

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
ON TUESDAY 12th FEBRUARY 2019
IN THE TOWN HALL, WOODSTOCK**

PRESENT:

Cllr P Jay (Mayor)

Cllr J Bleakley (arrived at 7.37pm)

Cllr M Parkinson

Cllr E Poskitt

Cllr P Redpath

Cllr A Grant (Deputy Mayor)

Cllr J Cooper

Cllr U Parkinson

Cllr S Rasch

Cllr T Redpath (arrived at 8.55pm)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr I Hudspeth and four members of the public.

WTC210/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Cllrs D Davies and S Parnes. Cllr T Redpath sent apologies stating that she would arrive late for the meeting owing to attending the Examination In Public.

WTC211/18 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST:

Cllr J Cooper

Item 10 Blenheim Talks Progress Report: Prejudicial interest as he is a Trustee of Community Trust Oxfordshire.

Cllr J Cooper

Item 12 Planning: Personal interest as he is a member of WODC Uplands Planning Sub-Committee.

Cllr A Grant

Item 12 (a) Planning: Prejudicial interest as she is the owner of 40 Green Lane, the property adjacent to 38 Green Lane.

Cllr E Poskitt

Item 12 Planning: Personal interest as she is a member of WODC Uplands Planning Sub-Committee.

WTC212/18 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:

None.

WTC213/18 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 12th JANUARY 2018:

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th January were approved without amendment.

WTC214/18 REPORT FROM TOWN CLERK:

The Clerk advised Council that she has obtained a template for the loan agreement between WTC and the Woodstock and Royal Park, 900 years of History Association which can be adapted ready for both parties to sign.

Council were advised that copies of invoices had been received that confirmed the cost of the legal advice CDWA had obtained in relation to the Cherwell Local Plan and Oxford Unmet Housing Need. The £2,000 pledged by WTC would be transferred to the CDWA as soon as possible.

WTC215/18 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' UPDATE:

The monthly Parish report from CClr I Hudspeth was noted without comment or question owing to him having not arrived at that point of the meeting.

The District Councillors' report was received without comment or questions raised.

WTC216/18 COMMUNICATIONS:

The Mayor reminded Council that the Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 19th March and although the agenda for the meeting is totally in the hands of those members of the community who attend Council are responsible for drafting a suggested Agenda. He asked that Councillors who wish to submit items for the suggested agenda to submit them to the Clerk by the end of February.

Cllr P Redpath asked whether there was a good, clear means whereby the public can notify the Clerk of any specific thing they want to put on the agenda? The Mayor referred to the mechanisms members of the public could use to contact the Clerk, email, telephone or calling into the office.

Cllr P Redpath requested that a notice be put up on all noticeboards and on the Council website confirming the date of the meeting and inviting members of the public to contact the Clerk with any items they wish to be added to the agenda.

RESOLVED: The Clerk would liaise with the Administrative Assistance and arrange for the appropriate notices to be produced and put up on all Council noticeboards.

The Mayor wanted to thank the Deputy Mayor, Cllr A Grant very much for all the extra hard work she did while he had been in hospital, chairing the January meeting and overseeing work at the Town Hall. He will endeavour to resume his normal duties from now on, though if the Council thinks he should stand down, he will of course do so.

WTC217/18 QUESTIONS:

- (i) The Woodstock & Bladon News reported that at the January meeting "there had been agreement 'to recommend the appointment'", subject to specified clarifications, of a particular facilitator for consultations on infrastructure projects; but the same edition contained a report from the Mayor which seemed to indicate that a limited group of Councillors already "appointed" the facilitator in their "session the previous day with Blenheim". Please would the Chair explain the apparent discrepancy?

The Mayor responded that the version in his column was more compressed than that in Brian Yoxall's report because he knew by then that the specified conditions had been satisfied

- (ii) The Woodstock & Bladon News reported that a "stern test of the Chair's assertiveness" at the January meeting was posed by a Member who "inveighed strongly against the motion that in order 'to save money WTC agrees that there is no need for polling cards to be sent out for the forthcoming election on Thursday 21 February 2010'". Will the Chair confirm for accuracy that: (a) in fact the wording of circulated motion proposed by the Mayor in absentia began with a proposed but disputed contention that "Statistics show that Polling Cards do not necessarily make a significant difference to the turn-out of voters and therefore ..." (b) that contrary to

what may be [mis]understood from the published WOBL News report, in fact there was no objection to saving money in of itself but rather the debate highlighted concern about assumptions drawn from reference to a narrow selection of two by-elections held prior to the current term of office despite there having been actually been 6 by-elections (three pre- and three post- May 2016) called; (c) that expressed concerns included that poll cards are not just for increasing turnout but for maximizing awareness, from official direct notification, of the opportunity to exercise their democratic right to vote in a contested election; that (d) it was noted in discussion that the same meeting was to consider “tens of thousands of pounds” in underspend from taxes funds collected; and (e) that it was argued that not issuing polling cards would signal a perception the Council is not encouraging of participation, and is insular, not supportive, and closed and fearful to new people joining? Does the Chair consider the debate to have been a stern and democratic challenge of the rationale behind the motion against polling cards, or a test of the Chair's assertiveness?

The Deputy Mayor, Cllr A Grant responded that in her opinion the motion referred to was handled as per the democratic process:-

- Put to the council,
- Discussed and
- Voted on
- And recorded in the minutes accordingly

With regards to any publication referring to anything that went on at a Council meeting, this was beyond her control and she had no comment to make on the matter.

WTC218/18 COUNTY COUNCILLORS' UPDATE:

Cllr E Poskitt asked Cllr I Hudspeth whether the reason for the enormous increase in the children's social care budget to make sure the growing number of children at risk of abuse and neglect are protected is due to the County Council doing more or due to the number of children at risk of abuse and neglect increasing? If it is due to numbers increasing is that because people are more aware of it or perhaps taking a more aggressive stance?

Cllr I Hudspeth confirmed that the issue is countrywide and it is a combination of all the above. He also mentioned the conservative approach being taking by social services to ensure that they are not falling foul of legislation. He made reference to the child sexual exploitation in Oxford which had made people in the County more aware and willing to report their concerns which is a good thing but on the downside it creates more work to do. He advised that the biggest workload is dealing with the 'no further action' cases.

Cllr P Redpath raised the issue of air quality and the effects of poor air quality on people's health. He asked with all the development that is currently going on, it seems likely the government will keep putting things off, where do we stand?

Cllr I Hudspeth replied that there is a low emissions policy in the centre of Oxford which came into place in 2013 and therefore the S3 bus has to be low emission to go into the centre. He advised that Oxfordshire County Council are looking at making the centre of Oxford a zero emission zone. Cllr I Hudspeth referred to the fact that there is a need for homes hence the

current local development. He did say that the 2050 Oxfordshire Plan is to link employment and homes together so people do not have to drive as far and ensuring that there are good cycle paths, bus lanes etc for commuters to use. Cllr P Redpath stated that people needed to be encouraged to use public transport and greener modes of transport in the future.

WTC219/18 MOTIONS PRESENTED TO THE COUNCIL:

No motions were presented to Council.

WTC220/18 BLENHEIM TALKS PROGRESS REPORT:

This item was deferred until later in the meeting as Cllr T Redpath had not arrived at this point in the meeting.

WTC221/18 FRIENDS OF OLD WOODSTOCK - INFORMATION SHEET AND MEETING:

Mr Stan Scott provided a brief overview of reason for the request on behalf of the 'Friends of Old Woodstock' group for Council to print copies of their information sheet and also to allow the use of the Mayor's Parlour for their meeting which they are hoping to hold in March. The Mayor said that Council welcome any group of citizens being proactive into the consultation, which is about to be launched. He referred to the Steering Group meeting which had been held the previous afternoon where it was agreed that a launch meeting would be held in early March. He hoped the consultation would be accessible to everybody.

Cllr J Cooper proposed that he would support the request with a caveat which was 'that a certain individual from the Friends of Old Woodstock group has been of great assistance to Woodstock Town Council'. This was seconded by The Mayor.

A debate followed during which some Councillors expressed concerns at supporting the request from one local group and not others who may be equally justified in requesting assistance from Council for printing leaflets and using the Mayor's Parlour. Cllr E Poskitt stated that the proposal was against the policy that WTC had applied in the past.

Cllr J Cooper stated that Council had in the past photocopied many items for the Carnival Committee and he considered this group as a similar type of local organisation.

Cllr J Cooper proposed the following motion which was seconded by The Mayor:-

That WTC agree to the printing of 262 copies of this document, the justification for this being the particular assistance this group has given to the Town Council over many years.

A vote was taken.

VOTE: For: 4 Against: 4 Abstaining: 1

Owing to the vote being a tie the Mayor used his casting vote to preserve the status quo.

RESOLVED: The Mayor voted against the motion and it therefore fell.

The Mayor then made a personal offer that he would print 262 copies for the group at his home. He then advised the group formally to request to use the Mayor's Parlour and he would exercise his discretion to approve the use of the room.

Mr Scott then posed the question whether Council would print them if the group paid for the printing. The Clerk expressed her concern to whether the cost of the printing could be identified separately from the office printing and so charged for. A short discussion followed during which Cllr E Poskitt also offered to provide the group with the use of her personal printing facilities to print the information sheet. The Mayor concluded that it was too complicated for them to be printed and charged for by Council staff and upheld the Council's earlier decision.

WTC222/18 PLANNING:

As she had declared a prejudicial interest Cllr A Grant left the room for the duration of this agenda item.

Council considered the following planning applications:

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/00095/HHD 38 Green Lane, Woodstock

Alterations to include conversion of loft and erection of two storey rear extension.

Council had received some 8 objections via letters from residents. At the Mayor's invitation Mr Colin Taylor the owner of 36 Green Lane one of the properties adjacent to 38 Green Lane addressed Council regarding the above planning application. He confirmed that work had already started outside of the property and he was not sure whether it was illegal as planning permission had not yet been approved. Mr Taylor said that his main concern was that the light to his property would be affected as would the privacy and enjoyment of his garden. He also raised concerns about the drainage of surface water from the fields behind the property and he stated that the plans show that the garden will be halved to accommodate the cars which will consequently double the size of the driveway. Mr Taylor added that parking is already a significant issue in Green Lane.

RESOLVED: WTC object to this application as it will be an intrusion on the gardens of the adjacent properties and transgresses policy OS4 'others general enjoyment of their property'. It is understood that the owners of the adjacent property 40 Green Lane had previously been provided with pre-planning advice on raising the roof pitch and were told that the application would be refused by WODC.

Cllr A Grant returned to the meeting and Cllr I Hudspeth left the meeting at this point.

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/00094/HHD Merry Piece Oxford Road, Woodstock

Construction of detached pool outbuilding with storage and plant area beneath.

RESOLVED: WTC had concerns regarding this application and requested that a technical assessment is completed by the Environmental Health Department to assess the environmental impact with particular regard to noise disturbance.

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/00101/HHD 24 Oxford Street, Woodstock

Single storey rear extension

RESOLVED: WTC had no objection to this application.

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/00102/LBC 24 Oxford Street, Woodstock

Internal and external alterations to include single storey rear extension and re-opening of

previously blocked doorway

RESOLVED: WTC had no objection to this application.

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/00106/HHD 29 Hill Rise, Woodstock
Erection of front extension

RESOLVED: WTC had no objection to this application.

PLANNING APPEAL

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 17/00829/FUL 1 Hill Rise, Woodstock

Erection of two dwellings with associated access and landscaping

RESOLVED: Woodstock Town Council object to this application under Policy EW4 item C of the WODC Local Plan 2031 (page 240). Proposals for the development should be consistent with the following:-

c) Landscape dominated design with the provision of appropriate measures to mitigate the potential landscape, visual and heritage impact of the development including the retention and strengthening of existing hedgerows, use of appropriate building heights and materials, retention of key views and the provision of structural planting and extensive areas semi-natural green space, with built development kept away from the eastern and northern parts of the site including where it adjoins the A44.

This was also stressed in the Heritage Issues and Constraints in Chris Blandford Associates' Landscape and Heritage Advice to West Oxfordshire District Council, page 84:

8.3.14 "The visual separation of the site from the WHS reduces the risks associated with future development in terms of impact on the WHS and Registered Park and Garden. There are however a number of measure, in addition to landscape design mitigation measures, that could be taken to reduce risks further and also help address potential cumulative/combined impacts, these include:

- Ensuring development heights remain at or below 2 storeys to reduce visual presence and ensure that development does not emerge over the top of existing development to the west.
- Ensuring that built development on the site is restricted in its geographical extent and scale to lessen the overall change to the rural character of the setting of the WHS. This could include:

(page 85) - ensuring that the northern part of the site where it joins the main road remains undeveloped to reduce perception of urbanisation.

The proposed two dwellings are on land immediately adjacent to the northern part of the allocated site covered by Policy EW4 and adjoining the A44. The listed Wall and Park are immediately across the A44 and thus the proposed dwellings are in effect in just the area where the Local Plan is trying to avoid development in order to protect the World Heritage Site. We believe the proposed two dwellings are therefore in contradiction to the efforts to protect the World Heritage Site put forward in the above policy point of the Local Plan.

WTC223/18 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER – JANUARY 2018

The Mayor proposed and was seconded by Cllr A Grant that Council approve the payments for January and for Cllr U Parkinson to be a signatory on the Unity Trust Bank. It was also proposed that the Bank Reconciliation, Income and Expenditure Statements, Internal Controls, Internal Control Review and NALC Salary Scales 2019/20 be noted.

Cllr U Parkinson asked for clarification as to the frequency of the grass cutting payment made to Woodstock Town Football Club. The Clerk confirmed that it is a yearly payment as the club cut their own grass.

RESOLVED: The payments totalling £18,701.79 in the month of January were approved.

RESOLVED: The Bank Reconciliation Statements for January were noted as satisfactory.

RESOLVED: The summary and detailed Income & Expenditure Statements for January were noted as satisfactory.

RESOLVED: The paper 'The Effectiveness of the Internal Control' was noted by Council.

RESOLVED: The Petty Cash procedures - Internal Control undertaken since the last Town Council meeting were noted as satisfactory.

RESOLVED: The NALC Salary Scales 2019/20 were noted.

RESOLVED: Council approved Cllr U Parkinson as a signatory for the Unity Trust Bank Account and Cllr A Grant as a signatory to the Barclays Bank Account.

WTC224/18 RISK ASSESSMENT:

Cllr A Grant confirmed that all sections of the risk assessment had been checked and amended accordingly prior to it being presented to Council for approval.

RESOLVED: Council voted in favour of adopting the 2018/19 risk assessment report. Council also agreed that the Clerk should investigate the possibility of replacing the manual flag raising/lowering which is undertaken presently by the Deputy Caretaker via the Town Hall roof, which is considered a Health and Safety risk with an electronic version that could be operated from ground level.

WTC225/18 ADOPTION OF THE INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED IHRA DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM:

Council agreed that the item be deferred until the March meeting as its proposer Cllr S Parnes had sent apologies that he would be unable to attend the February meeting.

WTC226/18 UPDATES ARISING FROM DISCUSSIONS AT OXFORD AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE:-

Council agreed that the item be deferred until the March meeting as the council's representative, Cllr S Parnes had sent apologies that he would be unable to attend the February meeting.

WTC227/18 WEST OXFORDSHIRE TAKEOVER PROGRAMME – COMMUNITY HALLS:

After a brief discussion Council agreed that the Clerk and Cllr A Grant would contact Mark

Weston at the BBC Radio Oxford, West Oxfordshire Takeover programme to point out that Woodstock Town Council do not have a hall committee and to ascertain whether the venue and clients would be suitable to interview for his programme.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was then proposed by Cllr E Poskitt and seconded by Cllr A Grant that in view of the 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).

The members of the public left the meeting at this point.

WTC228/18 WTC PROPERTY PORTFOLIO:

Council considered the options outlined in the letter dated 8th February from Freeths in relation to the forfeiture of a lease for a council property.

The Mayor proposed the following motion which was seconded by Cllr A Grant:-

Council instructs Freeths:-

- 1. To proceed as set out in option 2 in their letter of 8 February; and*
- 2. If no satisfactory response is received by 19 February, to proceed without further reference to the council as set out in option 1 of their letter.*

The Clerk informed Council that Freeths had sent an email that afternoon advising that they had already instructed their debt recovery team to proceed with taking the action set out in option 2 as they were concerned to get the ball rolling in that regard.

A vote was then taken on the motion.

VOTE: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstaining: 0

RESOLVED: Council voted unanimously in favour and the motion was carried.

6 Park Street

Cllr A Grant confirmed that owing to the Council agreeing there are to be no rent free periods Breckon and Breckon had advised that to let these premises, Council needed to agree for it to be decorated, for which they had obtained quotes.

The following motion was proposed by Cllr A Grant and seconded by Cllr M Parkinson:-

WTC accept the quote from company 2(at the cost of £2050.00 + VAT for the redecoration of 6 Park Street

A vote was then taken.

VOTE: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstaining: 0

RESOLVED: Council voted unanimously in favour and the motion was carried that WTC accept the quote from company 2 at the cost of £2050.00 plus VAT for the redecoration of 6 Park Street

Re-letting of Property

Owing to the importance of moving on and re-letting the premises the following motion was proposed by Cllr A Grant Seconded by Cllr M Parkinson:-

- (i) *WTC agrees to accept the tenant for 6 Park Street as recommended by their Property Agent Breckon and Breckon at a rent of £14,000 pa*
- (ii) *WTC agrees to the lease agreement being drawn up by Freeths to include:*
 - *Rent to be paid monthly*
 - *Retail premises to be kept open to their advertised business hours*
- (iii) *WTC agrees to the lease being sealed and signed by the Clerk and the Mayor/Deputy Mayor as soon as received to allow the prospective tenant to move in in early March*

A vote was then taken.

VOTE: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstaining: 0

RESOLVED: Council voted unanimously in favour and the motion was carried.

Cllr A Grant confirmed that just over £400 had been made from the sale of some of the items left in the property. She thanked her husband Mr J Grant for his support and hard work in helping clear the premises with no charge ready for it to be decorated. The Mayor endorsed these thanks and asked the Deputy Mayor to convey the council's appreciation to Mr Grant.

Council unanimously agreed in favour of the invoice received from Freeths covering the period from 1st – 29th January for the sum of £2,503.20 including VAT being paid.

WTC229/18 ENVIRONMENT:

Council considered the quotes received for the tree work in the Water Meadow

The Mayor proposed that Council choose Company C which was seconded by Cllr J Cooper.

A vote was then taken.

VOTE: For: 9 Against: 0 Abstaining: 0

RESOLVED: Council agreed unanimously in favour of accepting the quote submitted by Company C at a cost of £6,160 plus VAT.

Cllr A Grant proposed the following motion which was seconded by Cllr J Cooper:-

WTC accept Quote B for £3,900.00 to rub down, prepare and repaint the Hensington Road Cemetery Gates and Railing with 2 coats of Black Zinner paint

A vote was then taken.

VOTE: For: 9 Against: 0 Abstaining: 0

RESOLVED: Council agreed unanimously in favour of accepting Quote B.

The paper providing an update from the meeting with Jeremy Sacha regarding the Lawn Cemetery Extension was not discussed as Cllr T Redpath had not yet arrived at the meeting.

WTC230/18 BLENHEIM TALKS PROGRESS REPORT:

The Mayor gave a brief summary of the first Steering Committee meeting to be held since Community First were appointed to facilitate the public consultation. The Committee had agreed on the importance of the consultation being genuinely wide ranging, real and giving opportunity for everybody who wants to have their say. The Mayor reported that Community First are holding a drop in launch event at the Community Centre on Saturday 9th March from 10am – 1pm where they will give a presentation and answer questions. This will be followed by some smaller events.

Cllr T Redpath arrived at the meeting at this point.

The Mayor also reported that it had been proposed that the Steering Committee meet monthly, he reminded that it is not a decision-making body but exists to ensure the process of the consultation goes forward effectively.

WTC231/18 ENVIRONMENT:

Cllrs T Redpath, A Grant and the Clerk had met with Jeremy Sacha to discuss the brief for the lawn cemetery extension. Jeremy offered to attend a brainstorming session to assist WTC with putting together a brief that could be sent to all companies tendering for the work. He did advise that a number of questions needed to be answered before the working group could move the project forward. Council considered the following questions and responded:-

- Is a designated cremation area required or do WTC wish to continue having cremation plots laid out as per the original cemetery?

RESPONSE: When a company has been selected to design the layout they should be asked to provide two different plans – one with cremation plots laid out as per the original cemetery and one showing a designated cremation area.

- Should there be a separate area for children's graves?

RESPONSE: No, as Council policy allows the purchase of the adjacent plot for a close family member, as having a separate area for childrens grave would not allow for this policy to be implemented.

- Should the layout of the extension mirror the original cemetery layout or would WTC prefer a different design?

RESPONSE: Council decided that the layout should mirror the original cemetery.

- It has been suggested that the headstones in the extension face the entrance of the cemetery which will enable visitors to locate a grave more easily.

RESPONSE: Council agreed to this suggestion.

- Particular attention should be paid to the structure of the pathways both within the extension and the original cemetery as the existing paths have proven not to be suitable due to the base being soft underneath. It was suggested that tarmac paving (which can have a variety of different finishing) could be laid which would be hard wearing and more suitable for wheelchair users and compliant with DDA.

RESPONSE: Council agreed to this suggestion.

- The removal of some of the hedgerow between the trees was also discussed as this would integrate the extension with the original cemetery and could allow space for seating.

RESPONSE: Council agreed with this suggestion.

- The area where the water tap is situated needs to be improved.

RESPONSE: Council agreed to this.

- Reducing the area surrounding the blossom tree in the centre of the main path and reducing the tree canopy to accommodate the pallbearers carrying a coffin through to the new area.

RESPONSE: Council agreed to this suggestion.

- A central remembrance feature to accommodate memorial plaques.

RESPONSE: Council agreed with this suggestion.

Council confirmed that the group should continue working to put a brief together.

Cllr P Redpath had a strong view that the cemetery extension should include an area where wild flowers are planted for people to have a somewhere to sit and contemplate.

The meeting closed at 21.07hrs

Signed:

Date: