

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL  
ON TUESDAY 8<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2019  
IN THE TOWN HALL, WOODSTOCK**

**PRESENT:**

Cllr A Grant (Mayor)  
Cllr J Cooper  
Cllr U Parkinson  
Cllr S Rasch  
Cllr T Redpath

Cllr M Parkinson (Deputy Mayor)  
Cllr P Jay  
Cllr E Poskitt  
Cllr P Redpath

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** CCllr I Hudspeth and two members of the public.

The Mayor introduced Kate Begley a former student of the Marlborough School who is presently taking a gap year before going to university in 2020. Kate is very interested in journalism and will attend the monthly Council meetings as she has been asked to write a summary of the meetings for the Woodstock and Bladon News.

**WTC109/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Cllr D Davies

**WTC110/19 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST:**

Cllr P Jay	<b>Passim:</b> Personal interest as he is a resident of the Retreat, Banbury Road.
Cllr M Parkinson	<b>Item 16 Woodstock Memorial Garden:</b> Personal interest as he is a trustee of the piece of land.
Cllr E Poskitt	<b>Item 10 Planning:</b> Personal interest as she is a member of WODC.

**WTC111/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:**

Mr Graham Brown addressed Council on behalf of Sustainable Woodstock and after providing some interesting background details he strongly encouraged Council to declare a Climate Emergency (as proposed in Agenda Item 18) and be proactive in reducing the effects of Climate Change. Sustainable Woodstock would also like Council to take the lead and host an Extinction Rebellion talk to demonstrate their commitment to informing the community of the emergency and fighting Global Warming. Sustainable Woodstock believe that if the message came from the Town Council it would be a much stronger message to our community.

**WTC112/19 MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 10<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2019:**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2019 were approved for accuracy, there were no amendments.

Council agreed that Agenda Item 6 - County and District Councillors' Update and Item 18 - Climate Emergency should be brought forward and taken at this point in the meeting.

### **WTC113/19 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' UPDATE:**

The monthly Parish report from Cllr Hudspeth was received by Council. Cllr J Cooper commented on the Growth Deal Funding element of the report which referred to the potential collapse of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) bid and the severe impact that it could have on the South Oxfordshire Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans that align to it. Cllr I Hudspeth responded to the comment.

The District Councillors' report was received. Cllr E Poskitt informed Council of the interesting morning she had spent at the Cotswold Council headquarters in Cirencester where developing the environment to sustain biodiversity was discussed. She mentioned a group mapping Oxfordshire for green spaces within communities, not just the obvious green spaces but patches of open land which could be developed into wild flower meadows and similar.

Cllr P Redpath asked whether permission had been granted for the development to the rear of 36 Shipton Road allowed on appeal to be accessed across Ryegrass? Cllrs J Cooper and E Poskitt confirmed that as far as they were aware the permission which was not a planning issue had not been granted.

Cllr J Cooper gave his apologies and left the meeting at this point as he had another engagement.

### **WTC114/19 CLIMATE EMERGENCY:**

The following motion was proposed by Cllr M Parkinson and seconded by Cllr E Poskitt:-

1. *The Town Council declares a Climate Emergency with immediate effect and supports policies such as the ones outlined in the paper and considers these when making future policies and decisions. It will additionally formulate actions which will help combat global warming and introduce the item 'Climate Emergency' permanently to the agenda.*
2. *The Town Council instructs its property agent to assess the viability of installing solar panels on the roof of the community centre and if structurally sufficient, then proceeds to get quotes for the installation*

After some discussion Cllr M Parkinson summarised that the motion is a starting point. Climate Emergency should be an item permanently on the agenda so that the impact of climate change is considered when making decisions. Cllr P Redpath quoted the saying "think global act local". Council agreed that the two bullet points of the motion should be voted on separately.

#### **Motion (bullet point 1)**

Cllr U Parkinson proposed an amendment to the motion in which the word declares was changed to acknowledge. Cllr M Parkinson and E Poskitt agreed to the amendment.

Cllr P Redpath suggested adding the following to the end of the motion:-

*and this will need a serious redistribution of wealth.*

Cllr M Parkinson did not accept for the additional sentence to be added to the motion and there was no seconder for Cllr P Redpath's proposal.

A vote was taken on the amended motion shown below:-

*The Town Council acknowledges a Climate Emergency with immediate effect and supports policies such as the ones outlined in the paper and considers these when making future policies and decisions. It will additionally formulate actions which will help combat global warming and introduce the item 'Climate Emergency' permanently to the agenda.*

**VOTE:** For: 5 Against: 1 Abstaining: 2

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

**Motion (bullet point 2)**

Council discussed the need when considering solar panels on the Community Centre for both an asbestos survey and a roof structure survey to be completed prior to proceeding further. Cllr P Jay proposed an amendment to the motion in which the words 'including in detail the financial impact on the Council affairs,' added after the words Community Centre. Cllr M Parkinson and E Poskitt agreed to the amendment.

Cllr E Poskitt suggested removing the words 'instructs its property agent to' from the motion which was accepted by Cllr M Parkinson. A vote was then taken on the amended motion shown below:-

*The Town Council assess the viability of installing solar panels on the roof of the community centre including in detail the financial impact on the Council's affairs and, if structurally sufficient, then proceeds to get quotes for the installation.*

**VOTE:** For: 7 Against: 0 Abstaining: 1

**RESOLVED:** The motion was carried and it was also agreed that the paper submitted by Cllrs M Parkinson and E Poskitt would be included as an addendum to the minutes.

Mr Graham Brown left the meeting at this point (8.15pm).

**WTC115/19 REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK:**

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

Council considered the response received from Chris Hargraves, Planning Policy Manager, WODC in relation to the letter sent to Dr Christine Gore questioning how WODC obtain the Housing Need figures for Woodstock without conducting a survey, unsatisfactory.

**ACTION:** The Clerk would write back to Chris Hargraves stating that Council was dissatisfied and requesting answers to the questions asked in the previous communication.

Council agreed that the hire charge for using the sound equipment at the Community Centre would be added to Conditions of Hire and be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2020. The Clerk would arrange for all long term hirers to be informed of the charge well in advance of that date to enable them to budget accordingly.

Cllr P Jay raised the matter of the A44 Road Safety and the lack of response from Oxfordshire County Council to the letter sent in July requesting a meeting to be held to discuss the

seriousness of the issue. The Clerk confirmed that an email had been received earlier that day from Natalie Moore, Communities, OCC. She confirmed that a review of the reported injury accidents on the A44 through Woodstock, and specifically in the section near the Black Prince had been completed. She advised that the longer term accident history showed that the 2016 accident by the Black Prince was the only serious accident in that section of the A44. Four fatal and seven serious accidents involving pedestrians were recorded on other parts of the A44 through Woodstock.

The report stated that whilst the risk of the high severity incidents is a very understandable concern to Woodstock Town Council, the accident statistics do however identify that other parts of the A44 also have very comparable risks. Additionally, the overall accident rate (taking account of the traffic flows) within the town is below average for a built up area.

**ACTION:** Council requested that the Clerk reply to Natalie Moore and express their disappointment that a copy of the report that was promised had not been received and that the meeting (to be held before 12th September) as requested in the letter sent to Mike Wasley by email, on 22nd July was not arranged. The Clerk should also ask for a date to be arranged for a meeting with the responsible officials, Woodstock Town Council, representatives from Blenheim and other parties who have been concerned about this matter.

#### **WTC116/19 COMMUNICATIONS:**

The Mayor reminded Councillors of the importance of their attendance at the Remembrance Parade and Service on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November. She said it would be lovely if all Councillors could attend the Mayors Carols being held at the Town Hall on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2019 from 5pm.

#### **WTC117/19 QUESTIONS**

Cllr S Parnes made the following written statement (*shown in italics*) at the time he submitted the two questions below:

*“The following Questions are submitted for the Town Council meeting of Tuesday October 8th, with the requisite three clear days notice to the Proper Officer in accordance with Standing Order 8: “*

##### QUESTION ONE

Why did the Town Mayor decline to convene an Extraordinary Town Council meeting after being asked to do so as early as 19th September, to address discrepancies between WTC Minute WTC72/19 “PROPOSED HOUSING NEED SURVEY” and the Housing Needs Survey distributed to households throughout the Town (still in circulation with a published submission deadline just 3 days from today’s Town Council meeting and which incorrectly states “The survey is supported by Woodstock Town Council” and also states “CFO will analyse the survey results and prepare a summary report for the Town Council”) whereas at the July Town Council meeting the Mayor asked Council to agree to the request that West Oxfordshire District Council carry out a housing need survey to help inform the developer (Pye/Blenheim) [not vice versa]? The survey, which invites submission of personal information but did not have a privacy policy attached Participant can make their own decision as to what they put on the form or even a direct link to an online version, is not a District Council survey, and does

not disclose the party which instructed and paid for the exercise. Does the Mayor agree that recipients of such surveys have an absolute right to know who is instructing and paying for it?

Why didn't the Mayor ensure the Council's representatives on the relevant Steering Group make the details vividly clear at the July meeting before the vote?

The Mayor said that she did not decline to call the meeting as asked but as Cllr S Parnes had written in his email "as a courtesy to Colleagues, I undertake not to engage in public comment on the matter during the next 24 hours". As stated in the Standing Orders the Mayor has 7 days to call a meeting and therefore, she felt it better to wait and see what the public said. Obviously the public did not saying anything and no other Councillor actually picked up on the fact that a meeting should be held on this process.

The Mayor confirmed that Council had voted for West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) to do a Housing Need Survey, which was what the motion actually said. Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) and Blenheim Estates were made aware that this was Woodstock Town Councils resolution and they had discussed it with West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) who agreed that CFO should carrying out the Housing Need Survey as WODC no longer carry out Housing Need Surveys knowing that WTC were happy for one to be carried out. She also confirmed the survey stated that all CFO Privacy Statements are available on the website [www.commumityfirstoxon.org](http://www.commumityfirstoxon.org) and all information is kept in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations.

The Mayor also stated that she had given out all the information she had got at the time of the July meeting when the vote on the motion was taken.

#### QUESTION TWO

In July the Town Council resolved (Minute WTC82/19 WTC PROPERTY PORTFOLIO): "An agreement written up by Freeths to be put forward to the tenant of No. 2 Market Street to relinquish the lease following the next rent payment. In return WTC shall not pursue renovation obligations/costs from the tenant, WTC will burden themselves with these with a view to having a void period and now turning the property around without delay to get it re-let as soon as possible, certainly in time for the Christmas period." But at the September meeting Council considered a report stating the tenant was amenable, offering to agree early surrender of the lease and even agreeing Council keep half the deposit; as such, how could Council have properly voted to refuse before first rescinding the Resolution from July? And: on what date did the Property Agent convey or indicate their reported recommendation "to hold off until the lease termination date", and why did Council not have sight of their recommendation in their own words on their own letterhead rather than a third-party conveyed interpretation?

The Mayor replied that in her opinion the question had unacceptable accusations within it and she therefore declined to answer it.

#### **WTC118/19 MOTIONS PRESENTED TO THE COUNCIL:**

There were no motions presented to Council.

## **WTC119/19 PLANNING:**

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

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 36 Blackberry Way, Woodstock

Conversion of part of garage to study/office.

**RESOLVED:** WTC have no objection to this application.

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/02496/FUL Manor Farm Barn, Manor Road, Woodstock

Construction of new dwelling incorporating existing outbuilding with associated works and landscaping. (To allow changes to layout of approved plans 18/00184/FUL)

**Condition Number: 2 Conditions Removal:** When the project was sent out for pricing we found it to be a very tough tender environment and in order to bring the project on budget we need to make some changes to the design. These changes do not impact on the quality of the project but will require a Minor Material Amendment and therefore a change to the approved plans detailed in Condition 2 of the original planning application approval.

Condition 2 to be amended in accordance with the supporting drawings for this Minor Material Amendment.

**RESOLVED:** WTC have no objection to this application.

REF: APPLICATION NO: 19/02580/LBC Manor Farm Barn, Manor Road, Woodstock

Construction of new dwelling incorporating existing outbuilding with associated works and landscaping. (To allow changes to layout of approved plans 18/00185/LBC)

**RESOLVED:** WTC have no objection to this application.

## **WTC120/19 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER – SEPTEMBER 2019**

Council approved the payments totalling £20,575.92 made in September 2019 and also noted as satisfactory the Bank Reconciliation and Income and Expenditure Statements for those months along with the Internal Controls and the External Audit Report.

Project Monitoring Spreadsheet

The spreadsheet was received without questions or comment.

## **WTC121/19 INVESTMENT WITH THE PUBLIC SECTOR DEPOSIT FUND MANAGED BY CCLA:**

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

*WTC agrees that the following Councillors:-*

*Cllr A Grant, E Poskitt, M Parkinson and U Parkinson as signatories (to date) of the Public Sector Deposit Fund Account may authorise the first investment of £80,000 to this account being the balance from the closed Barclays Bank Deposit Account*

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

## **WTC122/19 TOWN COUNCIL & BLENHEIM STEERING COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT**

Cllr P Jay provided Council with a brief verbal summary of the discussion had by the Steering Committee the previous day. He confirmed that Community First Oxfordshire had completed the draft of the first stage report and were planning to present it at two public meetings in

early/mid November. The completion of the draft report will bring that exercise to a pretty advanced stage.

Cllr T Redpath said that the Steering Group had been given sight of the draft report but they were advised that the document was to remain confidential until made public by CFO. She advised that the benchmark being used to evaluate the square meterage per population of public buildings in Woodstock is the one used by Cherwell as West Oxfordshire District Council do not have one and it had been pointed out that Woodstock has four and a half times the benchmark figure for its current population. There was a discussion around whether a new community building should be provided within the Hill Rise development due to distance into the town. Cllr T Redpath felt that residents of the new development would probably make the effort to use the facilities already available within the town where classes and local groups meet. She said there was a suggestion that any money should be put into improving the facilities Woodstock has already got.

Cllr T Redpath confirmed that the public meetings that CFO had arranged were to be held on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November. Cllr E Poskitt noted the dates for inclusion in the Autumn Town Council Newsletter.

#### **WTC123/19 UPDATE ON PLANNING POLICY MATTERS**

Cllr T Redpath advised Council that an archaeological survey had been conducted on the additional PR10 site which had revealed that there were no archaeological remains there of any substance and reading between the lines she felt that Blenheim were still hopeful of building something on that piece of land.

#### **WTC124/19 WEST OXFORDSHIRE TOWN AND PARISH FORUM:**

The Mayor said that she would attend the meeting if she had no conflicting prior engagement.

#### **WTC125/19 WOODSTOCK MEMORIAL GARDEN:**

Council had a long discussion about Woodstock Town Councils' role in how the Memorial Garden is best used and maintained.

Cllr P Jay proposed the following motion:-

*Council to authorise the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Town Clerk at their discretion to enter into discussions with the Trustees of the Memorial Garden and Blenheim about the best possible use of that site in the interests of the community as a whole and to report back to the Council.*

Cllr M Parkinson confirmed that the Trustees (of whom he is one) were waiting to see how the Police station and Library sites are to be developed as the upkeep of Memorial Garden could be included within these plans.

A further discussion followed after which the Mayor asked if there was a seconder for the motion. As no Councillor wished to second it the motion fell.

#### **WTC126/19 DESIGNATED GREEN SPACES:**

Cllr T Redpath reported that she had been in contact with Troy Hayes from Troy Planning and they had discussed the brief to produce a Neighbourhood Plan that concentrated entirely on greenspace designation. She provided an overview of her research into the grant funding

process for Neighbourhood Planning available via Locality and confirmed that Troy Planning would be willing to make an application for grant funding on behalf of Woodstock Town Council.

Cllr T Redpath had also received the brief below from Astrid Harvey for the appointment of a consultant to complete the Neighbourhood Plan for green spaces:-

- To lead the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Woodstock in liaison with Woodstock Town Council as client, including applying for Locality Grant Funding for this activity and being a single point of contact for West Oxfordshire District Council.
- To fulfil the requirement of undertaking a strategic assessment of Local Green Spaces across the Parish with the goal of designating Local Green Spaces through the Neighbourhood Plan (including production of maps, all text, production of necessary submission supporting documents so that the Neighbourhood Plan is found to meet the Basic Conditions at examination eg Consultation Statement, Basic Conditions Statement
- To produce the final Neighbourhood Plan for submission to West Oxfordshire District Council.

Cllr E Poskitt said that she had spoken to Astrid Harvey and she had implied that Woodstock Town Council needed to submit a formal application to WODC which included a list of the green spaces being proposed and the parish boundary. A discussion followed during which the following list of sites was drawn up and it was agreed to submit the application:-

Recreation Ground / Football Field  
New Road Play Area  
Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club  
Watermeadows  
Old Woodstock Play Area  
Marlborough School Field  
Memorial Garden  
Allotments  
Budds Close Play Area  
Old Woodstock Line (OWL)

Cllr T Redpath proposed the following motions:-

1) *That Council RECOMMEND that in view of the timescale Troy Planning be asked to proceed with drawing up a plan for consultation and to make application on behalf of Woodstock for grant funding and that the brief that is presented to Troy Planning is as shown below:-*

- *To lead the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Woodstock in liaison with Woodstock Town Council as client, including applying for Locality Grant Funding for this activity and being a single point of contact for West Oxfordshire District Council.*
- *To fulfil the requirement of undertaking a strategic assessment of Local Green Spaces across the Parish with the goal of designating*

*Local Green Spaces through the Neighbourhood Plan (including production of maps, all text, production of necessary submission*

- *supporting documents) so that the Neighbourhood Plan is found to meet the Basic Conditions at examination eg Consultation Statement, Basic Conditions Statement.*
- *To produce the final Neighbourhood Plan for submission to West Oxfordshire District Council.*

2) *In tandem that the Town Council will apply for Neighbourhood Area Designation, the boundary of which will follow the boundary of Woodstock Parish.*

Cllr A Grant seconded both motions and the brief as outlined above.

**RESOLVED:** Council voted unanimously in favour of both motions and agreed that the Clerk write to Troy Planning to inform them of the Council decision and request a fee proposal for the costs to undertake the work.

#### **WTC127/19 ENVIRONMENT:**

Cllr P Redpath gave an overview of his meeting with Mr R Cox from Blenheim Estate and asked that another meeting was set up to discuss further the future of works on the Watermeadows. Cllr P Redpath would liaise with the Clerk regarding arranging this meeting

The recommendations from the report written by the Clerk relating to tree planting and tidying up Brook Hill entrance to Watermeadows were discussed.

Council did not approve the recommendation to plant an extra 15 alder to the original 10 alder quoted for and 25 hawthorn and 25 hazel to be planted as provided in quote 1 and therefore, only the 10 alder originally quoted for will be planted in the area where the poplar trees were removed during November.

Council did agree to accept the quote for Dowdeswell to re-level the pathway from the Black Prince entrance to the Brook Hill entrance and lay stone to enable clean access via that entrance at a cost of £250 plus VAT.

#### **WTC128/19 OFFICE OPENING HOURS OVER CHRISTMAS PERIOD:**

It was agreed by Council that the Woodstock Town Council office would be closed from Monday 23rd December 2019 through to Thursday 2nd January 2020. A notice will be displayed on the main door of the Town Hall and on the noticeboards from early December to notify residents and hirers of the closure and contact arrangements during the period the office is closed. The protocol for funerals during this period was discussed and it was agreed that there would be no facility for burials which follows the practice of other Councils.

#### **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

It was then proposed by Cllr J Cooper and seconded by the 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 remaining member of the public left the meeting at this point (9.50pm).

## **WTC129/19 WTC PROPERTY PORTFOLIO:**

### Town Hall Disabled Toilet

Council were informed that the quotes obtained to change the current ground floor toilets to a unisex facility and to refurbish the first floor ladies toilets were still being collated.

### Community Centre

Cllr A Grant advised that following the Council's decision, two further quotes are being sought for the redecoration of the Main Hall.

### Cobbled Area

After confirming with the tenant that he would not pay the required licence fee, a letter will be sent to request that the tables and chairs be removed from the cobbled area. The Responsible Financial Officer has been investigating whether there are any payment arrears and has contacted the previous Property Agent requesting clarification of the annual payments received from the tenant.

### 2 Park Street

Renewal of the lease is currently being negotiated with the franchisee of the Post Office. The Property Agent will keep Council updated on this matter.

### 4 Park Street

The current tenancy is due to expire on 29th November 2019 and the tenants had previously requested an extension of 6 months to their lease which was agreed by Council. They have advised the Property Agent that they wish to take the lease for another year with a six month break clause.

**RESOLVED:** WTC agreed to the lease being renewed for another year with the break clause requested.

### 6 Park Street

The Property Agent advised that some reference documentation is still outstanding which is being chased by the prospective tenant as a matter of urgency. They also advised that the old lease from 2010 should be removed from the freehold title, which will close the historic leasehold title as this has been an issue with previous potential tenants.

Cllr A Grant, CMfP proposed the following motion seconded by Cllr M Parkinson:-

*WTC agrees that:*

*The Town Clerk instructs Freeths Solicitors to submit an application to the Land Registry to have this old lease removed at the anticipated cost of £450 - £650 + VAT and disbursements as advised.*

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

### New Lease for 6 Park Street

Cllr A Grant reported that it was hoped that all the relevant paperwork will be completed and the new lease drawn up and signed to enable the new tenant to move in on the 1st November 2019.

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

*WTC agrees that;  
Providing the Town Clerk and the Mayor are satisfied with the content of the new lease they both sign it on behalf of the Council to enable the new tenant to move in on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2019*

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

24 Market Place

The delay with the lease being completed is being dealt with by the Property Agent.

Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club

Cllr A Grant reported that costs are being sought from Council's solicitors for the amendment to the current lease that has been requested to allow for 'the passage of electricity and water mains together with the route and discharge of foul water to the septic tank.'

The Clerk has been chasing up the outstanding contribution from Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club towards the costs of replacing the boundary fencing.

Community Centre Dishwasher

Due to the ongoing issues with the dishwasher not working properly and its age (9 years old) Cllr A Grant proposed the following motion which was seconded by Cllr E Poskitt:-

*WTC agree that a new dishwasher be purchased and installed at the Community Centre as soon as possible at the cost of £1,200 plus VAT.*

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

**WTC130/19 HEADS OF AGREEMENT:**

Council approved for the Heads of Agreement for the new lease to be drawn up for 6 Park Street.

The meeting closed at 22.00hrs