

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 11th OCTOBER 2016
IN THE MAYOR'S PARLOUR, WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL**

PRESENT:

Cllr E Poskitt (Mayor)	Cllr Mrs A Grant
Cllr P Jay	Cllr Mrs S Rasch
Cllr P Redpath	Cllr Mrs P Redpath
Cllr Mrs E Stokes	Cllr B Yoxall

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: 1 member of the public.

WTC/159/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr F Collingwood (Deputy Mayor) Cllr J Cooper Cllr S Parnes Cllr M Robertson

WTC/160/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

The following Cllrs declared general interests:

Cllr E Poskitt: prejudicial interest in agenda items 10 & 11 Planning Matters because she lives on Hedge End

Cllr B Yoxall: agenda item 25 Staff Matter in which he has a personal interest

WTC/161/16 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION: The Council

Robert Pritchard, Community Liaison Officer from SSE, had been invited to speak about 'Smart Metering'. He pointed out the advantages for saving energy of Smart meters which enabled household energy consumption to be monitored by the home owners and also enabled meters to be read without house calls. Currently Smart meters are available free and fitted free for those on dual energy tariffs but may become free to others at a later stage. After some discussion Mr Pritchard was thanked and Council assured him that the value to householders of having a Smart meter would be given publicity

WTC/162/16 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Approval of minutes was preceded by a general discussion as to the contents of minutes with particular reference to the Minutes of 9th August 2016 and the merits of narrative and non narrative styles. The existing policy of the Council that the function of Minutes was to record decisions with sufficient detail recorded to allow for future discussions and decisions was seen as the guide.

(i) Minutes WTC Meeting Tuesday 9th August 2016

a. **Declarations of Interest:** At end of list include: *Cllr A Grant declared a prejudicial pecuniary interest in Item 10a as she is part owner of a dwelling in Hensington Road together with the privately owned alleyway this plan includes*

b.WTC/111/16 Communications

Agreed: Paragraph 2: after MUGA in the third line change end of sentence to : *and indicating that a letter/agreement drafted by WTC solicitors had been despatched to them that day.*

Following on from paragraph 2 in WTC/111/16 : Proposed Cllr P Redpath seconded Cllr B Yoxall. A named vote was requested.
For: Cllrs Grant, Redpath (1), Redpath (2), Stokes, Yoxall
Against: Cllrs Jay & Poskitt
Abstention: Cllr Rasch

Council therefore
RESOLVED to add:

Cllr P Redpath thought the public should be aware that most councillors had only seen the letters from Freeths at the meeting. He considered it wrong that some councillors had access and others didn't creating suspicions.

Cllr Collingwood had drafted the letter but Cllr Yoxall had disagreed with some of the content. WTC was not a prime client and the solicitor could not turn round the advice quickly. Cllr Collingwood believed it correct to see the draft letter before it was sent out.

Cllr Cooper claimed that Cllr Philip Redpath had actually chosen the location of the MUGA but was rebutted by Cllr Trish Redpath who read out a minute of a meeting held in February 2012 with WODC when Cllr Philip Redpath had disclosed a site at the New Road football ground.

Cllr Philip Redpath believed approximately £12k had been spent on legal fees on this matter, though this was denied by other members.

Cllr Philip Redpath requested and it was AGREED to bring forward item15(ii) (This is shown as WTC120/16 ie in the wrong place)

c. **WTC/113/16** Agreed in the motion proposed by Cllr Yoxall, insert *bringing* after *congratulates Blenheim estate on* in line 2

d. **WTC/114/16 Personal Statement**

Replace with: *Cllr Yoxall made a personal statement following what he considered to be unjustified attacks on his probity in the matter of the sale of the 'Capability Brown' painting by Cllr Julian Cooper in a recent email and by Cllr Elizabeth Poskitt in an earlier email.*

Cllr Yoxall stated that he believed his conduct in the matter had been exemplary. The key to the whole issue had been to consult the late Duke as to his wishes and that is all he had done. He had not attempted to pressurise anyone into acceding to the Duke's wishes.

Cllr Yoxall considered the attacks on his probity unworthy of these two councillors holding the positions they do noting that he was yet to receive an apology from either councillor concerned.

Cllr P Redpath proposed (Seconded by Cllr Mrs P Redpath) that this be accepted and added to the Minutes. A named vote was held:

For: Cllrs Grant Redpath Redpath (Mrs) Rasch Stokes Yoxall
Against: Cllrs Jay & Poskitt

e. **WTC115/16**

(i)a **Agreed to insert** : *Cllr A Grant left the room at this point as she had declared a pecuniary interest at the beginning of the item and at the end of the item insert Cllr A Grant returned to the meeting*

(ii). **Agreed to replace** from line 5 onwards with: *Cllr Collingwood wanted added that there were already 1000 vehicles per day on the A4095 and this would be further increased by new developments agreed for Long Hanborough. Concern was also expressed that additional houses at Woodstock East would make traffic congestion even worse and make it impossible for residents to get to work during Blenheim special events. There was also an additional point of contribution to pollution.*

In the last sentence of this item to read: *It was agreed the Council would write to Mr Mellor with these additional points.*

f. **WTC/118/16** Add at the end of the item after the resolution: *Agreed that the terms of reference on delegated powers regarding expenditure should be referred to the next meeting of the Resources and General Purposes Committee.*

g. **WTC/119/16** Additional text agreed:
Cobbles re. Italian restaurant and negotiation of lease: Discussion followed and members would check their files for information regarding the setting of the original lease terms.

The Council **RESOLVED** that the amended minutes of the Town Council Meeting that took place on Tuesday 9th August 2016 were approved subject to the above amendments.

(ii) Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of WTC Tuesday 16th August 2016

a. WTC/131/16 New Road Play Area

Para 2, fourth line: after WODC add: *was responsible for the s106 agreement with the developer and had been paid to facilitate the planning of the playground. The Mayor reported that WODC had been involved.....*

Delete *in planning the position of the MUGA* in lines 4 and 5.

Last line of that paragraph to read: *The solicitors' invoices were discussed at length and it was questioned whether it was appropriate to have gone to the solicitor. It was suggested by Cllr Collingwood that there had been a need as the matter was already in solicitor's hands but that quotations should have been received before there was a commitment. Cllr Philip Redpath thought that the Council should have sought advice from a solicitor with the correct expertise on parish and town councils.*

A simple vote was held on the amendments in WTC/131/16: Amendments agreed 6 in favour; 1 against; 1 abstention

b. WTC/134/16 Loss of retail space in Woodstock as revealed in the local plan monitoring report

The following addition was proposed to the minute of the above matter as paragraph 2:

Some members felt that applications to turn retail to residential should be resisted by the planning authority. It was easy to run down a business and plead non-viability. The Local Plan and the NPPF encouraged regeneration and there should be a requirement to demonstrate why the retail use was no longer viable

Cllr Cooper thought there was a more vibrant economy in Woodstock that in some areas but Cllr Collingwood disagreed and thought that the Town Council should be actively encouraging vibrancy.

Cllr Yoxall referred back to this 2009 Leisure and Tourism Paper

The amendment to WTC134/16 was agreed: For 6 against 2.
The Council **RESOLVED** that the amended minutes of the Town Council Meeting that took place on 16th August 2016 were approved subject to the above amendments.

(iii). Minutes WTC Meeting Tuesday 13th September 2016

The proposed amendments::

WTC/143/16 New Road Play Area

Para. 1 Line 1: Replace '*Mrs U Parkinson intends*' with '*The Complainants intend*' and end the first sentence after *15 September*.

Para. 3 Line 2: Replace '*Deputy*' with '*Town Clerk's Assistant*'

WTC/144/16 Placing of the MUGA

Line 5: Replace 'layout' with '*design*' and add '*or the MUGA*' to the end of the paragraph.

Add prior to **WTC/147/16** '*The Town Mayor left the meeting at this point and the Deputy Mayor took the Chair*'

Add prior to **WTC/149/16** and after meeting '*and resumed the chair*'

WTC/150/16 Budget Review

Replace 'carried forward' with 'postponed'

WTC/156/16 Property

Add results of Vote as taken:
4 in favour 1 Against 5 Abstentions

A simple vote was taken as to approval of the above amendments
6 in favour 2 abstentions

The Council **RESOLVED** that the amended minutes of the Town Council Meeting that took place on 13th September 2016 were approved subject to the above amendments.

WTC/163/16 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR UPDATES

- (i) None received.
- (II) Received. There were no comments at this time.

WTC/164/16 COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Tables had been borrowed from the Museum for the *This is Woodstock* day and were damaged on return. This was being investigated.

2. Cllr Jay stated that the event '*This is Woodstock*' had been a conspicuous success and he thanked the Mayor for all her efforts
3. The Mayor said that WUFA had not attended and commented that there were not many groups displaying activities for children. A future occasion might focus on the young.
4. The Mayor had suggested to Churches Together (who had arranged previous election hustings) that Woodstock might hold a hustings for the by-election candidates. However the long list of candidates when nominations were published had made the idea seem impractical.
5. The Mayor advised the Council that there would not be the large group of soldiers from Bicester at the Act of Remembrance this year
6. The Mayor stated that she and Cllr Cooper had attended the funeral of WODC Cllr and Cabinet member Warwick Robinson's funeral and commented that he would be sorely missed.

WTC/165/16 QUESTIONS: The following questions were received from Cllr S Parnes under Standing Order No 8:

In relation to the 'This is Woodstock' event showcasing societies, groups and organisations active in Woodstock, held Saturday 8th in the Town Hall, (a) was Wake Up To Woodstock (WUTW), an interest group representing a proportion of the businesses in the town, directly invited by the Mayor to display a presence at the event and (b) why wasn't, or when was, Woodstock Action Group (WAG) directly invited by the Mayor to display a presence at this event?

The Mayor said she believed there might be a misunderstanding as to the nature of the event – it wasn't an 'interest' day but rather a collection of societies with no 'political' participation. WUTW had been one of the first groups to be informed about the Day but had decided that it was not an appropriate occasion for them to seek publicity. Some groups were invited specifically but most heard of the event through publicity and person to person contact. Several Cllrs are in close contact with WAG and the matter had been presented in Council on several occasions and widely advertised elsewhere so she did not feel responsible for WAG not being informed about the event. .

WTC/166/16 MOTIONS PRESENTED TO COUNCIL:

There were no Motions

WTC/167/16 PLANNING

- a) **Ref: 16/09264/HHD – 33 Shipton Road Woodstock** – Conversion of a garage to a playroom with new porch and bike shed to side elevation

RESOLVED that the Council wishes to make no comment about this planning application.

The Mayor had declared a prejudicial interest in the following two agenda items (10 and 11) because of where she lives so left the meeting at this point. Cllr. P Redpath took the Chair in her absence

- b) **Updates about the 'Land East of Woodstock' Planning application**

i) Cllr Yoxall advised of an imminent meeting with WODC planning officers on Friday 14th October

ii) The Council received and considered the motion proposed by Cllr Jay as follows:

That a further objection to the plans for Woodstock East be sent to WODC Planning

a) Objecting, in support of Historic England's objective of avoiding an urban approach to the World Heritage Site, to the installation of a controlled pedestrian crossing on the A44 near the present site of the planters, and that it be replaced by a refuge

b) Asking for the provision of a lay-by for the new southbound bus stop

c) drawing attention to the lack of a continuous paved footpath to

Woodstock on the east side of the A44

The Council agreed that accepting that the controlled pedestrian crossing be replaced by a refuge could be construed as accepting that Woodstock East development was assumed and therefore tolerated and therefore wished to record its objection:

The Controlled Pedestrian Crossing and a Refuge

The bus stop and lay-by

And to continue to draw attention to the lack of a continuous paved footpath to Woodstock on the east side of the A44

The amended motion was proposed by Cllr Jay and seconded by Cllr P Redpath and passed unanimously by the Council

c) **'Petition' Designation by WODC, of Yellow Cards containing Planning Objections**

There had been no new information and in the absence of a Motion from Cllr Parnes the following Motion was proposed

'To remind WODC of the outstanding matter and a letter should write again requiring a meaningful reply'

Proposed by Cllr Jay and seconded by Cllr Mrs P Redpath and passed unanimously by the Council

The Mayor returned to the meeting and took the chair.

WTC/165/16 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER – SEPTEMBER 2016

In the absence of the responsible financial officer the Mayor proposed that the following submitted reports be approved

(i) List of payments for September (new format) 2016:

A discussion as to the appropriateness of paying persons to pull Himalayan balsam plants was initiated by Cllr P Redpath and included the outsourcing of such matters to Wychwood. It was ultimately agreed that the matter should be put on the Environment Committee Agenda

The Mayor advised that a missing cheque payable to her had been returned as her bank branch she uses appears to have closed. She proposed and it was agreed that the sum should be diverted to the Mayor's charities.

RESOLVED that the list of payments totalling £19,326.08 made in the month of September 2016 is approved.

(ii) Bank Reconciliation Statement for September 2016: Noted.

(iii) Summary and Detailed Income & Expenditure Statement for September 2016: Noted and Accepted

(iv) Internal Controls: It was noted that internal controls for 'Bank Reconciliation' had been undertaken and been satisfactory. Noted and Accepted

v. Council Disposition of Funds at 30th September 2016 Noted and Accepted.

WTC/166/16 NEW ROAD PLAY AREA:

Cllr Yoxall requested that this matter listed as Item 20 be brought forward and the Council agreed. Cllr Yoxall placed before the Council a revised version of a paper entitled 'Examination of Issues Surrounding the New Road Play Area Project' for discussion. A frank discussion ensued. The comments are attached in an appendix to the Minutes.

WTC/167/16 UNSIGHTLY AND DEFECTIVE ROOF SLATES AT BENS CLOSE AND RESOLVED REQUEST FOR COMPENSATION

It was agreed that this matter be deferred until Cllr Parnes was present.

WTC/168/16 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Cllr Yoxall offered his help with fund raising. The Mayor thanked him warmly for this offer. Full discussion was deferred to the Environment Committee. .

WTC/169/16 DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DCLG) PRECEPT REFERENDUM – TECHNICAL CONSULTATION

Cllr Mrs Redpath explained the background to the Consultation. The situation was not immediately serious for Woodstock but had the potential to have an impact if smaller parishes were also involved in capping and referenda. Cllr Mrs Redpath said WTC should give its views to the consultation. It was agreed the Mayor and Cllr T Redpath would draw up the WTC response on the basis of comments made as the consultation closed on October 25th.

WTC/170/16 OFFER OF FREE APPS FOR WOODSTOCK

The Mayor said she believed this was of interest to Cllrs but the creator of the app was unable to attend this meeting to talk about his proposal. He would be invited to attend a future meeting when practical.

WTC/171/16 RESOURCES AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

It was agreed that as this involved the approval of extraordinary expenditure it should be reviewed by the full Council and should therefore go on the next Agenda.

WTC/172/16 TOWN CENTRE LIAISON

Cllr Grant and Cllr Yoxall had put together a Report which had been circulated to the members. Cllr Yoxall introduced their suggestions. Cllr Collingwood had also declared he had an interest in this area. The Mayor asked if the proposal had been

shared with Wake Up To Woodstock (WUTW). Cllr Yoxall said it would be discussed with WUTW but he did not think the activities would overlap. Cllr Jay reminded Council that there was a Memorandum of Understanding to work together with WUTW.

The Council agreed that the project would continue.

WTC/173/16 ASBESTOS REMOVAL FROM THE OWL

The Council understood that this had been removed and the bill paid.

WTC/174/16 NEW WTC NOTICEBOARD NEAR BUS STOP ON A44 OPPOSITE HENSINGTON GATE.

In the absence of Cllr Parnes the matter was deferred.

WTC/175/16 WUFA

No updates had been received

WTC/176/16 OXFORD AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Deferred in the absence of Cllr Parnes

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

That if view of the nature of the business to be transacted and the public and press be temporarily excluded from the meeting (Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s.1).

WTC/177/16 RESOURCES AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE contd.

The Mayor pointed out that the previous WTC meeting had overlooked a recommendation for the R&GP Committee for an additional salary spine point for a member of staff who had been given extra responsibilities.

RESOLVED (*nem con*) that the recommendation for an additional spine point should be implemented.

WTC/177/16 PROPERTY:

- 2 Park Street – nothing to report
- 4 Park Street – Cllr Cooper had recommended acceptance of fencing quotation otherwise renting would be delayed. Unfortunately the Mayor was unable to locate the invoice amongst her papers. Clrs agreed that the quotation should be accepted if it was less than £1,500 but if it was more the a further two quotations should be sought.
- 8 Park Street – it was hoped that this would be let shortly
- Woodstock Community Centre –A ground floor tenancy is due for renewal. It had been recommended that the rent is low and should be significantly increased. Cllr Mrs Redpath suggested staged increases would be preferable and the Council agreed to proceed on this basis
Disabled toilet in Community Centre – Awaiting quotations.
Broken windows – three quotations needed to repair
- Old House Store – there were concerns about the retail situation but there are no arrears. .
- 4 Market Street –nothing to report.

WTC/178/16 FREETHS INVOICE

It was agreed that an invoice for Carter Jonas relating to a new lease and the two smaller Freeths invoices should be paid. Cllr Collingwood, Councillor for Finance had not heard back from Freeths and had stated that he did not agree to payment until he had had a satisfactory response from Freeths. .

Council **RESOLVED** not to pay this bill until Cllr Collingwood had had a satisfactory response from Freeths.

Named vote: For: Cllrs Grant, Rasch, P Redpath, T Redpath, Stokes, Yoxall

Against: Cllrs Jay and Poskitt

WTC/179/16 STAFF MATTER

The Mayor updated Cllrs on the matter. A resolution she proposed whereby Council would offer an apology to the member of staff was seconded by Cllr Jay but was defeated. In a named vote: For Cllrs Jay and Poskitt

Against: Cllrs Grant, Rasch, P Redpath, T Redpath, Stokes, Yoxall

Cllr Jay then proposed a motion (seconded by the Mayor) affirming Council's strongest confidence in the member of staff and recommending mediation to resolve the issue.

In a named vote:

For: Cllrs Grant, Jay, Poskitt, Rasch, T Redpath, Stokes.

None against.

Abstentions: P Redpath, Yoxall.

The Mayor would speak with the member of staff.

The meeting closed at 10.30pm

Signed Date