

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL  
HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2013  
IN THE MAYOR'S PARLOUR, WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT:**

|                       |                                  |                |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Cllr B Yoxall (Mayor) | Cllr Mrs E Stokes (Deputy Mayor) | Cllr C Carritt |
| Cllr J Cooper         | Cllr E Poskitt                   | Cllr P Jay     |
| Cllr M Robertson      | Cllr Mrs P Richardson            | Cllr T Wray    |

Cllrs G Fleetwood and S Parnes (after the start of the meeting)

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** 12 Members of the Public.

**WTC/231/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs V Edwards and County Cllr I Hudspeth.

**WTC/232/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr E Poskitt declared a general interest in Agenda Item 9 Planning Applications because she is a District Cllr who sits on the Uplands Planning Committee. Cllr J Cooper declared a general interest in Agenda Items 4 Public Participation (ii) as he is a member of the Electoral Reform Society, 4 (iii) because he is a trustee of ORCC who gave a grant towards the Market Town Partnership Survey, Item 9 (d) Planning Application 13/0162/P/FP as he is a District Cllr and this relates to WODC land, Item 12 as he is the Chairman of the Woodstock Youth Club and item 18 (ii) Solar Panels on the Community Centre. Cllr M Robertson declared a general interest in Agenda Item 9 (d) Planning Application 13/0162/P/FP as she is a neighbour to the house which is the subject of the planning application. The Mayor declared a general interest in Agenda Item 12: 'Capability Brown' Picture. Cllr P Jay declared a general interest in Agenda Item 9 Planning Applications (b) Ref: 13/0074/P/LB because he knew the applicant.

**WTC/233/12 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF:**

Cllr G Fleetwood joined the meeting at this point.

The minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2013 were approved and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

WTC/209/12: County & District Cllr Updates (i) County Cllr I Hudspeth. The last sentence of the final paragraph was revised to read 'He noted that WODC are responsible for enforcing parking regulations in Woodstock'.

WTC/217/12: Property Matters (ii) Double Booking. The resolution was amended so that the word 'it' was deleted and replaced by the word 'they'. (iii) Town Hall Booking Forms and Pricing Policy. The first part of the third sentence was amended to read 'The Mayor proposed that this item be deferred until February in order that he can hold a meeting with the CMfP, the former CMfP and staff together..... meeting.'

WTC/223/12: Wall Plaques. It was noted that it was Cllr Poskitt (singular) at the beginning of the second sentence.

WTC/225/12: Memorial Garden. The minutes were amended to note that it is Memorial Garden singular.

Cllr S Parnes joined the meeting at this point.

## **WTC/234/12 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

### **(i) Mr C Harris**

Mr C Harris made a statement that summarised his interactions with WTC relating to the interment of his fathers ashes and the subsequent correspondence. At the end of his statement Mr Harris asked the council three questions. The Mayor said that on behalf of the Council he would like to acknowledge and express regret for the fact that the decision of the Council at the January Meeting to refer him to the Code of Conduct process is now seen as unhelpful. The Town Council had no further comment to make. Cllr Parnes proposed a motion that an ETC be called but this motion was not seconded and so fell.

### **(ii) Mrs T Redpath**

Cllr J Cooper declared a general interest as he is a member of the Electoral Reform Society. Mrs T Redpath was responding to suggestions in the December ETC minutes that WAG was a pressure group. She explained the background to the Woodstock Action Group, its constitution and some of its activities. She explained that WAG is an "action" group established to enable residents to fight "inappropriate" development. Mrs Redpath addressed a question to one Cllr and distributed hard copies of her statement to all Cllrs.

### **(iii) Dr Bob McGurrian**

Cllr J Cooper declared a general interest because he is a trustee of ORCC who gave a grant towards the Market Town Partnership Survey. Dr McGurrian presented information about a WTC allocation of funding towards the Market Town Partnership Survey and queried how this money was spent. The Mayor asked for clarification of this query in writing.

## **WTC/235/12 COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR UPDATES**

### **(i) County Cllr I Hudspeth**

The February 2013 report from County Cllr Hudspeth was noted. The Mayor said that Cllr Hudspeth had recently attended a meeting about the Woodstock Library and intended to speak about this at the Annual Town Meeting.

Cllr Parnes spoke about the field behind the Marlborough School. He proposed that WTC ask OCC whether the person who was the head of planning at the time that OCC consulted with Woodstock residents about the Soldiers of Oxford Museum, was the same officer involved in relinquishing the lease on the field at the back of the Marlborough School. It was agreed that this motion stand adjourned until the March meeting.

***ACTION:*** *The Town Clerk will bring this item forward to the next meeting.*

### **(ii) District Cllrs J Cooper and E Poskitt**

The council received and noted the February 2013 report from District Cllrs Cooper and Poskitt.

***ACTION:*** *The Mayor will send a letter to the Woodstock Primary School to congratulate them on their Green Flag Award.*

## **WTC/236/12 COMMUNICATIONS**

The Mayor noted that the Annual Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2013. A flyer advertising the meeting will be inserted in the forthcoming WTC Newsletter.

The Mayor's report that was not published in the February edition of the Woodstock and Bladon News will be included in the next issue.

The Mayor invited Cllrs to a meeting with two local people interested in Leisure and Tourism and WODC representatives on 19<sup>th</sup> February. The purpose of the meeting is to update the strategy.

The Mayor reported that after discussions with the Marlborough School a bench had been proposed as a permanent commemoration of the Diamond Jubilee. The Mayor circulated details of the envisaged design and reported that the proposed site was outside the museum against the wall close by the stocks. The bench will cost £350 and the Mayor proposed that this cost be equally divided between WTC and the Marlborough School (£175 each). It is hoped that it can be installed to coincide with the Queen's celebrations on 6<sup>th</sup> June and that WTC will provide a commemorative plaque.

**RESOLVED**

That WTC supports the proposal detailed above.

The Mayor notified Cllrs that he had received a letter from a tenant requesting that the Council review its policy about dogs being allowed in WTC buildings.

**RESOLVED**

That this matter will be considered at the next Mayor's Committee meeting.

**ACTION:** *The Town Clerk will include this item on the agenda for the next Mayor's Committee.*

The Mayor reported that he would discuss with the Chief Executive of Blenheim Palace the concerns of a resident about parking issues at Brook Hill by visitors to the estate.

**WTC/237/12 QUESTIONS**

Cllr C Carritt asked the Mayor the following question:

*"Does the Town Mayor agree with WODC's Housing Needs Assessment 2008 and numerous other housing charities, such as Shelter and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, that the affordability of homes in Woodstock is as great a problem as ever, and that the Town Council should engage with others to find solutions to these long term difficulties? How does the Town Mayor consider that the Council might take the matter forward in order to meet these challenges and when might we expect some firm proposals to come before the Council?"*

The Mayor responded as follows:

*As someone whose eldest son has had to leave Woodstock with his family during the past year because he could not afford the £925 per month rent for a terraced house in Hensington Walk I certainly do agree with the import of this question. I propose as follows:*

- a) Use the medium of the forthcoming TC Newsletter to engage with residents on this issue.
- b) Set up a working group, preferably under the chairmanship of Cllr Colin Carritt, to study the housing affordability issue in Woodstock.
- c) To that end the working group should enlist the services of ORCC to undertake a Housing Needs Survey as was done in 2005 so that the current scale of the problem can be accurately determined.
- d) The Working Group should also engage with WODC housing specialists to determine the impact of WODC conclusions on the Local Plan on the affordable housing issue in Woodstock.

- e) The Working Group should investigate any other issues it considers to be relevant to the subject.
- f) A report to be prepared by the end of 2013.

**WTC/238/12 MOTIONS PRESENTED TO COUNCIL**

The following motion was submitted by Cllr Carritt and seconded by Cllr Poskitt

*“WTC supports the recent WODC proposal, referred to their Environment Scrutiny Committee thus:-*

*To work with OCC, Thames Valley Police and the new Police and Crime Commissioner to:*

- *create an enforceable 20mph limit on the A4095 through the centre of Bladon and on Heath Lane, Bladon;*
- *develop other measures to reduce heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) use on the A4095 through Bladon;*
- *looks realistically at methods of traffic slowing through other villages and small towns such as Woodstock, where major roads run in confined spaces through the centres of communities.*
- *WTC believes that carefully targeted mandatory 20 mph speed limits in urban centres and 20 mph speed zones in residential estate roads will play a significant part in reducing injury and/or accidents.*

Cllr P Jay proposed the following amendment that was agreed by Cllrs Carritt and Poskitt:

- *and WTC notes with approval the oral report by Cllr Jay on the meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February of the A44A Group and reconfirms its support for the Group's continuing efforts to reduce HGV traffic on the A44 by all appropriate means, including especially the de-prioritisation of the A44 between Southcombe and Troopers Lodge.*

Discussion followed during which Cllr Poskitt explained that Bladon was included in the motion as it would benefit from WTC's support.

**RESOLVED** (Unanimous)

That the motion above as amended is approved.

**WTC/239/12 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

Cllr E Poskitt declared a general interest as she is a District Cllr who sits on the Uplands Planning Committee. The following planning applications were received and considered:

- a) Ref: 13/0056/P/FP: The Oxford School of Drama, Sansomes Farm Studios, Woodstock - Change of use of land to create bus pull-in area and alterations to widen existing entrance.

**RESOLVED** (Unanimous)

WTC fully supports this planning application

- b) Ref: 13/0074/P/LB: Garden Cottage, Manor Road, Woodstock - Alterations to roof including insertion of new roof tiles. Cllr Jay declared a general interest as he knew the applicant.

**RESOLVED**

WTC has no comment to make about this planning application

- c) Ref: 13/0133/P/LB: 34 High Street, Woodstock - Internal alterations.

**RESOLVED**

WTC has no comment to make about this planning application

- d) Ref:13/0162/P/FP: 5 Glyme Close, Woodstock - Change of use of land from amenity to domestic and erection of fence (Retrospective).

Cllr J Cooper declared a general interest as he is a District Cllr and this relates to WODC land. Cllr M Robertson declared a general interest as she is a neighbour to the house which is the subject of the planning application.

**RESOLVED** (Unanimous)

WTC objects to this planning application for the following reasons:

1. The proposed land does not belong to the applicant, and
2. On the grounds of planning policy NE13 Biodiversity Conservation as it is strongly believed there are Kingfishers nesting on this site.

**ACTION:** *The planning responses will be relayed to WODC.*

**WTC/240/12 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

- (i) To receive the list of payments for January 2013

**RESOLVED**

The list of payments made in the month of January 2013 amounting to £21,385.36 was received and approved.

- (ii) To receive the Bank Reconciliation Statements for January 2013

The Bank Reconciliation Statements for January 2013 were considered and noted.

- (iii) To receive the Summary and Detailed Income & Expenditure Statements for January 2013

The Summary and Detailed Income and Expenditure Statements for January 2013 were received and noted.

- (iv) Disposition of Funds

The report of the disposition of funds was received and noted.

- (v) Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit and Control Systems

The report of the internal controls was received.

**RESOLVED**

That all of the internal controls were judged to be satisfactory by the Cllrs involved.

- (vi) Risk Assessment

The Town Clerk reported that the WTC risk assessment had been completed in February 2013 and detailed the three actions arising from it.

**RESOLVED**

That the risk assessment is approved and will be signed by the Mayor and the Town Clerk.

- (vii) Internal Controls

It was noted that two internal controls procedures were carried out in January by councillors on petty cash and bank reconciliations and that no problems were reported.

(viii) Approval of Invoices

**RESOLVED**

That two of the three invoices presented by the Town Clerk will be paid and the third will be paid subject to it being confirmed that the work is complete.

**WTC/241/12 WOODSTOCK ACTION GROUP**

Cllrs received and considered a letter from the Woodstock Action Group (WAG) about the official WTC response sent to WODC about the Draft Local Plan prepared by the Town Clerk in conjunction with the Mayor (as she had not been present at the Town Meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2012). Discussion followed. Cllr Jay proposed the following motion that was seconded by Cllr Fleetwood.

**RESOLVED**

That WTC respond to the letter from Dr McGurrin and

1. Sympathetically explain why it is impossible to alter the minutes
2. Acknowledge that the way in which the motion to WODC about the Draft Local Plan was phrased did not make the significance of the main motion opposing further housing development as clear as it should have
3. Confirm that WTC has taken note of his concerns and will use all reasonable opportunities to bring home to WODC the fact that WTC opposes any development in Woodstock over and above what has already been done.

**ACTION:** *The Mayor will formally respond to Dr McGurrin.*

**WTC/242/12 'CAPABILITY BROWN' PICTURE**

Cllr J Cooper declared a general interest as he is the Chairman of the Woodstock Youth Club. The Mayor declared a general interest in this agenda item.

The Mayor said that advice has now been received from OALC/NALC. He read out the conclusion in the report. It was agreed that this matter will be discussed at the March 2013 meeting.

**ACTIONS:**

1. *The Town Clerk will circulate the advice received from OALC/NALC to all Cllrs*
2. *The 'Capability Brown' picture will be included on the agenda for the March meeting.*

**WTC/243/12 ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the Environment Committee held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2013 were received and considered. The recommendations and resolutions of the Environment Committee were noted.

WTC made the following resolutions:

(i) WTC Cemetery Rules

WTC received and considered the new cemetery rules and procedures. The professional advice of the ICCM was sought when revising the WTC Cemetery Rules. The risk assessment and agreements are currently in preparation.

**RESOLVED** (Unanimous)

That the revised cemetery rules are approved and will be applied from now on.

**ACTIONS:**

1. *Cllrs Carritt and Fleetwood will work with the Town Clerk to finalise the risk assessment and code of practice.*
2. *The agreements (based on ICCM templates) will be drafted.*

(ii) Double Depth Graves

**RESOLVED**

1. That WTC maintain the current policy of only offering single depth graves at present but that this policy should be reviewed in the future.
2. That the Town Clerk will ask the contractor employed to lay out the cemetery extension to consider including a limited number of double depth graves within their plans in accordance with the requirements of the Environment Agency. This matter will then be brought back to the EC for further consideration.

(iii) Buy Back of Pre-purchased Graves or Cremation Plots

**RESOLVED**

That if the purchase price is known the resident is refunded 50% of the original purchase fee. If the purchase fee cannot be confirmed the resident should be refunded 50% of the current rate.

(iv) Cemetery Charging Structure for Cremations

**RESOLVED**

That the charge applied should be for one casket irrespective of the number of sets of ashes contained therein.

(v) Memorials

**RESOLVED**

That the charge for the installation of memorials should be the same for residents and non-residents.

(vi) Play Areas – Additional Project Funding

**RESOLVED**

That WTC funds any shortfall in the funding required for the purchase and installation of a roundabout for Old Woodstock Play Area – estimated to be between £1.5k and £3.5k.

(vii) Replacement Benches on the Market Square

**RESOLVED**

That the benches be replaced.

(viii) Allotments

The minutes and report of the Allotments Association AGM were noted.

**WTC/244/12 OWL EXTENSION**

The council received and considered an oral report from the Chairman of the OWL Extension Working Group this report included:-

- a) Progress on the management plan and associated indicative budget;
- b) Progress on the fencing contract, now let, but not yet actioned on the ground;
- c) Progress of plans for tree clearance, tree works and path construction;
- d) Preparation of a risk assessment;

- e) Report on the first forum meeting, including election of a chairman, deputy-chairman and secretary and lively discussion of issues of concern to the council and Verenia Court residents;
- f) Lack of progress with completion of the conveyance of the land from Messers Morgan to the council; and prospects for the council's timetable for completing initial works in conformity with the deadline specified by the Big Lottery as a condition of its grant; and
- g) Henman's email of 5 February acknowledging instructions to accept conditions for the completion of the conveyance of the land to the council, as follows:-
  - i) The Council do not intend to use the property for any purpose other than as a nature reserve and the Council will not build any structure or building on the property.
  - ii) The Council will observe the terms of the agreement dated 15th July 1999 and as varied by OCC (details of which have been outlined in various correspondence) and will indemnify and keep indemnified the Morgans against any breach or non-observance thereof.
  - iii) To observe and perform the matters contained or referred to in the property register of the property.
  - iv) The Council will jointly make an application with the Morgans preventing the Council from disposing of the property with the Morgans' consent; You confirmed that this is not a concern for the Council as the Council do not intend to dispose of the property and therefore will not require the Morgans' consent.
  - v) As with no. iv above, the requirement to request that an incoming purchaser of the property executes a deed of covenant is not of concern to the Council as the Council do not intend to dispose of the property.
  - vi) As per your instruction, I will confirm to the Morgans' solicitor that the transfer is now agreed.

Discussion followed.

**RESOLVED**

That the report of the Chairman of the OWL WG is noted and approved.

A WTC newsletter item about the launch of the OWL Forum was noted.

**WTC/245/12 WATERMEADOWS**

**RESOLVED** (Unanimous)

That WTC give permission for a dozen willow poles to be cut for education and recreational purposes by David Rees.

**WTC/246/12 STAIRLIFT UPDATE**

The Mayor updated the council about progress in the installation of the Stairlift in the Town Hall and said that WTC could hope to hear from WODC within 10 days of the close of the current consultation.

**WTC/247/12 PROPERTY MATTERS**

(i) Booking Forms and Charges

A report and recommendation by the Mayor was received and considered.

Discussion followed. The Mayor proposed that the changes that he recommended in

the report be accepted and applied on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 and that principles be discussed later. This motion was seconded by the Deputy Mayor. Cllr Poskitt asked that the charge to the Stroke Club be changed to £15 and the proposer and seconder agreed to this amendment. A vote was then taken. There were 4 votes for, 5 votes against and the other Cllrs abstained so the motion fell.

**RESOLVED** (Unanimous)

that Cllr Poskitt, the former CMfP bring a proposal about booking charges to the next Mayor's Committee.

**ACTION:** *The Town Clerk will include this as an agenda item for the next Mayor's Committee meeting.*

A report about insurance charges by the Town Clerk was received and considered and WTC

**RESOLVED** (Unanimous)

that:

1. WTC discontinue charging the one-off/irregular hirers separately for hirer's liability insurance but absorbs the cost of this annual insurance through the basic hire charges.
2. WTC check whether all of its long term hirers have Public Liability insurance.

**ACTION:** *The Finance Assistant will work with the Administrative Assistant and implement this resolution.*

(ii) Homebuy Exhibition at the Community Centre

Sovereign Housing has arranged to host an exhibition in the Community Centre to promote the 'Open Market HomeBuy' scheme to Woodstock residents on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2013. Discussion followed.

**RESOLVED**

That there will be no charge for the use of the Community Centre by Sovereign Housing to promote the 'Open Market HomeBuy' scheme to Woodstock residents.

**ACTION:** *The Town Clerk will notify Sovereign of the Council's decision.*

(iii) The Disposal of Old Curtains from the Community Centre

**RESOLVED**

That the old curtains from the Community Centre will be disposed of by Cllr Poskitt.

(iv) Disposal of the Books in the Mayors Parlour

WTC received and considered an email from WODC that confirmed that the District Council would have no objection to WTC disposing of the books in the display cabinet in the Mayor's Parlour.

**RESOLVED**

That WTC will keep the books.

**ACTION:** *The prospective buyer of the books will be notified of the Council's decision.*

(v) Question of OCC Centralised Billing of Energy Consumption

This item was not discussed as the Finance Assistant had answered the CMfP's query earlier that day.

(vi) Legal Property Protocol

The Town Clerk confirmed that the commercial property protocol query had been sent to NALC. No response has been received yet

**ACTION:** *All other property matters will be brought to the Mayor's Committee.*

**WTC/248/12 COMMUNITY CENTRE PHOTOVOLTAICS**

Cllr J Cooper declared a general interest in this item. WTC received and considered two papers from Cllrs Carritt and Cllr Parnes. Discussion followed.

**RESOLVED** (Unanimous)

WTC supports the principle of installing solar photovoltaic panels on the Community Centre roof in line with the recommendations of the Council's property consultant Carter Jonas and subject to the signed formal agreement between the Council and the promoting body. The Council will publicly advertise the proposals in its newsletter, website and in the Woodstock and Bladon News and invite any entities that deal with solar energy or the funding thereof and who may wish to explore ideas and discuss costings with the Council.

**WTC/249/12 SHOE REPAIR SHOP**

The council received and considered an oral report from the Mayor.

**WTC/250/12 TOWN CENTRE RETAIL SUPPORT**

It was agreed that this matter be discussed at the March Town Council meeting.

**ACTION:** *The Town Clerk will include this as an item on the March agenda.*

**WTC/251/12 TRANSPORT NEEDS SURVEY**

It was agreed that this matter be discussed at the March Town Council meeting.

**ACTION:** *The Town Clerk will include this as an item on the March agenda.*

**WTC/252/12 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

The lease for the play area in Budds Close was sealed and signed by the Mayor and Town Clerk.

**WTC/253/12 VISITOR DEVELOPMENTS**

It was agreed that this matter be discussed at the next meeting of the Mayor's Committee.

**ACTION:** *The Town Clerk will include this as an item on the Mayor's Committee agenda.*

The Mayor asked the council to agree to extend the meeting by 10 minutes and the Council agreed to do so.

**WTC/254/12 ACTIONING RESOLUTIONS BY CORRESPONDENCE**

Cllrs received and considered a report and proposal by Cllr Parnes. The proposal was not supported.

The meeting rose at 10.40pm.

Signed ..... Date .....