

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
ON TUESDAY 11th MARCH 2020
IN THE TOWN HALL, WOODSTOCK**

PRESENT:

Cllr A Grant (Mayor)
Cllr J Bleakley
Cllr U Parkinson
Cllr E Poskitt

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

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

WTC222/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Cllrs P Jay, T Redpath, P Redpath and Cllr I Hudspeth.

WTC223/19 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST:

Cllr J Cooper

Item 10 Planning: Personal interest as he is a member of WODC Planning Sub-Committee.

Cllr E Poskitt

Item 10 Planning: Personal interest as she is a member of WODC.

WTC224/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:

Mrs Hilary Brown a member of Sustainable Woodstock provided an update on the issue of Climate Emergency and Woodstock activities related to climate action.

A hard copy of the update is available (on request via the Clerk) for anybody who would like a copy.

WTC225/19 MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 10th FEBRUARY 2020

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10th February 2020 were a true record of the February meeting with the following amendments:-

WTC202/19 paragraph 2, line 2 remove the words 'put a bypass around' and replace with 'divert traffic to use the road that passes'.

WTC211/19 vi) paragraph 9 line 2 remove '£275' and replace with '£250'.

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

WTC226/19 REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK:

Council agreed to the annual inspection being booked and undertaken by Mr John Hicks at the same cost as his 2019 inspection.

Council acknowledged the increase in the cost of the planters (fixed for a three years) and that there was provision within the Woodstock In Bloom budget to absorb this increase.

WTC227/19 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' UPDATE:

The monthly Parish report from Cllr I Hudspeth was received by Council and noted. Although Cllr I Hudspeth was not in attendance it was **resolved** that the Clerk would contact him to ascertain whether Oxfordshire County Council or West Oxfordshire District Council were responsible for maintaining and cleaning footpaths in Woodstock. Concerns were raised about the condition of two footpaths, the first is where the pavement runs through the wood between Churchill Gate and the Oxford Road from the Park View development. The path under the trees is particularly slippery and requires cleaning. Vegetation on the section of the path along the Oxford Road between Churchill Gate and Cadogan Park also needs clearing back. The second is the footpath located between two properties on the Oxford Road (slip road) which provides a cut through to the Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club and Cadogan Park. This path requires resurfacing and the overhanging vegetation clearing back.

The District Councillors' report was received by Council. Cllr S Parnes commented on the illuminated sign erected for Park View intruded on the Countryside and asked if it would set a precedent? Cllr E Poskitt responded that the illumination was so soft it could hardly be recognised and stated that the illumination from the houses being built where the lights had been left on all night was infinitely greater.

Cllr S Parnes asked whether the letter from the landlord regarding the closure of Ryegrass which was read out at the recent Scrutiny Committee meeting would be available? Cllr J Cooper confirmed that he had approached the cabinet member Mr Haine for copies of both what he said at the Council meeting and the other bits of information but to date had not received a response to that request.

Cllr E Poskitt mentioned the revised Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) that is currently out for public consultation. A particular concern was the proposal to absolve five strategic developments from a CIL commitment. She encouraged Councillors to participate and express their views.

WTC228/19 COMMUNICATIONS:

The Mayor expressed her concern about holding the Annual Town Meeting on Tuesday 17th March due to the current health concerns surrounding the coronavirus and asked Council to consider postponing the meeting until further notice. A short discussion followed before it was **resolved** that the Annual Town Meeting would be postponed until further notice and for the Clerk to produce postponement notices which will be displayed on the noticeboards and the Council Website. The Clerk would also write to representatives from Cottsway, Blenheim, Wake Up To Woodstock, Cllr I Hudspeth, PCSO Helen Keen, the residents of Ryegrass and all relevant parties to confirm that the meeting will be postponed. Cllr M Parkinson agreed to post a copy of the postponement notice on the 'We Love Woodstock' facebook page.

WTC229/19 QUESTIONS

The responses to the three questions received from Cllr S Parnes on Friday 6th March are shown in italics below :-

1. Minute WTC44/18 from the 12th June 2018 records, among other things, Council's Resolution to conduct "A Council briefing / training session at the Town Hall – for Members and Town Hall staff - expressly on the topics of Data Protection, Privacy Rights, and related on online information security issues"; and, "An Application to the Office Information Commissioner for a free-of-charge 'Voluntary Audit' (in order that the Town Council can have authoritative guidance on the Data Protection / GDPR –related processes and structures which it has or should be aspiring to develop)". Why have these Resolved actions not been completed, and does the Mayor intend to ensure full implementation before the scheduled end of the current

four year term in May (whereas both pertain to, among other things, the operation of Council email addresses mentioned in in Question 2)?

The Mayor responded that she does not intend to ensure full implementation as it is not her place to do so. It is for the staff to implement what Council decide.

The Clerk acknowledged that two of the four actions had not been completed mainly due the time constraints, conflicting workload priorities and Liz Howlett's lack of availability to provide a briefing/training session when approached in 2018. She admitted that she had not chased Liz Howlett since. The Clerk also refrained from applying to the Office Information Commissioner for a free-of-charge 'Voluntary Audit' as she wanted to streamline and condense the historic paper records in the office before any voluntary audit was applied for.

2. Another aspect of the Resolution recorded in WTC44/18 was allocation of Council email addresses, immediately, to all Council Members. This was eventually implemented after substantial delay and the training referenced in Question 1 above will be relevant for consistency of Councillor awareness in relation to data protection and information safeguarding responsibilities both among Councillors who will not return to office after May, as well as those who will return and be part of the transition to the new Council membership. Moreover, in relation to the Council email system, there exists no clear Council policy or agreed process enabling Members to understand how content on Councillors' email accounts will be safeguarded when they cease to serve their terms, how their email account contents will be stored by or on behalf of the Council and for how long, whether Councillors will be authorized to make copies of their email account contents, and what Councillors' responsibilities are in relation to content remaining, forwarded or stored on their personal devices or home computers once access to the Council system is revoked and the data destroyed. When will Councillors receive clarity on options for approval in relation to these issues?

The Mayor responded that the information received from the company who provide IT support to the Council clearly communicated the options available when closing down the hosted mailboxes for Councillors not returning to office after the May elections. It was confirmed that all Councillors are bound by the code of conduct.

Cllr S Parnes stated that the resolutions recorded in WTC44/18 should either be implemented or rescinded.

Cllr J Bleakley suggested that there should be a 'leavers' procedure/policy for those Councillors who do not return to office.

3. A further aspect of the Resolution cited above relates to "a suitable privacy notice in the 'footer' of Council email addresses" but the Council's standard footer links to a Privacy Policy which states: "If you write to us your letter will be in the public domain unless you make it clear you do not wish it to be...". What is the Council's legal basis for processing all correspondence in this blanket way, and how can the Council ensure Data Protection relating to personal information if Council renders as a default all submitted correspondence as being in its entirety in the public domain; and what measures were undertaken to ensure the quoted aspect of the Privacy Policy is up to date and compliant with GDPR?

The Clerk confirmed that she had adapted the privacy policy of another local Council with their permission and their privacy policy had been adapted from the template circulated by OALC.

WTC230/19 MOTIONS PRESENTED TO THE COUNCIL:

There were no motions presented to Council.

WTC231/19 PLANNING:

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

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 20/00290/LBC17 Woodstock Social Club, 44 Oxford Street, Woodstock

Alterations to replace two pairs of wooden fire doors with new doubled glazed doors, one to the rear and one to the side elevation (Retrospective).

It was **resolved** that WTC have no objection to this application.

WTC232/19 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER – MARCH 2020

- i) To approve the List of Payments for February 2020 totalling £93,028.84 – It was **resolved** to approve the Payments made in February 2020.
- ii) To approve the Bank Reconciliation for February 2020 – It was **resolved** to approve the Bank Reconciliation for February 2020.
- iii) To receive and consider the Income and Expenditure statements for February 2020 – noted
- iv) To receive and note the regular payments made by DD and S/O – noted.
- x) To receive the project monitoring spreadsheet – noted.

WTC233/19 BT CONTRACT PHONE PRICES:

Council considered the recommendation presented by the Responsible Financial Officer within the paper.

That WTC considers taking out a two year contract with British Telecom.

It was **resolved** to take out the two year contract with British Telecom.

WTC234/19 INTERNAL AUDITORS INTERIM REPORT:

The Internal Auditor's Interim report was received and noted along with the comments from the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

The RFO has contacted OALC and has sent some figures regarding income and expenditure for them to forward onto Steve Parkinson, the VAT adviser. She is awaiting his response and is hoping to engage with him directly to discuss the VAT implications for the council in more detail.

It was **resolved** that the RFO should progress the registration for VAT if it established with the OALC Financial Advisor that the council should be registered.

WTC235/19 SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS FROM THE INTERNAL AUDITOR:

The paper recommending amendments to previous budget minutes resulting from internal auditor's interim report was discussed and it was **resolved** that the Clerk refer this to OALC for their advice on whether approved minutes can subsequently be amended.

WTC236/19 INVESTMENT POLICY:

The draft Treasury & Investment Policy was considered. It was **resolved** to adopt the policy on the proviso that the ambiguity in what the 60% relates to in the following bullet is clarified:

The maximum of the council's cash deposits which may be held with one institution must not **exceed 60%**.

WTC237/19 RISK ASSESSMENT – FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT:

The amendments to the Risk assessment 2019/20 were received but as Council did not have the previous version of the documents to compare the changes it was **resolved** that it should be brought back to the April Town Council meeting with the amendments clearly shown.

WTC238/19 UPDATE ON PLANNING POLICY ISSUES:

Cllr T Redpath's report was noted. It was **resolved** to thank Cllr T Redpath for all her hard work in keeping Council informed on planning policy issues and objecting to the proposed development on the PR10 site.

WTC239/19 CLIMATE EMERGENCY:

Cllr J Cooper had attended the Climate Change talk on Friday 6th March at Woodstock Community Centre and said that it was an interesting meeting, attended by a wide range of people.

Cllr E Poskitt confirmed that no asbestos had been found in the Community Centre roof when it was surveyed and there is viability for it to hold solar panels. . One quotation for solar panels on the roof was included in the survey organised by Blenheim.

It was **resolved** that Cllrs E Poskitt and M Parkinson would investigate how the electricity from the solar panels would be distributed and look into whether any grants or funding are available to assist with the cost of installation before further quotes are sought.

WTC240/19 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL PARISH SURVEY:

It was **resolved** to submit the following comments in response to Question 28:-

The greatest challenges are the increasing number of dwellings without significant change to the infrastructure and the environmental impact of concreting over the fields are green spaces.

With this goes the chronic issues of the shortage of car parking spaces in Woodstock.

The biggest changes in the parish in the past 5 years have been the decline in the High Street due to a downward turn in footfall and the number of shops where planning permission has been given to change them to private residential dwellings.

WTC241/19 WOODSTOCK DESIGNATED GREEN SPACES:

Cllr T Redpath's report was noted with a comment that the Community Woodland has been included within the list of designated green spaces.

WTC242/19 PERCEIVED DANGERS AND RECENTLY REPEATED SIGNS OF DISREGARD RELATING TO DEVELOPER ROADSIGN INSTALLATIONS:

Cllr S Parnes advised that the problematic signs referred to within his report been removed with one being relocated into the appropriate place at the entrance to the development.

The Mayor informed Cllr S Parnes that she contacted Blenheim about the issues raised in his paper and had received an apology from Dominic Hare CEO, Blenheim.

The issue of the lack of consultation surrounding the relocation of the stone planters on Oxford Road was raised again and Cllr J Cooper said that he would pursue the matter the following day. It was suggested that this issue could also be raised with Blenheim at the next Town Palace Dialogue Meeting.

Cllr S Parnes proposed the following motion which was seconded by Cllr J Cooper:-

that Woodstock Town Council resolved to communicate to the developer the Town Council's concern and disappointment, and respectfully insisting that much greater consideration, planning and compliance should be ensured with regard to developer signage in future.

It was **resolved** that the Clerk would send the above communication to Blenheim.

WTC243/19 RECTIFICATION OF ERRONEOUS RECORD AND COMMUNICATIONS PERTAINING TO COUNCIL'S DECISION ON NAMING OF STREETS, INCLUDING MINUTES WTC95/19 AND WTC265/18:

It was noted that Cllr S Parnes had submitted his report relating to this agenda item by email 15 minutes prior to meeting being due to commence, leaving no time for Councils to read and absorb its content. An in depth debate followed before Cllr S Parnes proposed the motion below from his paper:-

It is proposed that a motion to correct the erroneous resolution be resolved and that the Planning Authority (street naming team) and the Developer are informed of the erroneous information provided to them, together with a request that further names (beyond the five or six determined already) be derived afresh from among the broader array of themes without regard to any listed proposed names as none have been agreed by Council to date.

The motion was not seconded and therefore was not progressed.

WTC244/19 RYEGRASS INDEPENDENT LIVING HOUSING SCHEME:

Cllr A Grant's report was noted.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

Cllr A Grant proposed 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), seconded by Cllr M Parkinson

Kate Begley and the four members of the public left the meeting at this point (9.16pm).

WTC245/19 TOWN MAPS:

Cllr E Poskitt provided an overview of her report and the following three points were considered:-

- i. Where and how it would like to display maps.
- ii. Given that the estimates appear very similar, which style and therefore which provider it prefers.
- iii. Allow the Clerk/Office to go ahead with a Planning Application.

Experience Oxfordshire was suggested as an organisation that may wish to offer sponsorship towards the cost of the maps in exchange for the map displaying their logo.

It was **resolved** to engage the services of Fitzpatrick Woolmer the company that submitted an estimate of £6842 including VAT to produce a free-standing map display unit and a wall-mounted map and the design would be similar to the map of 'Driffield' that was circulated and the map would show the town centre.

It was **resolved** that the wall mounted map would be positioned in Hensington Road Car Park (on the side of the public toilet wall) and the free standing map would be positioned on the Millennium Triangle. Permission would be sought from the landowners of both sites where it has been decided the maps should be positioned and planning permission applied for via the appropriate authority if this was required.

It was also **resolved** that the option of having a lectern style free standing map board instead of an upright one at the Millennium Triangle would also be investigated by the Administrative Assistant.

WTC246/19 WTC PROPERTY PORTFOLIO:

6 Park Street

The Mayor, Cllr A Grant, CMfP reported that an asbestos survey will be required before the lease for the new tenants could be completed.

It was **resolved** that the Clerk use her delegated power to authorise the Council's Property Agent to engage the services of a local company to complete the asbestos survey on this property as soon as possible.

2 Market Street

The two quotes shown below were considered by Council:-

Quote	Details	Amount
A	specification as outlined within the property report	£18,553.52 plus VAT
B	specification as outlined within the property report	£33,240.00 plus VAT

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

WTC accept quote A of £18,553.52 + VAT for the Exterior and Interior work to be carried out on 2 Market Street as specified. This work to be carried out as soon as possible after the termination of the present lease 16th May 2020 and the council property agent to re-let as a self-contained flats and a lock-up shop unit soon as possible.

It was **resolved** to accept quote A of £18,553.52 plus VAT for the work as specified within the property report to be completed as soon as possible after present lease expires on 16th May 2020. The property will then be re-let as a self-contained flat and a lock-up shop unit soon as possible.

2 Park Street

Cllr A Grant expressed, the loss of the Post Office facility would have a large impact on the town, effecting other business and residents alike and the Council needs to bear this in mind when considering the rent increase.

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

WTC agrees to offer a 5 year lease, accepting the £500 offered increase for the first 2 years taking the rent to £21,000 per annum with a rent review in October 2021.

Council agreed the motion as laid out above.

The meeting closed at 9.41pm