

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
ON TUESDAY 14th JANUARY 2020
IN THE TOWN HALL, WOODSTOCK**

PRESENT:

Cllr A Grant (Mayor)
Cllr J Bleakley
Cllr P Jay
Cllr E Poskitt
Cllr P Redpath

Cllr M Parkinson (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr J Cooper
Cllr S Parnes
Cllr S Rasch
Cllr T Redpath

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Four members of the public and Kate Begley attending as she will be writing a summary of the meeting for the Woodstock and Bladon News.

The Mayor asked members of the Council to join her in a one minute silence as a mark of respect for Mr Brian Parkinson, a former Woodstock Councillor and Cllr Ulli Parkinson's husband, who had sadly passed away the previous week.

WTC177/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Cllrs D Davies and U Parkinson.

WTC178/19 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST:

Cllr J Cooper	Item 5 Planning: Personal interest as he is Treasurer of Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association.
Cllr J Cooper	Item 10 Planning: Personal interest as he is a member of WODC Planning Sub-Committee.
Cllr J Cooper	Item 19 WTC Property Portfolio: Personal interest as he is a member of the Youth Club Committee
Cllr A Grant	Item 19 WTC Property Portfolio: Personal interest as she is the Secretary of the Youth Club
Cllr P Jay	Passim: Personal interest as he is a resident of the Retreat, Banbury Road.
Cllr M Parkinson	Item 19 WTC Property Portfolio: Personal interest as he is a member of the Youth Club Committee.
Cllr S Parnes	Item 19 WTC Property Portfolio: Personal interest as his wife is the Chair of the Youth Club Committee.
Cllr E Poskitt	Item 10 Planning: Personal interest as she is a member of WODC.
Cllr S Rasch	Item 19 WTC Property Portfolio: Personal interest as she is a member of the Youth Club Committee.

WTC179/19 MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 10th December 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10th December 2019 were approved as a true record of the meeting with the following amendments:-

WTC162/19 paragraph 5, line 3 add (not Woodstock Surgery) between the words 'Service' and 'near'.

WTC163/19 paragraph 1, line 2 correct spelling from 'eth' to 'the' and correct '£6000' to '£600'.

WTC164/19 paragraph 1, line 3 delete the word 'to' and replace with 'but should'.

Cllr S Parnes requested that his abstention from approving the minutes was recorded due to him not being present at the meeting.

WTC180/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:

There was no public participation.

WTC181/19 REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK:

The Clerk provided Council with an update on status of the action points from the December Town Council meeting.

The Clerk had received confirmation from the Council's insurers that that the Community Centre was not insured for use as overnight accommodation. This information has been relayed back to the enquirer along with contact details for Shipton-on-Cherwell hall as the hall can be hired for overnight accommodation.

The Clerk also reported that Oxfordshire County Council had responded to her and advised that the developer was expecting the 30mph limit and controlled crossing on the A44 Oxford Road to be operational by the end of January.

The Clerk reported that the new power pack had been fitted to the Stair Lift in the Town Hall.

The request for the purchase of the spring removal tool to allow the removal of rubbish from under the trampoline in New Road Play Area was withdrawn by the Clerk as she had been advised that this was a specialist job and so to avoid damaging the equipment, she will obtain a quote from a professional company to carry out the work.

Andrew Parsons, OPFA Community Development Officer had confirmed to the Clerk that he would look at the current signage when he next passes the Old Woodstock play area and recommend improvements to the wording if necessary.

Cllr P Jay asked whether a date had been arranged for Councillors and an OCC representative to meet and discuss the A44 Road Safety. The Clerk advised that she had received an email earlier that afternoon (which had been circulated) advising that OCC Officers were available to attend a meeting at 6pm on Tuesday 11th February 2020 which would be prior to the monthly Town Council Meeting.

Action: The Clerk will confirm suitability of the date offered and will advertise the meeting on the February Town Council meeting agenda and also invite individuals and groups that have expressed an interest in the matter.

Cllr P Jay also enquired about a meeting that he thought Council had resolved during a previous Town Council meeting for a meeting to be arranged with WODC regarding WTC's parking policy.

Action: The Clerk agreed to investigate and progress accordingly.

WTC182/19 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' UPDATE:

The monthly Parish report from Cllr I Hudspeth was received by Council

Cllr T Redpath addressed Cllr I Hudspeth about an item not contained in his report but covered on Radio Oxford earlier that morning. The item being discussed was in relation to Oxford City Council having a Council meeting to consider banning cars from the centre of Oxford.

Cllr I Hudspeth clarified that it was an executive meeting to discuss a joint proposal with the County Council covering a limited area where cars will be charged £10 if they enter the designated area. The fees collected will go towards reducing air pollution and promoting the use of electric cars.

Cllr T Redpath commented "that it seemed ironic to her that Oxford City Council are reducing the number of cars driving into Oxford when the solution is plain that they should build within the city instead of actually putting more employment units into the city area and building the houses outside so people had to get into Oxford".

Cllr I Hudspeth agreed and said "he had been saying exactly the same all along".

Cllr J Cooper stated "that to him one of the obvious way to reduce the amount of traffic going in and out of Oxford would be to dual track Cotswold Line".

Cllr I Hudspeth advised Councillors that as a member of the Cotswold Line Task Force he had been campaigning for the service to provide up to four trains per hour and for improvements in rail connectivity across the county.

Cllr M Parkinson asked Cllr I Hudspeth whether there would be scope to provide a cycle path from Hanborough Station through Bladon and onto Woodstock.

Cllr I Hudspeth confirmed that Mr Colin Carritt, with Sustainable Woodstock, has been working on how the provision of a cycle path could be progressed.

Cllr S Parnes asked Cllr I Hudspeth whether he had any feedback on the recent Growth Board consultation?

Cllr I Hudspeth replied that the feedback from the consultation was currently being collated.

Cllr S Parnes asked that in light of the recent publicity about the local independent bookshop being sold by the current owner which comes in the year that Woodstock lost its full service library facility, was there any news about the prospect of a full service library being reinstated?

Cllr I Hudspeth pointed out that the library is open 50% longer than it was previously and the increase in opening from 27 hours to 38 hours was a good thing. He said that he would like to see a shared library facility similar to those in Charlbury and Banbury where the library facility is open for up to 80-90 hours a week.

The Mayor requested again that the trees in the centre of Woodstock are cut back, and that the hollow in Hensington Road where the bricks are on the narrow part of the road be repaired along

with the road surface in Union Street. She also referred to an email she had previously sent to Cllr I Hudspeth complaining about the buses coming through the town whilst the road was closed for the Remembrance Parade and asked that the buses are permanently re-routed to the Wootton Turn.

Cllr I Hudspeth said that it would be really difficult to stop the buses permanently coming through the centre of the town but he would progress the issues raised.

The District Councillors' report was received by Council.

Cllr S Parnes asked if a planning application had been submitted in relation to the Town Boundary signs being moved in line with the Park View development (on the Woodstock East site)?

He also questioned the actions of the developer in erecting unlawful signage to advertise Park View and then submitting a retrospective planning application.

Cllr J Cooper said that he would go away and check but his assumption would be that the Town Boundary signs were moved under 'permitted development rights'. He also confirmed that he had written to Mr Shaw, Area Development Manager at WODC regarding the retrospective planning application for the advertising signs.

WTC183/19 COMMUNICATIONS:

The Mayor had reminded Councillors earlier in the meeting of the offer from OCC to meet with Council on Tuesday 11th February at 6pm to discuss the A44 Road Safety. The meeting would be held prior to the February Town Council meeting which all Councillors had agreed was acceptable.

WTC184/19 QUESTIONS

No questions were received prior to the meeting.

WTC185/19 MOTIONS PRESENTED TO THE COUNCIL:

There were no motions presented to Council.

WTC186/19 PLANNING:

Council considered the following applications and their responses are shown below:-

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/03265/S73 80 Manor Road, Woodstock

Non compliance with condition 2 of planning permission 15/04147/FUL to allow plot 3 carports changed to garages.

RESOLVED: WTC expressed concern that the application did not contain any reference to the materials which would be used to build the garages. As the garages will be seen across the Glyme Valley, WTC have requested that WODC check and confirm that appropriate materials will be used.

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 18/02105/S73 80 Manor Road, Woodstock

Variation of Condition 2 of Planning Permission 15/04147/FUL to allow amendments to the approved drawings.

RESOLVED: WTC expressed concern that the application did not contain any reference to the materials which would be used to build the garages. As the garages will be seen across the Glyme Valley, WTC have requested that WODC check and confirm that appropriate materials will be used.

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/03358/HHD 53 Oxford Street, Woodstock
Erection of single and two storey rear extensions.

RESOLVED: WTC have no objection to this application.

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/03527/HHD 27A Union Street, Woodstock
Erection of single storey extension to replace existing conservatory.

RESOLVED: WTC have no objection to this application.

WTC187/19 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER – JANUARY 2020

Cllr P Jay proposed the following motion, seconded by Cllr J Cooper:-

that Council approved the payments totalling £103,738.94 made in December 2019 and also noted as satisfactory the Bank Reconciliation and Income and Expenditure Statements for that month

RESOLVED: Council voted unanimously in favour of the motion being carried.

Projected Budget Outturn 2019-20
The report was received by Council.

Cllr P Jay stated that it was necessary to achieve the expenditure put into the budget and expressed his concern in relation to the 'underspend' in numerous areas in the current financial year. He stated that the project monitoring spreadsheet should be taken seriously and if projects cannot be fulfilled whether they should not have been put in the budget in the first place.

Project Monitoring Spreadsheet

Cllr P Redpath enquired about the Mill Stream bank repairs for which there is budgetary provision.

The Clerk advised that she had been waiting for a response from Wychwood Project as to whether any repairs are required.

Cllr Cooper remarked how useful the spreadsheet was. Cllr Poskitt asked that all staff involved with the producing of this sheet be thanked.

WTC188/19 UPDATE ON PLANNING POLICY ISSUES - CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN:

Cllr T Redpath reported that the response written by Troy Planning in support of the Inspector's letter to withdraw the 500 (410) houses proposed for the land to the south east of Woodstock had been submitted on behalf of Woodstock Town Council to the Cherwell revised consultation on the partial review and would be going in front of the Cherwell committee in February. She said that at least one WTC member should be present to address the committee if it is open to public participation and asked Councillors for their view on this.

Cllr T Redpath also advised Council that the Cherwell Development Watch Alliance were in the process of seeking legal advice on what action they should take next in their fight against the proposed development and the Oxford City unmet housing need figures. She added that the situation is beyond being complex and was compounded by the fact that the Oxford Local Plan is being considered separately to the Cherwell Local Plan. Even more complicated is the fact that the Cherwell Plan is being considered under the NPPF1 whilst the Oxford City Plan is being considered under NPPF 2. Very few Local Plans have been considered under NPPF 2 and nothing considered previously touches on the Oxford situation, meaning this almost a test case.

Cllr T Redpath went on to say that it seems one of the things happening is the NPPF has loosened the criteria for development. She had read that the NPPF is now allowing a need to be defined by the local planning authority as to whatever the authority wants to happen and not based on evidence any more. She said this seems to be the planning policy coming out of parliament and she thinks there is a lack of understanding. Some MPs are now realising that the effect of all this on the ground is illogical. Cllr T Redpath suggested that WTC write to the local MP Robert Courts asking him to go back to government and saying there is a problem.

A debate followed during which a number of Councillors expressed their views and support for the suggestion.

Cllr T Redpath summarised and proposed the following motion:-

that the Town Council allow herself and Cllr P Jay between them to draft the letter to send on behalf of the Council to Robert Courts explaining the severity of this situation and asking that he takes it up.

Cllr J Bleakley seconded the motion.

Cllr J Cooper then proposed the following amendment to the motion:-

to send on behalf of the Council to all Oxfordshire MPs

His reasoning for this was because the 500 homes proposed south of the town are in the Henley Parliamentary constituency. He also said that he could provide the name of a peer who could probably get the amendment down in the House Lords and stated that the House of Lords is now more effective than in the House of Commons.

The Mayor seconded the amendment to the motion.

Cllr T Redpath clarified that her motion is aimed at fighting the whole process which is flawed not just the 500 proposed homes.

Council approved the amendment to the motion and a vote was then taken on the amended motion:-

that the Town Council allow Cllr T Redpath and Cllr P Jay between them to draft the letter to send on behalf of the Council to all Oxfordshire MPs explaining the severity of this situation and asking that they take it up.

RESOLVED: Council voted in favour of the motion and it was carried. It was also agreed that the draft letter would be circulated to Councillors for their approval prior to it being sent.

Cllr T Redpath informed Council that after the Troy Planning consultation fees have been paid there will still be some funds (£1,250) left in the budget and she proposed the following motion:-

that WTC, subject to receiving a formal request from the CDWA ,contribute the remainder of the funds (£1,250) to them towards their continued fight.

The Mayor seconded the motion and a lengthy discussion followed.

A named vote was requested.

VOTE: For: Cllrs J Bleakley, J Cooper, A Grant, P Jay, M Parkinson, U Parkinson, S Parnes, E Poskitt, S Rasch, P Redpath, T Redpath

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

Cllr T Redpath asked Councillors if they had any comments on the letter she had drafted and proposed for Council to send to the Oxford Mail as follow up to the article in the paper (Saturday 4th January) which put forward the Blenheim side of the 500 houses and with no response from the Town Council.

A discussion followed during which a number of amendments to the letter were suggested.

RESOLVED: Council then agreed unanimously for the letter to be amended by Cllrs P Jay and P Redpath and circulated to Councillors prior to it being sent to the Oxford Mail by the Clerk.

WTC189/19 TOWN COUNCIL & BLENHEIM STEERING COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT:

Cllr P Jay reported that the Steering Committee meeting had been interesting and had mainly focused on the timetable over the coming 6-8 weeks. During this period Blenheim expected jointly with the Town Council to sit down with OCC and WODC to discuss the Section 106 agreement. He said that the developer had suggested that the Town Council should send as many representatives as it wished to participate in the initial dialogue with OCC and WODC. He went on to say that Council needed to have a discussion and decide to what extent they wish to participate in that process.

The Mayor added that the discussion with OCC & WODC would be focused on as described by Roger File the 'hard items' that would be within the development and then they would be ready to discuss things with WTC. Roger File provided the example that Long Hanborough had been provided with a Doctors Surgery which had cost £2,000,000 and that came at the cost of losing some of the affordable housing which is probably what the situation would be in Woodstock but on a larger scale.

Cllr M Parkinson commented that WTC did not start this process to stop OCC and WODC taking all the money away and leaving nothing left. In his opinion OCC have a set way of doing things so it is a kind of 'one size fits all sort of but not quite'. It is not a tailor-made plan so the whole idea of entering into the process was so that the hard work could be done beforehand and it could be tailor-made to what WTC wants rather than just fitting the standard.

Further discussion followed during which the Mayor confirmed that the item would be added to a future Town Council meeting agenda.

Cllr S Parnes went on to make the point that any discussion with the developer would be severely impacted by the decision from the Cherwell District Council Partial Review on the 500 homes proposed on the PR10 site.

WTC190/19 CLIMATE EMERGENCY:

Cllr E Poskitt provided a brief summary of the meeting she and Cllr M Parkinson had with Dominic Hare, Chief Executive of Blenheim Estates regarding the viability of installing solar panels on the Community Centre roof. A report completed a number of years previously had indicated that the roof panels might contain asbestos and there was a question as to whether the roof was strong enough to bear solar panels. Cllr E Poskitt advised Council that Dominic Hare had said that Blenheim were quite prepared to find a surveyor who could resolve those two issues. She added that if it was found to be viable to fit solar panels then it would be reasonable to discuss with

Blenheim what else they might be prepared to support. It was also agreed that Blenheim will bear in mind working with WTC on future 'mutual' green issues.

Cllr E Poskitt attended the Sustainable Woodstock meeting the previous evening where it was discussed whether there should be an 'Extinction Rebellion' talk held in Woodstock as there had been in Charlbury. She said that the general feeling was to have an environmental climate change issues discussion with relevant parties instead and she would keep Council informed on the progress of the discussion being set up.

Numerous Councillors expressed their views on Blenheim working with WTC on 'green issues' when they are the developer responsible for the large scale development within the Woodstock. It included reference to previous commitment by Blenheim for sharing electric vehicles with the community. Cllr M Parkinson reported that this remained an aspiration but currently there were problems with the amount of electricity available for charging and the battery power of the vehicles.

WTC191/19 SAFETY IN GREEN LANE:

Cllr M Parkinson gave a brief overview of his written report which raised concern for the safety of pedestrians. He indicated that the path stops abruptly at Glyme Close and suggested that it should be extended to enable pedestrians to walk safely to the Owen Mumford site. He also suggested that the words SLOW are painted on the road before the sharp bend marking the approach to it from both Green Lane and Brook Hill.

Cllr E Poskitt commented that the item was a matter for the Traffic Advisory Committee. Cllr M Parkinson acknowledged her comment but replied that there was a lengthy gap between the committee meetings.

Cllr M Parkinson suggested that he, the Mayor meet with representatives from OCC and Owen Mumford Ltd to discuss the matter further.

After a short discussion Council agreed for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to progress the matter and for the Clerk to contact representatives from OCC Highways and Owen Mumford Ltd to arrange the meeting.

WTC192/19 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING:

The Mayor asked for suggestions of items to add to the Annual Town Meeting agenda. Cllr E Poskitt suggested an item on 'what happens to our rubbish' and the aspirations of UBICO.

Cllr P Jay suggested an update on the Local Development and the Community Plan.

Council approved to add Local Development and the Community Plan to the agenda.

WTC193/19 VE DAY 2020 - 75th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS AND COMMEMORATIONS 8th - 10th MAY:

The Mayor called for volunteers to form a working party with other groups such as Wake Up To Woodstock and We Love Woodstock to co-ordinate celebrations and commemorations to be held on Friday 8th May. Cllr J Bleakley agreed to take the lead on this and set up a meeting with other interested parties. Cllr J Cooper reminded Council that the local elections will be held on Thursday 7th May. The Mayor agreed to attend the meeting and Cllr J Cooper said he would like to join the working party as did Cllr E Poskitt. The Mayor confirmed that the Parlour could be used for working party meetings.

WTC194/19 WOODSTOCK DESIGNATED GREEN SPACES:

Cllr T Redpath reported that Troy Planning were in the process of applying for the grant funding as the Local Authority had confirmed designation of the Woodstock Neighbourhood Area.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

Cllr E Poskitt proposed and seconded by the Mayor that in view of the nature of the business to be transacted the public and press be excluded from the meeting (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960 s.1)

Kate Begley and the remaining member of the public left the meeting at this point (9.46pm).

WTC195/19 WTC PROPERTY PORTFOLIO:

The Mayor, Cllr A Grant, CMfP drew Council's attention to the two quotes received for the refurbishment of the ladies toilets in the Town Hall. Cllr J Cooper asked whether the project would be Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant. Cllr A Grant responded that as the project is being overseen by Council's Property Agent they should be aware of and adhere to any specific standards and regulations. She also clarified that the project was to refurbish the toilets not to convert them into a disabled toilet facility.

Cllr A Grant proposed the following motion which was seconded by Cllr M Parkinson:-

WTC accepts the quote from company B of £12,100+VAT for the refurbishment of the ladies toilet

VOTE: For: 9 Against: 1 Abstaining: 1

RESOLVED: Council voted in favour of accepting the quote from company B

Cllr A Grant, CMfP then drew Council's attention to the two quotes received to convert the ground floor gentlemen's toilets in the Town Hall into a unisex toilet facility.

A brief discussion followed before Cllr A Grant proposed the following motion, seconded by Cllr M Parkinson:-

WTC accepts the quote from company B of £14,400+VAT for the refurbishment of the gentlemen's toilet converting it to a unisex toilet facility

VOTE: For: 10 Against: 1 Abstaining:- 0

RESOLVED: Council voted in favour of accepting the quote from company B

Cllr A Grant informed Council that the Clerk had approved for the ceiling of the cellar in the Town Hall to be repaired at a cost of £240 plus VAT.

Council were advised that the contractor awarded the contract to paint the walls and woodwork in the main hall and rear hallway of the Community Centre had confirmed availability to complete the work in February which would mean that WTC would have to accommodate bookings that have already been made. If the work was completed during the school half term in February Woodstock Youth Club may have availability to offer their facilities as an alternative venue for WTC bookings. Cllr A Grant confirmed that this potential solution is currently being explored and requested the following:-

That council agree that if they have to notify groups of the non-availability during this week, WTC offer one free session as compensation for the inconvenience if they could not be accommodated an alternative venue.

Cllr P Jay asked that the conditions of hire are checked to establish whether they contain a clause that states WTC reserve the right to cancel bookings. He stated that if there is no such clause it should be added when the conditions of hire are next reviewed.

VOTE: For: 11 Against: 0 Abstaining: 0

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

Cllr S Parnes enquired as to how long is it anticipated that there will be a need to wait for the financial information to be received from the prospective tenant for 6 Park Street?

Cllr A Grant confirmed that Council had only approved the prospective tenant at the December Town Council meeting she advised that she could not answer the question as the tenancy was being dealt with by the Property Agent.

Cllr S Parnes requested that the Property Agent is contacted and asked 'what is going on'?

Action: It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the Property Agent for an update on how the tenancy agreement/lease is progressing.

WTC196/19 MEETING DATE SEPTEMBER 2020:

Council agreed to bring forward the date of the September 2020 Town Council meeting to Tuesday 1st September 2020 as the Clerk confirmed that she would not be available to attend if the meeting was held on Tuesday 8th September which would be the usual date of the meeting.

WTC197/19 TROY PLANNING INVOICE:

Council approved the payment of the invoice for the sum of £1,750 plus VAT from Troy Planning in relation to the work undertaken by them to prepare and submit the representations on behalf of Woodstock Town Council in respect of the proposed PR10 site.

WTC198/19 COMPUTER SOFTWARE UPGRADE:

Council approved the payment of £100 for Triumph Technology to upgrade the software on the computers used by the Clerk and the Responsible Financial Officer to Windows 10 as soon as possible.

WTC199/19 ENVIRONMENT:

Council agreed to defer the proposal for the outstanding tree maintenance work until a further meeting as more quotes were required before it could be considered.

The meeting closed at 21.58hrs