

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL  
HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 9<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2013  
IN THE MAYOR'S PARLOUR, WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT:**

Cllr B Yoxall (Mayor)	Cllr Mrs E Stokes (Deputy Mayor)	Cllr C Carritt
Cllr J Cooper	Cllr E Poskitt	Cllr P Jay
Cllr T Wray	Cllr Mrs P Richardson	Cllr S Parnes

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** 6 Members of the Public.

**WTC/281/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs V Edwards, G Fleetwood and M Robertson.

**WTC/282/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr J Cooper declared a general interest in Agenda Item 9, Planning as he is a West Oxfordshire District Cllr involved in planning matters. Cllr E Poskitt declared a general interest in Agenda Item 9, Planning as she is a West Oxfordshire District Cllr and sits on the Uplands Planning Committee. The Deputy Mayor declared a general interest in Agenda Item 9, Planning application 13/0330/P/FP as she is a personal friend of the applicant. The Mayor declared a general interest in Agenda Item 15 'Capability Brown' Picture.

**WTC/283/12 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF:**

The minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2013 were approved and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

WTC/257/12, Minutes: WTC/244/12: Owl Extension iv) the second line was amended to read '...without the Morgans' consent;...'

WTC/262/12 Motions: The third sentence of the paragraph after the motion was amended so that the words 'eroding or diluting' were inserted after the word 'negating'.

WTC/263/12 (iv) Internal Controls: Action 1. The word 'be' was inserted after the word 'will'.

WTC/266/12 Town Centre Retail Support: The following sentence was inserted at the end of the paragraph 'It was noted that the Town Partnership did have a six month trial membership which had now lapsed'.

WTC/269/12 Communications Working Group (i) Chairman's Report: The second sentence was amended to read 'The Mayor and Deputy Mayor gave their view of the circumstances'.

WTC/274/12 Property Matters (i) Post of Council Member for Property: The third sentence of the first paragraph was amended to read 'The Mayor has assumed the role...'. The first sentence of the second paragraph was amended to read 'Cllr Jay proposed that WTC notes the Mayor's report and gives its unqualified support for the actions he has taken.'

**WTC/284/12 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

Mr Glyn Lambert

Mr Glyn Lambert addressed the Council about his reaction upon reading comments about affordable housing in the March newsletter. He said that the amount of concentrated development already achieved in one small area of town, (Banbury & Shipton Roads), had already turned quiet, pleasant rural roads into urban roads with the beginnings of a traffic problem. He said that significant prices are already being paid by residents with parked cars, clogged roads and the green fields no longer being visible. He considered that the newsletter item, seeking support to build

affordable homes in Ben's Close or other parts of town, coming so close after Council decisions to oppose development, appeared to be a change of direction, totally disregarded residents' concerns about development and was one sided and unbalanced. He felt angry at the way creeping development had already damaged his road and asked why some factions of the Council were already seeking to build more?

The Mayor explained that this matter would be addressed under the Town Council Communications item on the agenda.

#### **WTC/285/12 COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR UPDATES**

(i) County Cllr I Hudspeth

The April 2013 report from County Cllr Hudspeth was received and noted.

(ii) Motion Brought Forward From The Last Meeting

The following motion from Cllr Parnes that was brought forward from the February Town Council meeting 'That WTC ask OCC whether the person who was the head of planning at the time that OCC consulted with Woodstock residents about the Soldiers of Oxford Museum, was the same officer involved in relinquishing the lease on the field at the back of the Marlborough School.' County Cllr Hudspeth said that he would check whether it was OCC or the Marlborough School that had decided to relinquish the lease but noted that it was the end of the lease, it was not the decision of the Head of the Planning Department and that two separate departments were involved. Cllr Parnes asked Cllr Hudspeth whether there was an opportunity to ask why it was not queried whether someone else locally could have used the playing field. Cllr Hudspeth said that if the school had not required the field it was given up and he didn't know whether the lease could have been transferred but would find out.

(iii) District Cllrs J Cooper and E Poskitt

The council received and noted the April 2013 report from District Cllrs Cooper and Poskitt. It was noted that the lease on the Girl Guide hut had yet to be finalised as there are boundary problems. However the peppercorn rent has been agreed. Cllr Jay commended and thanked the District Cllrs for their remarks about the Local Development Plan.

#### **WTC/286/12 COMMUNICATIONS**

The Mayor reported that due to the bad weather the official tree planting at the War Memorial and the annual litter pick had been cancelled. However an unofficial litter pick still went ahead.

The Mayor reminded Cllrs about the charity event that he was holding at the Marlborough School on 20<sup>th</sup> April. He reported that on 24<sup>th</sup> April there will be a social mixer event for 'Wake up to Woodstock'. Discussion followed about whether WTC should become a formal member of 'Wake Up to Woodstock' and it was agreed that a formal proposal should be brought to council.

**ACTION:** *The Town Clerk will make this an agenda item at the May Council meeting.*

The Mayor said that he had received a letter from Gerald Myatt about flying the flag. Mr Myatt is happy to continue raising the flag as required but felt that many residents do not know why it is flying. He therefore suggested that a set of A3 laminated boards could be produced and the appropriate one could be displayed in the Town Hall window overlooking the square whenever the flag is flown. The Mayor supported this idea and had thanked Mr Myatt for his initiative. The Mayor had

arranged for the flag to be flown at half mast today to mark the passing of Margaret Thatcher, the former PM. Discussion followed during which Cllr Jay asked the Mayor to record his reasons for asking for the flag to be raised and whether he had looked at any precedents. Cllr Cooper noted that five former Prime Ministers had died in recent years and the flag had not been flown at half mast on these occasions. The Mayor said that he had personally taken this decision being unsure about precedent. WTC decided that there was no problem with the Mayor's decision today but that the flag should be taken down the next day and not be flown on the day of the funeral as this is not a State Funeral.

The Mayor noted that as yet he had received no response to his email to the Chief Executive of OCC regarding the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Project. County Cllr Hudspeth said that a response will be sent.

The Mayor noted that the shoe repair shop will close on 18<sup>th</sup> April. Discussions have been held about a possible alternative location in the town but the outcome of these are unknown.

The Council had recently received a letter from CPRE about the preservation of rural England. Discussion followed. It was agreed that it would be considered at the next Mayor's Committee Meeting.

***ACTION:*** *This item will be brought forward to the next Mayor's Committee meeting.*

#### **WTC/287/12 QUESTIONS**

To receive the following question under Standing Order No 8 by Cllr Parnes to the Mayor:

*Can the Mayor give assurances that Woodstock Town Council will actively support the documented prevailing position (of opposition) among Town residents in relation to further development, and that such support will include WTC's proactive engagement with relevant entities to specifically include: current and known potential landowners and developers, local government, and media? Last summer, after residents expressed concerns about perceived intentions to develop land adjacent to the Old Woodstock playground, the Mayor proactively (and quite intensely) engaged with the land owners/developers Caledonia, then-prospective and now current owners Blenheim Estates, local media and residents. Now Blenheim Estates and Pye Homes have publicly disclosed ambitions to develop land at 'SSHLA 162' south of the Marlborough School recreation grounds and 'SSHLA 163' north of Shipton Road between Marlborough School and Budd Close, does the Mayor consider residents concerned about development in that part of Town are entitled to similar methods, extents and intensities of proactive support and engagement as that which the Mayor led on behalf of residents of Old Woodstock?*

The Mayor said that he understood the concerns that residents have about further development in Woodstock and believed it to be the role of the Mayor to represent the democratically agreed position of the Town Council with everyone concerned. He said that in the matter of issues concerning the residents of Old Woodstock since last Summer he had tried to act with reasonableness towards all affected parties, with integrity and strong conscientious commitment and that would be the same for any other part of town where issues concerning residents arise.

**WTC/288/12 MOTIONS PRESENTED TO COUNCIL**

Cllr Jay proposed the following motion that had been submitted in writing and signed by eight Cllrs:

*'The Council rescinds its decision of January to seek legal advice about the revision of its agreement with Carter Jonas for the management of its properties.'*

Cllr Cooper seconded this motion. Discussion followed. A Cllr called for a named vote the result of which was as followed:

For: The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Cllrs Carritt, Cooper, Jay, Poskitt, Mrs Richardson and Wray (8)

Against: Cllr Parnes (1)

**RESOLVED**

That the Council rescinds its decision of January to seek legal advice about the revision of its agreement with Carter Jonas for the management of its properties.

**WTC/289/12 PLANNING**

Cllr J Cooper declared a general interest as he is a West Oxfordshire District Cllr involved in planning matters. Cllr E Poskitt declared a general interest as she is a West Oxfordshire District Cllr and sits on the Uplands Planning Committee.

(a) Ref:13/0326/P/FP – 18 Shipton Road, Woodstock.

Erection of replacement single storey rear extension to existing dwelling and erection of detached dwelling. Formation of new vehicular access and parking to serve both dwellings. Discussion followed. Cllr Jay proposed that WTC object to this planning application on the grounds that such developments put intolerable pressures on inadequate infrastructures. This motion was seconded by Cllr Parnes but was not supported by the council and so fell.

**RESOLVED**

That WTC has no comment to make about this planning application.

(b) Ref:13/0330/P/FP – 10 Mavor Close, Woodstock

Conversion of garage and alterations to existing dwelling to form two dwellings (Retrospective). The Deputy Mayor declared a general interest as she is a personal friend of the applicant. Discussion followed.

**RESOLVED** (7 votes for and 2 abstentions)

Woodstock Town Council objects to this planning application and is disappointed that this development was allowed to progress without prior agreement.

(c) Ref:13/0331/P/FP – 126 Oxford Road, Woodstock

Erection of single storey side extension.

**RESOLVED**

That WTC has no comment to make about this planning application.

(d) Ref:13/0353/P/LB – 10 High Street, Woodstock

Internal alterations to support beam.

**RESOLVED**

That WTC has no comment to make about this planning application.

(e) Ref:13/0354/P/FP – 25 Bear Close, Woodstock

Erection of two storey side extension and single storey front extension.

**RESOLVED**

That WTC has no comment to make about this planning application.

**ACTION:** *The planning responses will be notified to WODC.*

**WTC/290/12 TOWN COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS**

(i) Website Content

The Mayor responded to concerns from a resident about the inclusion of the Town Partnership report on the WTC web site. The report will remain on the web site.

The report from Cllr Garritt about the web site management and content policy was received and considered. Cllr Garritt noted that a consultations page had recently been added to the WTC web site. The first on-line consultation was about the Town Fair and this had been well used. Cllr Garritt proposed, the Mayor seconded this motion and WTC

**RESOLVED** (Unanimously)

That that the following wording be added to the website management and content policy that had been drafted in January 2011.

Consultations Page

1. Only consultations agreed by the Council or one of its Committees may be uploaded to the website.
2. The general style of questions and the duration of the consultation shall be agreed by the Council or one of its Committees
3. The precise wording may be amended by the website manager or Town Clerk to suit the format of the web page provided that the sense and style of the questions and the broad intentions of the consultation are not compromised by doing so.

(ii) Newsletter Content

The Mayor apologised for his oversight allowing the inclusion of the inappropriate wording in the article on affordable housing that appeared in the recent WTC Newsletter which raised concerns with some residents in light of the Council's decision to oppose any further development.

The Mayor quoted the newsletter management and content policy produced by Cllr Carritt in 2011 (clause 3) confirming that the inclusion of an article on Town Twinning in the recent WTC Newsletter complied with the newsletter protocol. He said that he had no personal interest in town twinning and agreed to bring any future development in this area to the attention of the Town Council.

(iii) WTC Response to WODC Report on Draft Local Plan

The Mayor has written to Mr Tucker, Strategic Director at WODC with responsibility for housing, reaffirming WTC's opposition to any further housing development and the Council's disappointment that this was not brought out in Mr Tucker's summary of the Draft Local Plan Consultation responses.

(iv) Way Forward for Formulating Future Policy

The Mayor reminded the Council that it had resolved at its January meeting to leave the existing arrangements for Committees and Working Groups until this is reviewed in July 2013. He noted that there were two new members of the Communications Working Group and looked forward to its next meeting.

(v) Policy on Receipt of Agenda Items

Cllrs were reminded that any items for the Town Council agenda need to be with the Town Clerk by noon on the day before the agenda is due to be issued. Any

accompanying papers must be received by the staff by 10am on the morning on which the agenda is being issued in order that they can be copied and distributed.

**WTC/291/12 THE WTC NEWSLETTER AND THE LOCAL PLAN**

WTC received and considered a report from Cllr Jay about the WTC newsletter and Local Plan. Cllr Jay noted the apology from the Mayor, thanked him for this and accepted that the actions had been taken in good faith.

Cllr Jay supported the concerns raised by Mr Lambert in the public participation session. He recognised that it was an oversight but considered that the sentence in the recent WTC Newsletter that included references to Ben's Close conflicted with the policies of the newsletter and was an 'own goal' on a very sensitive topic. Cllr Jay thanked the Mayor for his recent letter to Mr Tucker. Cllr Jay proposed the following motion that was seconded by Cllr Cooper and approved by the Council:

**RESOLVED** (4 votes for, 1 vote against and 3 abstentions – Cllr Poskitt did not vote)

That WTC:

1. Notes Cllr Jay's comments on the reference in the newsletter to Ben's Close as a development which could be 'extended or copied' elsewhere in the town;
2. Invites the Mayor to account for his part in permitting this entry; and
3. Commends the Mayor's letter of 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2013, to the Head of Planning at the District Council, which unequivocally states the Council's opposition to further development in the town on top of the large contribution recently made.

**WTC/292/12 REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP**

The Chairman of the Communications working group noted that the recent scheduled meeting did not take place as only one member could attend.

**WTC/293/12 SUNDAY TIMES ARTICLE**

Cllr Parnes proposed that WTC respond to a disputed depiction of Woodstock recently published by the Sunday Times and submitted some wording for consideration. The Mayor proposed an amended motion that was seconded by Cllr Parnes. This proposal was not seconded and so fell.

**WTC/294/12 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

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

(i) The List of payments for March 2013

The Council received and considered the list of payments for March 2013

**RESOLVED**

That the list of payments totalling £28,775.34 made in the month of March 2013 is approved.

(ii) Bank Reconciliation Statements for March 2013

The Council received and considered the bank reconciliation statements for March 2013.

- (iii) Summary and Detailed Income & Expenditure Statements for March 2013  
The Council received and considered the summary and detailed income & expenditure statements for March 2013
- (iv) Payroll Controls  
The Council received and noted a paper from the Financial Assistant about payroll controls.
- (v) Disposition of Funds  
The Council received and noted the disposition of Council funds. Cllr Cooper proposed, Cllr Poskitt seconded and WTC

**RESOLVED** (6 votes for, 1 vote against and 2 abstentions)  
that the Woodstock Public Events Fund and Mayors Charity Accounts should be removed from the report of the disposition of Council funds in the new financial year.

**WTC/295/12 'CAPABILITY BROWN' PICTURE**

The Mayor declared a general interest in this agenda item.

The updated advice received from NALC about the 'Capability Brown' picture was considered. This clarified that as a council WTC cannot pursue either of the two options that had been previously proposed i.e. it cannot give the 'Capability Brown' picture back to the present Duke of Marlborough as the Council and tax payers would receive no benefit from giving it away; nor can WTC give the picture to the Duke on long-term loan in return for his agreeing to renovate and maintain it, and put it on public display.

It was noted that when the picture had been displayed at Compton Verney the gallery conservator had recommended an expert who could repair some of the current damage to the picture. Cllr Carritt proposed that the Town Clerk investigate the cost of repairing the picture with this expert and then bring this matter back to Council.

**ACTIONS:**

1. *The Mayor will write to the Duke to explain the situation and return the four cheques.*
2. *The Town Clerk will investigate the cost of repairing the picture and then report back to Council.*

**WTC/296/12 PROPERTY REPORT**

WTC received and considered a report from the Mayor.

(i) Community Centre Refurbishment Phase 2

The Mayor reported upon the budget and rough estimates for further work that needs to be done at the Community Centre.

**RESOLVED** (Unanimous)

That Carter Jonas is asked to obtain three quotations for the following Phase 2 items:

- a) Replacement UPVC double glazed windows to kitchen, Small Meeting Room, Chair Store and the offices currently used by the Landscape Architect and Physiotherapist
- b) Decoration of the remaining exterior joinery, metalwork, render etc.
- c) Decoration of the kitchen (deferred from Phase I)
- d) Decoration of the ladies cloakroom and toilets, disabled access WC and gents toilets

- e) Move fire alarm control panel to main exit.
- f) Repair the ceiling in the upstairs office if deemed necessary by Carter Jonas who would be asked to investigate.

(ii) Town Hall Stairlift

The Mayor reported that the stair lift had been installed on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2013. The Mayor said that quotes had been obtained for an 'Evac Chair' Quote A had been for £1376, Quote B was £735 and Quote C was for £693 plus VAT. The Mayor proposed, the Deputy Mayor seconded and WTC

**RESOLVED** (8 votes for and 1 abstention)

that an 'Evac' chair be purchased at a cost of £693 plus VAT and a small amount for the wall bracket.

It was noted that the staff would require training in its operation. It was also noted that a total expenditure of £8875 plus VAT had been spent on the Stairlift and 'Evac Chair'.

**ACTION:** *The Clerk will place the order for the Evac chair and arrange for training.*

(iii) 8 Park Street

It was noted that discussions are on-going between Carter Jonas and WODC regarding the listed building requirements for the solution proposed to cure the damp problem.

(iv) 2 Park Street

**RESOLVED**

that the budget of approximately £2,800 to solve the problem of the bulging wall is approved.

**ACTION:** *The Town Clerk will notify Carter Jonas of the Council's decision.*

**WTC/297/12 VARIATION APPLICATION FOR PREMISES LICENCE**

WTC received and considered an application to vary the premises licence at The Bear Hotel, Woodstock received under the Licensing Act 2003 (enclosed).

**RESOLVED**

That WTC has no comment to make about this premises licence variation.

**ACTION:** *The Town Clerk will notify WODC of the Council's decision.*

**WTC/298/12 ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

The minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Environment Committee that was held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2013 were received and considered and the following decisions made:

(i) Tree Policy

**RESOLVED**

That the amended draft Tree Policy presented by the Chairman of the Environment Committee will be considered at the June TC meeting.

It was noted that this policy will not apply to the OWL Extension.

(ii) Town Fair

Cllr Carritt reported that 110 responses had been received in response to the WTC consultation about the Town Fair. Cllr Carritt said that 86 of the responses had been very positive and 23 negative. Cllr Carritt proposed, The Deputy Mayor seconded and WTC

**RESOLVED**

that in view of the overwhelming support for the Town Fair the Council will continue to work with the Fair operators to achieve the best possible outcome for the benefit of visitors and residents.

**WTC/299/12 OWL EXTENSION**

The Council received and considered the information previously circulated about the OWL Extension. Cllr Jay proposed, Cllr Mrs Richardson seconded and WTC

**RESOLVED** (Unanimous)

that the council:-

1. Notes with satisfaction that the conveyance of the OWL Extension land to the council's ownership has been completed;
2. Notes and approves the actions being taken under the leadership of the OWL Extension working group for fencing, signage and an action plan and budget for further works at the OWL extension;
3. Notes the letter received from the Verenia Court Management Company about future relations with the council, comments received from the council's legal and estate advisers and proposals by Councillor Jay for further negotiations for an agreed resolution of current differences, which it approves;
4. Notes Councillor Jay's report on negotiations with Oxfordshire County Council about revisions to the OWL Extension management plan under the Section 106 agreement and about public access to the area and approves these efforts to move matters forward; and
5. Notes and approves plans for a meeting of the OWL Extension Forum on 26 April, 2013.
6. Notes Henman's report about legal costs.

**ACTIONS:**

*The Town Clerk, Mayor and Cllr Jay will meet with representatives of the Verenia Court residents to discuss the current differences.*

**WTC/300/12 SELECTION OF MEMBERSHIP AND CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS AND LEAD COUNCILLORS**

The council received and considered a report from Cllr Carritt. The role of the 'Council Member for Property' and others were discussed. It was considered important that these roles have proper terms of reference. Cllr Carritt asked the Mayor for permission to propose the motion contained therein but the Mayor said that due to the council resolution of January 2013 the proposal contained in this paper could not be discussed until July 2013.

The method of allocating specific roles to Cllrs was discussed. It was noted that the agreed procedure was for the Mayor to invite Cllrs to accept specialist roles.

**ACTION:** *The Town Clerk will distribute a list of the current Committees, Working Groups etc in order that Cllrs can indicate their preferences prior to the Annual Town Council meeting in May.*

**WTC/301/12 ELECTRICAL REPAIRS AND RENEWABLES FOR CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

The motion for Christmas Lights proposed by Cllr Carritt, seconded by Cllr Cooper and left to lie at the last meeting (Minute WTC/277/12) was discussed by WTC and it was

**RESOLVED**

that in financial year 2013/14 funding is allocated for priorities 1, 2 and 3 at an expected total cost of £900 inclusive of VAT and that in financial year 2014/15 a further £600 is allocated for priorities 4 and 5.

Cllr Carritt noted that he has met with Southern Electric representatives who will be submitting a quote in due course.

**WTC/302/12 AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

WTC received and considered an oral report by Cllr Parnes about the meeting of the Airport Consultative Committee that was held on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2013. He noted that there may be increased air traffic due to the flight school being restructured. The commercial services are expanding. Some new routes are already being introduced and a potential service to Paris is expected to be added soon. Cherwell District Council is monitoring the situation.

**WTC/280/12 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

None

The meeting rose at 10.30pm.

Signed ..... Date .....