

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 12th AUGUST 2014
IN THE TOWN HALL, WOODSTOCK**

PRESENT:

Cllr J Cooper (Mayor)
Cllr B Yoxall
Cllr Mrs E Stokes
Cllr T Wray
Cllr E Poskitt

Cllr M Robertson (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr Mrs V Edwards
Cllr L Maybury
Cllr S Parnes
Cllr C Carritt

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: County Cllr I Hudspeth and 7 members of the public.

WTC/81/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs P Jay and Mrs E Jay.

WTC/82/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: No pecuniary interests were disclosed at the meeting but 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 and 10 (ii) as she lives at Hedge End.

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

WTC/83/14 MINUTES: The Mayor proposed, Cllr E Poskitt seconded this motion and the Council **RESOLVED** (9 votes for and 1 abstention) that the minutes of the Town Council meeting that took place on Tuesday 8th July 2014 were an accurate record of the meeting.

The Mayor then signed the minutes

WTC/84/14 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION: No members of the public wished to address the Council.

WTC/85/14 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR UPDATES

(i) Report from County Cllr I Hudspeth

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

Cllr T Wray joined the meeting at this point.

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

The Council received and noted the August report from District Cllrs J Cooper & E Poskitt.

WTC/86/14 COMMUNICATIONS: The Council received and noted the communications from Mayor.

ACTIONS:

1. The Town Council will include an agenda item about "Mayor's Sunday" on the September Town Council agenda.
2. The Mayor will consult with the British Legion about the possibility of using the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum for the reception after the church service on Remembrance Sunday whilst noting that some damage in Harrisons Lane resulting from the construction of the new building had yet to be repaired.

WTC/87/14 QUESTIONS: None.

WTC/88/14 MOTIONS PRESENTED TO COUNCIL: None.

WTC/89/14 COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON THE YOUTH CLUB

No progress has been made in appointing an additional Council representative.

ACTION: *The Mayor will report back in to the Town Council at the September Town Council meeting.*

WTC/90/14 PLANNING

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

(a) Ref: 14/1002/P/LB: 19 Park Street, Woodstock. Alterations to refurbish main roof and replace windows.

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

(b) Ref: 14/1020/P/FP: 44 Green Lane, Woodstock. Erection of first floor extension to garage and two storey extension to dwelling.

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

(c) Ref: 14/1054/P/FP: 1 Market Street, Woodstock. Alterations and part change of use to dwelling with single storey rear extension. Cllr S Parnes proposed that the Council object to this planning application noting that there was a lack of proven viability for the economic case and Cllr B Yoxall seconded this motion. Discussion followed. This motion was then put to the vote and fell (by 2 votes for and 8 votes against).

Cllr C Carritt proposed, Cllr T Wray seconded the motion and WTC

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

(d) Ref: 14/1103/P/FP: 5 Farm End, Woodstock.
Erection of single storey extension with extended balcony above.

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

(ii) Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) of Developable Land in Woodstock

The Council received and considered an email and oral report from Cllr S Parnes that outlined his concerns about the updated WODC Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) about Woodstock. Cllr S Parnes considered that this report disregarded the findings of a previous planning inspector and he noted that WODC had only given the public little time in which to respond and that it was now the holiday season.

(iii) Local Plan

(a) The Town Council's Response to the Local Plan and the Mechanism for doing so.

The Mayor proposed that Mr H Mellor from Kemp and Kemp be asked to review the full WODC report and report back to the September Town Council meeting which

dovetails with the WODC timescales. Cllr B Yoxall seconded this motion. A Cllr called for a named vote the results of which were:

For: Cllrs E Poskitt, L Maybury, Mrs V Edwards, S Parnes, B Yoxall, Mrs E Stokes and J Cooper (7)

Abstentions: Cllrs M Robertson, T Wray and C Carritt (3)

RESOLVED that Mr H Mellor from Kemp and Kemp is asked to review the full WODC report and report back to the September Town Council meeting.

(b) Budget for the Review of the Local Plan

RESOLVED that a budget of £1300 is approved for the review of the Local Plan.

ACTION: *The Town Council will confirm with Mr Mellor that WTC would like him to review the Local Plan and report back at the September Town Council meeting.*

(iv) Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr S Parnes asked that this agenda item be postponed until the September meeting as he considered it to have come in too late for Cllrs to have had time to read the paper. The Mayor decided that this agenda item should be taken now.

The Council received and considered a paper and motion from Cllr T Wray about Neighbourhood Planning. Discussion followed. Cllr T Wray proposed, Cllr Mrs V Edwards seconded the motion and the Council

RESOLVED (9 votes for and 1 against) that The Town Council agree to a working group to be set up immediately to consider the following options:

- develop a neighbourhood plan or to consider a 'master plan' approach to the Town
- develop a local planning strategy
- identify how WTC can better engage with WODC and local developers without showing favour in any way.

The working group should include local group representation and councillors with a maximum group number of 8. The working group will report back fully to full Council in September with a short, medium and long term proposal on how we are able to be fully engaged in planning and development in and around Woodstock.

Cllr S Parnes asked that it be noted in the minutes that he had voted against this motion because he had not had time to read the paper.

Cllr C Carritt proposed, Cllr E Poskitt seconded the motion and the Council

RESOLVED (9 votes for and 1 abstention) that the drawing up of potential members of this working group be by the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and Cllr T Wray.

ACTIONS:

1. *The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Cllr T Wray will draw up a list of potential members for the Neighbourhood Planning Working Group.*
2. *The terms of reference for the working group will be brought to Council in September*
3. *The first report of the working group will be brought to Council in October.*

WTC/91/14 TOWN CENTRE PARKING REVIEW

The Council received and noted an oral update about the Town Council parking review from Cllr C Carritt.

WTC/92/14 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER – August 2014

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

- (i) The List of Payments for July 2014

RESOLVED that the Council resolve that the list of payments totalling £25,860.99 made in the month of July 2014 be received and approved.

- (ii) Bank Reconciliation Statements for July 2014

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

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

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

WTC/93/14 MAYOR'S COMMITTEE

The Council received and considered the minutes from the Mayor's Committee that took place on 22nd July 2014. The following recommendations were received and considered:

- (i) MC/15/14 (ii) Planning Motions

RESOLVED that Cherwell District Council (CDC) is asked that if they make any recommendations in the Local Plan about these areas [the green-field land adjacently east of Woodstock's boundary, and/or east of, and adjacent to, the field between the Marlborough School and Budds Close] they include WTC in the discussions.

ACTION: *The Town Clerk will write to CDC.*

- (ii) MC/17/14 Review of Polling Districts and Polling Stations.

RESOLVED that WTC does not wish to see any changes made to Polling Districts or Polling Places that are relevant to Woodstock and asks WODC to keep continual vigilance to look for opportunities to establish a polling station in Old Woodstock.

ACTION: *The Town Clerk will respond to WODC.*

- (iii) MC/18/14 (ii) The Living Wage. The Mayor proposed that this item be taken under the confidential session as it concerned members of staff and the Council agreed to do this.

- (iv) MC/15/14 Planning

Cllr S Parnes reported upon recent drilling activities that had taken place on the field between Marlborough School and Budd's Close. The contractors had crossed the WTC OWL land at Budds to access the site. Cllr S Parnes proposed that WTC pursue an injunction to ensure without doubt that no other unauthorised use occurs. This motion was not seconded and so fell. The Mayor noted that Blenheim Estate may be granted a right of access under the Woodstock Railways Act.

ACTIONS:

1. *The Mayor will ask Blenheim Estate for clarification in writing.*
2. *The Town Clerk will put this item on the September Town Council agenda.*

WTC/94/14 STAFFING MATTERS

The Council received and considered the following:

(i) Staff Handbook

Cllr S Parnes asked that this agenda item be postponed until the September meeting as he considered it to have come in too late for Cllrs to have had time to read the paper. As the bulk of the papers had been sent out previously the Mayor decided that this agenda item should be taken.

A paper from the Deputy Mayor was received and considered. WTC has worked with Ellis Whittam, its professional HR advisors, and updated the Staff Handbook. The Deputy Mayor proposed, Cllr T Wray seconded and the Council

RESOLVED (9 votes for and 1 abstention) that WTC adopts the handbook as advised by the HR consultants and issues it to all staff.

The Mayor recorded his thanks to the Deputy Mayor for her work on the handbook.

ACTION: *The Town Clerk will issue the staff handbook to all staff.*

(ii) Updating Staff Contracts

The Council received and considered a paper by the Deputy Mayor that reported upon the current situation regarding staff contracts that had developed over time and the need for these to be standardised. The Deputy Mayor proposed, Cllr T Wray seconded the motion and the Council

RESOLVED (unanimous) that WTC:

1. Adopts "Green Book" conditions of service for all staff.
2. Adopts an incremental pay scale for all staff whereby they would progress subject to satisfactory service as determined by an annual appraisal.
3. Continues its policy of paying statutory sick pay only.
4. Issues new contracts to existing staff under the guidance of Ellis Whittam
5. The Deputy Caretaker is paid an acting up rate when acting up for the principal caretaker.

(iii) The Living Wage

The council received and considered a paper from Cllr E Poskitt about the "Living Wage". This is an informal benchmark calculated each year by the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough (and for London by the GLA) and is conceived as the minimum pay rate needed to let workers lead a decent life.

Cllr E Poskitt proposed, the Mayor seconded and the Council

RESOLVED (unanimous) that it supports the general principle of the Living Wage.

Further discussions about this matter were taken under the confidential session later in the meeting as they affected specific staff.

WTC/95/14 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

The Council received and considered the following:

(i) Report

A report from Cllr Carritt that outlined the requirements that needed to be actioned to provide Christmas Lights in 2014

RESOLVED (8 votes for, 1 vote against and 1 abstention) that the Town Clerk:

1. Send the Specification out to the three nominated contractors with an invitation to return their quotes by 30th September 2014.
2. Purchase 24 strings of lights as recommended in minutes CL/4/14 (ii) and (vii) from Lights4Fun at a cost of £477 (2 sets of 12 strings of 600 lights @ £199 each plus VAT)
3. Purchase a “star” for the town square Christmas tree from Light4Fun or somewhere marketing similar LED lights at a cost of approx. £100
4. The Mayor to ask the manager of The Bear if permission will again be given to connect the lights in the tree outside the hotel to its power supply (there is an external socket available). The expected energy use is calculated thus: 600 LED lights each with a wattage of 0.077 watts for nine hours per day for 40 days (600 X 0.077 X 9 X 40 / 1000 X £0.12 per kilowatt hour = approx. £2.)
5. Ask Sparkex to supply and fit a new control box above No 21 High Street to replace the existing (faulty) box. Cost approx. £350.

ACTIONS:

1. *The Town Clerk will action items 1, 2, 3 & 5 listed above.*
2. *The Mayor will action item 4 above.*

It was noted that item 6 of the report about the purchase of LED 'icicles' around the perimeter of the Town Hall at first floor level could cost up to £1k and needed further consideration to confirm what people thought about this idea.

(ii) Minutes

The draft minutes of the meeting of the Christmas Lights Working Group that was held on 30th January 2014 were received and noted.

(iii) The Draft Specification of Work

The draft specification of work was received and approved.

WTC/96/14 OPEN SPACES AND FOOTPATHS WORKING GROUP

The Council received and noted correspondence received by Cllr E Poskitt from a Woodstock residents about rights of way.

ACTION: *Cllr E Poskitt and the Town Clerk will send a response.*

WTC/97/14 CLA GAME FAIR

The Council received and considered a feedback request from WODC about the CLA.

RESOLVED that the CLA Game Fair 2014 had been a successful event

ACTION: *The Town Clerk will complete the feedback form and return this to WODC.*

WTC/98/14 OCC DRAFT FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY CONSULTATION

The Council received and noted the Oxfordshire County Council consultation about the Flood Risk Management Strategy that is open until 19th September 2014.

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 actions agreed by the Council:

- (i) 24 Market Place

RESOLVED that the CMfP can hold discussions with NatWest about them leasing 24 Market Place.

- (ii) 6 Park Street

RESOLVED that the lease, rent deposit deed and deed of surrender for 6 Park Street could be signed and sealed at the meeting.

The documents were sealed and signed by the Town Mayor and the Town Clerk.

- (iii) Property Management Contract

RESOLVED that Cllr C Carritt will help the CMfP prepare the tender documents required for the routine re-letting of the property management contract.

ACTION: *An update about this matter will be received at the September TC meeting.*

- (iv) Marketing the Town Council's Venues

ACTIONS:

1. *The Town Clerk will include the marketing plan for the Council's property on the September Town Council agenda.*
2. *The Mayor/Town Clerk will put a reminder in the October edition of the Woodstock and Bladon News asking regular users to confirm their 2015 dates as soon as they are able in order that these can be recorded in the Town Hall and Community Centre diaries*

- (v) Computer Back-Ups

The CMfP reported that the office computers had now been upgraded and so there was potential to save papers "in the cloud" for access by Cllrs. The back-up facility on the server had failed and so a temporary trial of back-up software had been arranged by Triumph Technology. This had 14 days left to run before it expires and so action is required urgently.

ACTION *The Town Clerk will try to extend the trial contract whilst a permanent solution is sought and agreed.*

WTC/100/14 THE LIVING WAGE (continued)

The Council

RESOLVED (unanimous) that

1. It will pay all staff the Living Wage as a minimum level of pay and that this will be introduced after October 2014 when the Living Wage recommendations for 2014 are published.
2. The proposed specific spine points for the two relevant members of staff were agreed.

It was noted that this would increase the overall staff salary bill by 2% annually.

WRC/101/14 STAFF APPRAISALS

The Deputy Town Mayor reported upon the annual appraisal of the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk reported that the annual appraisal of the staff was in progress.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Signed Date