

# MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL

TUESDAY 13TH MARCH 2018 AT 7.30PM

IN THE TOWN HALL WOODSTOCK

## Present:

Cllr Mrs T Redpath (Mayor)

Cllr J Cooper

Cllr P Jay

Cllr S Parnes

Cllr S Rasch

Cllr A Grant (Deputy Mayor)

Cllr D Davies

Cllr U Parkinson

Cllr E Poskitt (minuting the meeting)

## WTC 234/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs F Collingwood and P Redpath

CClr Ian Hudspeth

The Town Clerk was also absent due to illness

## WTC 235/17 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Cllr J Cooper

**Item 10 PLANNING** as he is a WODC Cllr

**Item 12 WODC LOCAL PLAN FURTHER CONSULTATION**

as he is a WODC Cllr

Cllr U Parkinson

**Item 11 FINANCE** as she is Chair of Woodstock Tennis Club

**Item 19 PROPERTY MATTERS**

as she is Chair of Woodstock Tennis Club

Cllr E Poskitt

**Item 10 PLANNING**

as she sits on WODC Uplands Planning Subcommittee

**Item 12 WODC LOCAL PLAN FURTHER CONSULTATION**

as she is a WODC Cllr

## WTC236/17 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No members of the public had asked to speak

## WTC 237/17 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF:

*i. The meeting of the Town Council of Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2018*

Some changes to the minutes had already been circulated and were agreed during the approval of the minutes.

Item WTC 211/17 p91 Under Items 20 and 21: Cllr Poskitt had expressed a **General** not Personal interest in these items.

Item WTC 216/17: p 94 top line: should read... **Leslee** Holderness...

p95 third paragraph: ...how the **motion** had been tabled...

last line of that item: ...and **sat** in the public area.

p 98 Item WTC222/17: Second paragraph: the date should be ...**February 20<sup>th</sup>**

p101 Item WTC 230/17: Under last **ACTION**: ...and confirm that **The Club's** liability....

ii. *The meeting of the Town Council of Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2018*

p102 Item WTC 233/17 second line: should read ...**that Woodstock**....(ie. omit 'the')

#### **WTC 238/17: REPORT FROM TOWN CLERK**

The Town Clerk had circulated a report which was considered in her absence.

##### ***Woodstock signs***

Thanks were expressed to Mrs Christine Inker, the Administrative Assistant for the work she had done liaising with OCC over the missing signs at both the northern and southern boundaries to Woodstock. She had ascertained that the signs would be renewed at no cost to the Town Council.

##### ***Parking suspension in Rectory Lane***

WODC had informed the Clerk that WODC had received no income from developers for the temporary suspension to parking in Rectory Lane

##### ***Outstanding S106 contribution.***

WODC had confirmed that the outstanding S106 money could be used to repair the rotten fencing at Budd's Close Playground

##### ***Trees on OWL extension***

It was requested that the Clerk refresh WTC on Council's policy for maintenance of the trees in this area

##### ***Weed Spraying Contract 2018 -21***

Council was happy to accept continuation of *Complete Weed Control's* contract for weed-spraying but there seemed some confusion over whether other contractors working in the environment sprayed certain areas. It was important that 'who did what' was clarified so WTC did not pay for the duplication of work. The Town Clerk was requested to check with the various contractors whether they did any weed spraying and, if so, where they did this.

##### ***Staff Issues***

The Caretaker had been off sick but the Deputy Caretaker, although only recently appointed, was coping well with the extra responsibilities.

#### **WTC 239/17: COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR UPDATE**

i. *To receive the monthly Parish Report from CClr Ian Hudspeth*

In the absence of CClr Hudspeth, there were no comments

ii. *To receive the monthly report from District Cllrs J Cooper & E Poskitt*

There were no comments on the report.

#### **WTC 240/17 COMMUNICATIONS**

The Mayor had sent a card of condolence to the family of Mr Richard Banbury who had died recently. Although never a Cllr himself, Mr Banbury was a well-known member of a family which had a long history of civic responsibilities locally. He had represented Council on

Woodstock Chamber of Trade and the Traffic Advisory Group for long periods. He had also run the family shop which had served the community very well for many years.

### **WTC 241/17 QUESTIONS**

The Mayor proceeded to answer the four questions received from Cllr Parnes as follows:

Q1. Why did the Town Mayor fail to ensure all Members (including Councillors) on the Town side of the JCTPD (Joint Committee for Town and Palace Dialogue) were directly informed of its most recent meeting?

*Mayor: Interestingly, I found out about the meeting only a day or two before it happened. Please note that the chairmanship alternates between Blenheim and WTC with the most recent meeting chaired by Blenheim. Brian Yoxall was the elected WTC chairman meaning there is no current designated chairman for WTC.*

Q2. Why did the Town Mayor refuse to convene (in time for the District Council's deadline for a decision), a Council meeting for facilitating open consideration, public participation, debate and vote on whether or not poll cards will be issued for the April 5th by-election in the event of a contested election?

*Mayor: As Chairman of WTC I did NOT refuse to convene an extraordinary meeting to discuss poll cards. The petition from a single councillor claimed "new information". I repeatedly requested that this information be given to aid the Council in understanding if an extra meeting was necessary. No such information was provided and bearing in mind that a decision not to issue poll cards had been taken by democratic vote as recently as January it was unlikely with no new information being imparted that such a vote would change.*

*An extraordinary meeting can be called by the Chairman or by two members. All members were aware of the request, but no second member supported the request. It is reasonable to assume therefore that it was a single member of the Council only who wanted the meeting to be held. The Chairman is under no obligation to call such meetings at the behest of an individual member.*

*Furthermore, I would remind the Council that following a 20% turnout for a previous by election a similar petition was received for poll cards. This resulted in the cards being issued at the next by election only to see the turnout reduce to 17%.*

*The polling staff at the recent election said that a number of electors were saying that they didn't know the candidates. The best way to address this and to ensure voter awareness is for the individual candidates to leaflet all households drawing attention to the election as well as to their personal attributes.*

Q3. What role does the Town Mayor see for the Town Council in honouring the Royal Wedding of HRH Prince Harry and Miss Meghan Markle on May 19<sup>th</sup>, the week after Woodstock Town Council is to choose its next Mayor?

*Mayor: It is not the role of Chairman/Mayor to arrange any celebrations if that is what the question is related to. If any member is aware that there is an appetite among residents for a celebration, this should be formally relayed, and it would have to be arranged with resident support. I don't believe the Council has a budget for such an event.*

Q4. The Town Council was told following extremely heavy traffic associated with a February 17<sup>th</sup> Palace event, "it is quite difficult to see the queues from inside Blenheim, especially when the traffic flows along the driveway quite nicely. This delay cost us crucial time." Does the Mayor consider the explanation to be somewhat difficult to understand in light of an abundance of sources of live traffic data freely available and widely used by consumers and drivers, though phone apps and easy Internet searches such as Waze, Google Maps and others? If so, will the Town Mayor ask for the explanation to be revisited?

*Mayor: This is not a matter for an individual Councillor to take up on a formal basis. It should be a decision of the Council if such explanation is to be queried.*

#### **WTC 242/17 MOTIONS PRESENTED TO COUNCIL**

The motion (proposed and submitted by Cllr Collingwood and seconded by Cllr Rasch) read:  
*That the Clerk writes*

- a) to HM Treasury in response to the Call for Evidence on Rent a Room Relief and*
- b) seeks local publicity for the new Property Tax Allowance and its use for off street parking*

Cllr Cooper proposed that, in view of Cllr Collingwood's absence, this matter be deferred to the next WTC meeting but the Deputy Mayor explained that Cllr Collingwood had asked that the matter be voted on as there was a time limit for submission of comments. Cllrs were not entirely clear what was involved and what the Clerk was being asked to say but were supportive in principle with the Clerk being given clear guidance on how to proceed.

**RESOLVED** (*nem con*)

**That the Clerk writes**

- a) to HM Treasury in response to the Call for Evidence on Rent a Room Relief and**
- b) seeks local publicity for the new Property Tax Allowance and its use for off street parking**

#### **WTC 243/17 PLANNING**

- a) 18/00318/FUL: 5 The Quadrangle Woodstock. Change of use from B1 business to D1 non-residential institution to enable use as a fertility clinic.
- b) 18/00405/HHD: 9 Union Street Woodstock . Dormer to rear elevation and garage changed to habitable space.
- c) 18/00609/HHD: 73 Oxford St Woodstock . Removal of conservatory and erection of single storey extension.

**Council had no objections to any of the above planning applications.**

## **WTC 244/17 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER - FEBRUARY 2018**

In the absence of both the RFO and the Council Member for Finance, questions raised by Cllrs could not be answered.

In relation to playground inspection there were queries about why this varied so much from week to week and whether inspection of the water-meadows was involved.

It was not clear if the payment for the marriage licence involved payment for both licences or for only one (they used to be paid a year apart).

### **RESOLVED (nem con)**

(i) *That the list of payments totalling £64,042-68 made in the month of February 2018 be received and approved*

(ii) *Bank Reconciliation statements. Received, considered and noted.*

(iii) *Summary and detailed income and expenditure statements. These were considered and noted.*

(iv) *Projected budget outturn 2017/18. It was noted that there were overspends in some areas, including Corporate Property, and these needed more detailed figures as explanation.*

Cllr Jay particularly requested that there should be more explanation of the underspends as well.

The report had been compiled by the Financial Assistant who, whilst doing an excellent job, had no responsibility for implementing planned expenditure.

It was agreed that the CMfF be asked to provide a full report with details of where budgeted money was overspent or was not spent for the next Council meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr Jay and seconded by the Mayor that :

*Council asks for a full report at the next monthly meeting of how the underspends listed in the paper Projected Budget Outturn have arisen so that Council can determine whether there are management weaknesses and what, if any, further action is required.*

### **RESOLVED (nem con)**

**Council asks for a full report at the next monthly meeting of how the underspends listed in the paper Projected Budget Outturn have arisen so that Council can determine whether there are management weaknesses and what, if any, further action is required.**

## **WTC 245/17 CONSULTATION ON FURTHER MAIN MODIFICATIONS TO THE SUBMISSION DRAFT OF WEST OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN (2011-2031)**

Cllr Poskitt had submitted a short report pointing out that the most significant – for Woodstock - change was that the number of homes planned for the Banbury Road had been reduced from 250 to 180 in order to protect the setting of the listed buildings at the westerly end of the site. It was disappointing that the strategic sites on AONB in Burford and Charlbury had been removed whereas there was no interest in changing the strategic sites which would alter the setting of the WHS of Blenheim.

Councillors agreed that The Mayor would draft a response for the Clerk to send to WODC making the points:

That WTC :

- Welcomed the reduction of homes planned for north of Banbury Road but regretted that there was no change in the number of houses proposed south of Woodstock particularly as the Cherwell decision led to the beginnings of ‘salami slicing’ the site which ICOMOS and English Heritage had flatly stated should NOT be allowed to happen
- Did NOT agree that development and landscaping of the development south of Woodstock would enhance the entrance to the town and the setting of the WHS but had concerns about the impact of the large number of dwellings on what was a sensitive environment
- Did not understand why AONBs were respected by the planning process but the concern of ICOMOS and English Heritage for the Woodstock South East site as a setting for the *internationally* recognised WHS was disregarded.

#### **WTC 246/17 REVISED CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN**

The Mayor commented that it was disappointing that the Cherwell DC meeting to discuss the revised Cherwell Local Plan had focused almost entirely on whether or not areas of Green Belt should be included for development. As non-Cherwell residents were not permitted to speak to the meeting, Woodstock had had little chance to state its case although a written response had been submitted to the consultation. It was thought those Councils against building on the Green Belt might raise a legal challenge to the Revised Local Plan process.

After considerable discussion over the practicalities of further action, the Mayor proposed and Cllr Grant seconded that WTC:

- *wishes to be represented at the hearings of the Cherwell Revised Local Plan*
- *is willing to consider the involvement of a barrister to represent Council*
- *explores further the possibilities and merit of joining other groups concerned about aspects of development within the Revised Plan*
- *looks into ways of funding this further action*

#### **RESOLVED (nem con) that WTC**

- **wishes to be represented at the hearings of the Cherwell Revised Local Plan**
- **is willing to consider the involvement of a barrister to represent Council**
- **explores further the possibilities and merit of joining other groups concerned about aspects of development within the Revised Plan**
- **looks into ways of funding this further action**

#### **WTC 247/17 CONNECTING WEST OXFORDSHIRE**

There was some doubt as to how much Gigaclear’s interest in getting ultrafast Broadband to the rural communities related to Woodstock but there could be some

outliers in the community who were still unable to access ultrafast Broadband. It was agreed to take up Gigaclear's offer to send a representative to speak to Council.

#### **WTC 248/17 OXFORD AIRPORT AIRSPACE CONSULTATION**

Cllr Poskitt presented a paper outlining the main issues in the consultation. There was discussion about whether the Council was able to contribute usefully to the Consultation. It was agreed that the motion from the February WTC meeting with a final point linking it to the consultation should be submitted.

Proposed by Cllr Parnes and seconded by Cllr Poskitt:

*The Town Council notes with appreciation the clarifications conveyed by London Oxford Airport in relation to misconceptions about its reported plans and the Council acknowledges the Airport's contribution to local employment, industry, tourism and national security. In addition, in relation to the current Airspace Public Consultation, Council recognises the concerns of general aviation over the proposed changes and hopes that those concerns will be taken into consideration.*

**RESOLVED** (For: 6; Against: 2; Abstaining: 1) that

**The Town Council notes with appreciation the clarifications conveyed by London Oxford Airport in relation to misconceptions about its reported plans and the Council acknowledges the Airport's contribution to local employment, industry, tourism and national security. In addition, in relation to the current Airspace Public Consultation, Council recognises the concerns of general aviation over the proposed changes and hopes that those concerns will be taken into consideration.**

#### **WTC 249/17 COMMEMORATING 100 YEARS SINCE THE END OF WW1**

Cllr Grant presented a paper with various suggestions, many supplied by Mr Brian Yoxall, for possible activities to celebrate 100 years since the end of WWI, the anniversary of which will coincide exactly with Remembrance Sunday in 2018. Cllr Grant proposed WTC purchase a Commemorative Tommy statuette, at a cost of £29-99 +£3 postage and packing, for display in the Town Hall. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Cooper and agreed by all

**RESOLVED**

**That WTC purchase a Commemorative Tommy at a cost of £29-99 +£3 postage and packing, to be displayed in the Town Hall.**

It was also agreed that WTC should explore with Bicester Barracks, SOFO and others the possibility of getting a significant military presence to attend the 'parade' associated with the Remembrance Service. The Mayor would write in person to the Barracks inviting soldiers to join the town on November 11<sup>th</sup>. The Mayor stated that this should be undertaken with the Clerk.

Cllr Cooper agreed to work with Mr Brian Yoxall to form a temporary Working Group to explore some of the suggestions for celebrations.

### **WTC 250/17 REQUEST TO USE THE FOOTBALL FIELD ON ROSAMUND DRIVE PLAY AREA FOR MOCK MAYOR CELEBRATIONS**

Mr Matthew Parkinson had asked if the football field off Rosamund Drive might be used for activities during the afternoon of the Mock Mayor making. The request was not very specific about what sort of activity and this needed clarifying. In principle WTC had no objection **provided** local residents had no significant objections; Blenheim, who own the field, would need to be informed; and the matters of public liability insurance and who was responsible for this needs to be clarified. It was recommended that Mr Parkinson develop a dialogue with local residents about what is proposed.

### **WTC 251/17 WEBSITE PROTOCOL**

In the absence of the Clerk and the CMfF it was agreed to defer this matter to a later Council meeting.

### **WTC 252/17 LONDON OXFORD AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

Cllr Parnes had presented a report together with papers from the recent Airport meeting. These were noted.

### **WTC 253/17 DISAPPEARANCE OF TOWN BOUNDARY SIGN**

This matter had been discussed under the item **WTC 238/17 REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK.**

### **WTC 254/17 BLENHEIM ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT**

Cllr Parnes presented a report pointing out various websites where the longer version of the report commissioned from Oxford Brookes University by Blenheim Estates was available. There were several references to Woodstock and Cllrs may wish to read the longer report and consider it further.

### **WTC 255/17 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

**It was proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Cllr Poskitt and agreed by all that in view of the nature of the business to be transacted that the public and press be temporarily excluded from the meeting (Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 s.1)**

### **WTC 256/17 PROPERTY MATTERS**

*(i) To receive the monthly report from Carter Jonas.*

The report was received with concern being expressed about the lack of action in certain areas.

*(ii) To receive the monthly report from Cllr Grant, CMf Property.*

The Working Group for the redecoration Mayor's Parlour met Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018 and made various recommendations.

### **Town Hall: Mayor's Parlour Chairs**

The Mayor's Chair and the Armorial Chair were both in need of restoration. The leather on both chairs was badly worn with the webbing underneath needing to be replaced. The joints needed restoration. The frames should be cleaned to remove grime and old polish and then repolished. Mr Richard Andrews who had restored other Parlour furniture quoted £735 including materials, labour and transportation to renovate the two chairs.

*WTC agreed to restoration of the chairs at a cost of £735*

### **Town Hall: Mayor's Parlour Redecoration**

Redecoration (removing furniture, painting the room and re-surfacing the floor) would be carried out during the first three weeks of July. Cllrs were asked to note the WTC monthly meeting scheduled for **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2018 would be held at the Community Centre.**

The Parlour needed to be completely empty to enable the floor to be sanded and sealed and to allow adequate drying time. The Working Group recommended that the contents of the Parlour should be removed and stored by a professional storage firm.

The estimate from *Luker Bros* for £1347 including VAT to remove and store the furniture and other effects from the Mayor's Parlour together with all risk insurance for a full three week period was recommended as the best estimate of those submitted.

*WTC agreed to accept the Luker Bros estimate of £1347 for removal and storage of the contents of the Mayor's Parlour.*

### **Sanding and sealing the Mayor's Parlour wood block floor.**

Several estimates had been submitted for sanding and sealing the Parlour floor. The *ACH Flooring Services* quotation for sanding the floor, minor repairs and three coats of *Bona good quality*, last coat being *Bona HD Traffic silk matt* came in at £1400 + VAT,

*WTC agreed to the recommendation to use ACH Flooring Services to sand and seal the floor of the Mayor's Parlour at a cost of £1400 + VAT.*

### **OTHER PROPERTY MATTERS**

#### **Appointment of new Property Management Agent**

Council agreed to the recommendation that Breckon & Breckon be employed as Council's new Property Management Company. Cllr Jay requested a formal written agreement with clear and detailed statements of what was expected of the Property agents and what their obligations were. This was agreed.

**RESOLVED** (proposed by Cllr Grant, seconded by Cllr Redpath and agreed unanimously)

*That WTC appoint Breckon & Breckon to be their property management agent with immediate effect allowing them to run the Council property portfolio and advising the Town Clerk and CMfP, for an initial one year period with review.*

The Council agreed that all information within the Property report should be passed on to Breckon & Breckon forthwith.

**Community Centre**

Breckon & Breckon would be asked to deal with the crack between the shed and the bar at the Community Centre

**Ongoing matters**

The two retail properties that are now empty are being dealt with by the Councils legal advisors

*The meeting closed at 10pm*

Signed: .....  
.....

Date: