODC to say that it is amazed and shocked by this huge cut when people need help with things that affect their families in these difficult economic times. Cllr P Jay seconded this motion.

RESOLVED (Unanimous)

That WTC write to WODC to say that it is amazed and shocked by this huge cut in the CAB grant when people need help with things that affect their families in these difficult economic times.

***ACTION:** The Town Clerk will write to WODC.*

In response to a query it was explained that CAB staff are a mixture of volunteers and paid specialist staff such as senior debt advisors.

(ii) Report from District and County Cllr I Hudspeth.

A report from Cllr I Hudspeth had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr I Hudspeth confirmed that the Woodstock library would have a professional librarian working alongside volunteers. He suggested that the use of volunteers be explored as some people would like to volunteer but are unable to do so during office hours and so may be prepared to open the library on Sunday mornings.

WTC/221/11 COMMUNICATIONS

Cllr A Glees asked to be allowed to comment on a letter received from Mr Stan Scott and circulated to all Cllrs for information. The Mayor said that as this matter was not an agenda item it could not be discussed.

The Mayor reported that Mrs Gill Morris, the Woodstock librarian, is retiring at Christmas. The Mayor considered her to be a fantastic librarian and that this will be a sad day for Woodstock. Cllr Mrs P Richardson noted the work that Mrs Morris has also done with children. The Mayor reported that Police Sergeant David Yates will be retiring from the Thames Valley Police Force at Christmas after serving the residents of Woodstock for the past 10 years. The Mayor said that this will be sad for Woodstock but that Chief Inspector Colin Payne will be coming to address WTC at the January meeting and so Cllrs can raise any concerns at that time.

***ACTION:** Retirements cards will be sent to Mrs Morris and Sergeant Yates.*

Cllr A Glees noted that he would like to thank these two individuals. It was suggested that WTC might consider inviting them for a drink with Cllrs. Cllr C Carritt suggested that if so, this should precede a Council meeting and suggested doing so in February 2012.

The Mayor thanked Cllrs for their donations of raffle prizes, purchase of raffle tickets and help with the Mayor's Coffee Morning that was held recently. This event raised £300 and there are still some items left to sell. The Mayor proposed that WTC agrees to the use of the now vacant shop in the Town Hall to sell the remaining items during the run-up to Mayor's Carols. This motion was seconded by Cllr Mrs P Richardson.

RESOLVED (Unanimous)

That WTC agrees to the use of the now vacant shop in the Town Hall to sell the remaining items during the run-up to Mayor's Carols.

WTC/222/11 QUESTIONS

A question was lodged by Cllr Mrs E Jay in accordance with Standing Order 24. This concerned a double booking and was addressed to the Mayor. Cllr Mrs E Jay distributed hard copies of her question to all Cllrs. The Mayor considered that this question should be taken in the Confidential Session and the Council agreed to defer this item until later on the agenda.

WTC/223/11 MOTIONS

Cllr C Carritt proposed the following motion:

“Woodstock Town Council re-affirms its previous resolution and protocol on the need for all Councillors, with the exception of the Town Mayor, to ensure that prior appointment is made with the town hall before visiting. This applies to visits to meet with the Clerk or her assistant but does not apply to simple collection or delivery of materials or documents. Please note that this was deemed a necessary discipline on the part of Councillors in order that the town hall staff have minimum interruptions and can progress their duties effectively and expeditiously. The staff workload has not changed and it is for this reason that a re-affirmation of the policy is needed.”

This motion was seconded by Cllr Mrs V Edwards. Cllr T Gardiner asked that the motion be amended to allow for urgent occasions and Cllrs Carritt and Mrs V Edwards agreed to this.

RESOLVED (Unanimous)

That Woodstock Town Council re-affirms its previous resolution and protocol on the need for all Councillors, with the exception of the Town Mayor, to ensure that other than in urgent situations prior appointment is made with the town hall before visiting.

This applies to visits to meet with the Clerk or her assistant but does not apply to simple collection or delivery of materials or documents. Please note that this was deemed a necessary discipline on the part of Councillors in order that the town hall staff have minimum interruptions and can progress their duties effectively and expeditiously. The staff workload has not changed and it is for this reason that a re-affirmation of the policy is needed.”

WTC/224/11 ALLOTMENTS

The Council considered whom it should appoint to represent WTC on the Allotment Society. Cllrs Mrs E Jay and Mrs P Richardson expressed an interest in doing so.

RESOLVED

That Cllrs Mrs E Jay and Mrs P Richardson will represent WTC on the Allotment Society.

WTC/225/11 PLANNING MATTERS

(i) Planning Applications

a) Ref: 11/1830/P/FP

Change of use of land to erect a detached garage.
34 Bear Close, Woodstock

RESOLVED

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

b) Ref: 11/1841/P/S73

Non compliance with condition 2 of planning permission
10/1536/P/FP EXT to allow changes to north elevation.
Land adjacent to The Glove House, 105 Manor Road, Woodstock.

RESOLVED

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

***ACTION:** The planning comments will be relayed to WODC by the office staff.*

(ii) Local Development Framework

The Mayor proposed that Huw Mellor of Kemp and Kemp is asked to represent WTC at the Local Development Framework discussions in Spring 2012. This motion was seconded by Cllr J Cooper.

RESOLVED

That Huw Mellor of Kemp and Kemp is asked to represent WTC at the Local Development Framework discussions in Spring 2012.

***ACTION:** The Clerk will inform Mr Mellor of WTC's resolution.*

It was confirmed that there is a provision for planning consultants in the 2012/13 budget.

WTC/226/11 FINANCIAL ISSUES

(i) To receive the List of Payments for November 2011

It was proposed and seconded that the list of payments made in the month of November 2011 amounting to £27,999.53 be received and approved.

RESOLVED

That the list of payments made in the month of November 2011 amounting to £27,999.53 is approved.

Cllr Mrs V Edwards asked to see a cost breakdown of the Henmans bill for the work on the Bowls and Tennis Club. She considered that the breakdowns need to be more specific and asked to see copies of the charge certificates for these.

***ACTION:** Henmans will be asked to provide copies of the charge certificates for the work undertaken on the Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club.*

(ii) To receive the Bank Reconciliation Statements for November 2011

The Council received and considered the Bank Reconciliation Statements for November 2011.

(iii) To receive the Summary and Detailed Income and Expenditure Statements for November 2011

The Summary and Detailed Income and Expenditure Statements for November 2011 were received and considered.

(iv) To Initiate a Review of the Internal Auditor

The Clerk/RFO said that the external auditors had commented on the need for a periodic review of the internal auditor and suggested that this would also be good practice. The Mayor proposed that the Town Clerk/RFO is asked to look for comparable costs and request and also ask for one extra visit a year. This motion was seconded by the Chairman of the Finance Committee. Discussion followed. It was agreed that the comparison should be based on more than just costs, that the current internal auditor should be made aware that WTC is undertaking this comparison and that reference is made to the minutes of early 2004.

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk/RFO investigate comparable costs and services and schedule in one extra visit a year by the internal auditor.

***ACTION:** The Clerk will make the current auditor aware of WTC's comparison and request that he schedules in one additional visit.*

(v) Updating the Risk Assessment

The Town Clerk/RFO reminded Cllrs that WTC needs to undertake an annual review of the Risk Assessment. She will distribute copies of the current risk assessment on 20th Dec to relevant Cllrs for consideration and updating if required. The risk assessment will be updated in January 2012 and brought to WTC for its approval in February 2012.

ACTIONS:

1. *The Clerk will distribute copies of the current risk assessment to relevant Cllrs on 20th December.*
2. *Cllrs will pass the Clerk any amendments early January 2012.*
3. *The Clerk will update the risk assessment and bring it to Council for formal approval in February 2012.*

WTC/227/11 LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MILL RACE

A report from Cllr C Carritt about the legal responsibility of the Mill Race was received and considered. Cllr C Carritt proposed that WTC asks its insurers (Zurich) for an opinion about the insurance position relating to the Mill Stream that runs through the water meadows and brings this response back to a future Town Council meeting for consideration. This motion was seconded by Cllr P Redpath.

RESOLVED (Unanimous)

That WTC asks its insurers (Zurich) for an opinion about the insurance position relating to the Mill Stream that runs through the water meadows and brings this response back to a future Town Council meeting for consideration.

***ACTION:** The Town Council will contact Zurich and ask for their opinion on this matter.*

WTC/228/11 COMMUNITY CENTRE PROJECT MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT

The Chairman of the Community Centre Working Party introduced the Project Team Report 1 (December 2011). The project finances were discussed at some length. The Chairman of the Community Centre Working Group re-affirmed that this project will only progress if fully funded. Fund raising is continuing. It was agreed that the regular Thursday evening working party meetings would be discontinued until the New Year. The arguments for and against registering the Community Centre as a charity were discussed. This matter is still being investigated by the Chairman of the working party who will report back in due course. The Mayor reported that it had taken 1.5 days for the staff to print this document and asked that full re-prints are not produced every month, only updates of the relevant sections. The Chairman of the working party and Cllr P Jay noted this request. Cllr A Glees proposed that every Cllr be copied all updates to the existing document but that the Town Clerk will retain the Master Document in the Town Hall. This proposal was seconded by Cllr J Cooper.

RESOLVED (8 votes for, 2 abstentions)

That every Cllr be copied all updates to the existing document and that the Town Clerk will retain the Master Document in the Town Hall.

Cllr T Gardiner proposed that the cost of printing large reports be investigated with external printers as they may be able to do so more economically. This motion was seconded by Cllr P Redpath.

RESOLVED (8 votes for)

That the cost of printing large reports be investigated with external printers.

***ACTION:** The Clerk will arrange for the cost of printing large reports to be investigated with external printers.*

The Mayor thanked Cllrs Mrs V Edwards, Mrs L Glees and P Jay for their work on this project.

WTC/229/11 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(a) Legacy Fund Trustees

The minutes from the meeting of the Legacy Fund Trustees held on 1st November 2011 were received and noted. The Chairman of the Legacy Fund Trustees reported that a number of suggestions had been received and considered from residents. It is hoped that further suggestions will be received.

ACTIONS:

- 1. The Town Clerk will write letters of acknowledgement to the residents who have written and made suggestions to WTC.*
- 2. The Legacy Fund will be included as an item on the Agenda for the February 2012 Town Council meeting.*

(b) Strategy Working Group

(i) Minutes

The minutes from the Strategy Working Group held on 16th November 2011 were received and noted.

(ii) Severe Winter Weather

Cllr B Yoxall declared a personal interest because his wife sustained an injury during severe winter weather on Christmas Eve 2009. Cllr B Yoxall provided Cllrs with a breakdown of the Winter Weather budget and went through this in detail. The Mayor thanked the Deputy Mayor for his work on this project.

(c) Environment Working Group

The minutes from the Environment Working Group held on 28th November 2011 were received and noted. The Chairman of the group confirmed that there was no proposal for WTC to directly employ a grave digger.

WTC/230/11 REFURBISHED RECYCLING BINS

Cllr Mrs P Richardson informed Cllrs that WODC has offered WTC nine, possibly ten, refurbished recycling bins for the Town. These will be black and gold and more attractive than the ones that had previously been on offer. Cllr Mrs P Richardson and Cllr C Carritt have produced a list of sites where these bins should be installed and the Clerk has forwarded this information to WODC.

WTC/231/11 RECYCLING BOXES

Cllr T Gardiner explained that when putting out the WODC recycling boxes for emptying you can sometimes get quite dirty. He has sourced a little trolley that helps prevent this and WODC are currently considering whether to make these available to residents. These trolleys work on flat ground only. Cllr P Redpath considered that there might be a design flaw as the trolleys lift the boxes from the lip and this may fail when the boxes are full of paper. Cllr T Gardiner suggested that these trolleys could represent a commercial opportunity for WTC as there are discounts for bulk purchases. Cllr Mrs L Glees queried how the sales would be managed. She was concerned that if they were done through the Town Hall it would result in interruptions to the work of the office. Cllr P Jay thought that it might be illegal for a Town Council to go into business and sell these trolleys and so the position must be checked with OALC/NALC.

Cllr T Gardiner proposed the following three part motion that was taken separately as follows:

- (i) That WTC pursue the idea of promoting these trolleys to residents. This part of the motion was seconded by Cllr C Carritt.

RESOLVED (11 votes for, 1 against)
That WTC will promote the trolleys to residents

- (ii) That WTC obtains leaflets about the trolleys and if it is legal for it to do so considers the option of selling the trolleys. This motion was seconded by the Mayor.

RESOLVED (7 votes for, 5 against and 1 abstention)
That WTC obtains leaflets about the trolleys and if it is legal for it to do so considers the option of selling the trolleys.

- (iii) That if it is legal for WTC to sell the trolleys, WTC explores with the hardware shop at 4 Market Street whether it would be prepared to stock and sell these trolleys on behalf of WTC. This motion was seconded by Cllr Mrs E Jay.

RESOLVED (9 votes for)
That if it is legal for WTC to sell the trolleys, WTC explores with the hardware shop at 4 Market Street the possibility of it stocking and selling these trolleys on behalf of WTC.

ACTIONS:

1. Cllr T Gardiner will arrange for leaflets about the trolleys to be made available in the Town Hall.
2. The Clerk will confirm whether it would be legal for WTC to sell these trolleys with OALC/NALC.
3. If it is legal to do so, the hardware shop at 4 Market Street be approached about the process by which the trolleys might be sold by them on behalf of WTC.

WTC/232/11 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was 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 asked to withdraw.

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 asked to withdraw.

WTC/233/11 STAFFING UPDATE

- (i) Deputy Caretaker

The Clerk reported that two completed applications have been received for the position of Deputy Caretaker. Both applicants will be interviewed. It was noted that Cllr Mrs L Glees would like the job description for this post to include putting out the chairs in the Assembly Room for clubs.

- (ii) Administrative Assistant

The Clerk reported that 24 applications had been produced and that six candidates have been short listed for interview.

WTC/234/11 PROPERTY UPDATE

(i) 8 Park Street

The Council received and noted an update about the current position relating to this property.

(ii) 24 Market Place

Carter Jonas has sent WTC details of a prospective tenant for this shop who is offering 6 months rent as a deposit. Cllr C Carritt proposed that WTC accepts the Carter Jonas recommendation and accepts the offer from the prospective tenant. This motion was seconded by Cllr J Cooper.

RESOLVED (8 votes for, 3 abstentions)

That WTC accepts the Carter Jonas recommendation and accepts the offer from the prospective tenant.

WTC/235/11 WOODSTOCK BOWLS AND TENNIS CLUB

The Chairman of the Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club Working Group updated Cllrs about the current position relating to the renewal of the lease. Cllr P Redpath proposed that WTC agree to an extension in time until 13th January 2012 to enable the Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club Trustees time to get together and sign the new lease. This motion was seconded by Cllr T Gardiner.

RESOLVED (12 votes for, 1 vote against and 1 non-vote)

That WTC agrees to an extension in time until 13th January 2012 to enable the Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club Trustees time to get together and sign the new lease.

The Mayor thanked Cllr P Redpath for his work on this matter.

WTC/236/11 QUESTIONS

This item was deferred from earlier in the agenda. Cllr Mrs E Jay presented her question about the recent double booking to the Mayor. The Mayor reminded Cllrs that under the WTC Standing Orders she is not required to respond but said that she would do so. The Mayor confirmed a personal interest, the arrangements for hire of the Mayor’s Parlour for the Literary Festival, the opportunity to increase revenue by the extension of the wedding licence and every endeavour would be made to resolve the double booking issue. The Festival would not pursue the hire of the Mayor’s Parlour in 2012 and she gave information regarding the Festival Book Shop. Cllr A Glee thanked her for her response.

WTC/237/11 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

No documents were sealed at this meeting.

The meeting rose at 10.30pm.

Signed Date