

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF
THE WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 16th AUGUST 2016
IN THE MAYOR'S PARLOUR, WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL**

PRESENT:

Cllr E Poskitt (Mayor)
Cllr J Cooper
Cllr P Jay
Cllr P Redpath
Cllr B Yoxall

Cllr F Collingwood (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr Mrs A Grant
Cllr S Parnes
Cllr Mrs T Redpath

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: 8 members of the public.

WTC/127/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllrs Mrs S Rasch, Mrs M Robertson, Mrs E Stokes.

WTC/128/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

The following Cllrs declared general interests:

Cllr E Poskitt: Prejudicial interest in Agenda item 9 **WODC Yellow Cards Community Objections to 'Land East of Woodstock 'Planning Application** as she lives in Hedge End.

Cllr J Cooper: Agenda item 9 **WODC Yellow Cards Community Objections to 'Land East of Woodstock' Planning Application** as he is a Member of WODC.

Cllr F Collingwood Agenda item 5 **New Road Play Area** as he works for a firm who used to act as legal advice for the complainants.

WTC/129/16 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.

WTC/130/16 QUESTIONS: None.

WTC/131/16 NEW ROAD PLAY AREA

The Mayor pointed out that agreement over the arrangements for the removal of the MUGA had not been finalised and should be dealt with in the confidential session. Any specific comment about the details of the solicitors' invoices was business information and should be only raised in the confidential session.

Cllr Parnes raised questions over

- WODC's role
- Payment to solicitors
- Clerk's report for September meeting

Other points listed in the paper regarding familiarity and/or competence re local government law, instructions to solicitors and advice from solicitors were dealt with under the other items and not raised further.

The point was made that WODC was responsible for the s106 agreement with the developer and had been paid to facilitate the planning of the playground and therefore had been involved. The Mayor reported that WODC did not agree that the MUGA was wrongly sited.

The solicitors' invoices were discussed at length and whether it was appropriate to have gone to the solicitor. It was suggested by Cllr Collingwood that there had been a need as the matter was already in solicitors' hands but that quotations should have been received before there was a commitment.

Cllr Philip Redpath thought that the Council should have sought advice from a solicitor with the correct experience on parish and town councils.

RESOLVED that Council defers payment of the three invoices to enable the legal advisor to respond to an invitation to attend the September Council meeting without costs to clarify various issues relating to the dispute.

A named vote was requested:

For: Cllrs Collingwood, Grant, Parnes, P Redpath, T Redpath, Yoxall (6).

Against: Cllrs Cooper and Jay (2).

Abstaining: Cllr Poskitt

The need for the Clerk to produce a paper for the September meeting as earlier requested was noted. Other matters relating to this item were deferred to a confidential session at the end of the meeting.

WTC/132/16 ERECTION OF HEADSTONE AT GREEN LANE CEMETERY

There had been a request for special positioning of a new headstone at New Lane cemetery. Cllr Grant stated that whilst sympathetic with the request, WTC should maintain its policy for positioning headstones in straight rows both in order to leave room for mowing the grass between rows and to create a tidy, well cared for, cemetery. It was acceptable for the inscription to be on the path face of the tombstone. She proposed, Cllr Cooper seconded and it was

RESOLVED That WTC does not allow the special positioning of this gravestone but maintains the policy of aligning the headstones in rows. The Clerk would write to the relatives of the deceased informing them of this decision. This should include the agreement in the paragraph above.

For 8; against none; abstentions 1.

WTC/133/16 UNSIGHTLY AND DEFECTIVE ROOFS AT BEN'S CLOSE

Cllr Parnes introduced his resolution expressing concern about the continuing problems relating to the unsightly roofs at Ben's Close. He proposed, Cllr P Redpath seconded and Council

RESOLVED

to write again to Sovereign Housing and Blenheim Estate Contractors, conveying

- a. That in light of the extensive period until remedial works began, following years of exceptional deterioration and unsightly disrepair, and considering the ongoing inconvenience of scaffolding and roof works during the summer holiday period, some form of reasonable compensation to the tenants and the neighbouring community is called for (bearing in mind paid up rents, mortgages and/or housing benefit payments entitle tenants to live in accommodation free of disrepair and deterioration); and
- b. independent inspection to confirm structural integrity and safety is still outstanding.

For: 5 Against 3 Not voting 1

WTC/134/16 LOSS OF RETAIL SPACE IN WOODSTOCK AS REVEALED IN THE LOCAL PLAN MONITORING REPORT

Cllr Parnes introduced his paper and resolution that Council write to the District Council Planning Policy Department on this matter.

Some members felt that applications to turn retail to residential should be resisted by the planning authority. It was easy to run down a business and plead non viability. The Local Plan and the NPPF encouraged regeneration and there should be a requirement to demonstrate why the retail use was no longer viable.

Cllr Cooper thought there was a more vibrant economy in Woodstock than in some areas but Cllr Collingwood disagreed and thought that the Town Council should be actively encouraging vibrancy.

After discussion Cllr Parnes put his motion which was seconded by Cllr T Redpath.

For: 4 Against 4 Abstention 1.

The Mayor used her casting vote against the motion so the motion fell.

WTC/135/16 WODC YELLOW CARDS COMMUNITY OBJECTIONS TO LAND 'EAST OF WOODSTOCK' PLANNING APPLICATION

The Mayor, having declared a prejudicial interest left the meeting at this point and the Chair was taken by the Deputy Mayor.

Cllr Parnes introduced his motion expressing concern that WODC seemed to be giving inadequate attention to a previous communication over the 'yellow cards' and proposed the motion, seconded by Cllr P Redpath and Council

RESOLVED To write again to the District Council Planning Policy Department expressing disappointment that since the Town Clerk's letter of 25th July 2016, WODC has not acknowledged or acted in acceptance of the Town Council's resolution in which WTC "calls upon the Planning Authority to remove references to 'petition' in relation to the yellow cards (as by definition those are not a petition)", those cards comprising submissions by hundreds of members of the public in objection to proposals for major development on "Land East of Woodstock" (application 16/01364/OUT).

A named vote was called.

For: Cllrs Grant, Jay, Parnes, P Redpath, T Redpath, Yoxall (6)

Against: Cllrs Collingwood and Cooper (2)

The Mayor then returned to the room and resumed the Chair.

WTC/136/16 QUESTIONNAIRE RECEIVED FROM BLENHEIM ABOUT COUNTRYFILE LIVE

Cllrs expressed pleasure at the success of the CountryFile Live event itself but had serious misgivings over traffic management associated with the event. It was agreed that, in the Clerk's absence, the Mayor would liaise with the Town Clerk's Assistant to complete the questionnaire raising concern that the lessons of the Game Fair in 2008 had been overlooked or forgotten, signage had been unsatisfactory and publicity about traffic jams led those planning to visit Woodstock to stay away. The situation was not helped by Didcot to Oxford Railway line being closed and the Wilderness Festival in Charlbury taking place the same weekend.

WTC/137/16 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that in view of the commercial nature of the business to be transacted the public and press be temporarily excluded from the meeting (Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s.1).

WTC/138/16 NEW ROAD PLAY AREA (CONTINUED)

There was discussion around removal of the MUGA and the role the Parkinsons should be asked to play in this. There was doubt about the way the MUGA was fixed

into the ground. There should be a clear action plan from the complainants. It was proposed by Cllr Collingwood and seconded by Cllr T Redpath and

RESOLVED

a) that as the Clerk was on leave and the Mayor was going away the next day he Deputy Mayor Cllr F Collingwood should write to the Parkinsons asking them to name their contractor and confirm

- the amount of their public liability insurance:
- exactly what work is planned
- when the work will be carried out so that the Council can make arrangements for storage of the MUGA structure and close the playground whilst the work is carried out.

b) Council would seek at least three quotes, including one from the contractor who had already shown interest, for removal of the apparatus and making good the surface with quotes for both digging the apparatus out of the surface material and for cutting off the metal posts four inches below the surface

c) contact Wicksteeds to ascertain how the MUGA is fixed in the surface material

d) Council would consider the various options so obtained and come to an agreement with the Parkinsons over removal of the MUGA.

A Cllr called for a named vote.

For: Cllrs Collingwood, Grant, Parnes, P Redpath, T Redpath, Yoxall (6)

Against: Cllrs Cooper and Jay (2)

Abstention: Cllr Poskitt

The meeting then returned to public session

The meeting closed at 20.15

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Signed Date