

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
ON TUESDAY 9th APRIL 2019
IN THE TOWN HALL, WOODSTOCK**

PRESENT:

Cllr P Jay (Mayor)
Cllr J Bleakley
Cllr U Parkinson
Cllr E Poskitt
Cllr S Rasch
Cllr T Redpath

Cllr A Grant (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr J Cooper
Cllr M Parkinson
Cllr S Parnes (arrived at 7.36pm)
Cllr P Redpath

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr I Hudspeth, some fifteen members of the public and Mr B Yoxall, who attended on behalf of the Woodstock & Bladon News to write a monthly report for the publication.

WTC254/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Cllr D Davies.

WTC255/18 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST:

Cllr J Cooper **Item 14 Planning:** Personal interest as he is a member of WODC Uplands Planning Sub-Committee.

Cllr J Cooper **Item 16 Renewal of UBICO Litter Pick, Playground and Watermeadows Inspections Contract:** Personal interest as he is a member of WODC.

Cllr E Poskitt **Item 14 Planning:** Personal interest as she is a member of WODC Uplands Planning Sub-Committee

Cllr E Poskitt **Item 16 Renewal of UBICO Litter Pick, Playground and Watermeadows Inspections Contract:** Personal interest as she is a member of WODC.

WTC256/18 OVO ENERGY WOMEN'S TOUR:

David Heycock, Project Manager, Oxfordshire County Council addressed the Council with a brief overview of the five-day women's cycling event which is one of, if not, the leading professional women's stage races. It is televised on ITV4 in the UK and around the world.

He confirmed that Oxfordshire have been successful in agreeing a three-year deal with the event organisers, SweetSpot that will involve the race passing through the county in year 1, starting in the county in year 2 and finishing in the county in year 3. Stage 3 of this years' event will finish in the grounds of Blenheim Palace on Wednesday 12th June between 2.45-3.15pm and the event will be free to attend.

Mr Heycock outlined that Community engagement will involve schools, businesses, cycling groups and charities. Last year the race generated £7.7 million net revenue for the places that

it visited across the six stages. He added that successful community engagement increases the Gross Value Added and creates a longer and more effective legacy. All arrangements will be designed and implemented to leave locals, spectators and riders with a positive experience.

The objective being to create an event that:-

- captures the imagination of the people of Woodstock
- has a positive impact on the local economy
- receives positive feedback from the local residents
- motivates people, young women and girls particularly, to be more active and exercise more.

The Mayor thanked Mr Heycock for attending.

Cllr S Parnes arrive at this point in the meeting.

WTC257/18 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:

Mrs Jo Lamb began her address to Council in relation to the parking issues in Woodstock with a quote attributed to Albert Einstein:

"If you always do what you always did, you will always get what you always got."

She said that Woodstock is now facing up to a challenge which is only likely to increase because of Blenheim's growing events programme and development plans. Parking has long been an issue which has divided us with the result that in the past, the problem has been "kicked in to touch" and left, for later Town Councils to grapple with. Hence the previous "light touch" approach which had subsisted for well over a decade and which has been the basis upon which many households since that time, purchased their homes.

However, the unexpected return of enforcement of all 72 one hour bays in the town centre, bemoaned by many at the time, has reaped some positive rewards. As a result of the formation of Heart of Woodstock (HOW), who now have the benefit of a factual unbiased report, which gives the authorities the opportunity to consider how best to solve the complexities of Woodstock's shortage of supply over demand in parking terms plus, (of equal importance), how to reconcile this need without discriminating against one section of the community, namely those residents who live in the central areas of Woodstock.

In an effort to find common solutions to the various parties' differences, the Mayor recently convened an informal meeting of interested citizens. It became clear during discussions that "churn" was essential for visitors, for businesses and indeed also, for residents. How might this be achieved when for example, over 40% of employees and owners of businesses surveyed by HOW, (i.e. Some 400+ individuals), parked early each morning in Hensington Carpark or in the town centre, where they stayed for the duration of their working day? At least (one might submit), that visitors and many residents, "come and go" during this time.

With this in mind and following the Mayor's informal meeting, HOW representatives met with Mr Colin Carritt in order to pool our recent traffic and parking findings with Colin's experience, in an attempt to find common ground. Much to the surprise of some, HOW found that far from

being divided over parking issues, with compromise on both sides we were each united in our thinking. This resulted in our respective responses to WODC's questionnaire which are integral to the parking motion to be considered by Council this evening.

It is so important for our community that we deal with our current parking and traffic challenges by means of consensus. It is a time for compromise. It is a time for unity and not division in our town. It can no longer be a case of the businesses versus the residents, for example. HOW submit that Cllr Bleakley's motion, supported by the Mayor, provides a tremendous opportunity of positive influence by our Town Council with WODC. It may be that you don't agree with everything proposed in the motion? But please consider that nothing need be set in stone. Indeed, the motion specifically suggests a 12 month trial in some cases. Therefore, much in the way that an oversupply of one hour parking bays has become apparent over the last few months, these things can be modified through trial, over the year. Crucially though, both appended questionnaires show a common approach and by virtue of their attachment within the motion, become integral to it. If the motion is carried by the Town Council this evening, it will indicate to WODC that there is a consensus of response by all those consulted, not only to the content of the draft questionnaire but also in terms of possible solutions to the parking problems we all face.

Change and challenge can often be uncomfortable. However, if discomfort can produce compromise, consensus and unity within our town then it has to be applauded. HOW so hope, urge and even plead with our Town Councillors to support Cllr Bleakley and the Mayor's motion.

Having begun this piece with Einstein, Jo ended her address with an old Chinese proverb:

"When the winds of change blow, some people build walls; others build windmills....."

WTC258/18 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 12th MARCH 2019:

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th March were approved, there were no amendments.

WTC259/18 REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK:

The Mayor proceeded to present the Clerk's Report during which Cllr P Redpath raised concerns relating to the growth of the Himalayan balsam if the cows are not grazing the meadow this year. The cost of having just two cows, obtaining a Deed Of Profit a Prendre and completion of the required legal forms with DEFRA were also discussed. The Clerk informed Council that she had taken the advice given by Wychwood Project and advised the owner that her cows were not required on the Watermeadows and she had therefore made alternative arrangements for their grazing.

The Mayor proposed '*Council ratify what is already happening and accept this*'.

A vote was taken.

VOTE: For: 9 Against: 1 Abstaining: 0

RESOLVED: The proposal was carried.

It was agreed that Cllr P Redpath would talk to the livestock owner and ascertain the situation with the cows

Causeway Pedestrian Crossing

Council noted that the new Halo lights had been installed at the crossing on the Causeway near the Black Prince.

Play Area Fencing

Cllr P Redpath agreed to assist the Clerk with seeking companies to provide quotes to erect the metal fencing currently being stored in the Town Hall Cellar in the New Road play area.

WTC259/18 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' UPDATE:

The monthly Parish report from CClr I Hudspeth was noted without comment or question.

The District Councillors' report was received. Cllr S Parnes referred to the extremely low level of affordable housing quoted within the Local Plan Monitoring Report. Cllr E Poskitt pointed out that provision of affordable housing is reliant on the size of the development and it is only provided where there is development on a significant scale. Cllr Cooper said he had taken this issue up with the Planning Minister Mr Malthouse at a recent LGA (Local Government Association) meeting stating that the calculations did not stand up. Mr Malthouse took Cllr J Cooper's comments on-board and said he was going to look into how that could be rectified.

WTC260/18 COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

WTC261/18 QUESTIONS:

None.

WTC262/18 MOTIONS PRESENTED TO THE COUNCIL:

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

Recognizing the importance of Wi-Fi for modern library users, tourists, residents, business meeting participants and students, Woodstock Town Council called upon Oxfordshire County Council to act without delay to install and/or activate publicly accessible Wi-Fi at the 'temporary' Woodstock Library facility building (including throughout The Oxfordshire Museum and its cafeteria), especially noting that at the time of submission of this motion publicly accessible Wi-Fi in the library or the rest of the facility building has not been available despite contrary comments and publications by some representatives of OCC in the WOBL News and elsewhere, whereas it was previously suggested - inaccurately - that Wi-Fi would be available at the beginning of the year or is active already.

The Mayor proposed an amendment to the motion in which 'called' was changed to 'calls' which was accepted by Cllr S Parnes.

Cllr E Poskitt provided some background information on the reasons for the delay installing WiFi in the temporary library which was not the fault of the Oxfordshire Museum. There was a short debate after which at the invitation of the Mayor, CClr I Hudspeth addressed the Council and explained the reasons for the delay and advised that he had not previously been advised that there was no public WiFi available in library. He confirmed that the Wi-Fi had now been ordered and would be installed in 8 weeks.

Cllr S Parnes requested a named vote.

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|--------------|-------------|---|--|
| VOTE: | For: | 2 | (Cllrs A Grant & S Parnes) |
| | Against: | 5 | (Cllrs T Redpath, P Jay, J Cooper, E Poskitt & S Rasch) |
| | Abstaining: | 4 | (Cllrs U Parkinson, J Bleakley, M Parkinson & P Redpath) |

RESOLVED: The motion fell.

WTC263/18 BLENHEIM TALKS PROGRESS REPORT:

Cllr Jay, T Redpath and Grant gave a collective overview of the Steering Group meeting held on Monday 8th April.

Cllr T Redpath said that the final draft questionnaire had been circulated taking on comments made by members of the group. Tom McCulloch of Community First had confirmed that all questions were based on feedback from the first part of the consultation exercise. Cllr T Redpath went on to say that the questionnaire was being delivered (by Newsquest) to all households on 26th April with a return date of 15th May, giving three weeks for return. Each household would receive a hard copy, but there would also be opportunity to complete the questionnaire online.

The Steering Group acknowledged that there may be duplication which is difficult to prevent but it is hoped that any duplication will be minimal. It was also noted that those who had filled in feedback forms during the launch events will still requested to complete the questionnaire.

Cllr T Redpath stated that Tom McCulloch had also agreed to write a statement to send out as a reminder before the closing date for the questionnaire.

There were worries that some of the questions did not have feasible outcomes and this would have to be explained at the next stage. It was also noted that some feedback forms had shown that residents were not necessarily aware of the facilities that already exist, and part of the outcome may be to produce a directory of facilities for all households.

Community First will present the results gleaned from the returned questionnaires and present the results at three community events which will be held end of May/beginning of June. The feasibility of the comments submitted by residents and the emerging priorities will be discussed at these events.

Cllr T Redpath advised that Tom McCulloch was summarising the feedback from the launch events in report form which would be made available to the public.

Cllr A Grant confirmed that additional hard copies of the questionnaire would be available for residents to take from the foyer in the Town Hall.

WTC264/18 WOODSTOCK PARKING REVIEW:

Cllr J Bleakley provided an overview of his and the Mayor's joint report and proposed the following motion, seconded by The Mayor:-

"That the Council recommends to the District Council a parking policy for Woodstock based on:-

- a. *Parking bays as described in this paper, properly enforced;*
- b. *Parking permits to use those bays for residents in zones as described in this paper;*
- c. *This all on an experimental basis to be reviewed after 1 year and in the light of questionnaire results. We agree with commentaries on WODC's draft provided by Heart of Woodstock and Colin Carritt, as attached, for forwarding to WODC"*

A lengthy debate followed during which a number of issues were raised including the lack of long stay parking and also the lack of parking spaces in New Road for use by its residents who do not have their own off street parking. The possible option of having a number of short stay parking spaces in the Hensington Road car park and having a one way system in the town centre were also mentioned. Concerns were raised whether there would be money available to fund the enforcement described within the report.

A vote was then taken.

VOTE: For: 7 Against: 2 Abstaining: 2

RESOLVED: The motion was carried

All the members of the public except one left the meeting at this point.

WTC265/18 NAMING OF STREETS IN WOODSTOCK EAST DEVELOPMENT:

After a full discussion Cllr M Parkinson proposed that Council submit the following themes for naming the streets within all the agreed developments in Woodstock (Woodstock East, Banbury Road and Hill Rise) which was seconded by Cllr J Bleakley:-

Woodstock Residents Remembered On War Memorial (Family name)

1914-18 Ashford, Ballard, Broadis, Brooks, Clarke, Crutch, Davenport, Farley, Fisher, Franklin, Freeman, Guy, Hall, Hardy, Hawkins, Haynes, Hine, Kilby, Langdon, Morley, Morgan, Painting, Paisley, Partlett, Remnant, Rose, Slade, Smith, Stephens, Stroud, Styles, Taylor, Vokins, Whitlock, Wilkins, Williams, Willis, Winning.

1939-45 Batt, Charlett, Hoare, Lacey, Mills, Morris, Moss, Murton, Parsons, Turrill, Warwick

Woodstock Businesses (as laid out in the paper submitted by Cllr A Grant at the March meeting)
Cowles, Prices, Turrells, Dews, Robinsons, Henriettas, Wembleys, Taylors, Bowlers, Durstans, Dunkleys, Parsons, Noonans, etc

Woodstock Field Names

Thrupp Way (arable), Priors Ground (arable), Far Ground (arable),

Woodstock Others

Kempster's Pippin, Radiohead...

A vote was taken.

VOTE: For: 10 Against: 1 Abstaining: 0

RESOLVED: The motion was carried.

WTC266/18 PLANNING:

Council considered the following planning applications:

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/00516/HHD 21 Oxford Road, Woodstock

Two storey side extension. Single and two storey extensions to rear. Erection of new double detached garage.

RESOLVED: WTC have no objection to this application.

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 19/00619/S73 8 Shipton Road, Woodstock

Non compliance with condition 2 of planning permission 10/0434/P/FP (To regularise what has been built)

Ref: APPLICATION NO: 10/0434/P/FP 8 Shipton Road, Woodstock

Erection of replacement conservatory with roof terrace above and provision of new glazed gable in SE elevation.

RESOLVED: WTC have no objection to this application.

Cllr E Poskitt suggested that the Urgent Planning Committee approved at the October 2018 meeting (WTC136/18) should meet in the next couple of weeks to discuss the planning application for 1 Spencer Close. The application was received after the deadline for WTC agenda items and the closing date for submission would be before the date of the next Town Council meeting.

Council agreed in favour of convening a meeting of the Urgent Planning Committee.

WTC267/18 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER – MARCH 2019

Cllr J Cooper proposed that Council approve the payments for March and also note as satisfactory the Bank Reconciliation and Income and Expenditure Statements for that month, seconded by Cllr A Grant.

RESOLVED: The payments totalling £27,279.80 in the month of March were approved.

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

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

Council Credit Card

The Council Credit Card application was deferred to the May meeting.

Barclays Bank

Council unanimously agreed to transfer £80,000 from Barclays Account to The Public Sector Deposit Fund managed by CCLA as recommended by the Responsible Financial Officer.

Project Monitoring Spreadsheet

Cllr E Poskitt requested that the funds allocated for the Town Noticeboards be carried over into the 19/20 financial year.

Cllr P Redpath reported that due to the onset of nesting season and the logistical difficulties currently being experienced with the removal of the poplar trees the budgetary provision will need to be carried over to the 19/20 financial year as all the approved tree work now cannot be completed until the autumn.

The company awarded the contract will ensure that any unsafe branches are removed in the interim period.

Cllr P Redpath also provided Council with an update on replacing the cattle bridge between meadow 5 & 6.

WTC268/18 RENEWAL OF UBICO LITTER PICK, PLAYGROUND AND WATERMEADOWS INSPECTIONS CONTRACT:

Council agreed to renew the Contract with UBICO for three years (2019-2021) with the yearly 2.9% rpi increase. After a short discussion they also agreed to increase the inspections and litter picking at the play areas (shown below) as a trial during the summer months which will hopefully prove beneficial in ensuring the play areas are kept clean and hazard free as far as possible at all times.

- New Road play area to include Saturdays and Sundays
- Budds Close play area to include Sundays
- Rosamund Drive play area to include Fridays

WTC269/18 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING:

The Mayor gave a short overview of the meeting.

Cllr T Redpath drew attention to the motion below that had been carried by a majority vote at the meeting on Tuesday 19th March:-

In a recent newsletter our Member for Parliament declared that he has always been clear that infrastructure upgrades should precede NOT follow housing development.

In the light of this statement this meeting calls upon our MP to request a halt to house building in Woodstock until the acute highways infrastructure problem on the A44 between Yarnton (Turnpike Inn) and the Loop Farm roundabout has been addressed and brought physically to fruition.

Cllr T Redpath proposed that the Town Council adopt the above motion, seconded by Cllr A Grant.

A vote was taken.

VOTE: For: 10 Against: 0 Abstaining: 1

RESOLVED: The motion was carried.

WTC270/18 DRAFT ORDER SE/3706 – PROPOSED STOPPING UP OF HIGHWAY AT BROOK HILL:

After a short debate Council agreed that there should be a three month time limit on the Stopping up Order and the Clerk would relay this response to the appropriate authority.

WTC271/18 FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS ON CHANGE OF USE OF FORMER OLD BARCLAYS BANK BUILDING:

Cllr S Parnes summarised the main points from his report and advised that approximately 20 letters of objection had been submitted. He then proposed the following motion:-

"In reference to Planning Application 19/00401/FUL, Woodstock Town Council does not accept the Planning Policy Manager's assertion in the 26th March "Consultation Response" which stated that "... the principle of the change of use from A2 to residential use is in this case acceptable." Having considered the Planning Policy Manager's document, the Town Council maintains and reaffirms its objection to the proposed change of use to residential, and shall inform the Planning Authority of this Resolution".

After a short discussion Cllr E Poskitt proposed to add the following additional points to the motion seconded by Cllr P Redpath:-

- "
- a) *The old bank building is only separated from the central area as shown in the local plan by The Oxfordshire Museum and there is a shop directly opposite it (No 5 Park Street).*
 - b) *The building was a bank from 1870 and Barclays Bank since 1919 and thus its association as a domestic dwelling is remote.*
 - c) *The Planning Policy Manager states that the neighbouring house had been a shop and is now residential but we find no evidence of this in the Victoria County History which is usually a good authority on these matters.*
 - d) *No evidence has been produced to show that attempts have been made to retain it as retail or office."*

Cllr S Parnes agreed to the above additional points being included within the motion and a vote was taken.

VOTE: For: 11 Against: 0 Abstaining: 0

RESOLVED: The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

WTC272/18 ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS ABOUT LIBRARY DEMOLITION CONSIDERATIONS:

Cllr Parnes provided Council with the background information contained within his report and also referred to the temporary library facility and the lack of WiFi which had been discussed earlier in the meeting. He then proposed the following motion which was seconded by Cllr P Redpath:-

"That the Council resolves to ask that the demolition be suspended until an assessment can be made and provided to us, of the costs that would be incurred if the building were to be repaired rather than demolished, and to have a cost survey conducted that we would be privy to."

Cllr P Redpath asked how a building that is only 34 years old which was commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council can be recommended for demolition? He also asked why the land the building is on has been included within the Blenheim Development Plan? Cllr P Redpath stated that residents (particularly those who are elderly) need facilities such as a library as they are a lifeline for them.

Cllr I Hudspeth said advised that demolition had been recommended by the structural engineer working for the County Council as it was deemed not safe to repair. He confirmed that cracks in the building dated back to the 1990's and had been monitored for many years before the structure was deemed unsafe which resulted in the sudden closure of the library in October 2018.

A further debate followed about sale of the land and whether there were any caveats within the deeds for the site. Cllr S Parnes quoted from the report that *"if the building was to go back into continued use then we recommend that the temporary works are completed as a minimum before this occurs"* which contradicts the opinion of the County Council's Structural Engineers decision.

A vote was then taken

VOTE: For: 8 Against: 2 Abstaining: 1

RESOLVED: The motion was carried.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

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

Cllr I Hudspeth, Mr Brian Yoxall and the remaining member of the public left the meeting at this point.

WTC273/18 WTC PROPERTY PORTFOLIO:

Council approved the payment of the following invoices from Freeth's:-

- £1,198.80 for advice between 27th February & 31st March 2019 on forfeiture of a lease.
- £548.40 for advice between 6th March 2018 & 31st March 2019 on a tenancy dispute.
- £1,512.00 for a new lease for a commercial property to be prepared.

Community Centre Leases

Council approved, the renewal of the leases for two of the tenants for periods of two and three years respectively.

WTC274/18 CHANGES TO THE TOWN CLERK'S AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S CONTRACTS:

Council gave approval for the Mayor to sign the new contracts for the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

The recommendation from the Chair of the Staffing Panel for WTC to extend the timescale for the Town Clerk to obtain the CILCA qualification was also approved.

The meeting closed at 22.15hrs