

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

PRESENT:

Cllr A Grant (Mayor)
Cllr J Bleakley
Cllr J Cooper
Cllr P Redpath

Cllr M Parkinson (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr P Jay
Cllr S Parnes
Cllr T Redpath

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

WTC131/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Cllr D Davies, U Parkinson, E Poskitt, S Rasch and CCllr I Hudspeth.

WTC132/19 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST:

Cllr P Jay	Passim: Personal interest as he is a resident of the Retreat, Banbury Road.
Cllr M Parkinson	Item 11 a): Prejudicial interest as he works for the sister company.
Woodstock Town Council	Item 10 a): Personal interest as Woodstock Town Council own the two properties next to The Woodstock Arms.
Cllr J Cooper	Item 10 Planning: Personal interest as he is a member of WODC Planning Sub-Committee.

WTC133/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:

There was no public participation.

WTC134/19 MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 12th OCTOBER 2019:

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12th October 2019 were approved for accuracy, there were no amendments. Cllr S Parnes requested that his abstention from approving the minutes was recorded due to him not being present at the meeting.

The Mayor pointed out that the date on the addendum to the minutes was incorrect and it should be amended to read 08/10/19 not 08/11/19.

WTC135/19 REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK:

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

She reported that she had written back to Chris Hargraves stating that Council were dissatisfied and requesting answers to the questions within their previous communication. He responded saying that he felt he had answered the substantive point which related to the evidence of housing need underpinning the decision to allocate 600 homes at Woodstock through the Local Plan process. He asked WTC to elaborate on which specific question they feel he had not yet answered which the Clerk referred to Cllr T Redpath for her to clarify and respond which to date she has not had the capacity to do.

Cllr S Parnes proposed the following motion, seconded by Cllr T Redpath:-

That:-

The Clerk write back to Mr Hargraves asking for an explanation as to why the Town Council was not informed that the survey was not going to be conducted by them after they had the resolution text from the Council.

A vote was then taken.

VOTE: For: 5 Against: 1 Abstaining: 1

RESOLVED: The motion was carried.

The Clerk confirmed that she had emailed Natalie Moore as requested to ask whether she could liaise with the relevant parties at OCC and propose some suitable dates that a meeting could be arranged to discuss the A44 Road Safety in more detail but to date she had not received a response.

Cllr P Jay said that it was intolerable and grotesquely rude and offensive that OCC had not replied to the email sent by the Clerk and that WTC should take all action available to them to tackle the issue (including bringing it to the attention of the County Councillor).

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

That:-

The Clerk should take all possible steps to demand a proper answer to the request and that the disgraceful behaviour from OCC should not be allowed to continue.

Cllr P Redpath stated that it had become increasingly more difficult to contact any department within OCC via telephone and felt that there should be a mass protest to bring OCC back to the telephone and make them directly accountable.

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

The clerk advised that the Deputy Caretaker had undertaken the task of clearing ivy from headstones and generally tidying up Hensington Road Cemetery and she thanked him for all his hard work to date as the task was ongoing.

The request from Mrs Owen to donate a bench in memory of her late husband within the Lawn Cemetery was discussed. The Mayor drew Council's attention to the policy stating that the maximum of three benches be allowed in the Lawn Cemetery and confirmed there were already three benches in situ. She confirmed that two prior requests received by Council had been refused. The Mayor suggested that the request from Mrs Owen and those previously refused might be considered within the design of the cemetery extension. She said

Cllr T Redpath had informed her that Kidlington Parish Council had purchased a large sturdy bench which had the provision to hold small memorial plaques and bereaved families offered the option of paying for plaque to be fitted to the bench. This in turn paid for the bench. WTC may wish to consider this option when the Lawn Cemetery extension is completed and in use.

Council agreed that the Lawn Cemetery policy needed to be reviewed and that Mayor and the Clerk to look into this and bring it back to Council for approval.

Council approved for the Caretaker to apply for both CostCo and Booker Cash & Carry cards to use for future work related purchases which would enable WTC to claim the VAT paid back.

The Wychwood invoice for the period from July to September was approved for payment.

WTC136/19 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' UPDATE:

The monthly Parish report from Cllr Hudspeth was received by Council. Cllr S Parnes informed Council that at a recent meeting the County Council had resolved not to support the Cambridge-Oxford Expressway and he wanted to ask Cllr Hudspeth 'what impact that's likely to have in the governments further processing of it or is it just a token position of the County Council or if it's going to have any real sway in terms of the government consideration?'

The Mayor confirmed that the Clerk would forward the question onto Cllr Hudspeth.

The District Councillors' report was received. The Mayor queried additional information relating to the planning application for 48 Park Street and the refusal by WODC to grant permission as WTC had submitted their response of no objection prior to that information being made available. Cllr J Cooper confirmed the additional information was related to the harm that would be caused to a listed building in a conservation area which led to the decision to refuse the application.

Cllr T Redpath made a rhetorical comment that she was stunned by the fact that even though the appeal inspector refused planning application for two dwellings on the site of 1 Hill Rise due to the impact they would have on the World Heritage Site, Blenheim are still proposing to build 200 plus houses in the same area. Cllr J Cooper confirmed that he took the matter up as in the previous Inspectors report on the local plan it was stated that there should not be development in Old Woodstock because of the effect on the World Heritage Site and particularly the effect the Column of Victory.

Cllr S Parnes asked Cllr J Cooper why the District Council is supporting the use Blenheim Estate Office as a Polling Station which may have a negative impact on the businesses within the town.

Cllr J Cooper advised that the overriding consideration for the decision was purely related to the Estate Office having level access.

Cllr S Parnes then asked whether the WODC decision to approve the change of use on the Old Railway Station site would set a precedent for future applications made to change the of use of buildings?

Cllr J Cooper confirmed that there has already been one changed.

Cllr S Parnes referred to the WODC member of cabinet for Environment previously writing to clarify that they do not have the resources to manually data input significant number of paper questionnaires. He asked now that 1500 hard copies have been delivered what will happen if hundreds are returned, will WODC find the means to input the results? And secondly who is paying for that?

The Mayor confirmed the Woodstock Town Council agreed to pay for and deliver the 1,700 hard copies of the questionnaire that WODC after originally refusing had subsequently agreed to print. She added that in her view if WODC do not have the resource to input the hard copy responses then the whole process would have to be aborted as everybody has the right to have their say and why should those people who do not have access to the internet be penalised.

Cllr J Cooper reiterated that there is a section of the community who do not use the internet.

WTC137/19 COMMUNICATIONS:

The Mayor showed Council a copy of the book 'Woodstock its buildings and people' which had been produced by Elizabeth Poskitt John Banbury Patricia Crutch and Robert Edwards. She then asked Council if they would like to purchase 10 Copies at a discounted price of £12 rather than £14.99 that could be presented as gifts to important visitors or possibly as raffle prizes.

RESOLVED: The Council agreed unanimously in favour of purchasing 10 copies of the book at the cost of £120.

The Mayor thanked her daughter Sarah, her son-in-law Ian, her sister Dulcie and her husband Jim for the great support and assistance they gave her in preparing and putting on the Remembrance Reception. She also thanked the staff for their part in the important event, together with the Reverend Stephen Pix who kindly took the service as Woodstock found itself without a Rector and Mrs Jean Hollis who helped by relaying the knowledge her late husband had of the proceeding which has helped the Council to hold the event over many years. Finally she said that the person who is elected as Mayor in the forthcoming year should have a meeting with the key people (Reverend, Jean Hollis etc) in early September to ensure all arrangements are in place, in good time. This year the Queens Standard Bearer was only confirmed 1 hour before the Parade was due to start which was quite a worry.

The Mayor advised Council that she had attended the South East Reserve Forces and Cadets Association award presentation at Pembroke College. The event provided the opportunity to recognise individuals who had demonstrated the voluntary ethos and built and nurtured the enduring relationships that are so important to both the Country and Local Community. She said that recognition is given through the award of medals and Her Majesty Lord Lieutenants certificate for meritorious Service. The award and certificate were instituted in order to afford public recognition to those members of the Reserve and Cadet Forces whose efforts are not recognised by the twice yearly honours list. The Certificate ranked second to the Queens Honours List. The Mayor confirmed it was a really lovely evening which also included British Empire Medals being awarded to five people who had undertaken some amazing voluntary work.

WTC138/19 QUESTIONS

The Mayor responded to the three questions that had been submitted by Cllr S Parnes as shown below:

QUESTION ONE

How can the Town Mayor's refusal to answer Question Two at the October 8th Town Council Meeting be reconciled with Code of Conduct's Paragraph 6 titled Openness which states "You must be as open as possible about your actions and those of your council, and must be prepared to give reasons for those actions."; and, why did the Mayor opine that Question Two "had unacceptable accusations within it" when, after all, the Code of Conduct's Paragraph 5 titled Accountability states "You are accountable for your decisions and actions to the public and must submit yourself to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to your office."? Does the Mayor not agree that the Questions segment of the Agenda, which is a common standard feature among similar council bodies throughout local government, is a legitimate means of such scrutiny?

The Mayor responded by saying that she was more than happy for Cllr S Parnes, any other Councillor or member of the public to scrutinise the actions of the Council via all documentation available. As Mayor she had not made any lone decisions and respected the decision of the Councillors majority which is something Cllr S Parnes seemed to struggle with and seemed to try and voice an opinion via email when he had not attended the meeting. Decisions can only be made at the table which he well knew. She stated that all Councillors are supplied with all available documentation before meetings to enable them to be fully prepared. The decisions of the Council are fully documented and actioned by the Clerk

She went on to say as mention before the Mayor does not make decisions, the Council does and she therefore, put it back to Cllr S Parnes that the Clerk who is the Council Proper Officer is the first place of call for any information he required as is so, for any member public who wished to scrutinise as Cllr S Parnes called it. The Mayor finished by saying if Cllr S Parnes read his papers and attended meetings he would not need to ask questions as all the information is there for him.

QUESTION TWO

After so many months throughout which the Council's commercial property at 6 Park Street has been vacant, why have the 'To Let' sign outside the property and the online property listing of the vacancy only appeared last month?

The Mayor responded that all information regarding Cllr S Parnes question is available in Council Office and is also available for public scrutiny. She said that Cllr S Parnes had received all the papers that have been received from the Property Agent which explain what exactly has happened in relation to advertising the property.

QUESTION THREE

Bearing in mind the Town Council's recognition of climate emergency last month, why is it necessary to print 1500 paper copies of the WODC parking survey when 200 paper copies were provided for availability in the town hall, most people have online access or the ability to seek assistance in obtaining one of those 200 copies, the processing of the paper copy responses is prone to less accuracy and substantial cost which is not readily available, and many paper copies will end up in the bin anyway?

The Mayor stated that most of the question had been answered in her answer to Cllr S Parnes first question. She put to him the fact that the Country is currently in the middle of a political quarrel and the political parties do not think anything of posting hundreds of pieces of paper through her door, so they are not actually going via the fact they have declared a climate emergency. She said that the questionnaire had been printed for the public to help them and Councillors had to look after their electorate. She went on to say that he reason why she put

the motion forward was because she did not feel that any Councillor had the right to say that that residents should not have a hard copy questionnaire.

WTC139/19 MOTIONS PRESENTED TO THE COUNCIL:

There were no motions presented to Council.

WTC140/19 PLANNING:

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

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/02670/LBC Woodstock Arms 6 - 8 Market Street, Woodstock

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/02669/FUL Woodstock Arms 6 - 8 Market Street, Woodstock
Erection of pergola to rear yard area.

RESOLVED: WTC had no objection to this application.

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/02599/HHD 70 Oxford Street, Woodstock

Erection of playhouse (Retrospective).

RESOLVED: WTC had no objection to this application.

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/02709/LBC Woodstock House, Rectory Lane, Woodstock

Structural repair works and alterations to existing roof and chimney.

RESOLVED: WTC had no objection to this application.

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/02769/FUL The Old Telephone Exchange, New Road, Woodstock

Replacement of three windows with aluminium acoustic louvres.

RESOLVED: WTC had no objection to this application.

WTC141/19 APPLICATION FOR STREET TRADING CONSENT:

Council considered the following applications submitted in relation to the Wake Up To Woodstock events being held on Friday 29th and Saturday 30th November 2019 and their responses are shown below:-

Licensing Application Consultation W/19/01162/STC The Oxfordshire Pig Roast Company Ltd

Trading from: St Mary Magdalene Church courtyard, towards the back nearest the grave site using 3m Square black gazebo with hog roast machine, 2/3 trestle tables with black table cloths.

Selling: Hot cooked pork in bread rolls with bread based stuffing and condiments & Hot turkey rolls in bread rolls with bread based stuffing and condiments.

RESOLVED: WTC had no objection to this application.

Licensing Application Consultation W/19/01195/STC Oxford Crepes

Trading from: Woodstock Town Square using 3m x 3m Gazebo

Selling: Sweet and Sour Crepes.

RESOLVED: WTC had no objection to this application.

WTC142/19 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER – OCTOBER 2019

Council approved the payments totalling £45,576.90 made in October 2019 and also noted as satisfactory the Bank Reconciliation and Income and Expenditure Statements for that month.

The quotes received from potential Internal Auditors were considered along with the recommendation below:-

The following motion was proposed by Cllr P Jay and seconded by Cllr A Grant:-

That:-

WTC accepts the quote from company B of 620.00 plus VAT based on 1.5 days on site and includes all expenses to carry out the Council Internal Audit subject to references

RESOLVED: Council voted unanimously in favour of accepting the recommendation to engage company B as their Internal Auditor.

Cllr J Cooper proposed that the £830 funding received from WODC for Community Clean Up be used towards re-varnishing and resealing the benches situated on the Town Square and on the Millennium Triangle. He also suggested that the Town Stocks would benefit from being resealed.

Cllr A Grant suggested purchasing an electric rechargeable leaf blower for the Deputy Caretaker to use when clearing the area around the Town Hall as it is difficult to remove the rubbish between the cobbles with a broom due to the surface being uneven. The Clerk informed Cllr A Grant that the Deputy Caretaker had already acquired a secondhand leaf blower at a very reasonable price. Cllr A Grant asked if this was electric or fuel, as if it was a fuel it could not be kept in the Town Hall as it would be a fire hazard. The Clerk said she would check with the Deputy Caretaker and if the machine was electric it would be PAT tested.

RESOLVED: Council voted unanimously in favour of using the funding towards the costs of undertaking the work proposed by Cllr J Cooper and the Administrative Assistant would obtain quotes from local tradespersons.

Project Monitoring Spreadsheet

The Clerk advised Council that she hoped that the Millstream bank repairs would be completed during the winter months. She agreed to investigate with the Administrative Assistant whether there is a need for a free standing projector and screen that could be hired when booking rooms in either the Town Hall or Community Centre. Obtaining a quote for a replacement boiler had proved difficult but both the Clerk and Administrative Assistant will persevere with the task. The Mayor's Consort and Chain will be sent away for engraving after the Christmas period which will result in the project being completed early in the New Year.

WTC143/19 TOWN COUNCIL & BLENHEIM STEERING COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT:

Cllr P Jay provided Council with a brief verbal summary of the very lively discussion had by the Steering Committee the previous day stating that Cllr T Redpath took the developers to task for their attitude of the Woodstock South East project where they said they would seek judicial review of the inspector's decision to reject that part of the Cherwell Local Plan. He confirmed that the Community First report was discussed prior to it being presented to the public at the meetings being held that coming weekend. He reported that the S106 money

had been fixed in relation to the Woodstock East development but not for Hill Rise or Banbury Road as those will be fixed at a later stage in the process as the amount of affordable housing for those areas had not been set yet.

Cllr P Jay stated that there was trouble from the developer's point of view in Old Woodstock as there is a very vigorous group that are strongly opposed to the development around Hill Rise.

Cllr T Redpath added that the second consultation document on the Cherwell Local Plan was now out and the deadline for comments is Friday 20th December 2019. She said that the reason for the second consultation period is because the inspector had taken out the 500 "Woodstock" houses from the plan and those houses had to be reallocated. She also said that when challenged about the S106 money on Woodstock East the developer had said that they have had to set aside the money but it is flexible, giving the example that the Section 106 agreement states that a new under-fives building will be built on the eastern side of the site after delivery of the 90th house unless a better location can be found in the town. This option has the support of Oxon County Council. The developer has stated that OCC wanted to work with the provider of under-five care (WUFA) but effectively OCC could override the fact that both WUFA and the community want the provision to remain in its current location.

Cllr T Redpath informed that Blenheim had referred to two sorts of Section 106 monies, a "statutory" one and a discretionary payment that the developer can make over and above the statutory provision. She confirmed that the Doctors Surgery came out as the number one priority in the survey which will be the largest chunk of money that will come out of the discretionary amount paid by the developer, leaving very little money for anything else as had been suggested earlier in the process..

WTC144/19 UPDATE ON PLANNING POLICY ISSUES:

Cllr T Redpath gave a brief overview of her report and advised that the hearing sessions for the examination of the Oxford City Local plan will begin on Tuesday 3rd December 2019 and that the Cherwell Development Watch Alliance (CDWA) will be speaking at that enquiry.

Cllr T Redpath raised the issue of the second consultation on the Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review and referred back to the agreement she had got from WTC at a previous meeting to put money into the budget to support the CDWA but with the option of Woodstock Town Council being able to use towards engaging a planning consultant for the Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review.

She also reiterated that the PR10 site was in two sections and there remains an option to develop the smaller part of the site on the eastern side of Shipton Road. The site has been earmarked for sports field development for use by Marlborough School and Woodstock Town Football Club. She said that she had read somewhere that Marlborough School needed playing fields, she was unsure why they would need these other than the fact that if they get the new site there will be a wedge of green land which is currently near the school playing field right abutting development that is already going ahead. She said that she couldn't see that the developer had made a particular representation about that piece of land but the situation should be kept an eye on.

Cllr T Redpath confirmed that she had approached Troy Planning and Design Limited and they have indicated that they would be happy to act as consultant on behalf of Woodstock Town Council. She proposed the following motion which was seconded by Cllr A Grant:-

that Woodstock Town Council employ Troy Planning and Design Limited as their consultant to submit an objection.

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

The Mayor thanked Cllr T Redpath for all the work she is doing in the planning/development area.

Council agreed unanimously in favour of supporting the objection submitted by Shipton-on-Cherwell Parish Council against the proposed extension to Shipton-on-Cherwell quarry and agreed that the Clerk would submit the response to the planning inspectorate.

WTC145/19 CLIMATE EMERGENCY:

Cllr M Parkinson reported that although they had nothing to report at the meeting himself and Cllr E Poskitt had been quite busy and had a number of things to discuss which they should hopefully report back to Council at a future meeting. He reminded everyone (Councillors and members of the public) that they are more than welcome to put forward their ideas. The issue of having solar panels installed on the community centre roof was raised by Cllr J Cooper which the Mayor confirmed was being reinvestigated. Cllr J Cooper advised that WODC had a new Climate Change Officer whom he suggested WTC should engage and work with.

The Mayor confirmed that Sustainable Woodstock are keen to assist and support the Council in relation to Climate Change and Cllr M Parkinson thanked the group for their persistence with local businesses to recycle more and reduce single use of plastics.

WTC146/19 WOODSTOCK GREEN SPACES - NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:

Cllr T Redpath confirmed that she had advised both Community First Oxfordshire and Blenheim Estate (owner of some of the areas included) that Woodstock Town Council planned to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan which is a required provision for registering the Green Spaces in Woodstock.

RESOLVED: Council agreed to engage the services of Troy Planning and Design to provide consultancy support for the Woodstock Neighbourhood Plan which would include applying for the £9,000 grant to cover the cost of the project

WTC147/19 VE DAY 2020 - 75th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS AND COMMEMORATIONS 8th - 10th MAY:

After a brief discussion Council decided to defer the item for discussion at the December meeting to allow Councillors time to consider and make suggestions as to how WTC might be involved in the celebrations and commemorations.

WTC148/19 DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4TH OCTOBER 2019:

The draft minutes were noted by Council.

Cllr Jay stated that issues raised at the TAC meetings were never followed through and responded to by Oxfordshire County Council Officers. He requested that this be raised again within the communication that was agreed under minute number WTC135/19.

Council noted the agreement of the committee to post the draft minutes from their meetings on the Woodstock Town Council Website.

Cllr P Redpath reiterated again that Oxfordshire County Council should be more accessible and more accountable.

WTC149/19 TOWN PALACE DIALOGUE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 5th NOVEMBER 2019

The brief notes of the meeting, produced by Cllr E Poskitt were noted along with the date of the next meeting which will be Tuesday 21st March 2020.

The Mayor pointed out that the date for dredging the lake should read May 2020 not May 2019.

Council noted that it had been agreed at the meeting that the draft minutes of the Town Palace Dialogue meetings would be posted on the Woodstock Town Council Website.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

Proposed by Cllr J Cooper and seconded by the Deputy Mayor 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).

Kate Begley and the members of the public left the meeting at this point (9.00pm).

WTC150/19 WTC PROPERTY PORTFOLIO:

Cllr A Grant CMfP provided a brief verbal summary of her report and answered questions raised by Councillors relating to the Cobbled Area, 2 Market Street and 6 Park Street.

Community Centre

Cllr A Grant advised that, two quotes have been received for the redecoration of the main hall and rear hallway and proposed the following motion , seconded by Cllr M Parkinson :-

WTC agrees that:

Company B be awarded the contract to paint the walls and woodwork of the main hall and rear hallway at the cost of £1985 + VAT and excludes the main hall ceiling which is not thought to need redecoration at the current time.

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

Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club

Cllr A Grant confirmed that a quote had been received for the cost of amending the lease to grant the club rights in respect to foul water drainage and electricity supplies across the adjoining children's play area. Council agreed to defer this item for discussion at the December meeting after as they needed time to view the letter in received from the Club and recap their request.

The Clerk agreed to check and confirm whether the outstanding contribution from Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club towards the costs of replacing the boundary fencing had been received.

The meeting closed at 21.45hrs