

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 8TH JULY 2014
IN THE TOWN HALL, WOODSTOCK**

PRESENT:

Cllr J Cooper (Mayor)	Cllr M Robertson (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr B Yoxall	Cllr Mrs V Edwards
Cllr P Jay	Cllr Mrs E Stokes
Cllr S Parnes	Cllr E Jay
Cllr C Carritt	Cllr E Poskitt joined the meeting during Item 10(ii)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Five members of the public.

WTC/59/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Maybury and T Wray and County Cllr I Hudspeth. Cllr E Poskitt had notified the Town Clerk that she might be late.

WTC/60/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: The following Cllrs notified the meeting of general interests:

Cllr E Poskitt: Agenda Item 10 Planning as a Member of West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) who sits on the Uplands Sub Committee.

Cllr J Cooper, The Mayor: Agenda Item 10 Planning, as a Member of WODC who is involved in planning

Cllr Mrs V Edwards: Agenda Item 16 as she is a resident in the Town Centre.

Cllr C Carritt: Agenda Item 20 as he personally knows one of the tenants in the Community Centre.

WTC/61/14 MINUTES: The minutes of the Town Council meeting that took place on Tuesday 10th June 2014 were approved and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

WTC/41/14 Marlborough Fields Planning Application. The following words were inserted immediately before the three part motion. "In augmenting agreed actions and resolutions from May and June, relating to Planning Application 13/0982/P/FP, Woodstock Town Council"

WTC/54/14 Minute Style. In the record of the named vote Cllr P Jay's surname was amended to include a capital "J".

WTC/62/14 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

(i) The Future of the Post Office. Mrs S Lally had asked to address the Council but prior to the meeting she notified the Town Clerk that she no longer wished to do so.

WTC/63/14 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR UPDATES

(i) Report from County Cllr I Hudspeth

The Council received and noted the July report from County Cllr I Hudspeth.

(ii) Report from District Councillors J Cooper and E Poskitt

The Council received and noted the July report from District Cllrs J Cooper & E Poskitt. It was noted that the grass verges in the town needed cutting. The Town Clerk confirmed that this matter had been raised with WODC. The Town Clerk has

also asked Thomas Fox Landscaping to bring forward the scheduled cut of the footpath through the water meadows.

The Mayor noted that although the planning application for the Blenheim Guest House had been approved he and District Cllr E Poskitt had voted against it.

WTC/64/14 **COMMUNICATIONS:** The Mayor reminded Cllrs that 20th July was “Mayor’s Sunday” and that all of them were invited to attend the church service. He said that Mock Mayor will take place on Saturday 2nd August.
The Mayor said that he had recently attended the 100th birthday celebration for the Brownie’s organisation that was held in Charlbury. Later the same day he had also attended the event in memory of Cllr Pauline Richardson. He advised Cllrs that there will be a training session in the use of the new defibrillator at 1pm on Saturday 12th July 2014.

The Mayor noted that he had already received 101 emails about Town Council business this week and asked Cllrs to show restraint.

WTC/65/14 **QUESTIONS:** None.

WTC/66/14 **MOTIONS PRESENTED TO COUNCIL:** The Mayor noted that a motion presented by Cllr B Yoxall would be taken under the property report.

WTC/67/14 **COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON THE YOUTH CLUB:** The Mayor noted that he was still looking for a new representative to join the Youth Club.

WTC/68/14 **PLANNING**

(i) Planning Applications: The Mayor and Cllr E Poskitt declared general interests as District Cllrs involved in Planning. The following planning applications were received and considered.

(a) Ref: 14/0867/P/FP: 16B Market Place, Woodstock. Renovation of premises including increase in roof height to create first floor office/studio space. Cllr C Carritt proposed, Cllr Mrs V Edwards seconded the motion and the Council

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

(b) Ref: 14/0877/P/FP: 2-4 High Street, Woodstock. Conversion of part of shop to residential to serve existing dwelling. Erection of rear extension and alterations to garage. Cllr C Carritt proposed, Cllr B Yoxall seconded the motion and the Council

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

(c) Ref: 14/0909/P/FP: 18 Cadogan Park, Woodstock. Erection of first floor front extension. The Deputy Mayor proposed, The Mayor seconded the motion and the Council

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

ACTION: *The Administrative Assistant will send the planning responses to WODC.*

(ii) Marlborough Fields Planning Application

(a) Progress Report about the actions that have been agreed by the Council.
Cllrs had recently met with the Council’s solicitors and received clarification and advice about judicial review requirements, proceedings and potential costs. Cllr S Parnes proposed that WTC instructs its solicitor to provide up to two hours further legal advice on the Planning Officer’s recommendations, Minutes of WODC

Uplands planning sub-committee on May 6th, and any perceived irregularities which Cllrs choose to submit for legal evaluation; and that the solicitor be asked to consider the Town's interests in referring the above materials to specialist planning barristers for their legal opinion. Cllr P Jay seconded this motion.

Discussion followed during which several Cllrs noted that the Council's solicitors had already provided clear advice about this matter at a meeting to which all Cllrs had been invited and therefore this would be repetition. Cllr S Parnes suggested that further discussions with the Council's legal advisors would not be repetition but would expand upon the guidance received, add value, tie up loose ends and provide confidence that everything necessary had been considered.

Cllr E Poskitt joined the meeting at this point.

Cllrs were reminded that the Council's legal advisors had advised that the recent legal discussions should be kept confidential and that their disclosure might affect the good of the town. The Council agreed to defer further discussion about the legal advice received until the Council went into confidential session.

Further discussion then followed about non-confidential matters that needed to be considered before any further advice might be sought. It was noted that this was the most overwhelming issue facing the Council at this time and a matter of acute concern to residents.

The motion was then voted upon. A Cllr asked for a named vote the result of which was as follows:

For: Cllrs S Parnes and P Jay (2)
Against: Cllrs E Poskitt, Mrs V Edwards, Mrs E Jay, B Yoxall, Mrs E Stokes, C Carritt, M Robertson and J Cooper (8).

The motion therefore fell.

Further discussion about this matter was deferred until the Council went into confidential session.

(b) Consideration of a draft letter prepared by Cllr P Jay which responds to WODC's response to WTC's complaint.

The Council received and considered a draft letter prepared by Cllr P Jay. Cllr P Jay considered that in light of the professional advice received WTC should not pursue a judicial review about WODC's handling of planning application 13/0982/P/FP, however the Council should respond to WODC's response to WTC's complaint in appropriate terms as this was a serious matter. Cllr P Jay proposed, Cllr B Yoxall seconded the motion and the Council

RESOLVED (unanimous) that the draft letter be sent with whatever amendments the Council conveyed and that it is re-written by the Town Mayor or Town Clerk.

ACTION: *The Mayor or Town Clerk will write to WODC.*

(iii) Developer Operations of 26th June on the field between Marlborough School and Budd's Close

The Council received and considered a report from Cllr S Parnes about activities involving a digger that had recently been seen on the field between Marlborough School and Budd's Close. He considered that these activities were inappropriate at the present time; the field had been accessed via WTC owned land; and leaving a digger on the land overnight raised safety concerns.

Cllr S Parnes proposed that in the interests of public safety, orchid preservation and wildlife protection, and WTC's property rights, the Town Council seek urgent professional legal advice on items 1-5 (in his confidential report) including advice on remedies and options available. Cllr P Jay seconded this motion but noted that Blenheim Estates had a right of crossing for agricultural purposes and asked for an amendment so that the following second part be added to the motion: that WTC erect a notice near the other signage on the OWL nature reserve where the land is accessed at Budd's Close that says "Any use of this land not agreed by Woodstock Town Council by third parties is prohibited by Woodstock Town Council", at a cost not exceeding £25. Cllr S Parnes agreed to this amendment.

The Council then considered the motion in two parts. Part 1 of the motion fell on a vote (2 votes for and 8 votes against).

Part 2 of the motion was then taken and the Council

RESOLVED (7 votes for, 1 abstention and 2 non-voters) that WTC erect a notice near the other signage on the OWL nature reserve where the land is accessed at Budd's Close that says "Any use of this land not agreed by Woodstock Town Council by third parties is prohibited by Woodstock Town Council", at a cost not exceeding £25.

ACTION: *The Town Clerk will arrange for the signage to be actioned.*

(iv) Rural Housing Policy Review

The Council received and considered a questionnaire about rural housing that had recently been sent by the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils on behalf of a member of the Rural Housing Policy Review Group (set up by Hastoe Housing Association with Lord Richard Best as its independent Chair).

RESOLVED that no WTC response will be sent but that Cllrs wishing to do so will respond as individuals.

WTC/69/14 **REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER – JULY 2014**

The Council received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer.

(i) Payments for June 2014

The list of payments for June 2014 was received and considered and the Council

RESOLVED that the payments made in the month of June 2014 totalling £16,352.61 were approved.

(ii) Bank Reconciliation Statements for June 2014

The Council received and noted the bank reconciliation statements for June 2014.

(iii) Summary and Detailed Income & Expenditure Statements for June 2014

The Council received and noted the summary and detailed income & expenditure statements for June 2014.

(iv) Disposition of Council Funds

The report about the disposition of Council funds was received and noted.

WTC/70/14 **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

The draft minutes from the Annual Town Meeting that was held on Tuesday 18th March 2014 were received and noted.

ACTION: *The Town Clerk will confirm with Honorary Town Cllr John Banbury whether the footpath to which he was referring, runs to Barton or to Wootton.*

WTC/71/14 ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

The Council received and considered the minutes from the Environment Committee that took place on 24th June 2014. It was noted that a Chair for this Committee has yet to be appointed by the Cllrs who sit on it. Cllr Mrs E Jay said that she would be willing to become Chair of it if someone else would take on the role of Cllr for cemeteries. WTC referred this matter back to the EC.

At EC/5/14 it was noted that a resident had raised concerns that the HGVs making deliveries to the Owen Mumford complex were large vehicles which could potentially carry 36 pallets but often carried part loads. The resident suggested that if fewer vehicles were used to deliver full loads the amount of traffic would reduce dramatically thereby bringing some relief to local residents and to the roadways and asked WTC, WODC and OCC to study his research and approach Owen Mumford for discussions about reviewing their transport arrangements. The EC recommended and the Council

RESOLVED that two or three Cllrs decided by WTC approach Owen Mumford with a view to talking about their transport arrangements.

The Cllrs tasked by the Council to undertake these discussions were Cllrs C Carritt and M Robertson, and Cllr Mrs E Jay if required.

ACTION: *The Clerk will write to Mr Owen and ask for a meeting.*

WTC/72/14 CLA GAME FAIR

The Council received and noted an oral updating report from Cllr B Yoxall about the CLA Game Fair. A Cllr asked Cllr B Yoxall about the proposed traffic routes for visitors to the Game Fair. There were concerns about potential major problems if traffic was routed through via the B4027 through Bletchington and/or via the Pear Tree roundabout.

ACTION: *Cllr B Yoxall was asked by the Council to clarify the proposed signage of the CLA Game Fair with its organisers.*

WTC/73/14 "LIGHTS OUT" EVENT 4TH AUGUST

The Council received and noted information about the 'Lights' Out' event that is being staged nationwide on 4th August 2014 to commemorate the centenary of the start of WW1.

WTC/74/14 POLICY ON RESIDENTS' PARKING. Cllr Mrs V Edwards declared a general interest as she is a resident who lives in the centre of the town. The Council received and considered an oral report from Cllr C Carritt which noted that several residents had asked about the possibility of a residents' parking scheme in the centre of the town. WODC set the policy about these schemes. Cllr C Carritt proposed, Cllr Mrs E Jay seconded the motion and the Council

RESOLVED (7 votes for, 2 votes against and 1 abstention) that the Town Clerk will send a letter to Mr Barry Norton at WODC asking the DC to reconsider their policy about residents' parking in light of the particular problems residents have in Woodstock.

ACTION: *The Clerk will write to WODC.*

WTC/75/14 TOURISM REPORT

The Council received an oral report from Cllr B Yoxall that noted that the First Great Western infrastructure had not progressed as quickly as had been hoped but that it shouldn't be too long now. The discounts agreed in Woodstock will then be promoted countrywide and worldwide this summer.

ACTION: Cllr Yoxall will provide an update to the August TC meeting.

WTC/76/14 PUBLIC EVENTS FUND

The Council received a report from the Town Clerk and noted that the public events fund is now closed and that the funds have been transferred to the bank account of the Woodstock Youth Club.

WTC/77/14 DONATIONS RECEIVED TOWARDS THE MEMORIAL FOR CLLR MRS PAULINE RICHARDSON

(i) The Council received and noted a report of the final account for the Memorial Fund in memory of Cllr Mrs Pauline Richardson prepared by the Town Clerk. Further funds had recently been received and so there was now a surplus of £418.80.

(ii) The Council agreed that the surplus money from the Memorial Fund will be earmarked as funding that will go towards the installation of a garden at the back of the Community Centre.

WTC/78/14 PROPERTY REPORT

(i) Property Report: Cllr C Carritt declared a general interest in the discussions about the CC tenancies. As there were no members of the public still present at this point of the meeting the Council decided to take the whole report in the confidential session.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

Cllr Mrs V Edwards proposed, the Mayor seconded and the Council.

RESOLVED that in view of the commercial 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).

The property report was received and considered and the following motions were made by the Council:

1. New Computers for the Town Hall

It was noted that the Town Clerk's computer had already been replaced as her old machine had failed. It was also noted that Windows XP is no longer supported and the other two office computers need to be replaced. The CMfP proposed, the Mayor seconded the motion and the Council

RESOLVED (unanimous) that the two remaining office computers are replaced at a total approximate cost of £1,784 excluding VAT

2. Community Centre Tenants

The recommendations from Carter Jonas were received and considered. Cllr C Carritt noted a general interest as he knows one of the tenants and abstained during the vote. Cllr V Edwards proposed, The Mayor seconded the motion and the Council

RESOLVED (9 votes for and 1 abstention) that

(A) All but the first recommendation made by Carter Jonas as listed under the first part of section 3 (a) in the WTC property report dated 8th July 2014 are approved

- (B) One of the leases at the Community Centre will not be renewed.
(C) CJ will advertise for a new tenant(s) when the current lease expires.

3. 'Capability Brown' Picture

Cllr Mrs E Jay reported that she had emailed various national auction houses about this matter. One of these has suggested that they can store it free of charge until such times that it is sold and has offered to come and collect it from site. Discussion followed during which the Town Clerk confirmed that prior to any action being taken WTC would require clear paperwork that set out the offer and any associated conditions from the auction house, details of insurance considerations, the details of the agent who the auction house proposed to send to collect the picture, details of the method of transport and storage and details of how the Council could retrieve or transfer it to another auction site at a later date if it so wished.

ACTION: *The 'Capability Brown' picture will be included as an item on the next agenda for the Mayor's Committee.*

4. Damaged Picture

The Council received and considered a quotation received from a specialist restorer, who is used by Blenheim Estates, for the repair of the damaged portrait of William Mavor that fell of the wall in the Mayor's Parlour and also for inspecting the rest of the pictures and wooden furniture in the Town Hall. Cllr Mrs V Edwards proposed, the Deputy Mayor seconded the motion and the Council

RESOLVED (unanimous) that James Smith is employed at a total cost of £1,225 to:

- treat the woodwork infestation and repair the frame and oil on canvas picture of William Mavor
- remove all paintings from walls around the Mayor's Parlour, check for signs of woodworm and treat as necessary
- thoroughly check all furniture and artefacts in the Town Hall for woodworm and treat as necessary on site

ACTIONS:

1. *Mr Smith will be notified that he has been awarded the work.*
2. *The Council's insurers will be sent details of the quotation and asked to confirm whether their prior approval is needed before the repair is undertaken.*
3. *Arrangements will be made for the picture of William Mavor and damaged frame to be transferred to Mr Smith for repair off site and subsequently returned.*

(ii) Motion from Cllr B Yoxall

The Council received and considered a two part motion from Cllr B Yoxall about the Property Management contract. Cllr C Carritt said that he would second the motion if part (b) was removed and Cllr B Yoxall agreed to do this. Discussion followed.

RESOLVED (unanimous) that cognisant of the fact that the agreement with Carter Jonas for them to act as our Property Advisors will have run 5 years in February 2015 and it is appropriate for the Council to seek competitive tenders for the property work WTC therefore resolves to seek competitive tenders for the Property Management contract, to include Carter Jonas and others, with a view to the new contract commencing in April 2015.

It was noted that the CMfP has already advised Carter Jonas of the need for WTC to re-tender the contract.

WTC/79/14 WOODSTOCK WAR MEMORIAL

The Council received and considered a quote for restoring the lettering on the War Memorial and noted the availability of grants from West Oxon District Council.

RESOLVED that Joslin's Stonemasonry Limited be asked to restore the lettering on the War Memorial at a cost of £966.00 plus VAT.

ACTION: *The Town Clerk will ask Joslin's Stonemasonry Limited to restore the lettering on the War Memorial before Mayor's Sunday.*

WTC/80/14 MARLBOROUGH FIELDS PLANNING APPLICATION

The Council received and considered the recent advice received from its legal advisors. Cllr P Jay proposed, the Deputy Mayor seconded this motion and the Council

RESOLVED (9 votes for and 1 vote against) that WTC will not go to judicial review and will send a short polite letter of opposition as previously agreed.

ACTION: *The Mayor or Town Clerk will action the letter as agreed at WTC/68/14 (b).*

The meeting closed at 9.44pm

Signed Date