

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
ON TUESDAY 12th JANUARY 2021
HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING**

PRESENT:

Cllr M Parkinson (Mayor)
Cllr P Jay
Cllr U Parkinson
Cllr S Rasch
Cllr T Redpath

Cllr A Grant (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr J Cooper
Cllr S Parnes
Cllr E Poskitt
Cllr P Redpath

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: C Carruthers (Clerk), CCllr I Hudspeth, Neil Clennell (Wychwood Project) and 16 members of the public.

WTC219/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: None.

WTC220/20 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST:

Cllr U Parkinson

Item 6: Fallen tree

Cllr E Poskitt

Item 11 Planning: Personal interest as she is a member of WODC.

Item 6: Trees: Currently using TCT Ltd for her willow trees.

Cllr J Cooper

Item 11 Planning: Personal interest as he is a member of WODC Planning Sub-Committee.

WTC221/20 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:

Ed Creasey of 51 Brook Hill and James Pain of 37 Brook Hill addressed the meeting in relation to residents report circulated following the floods of the 24th December 2020.

A hard copy of the update is available (on request via the Clerk) for anyone who would like a copy.

WTC222/20 WATERMEADOWS FLOODING:

Cllr M Parkinson proposed the following motion seconded by Cllr S Parnes

“Woodstock Town Council agrees to request a ‘post mortem’ of this particularly significant flood incident be carried out by an identified, appropriately qualified body to ascertain if possible what the cause(s) of the flooding could have been and identify ways in which Woodstock Town Council as property owners can act in order to minimise the risk or prevent this type of flooding occurring again”.

C Carruthers read aloud the following email from James Crozier OCC’s Emergency Planning Officer

OCC Highways:

From a highways point of view, many of the issues experienced over that period were as a result of water flowing from adjacent land in addition to full water courses so our highway drains in many cases would not have had anywhere to discharge into. Our highways team were not aware of any requests for sandbags, although this may have gone to WODC. Generally, our highways team will supply to properties that are at risk of imminent flooding from highway surface water

predominantly. Issues with flooding from water courses are generally referred to the EA. The water course which caused difficulties is managed by the environment agency and so you may wish to have a conversation with the EA about this.

Environment agency:

Rainfall

The nearest rainfall gauge currently working correctly is at Chipping Norton, and this recorded 43.7mm of rainfall on 23/12/20. Other nearby gauges recorded 60mm of rain. This is very significant rainfall, especially over such a short period, and caused property flooding elsewhere in Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire. There was further rainfall as a result of Storm Bella on Boxing Day. Overall the catchment recorded 192% of the average long term rainfall in December. This gauge also recorded 100mm of rain during Storm Alex at the start of October and this is relevant for the antecedent conditions mentioned below.

Levels

Levels peaked at 6:20am on 24/12. The gauge recorded the river being out of banks from late morning on 23/12/20, and it is still just out of banks, although there may also be significant lying water remaining in fields. This peak was the same level as seen in October following storm Alex.

Flood alert

Our flood alerts warn of rivers coming out of banks where internal property flooding is not expected. Internal property flooding is defined as flooding of homes, and this doesn't include outbuildings, garden buildings, or detached garages. We issue flood warnings where internal property flooding is expected. We have no records of any internal property flooding in Woodstock which accords with the emails in the chain below.

The flood alert covers the whole of the Glyme and Evenlode catchment so may reflect flooding elsewhere in the catchment. The alert was issued at 08:22 on 23/12/20 and remains in force.

Antecedent conditions

A flood alert was issued on 3/10/20 following the significant amount of rainfall received during Storm Alex. In October more than 200% of the long term average rainfall was recorded, and as a result the catchment was saturated and there was no capacity in the soil from the end of October.

OCC Emergency Planning Unit

As you mentioned, we forwarded the flood warnings to you and you posted these on your website. We can also offer support around writing community emergency plans and providing community resilience bags for vulnerable households in the town area.

Thames Water

Our colleagues at Thames Water have attempted to contact you regarding the manhole cover which is damaged. If you could liaise with James Lamb (cc'd) then a team can attend and inspect the cover.

Neil Clennell (Wychwood Project) advised that the site is a water meadow and has worked adequately in the past. At the time the current houses were built they were just outside the 1in200 flood zone, which was deemed safe. There also used to be a 3rd channel for water to disperse. The fundamental problem is with the Brook Hill 1m concrete pipelines that exit at the lake which are not enough after such a volume water. There is planning to tidy it up and remediate the problems with the banks. They do try and clear the area on a regular basis and on several visits the grills have been clear. General maintenance is undertaken by them, but the large jobs are sub-contracted out. In terms of going forward, Neil is happy to discuss how the water meadow is managed if required. Neil does not accept that anything that they have done has any significant changes of the flood pattern or

pulse, this was just a very big event over the South of England. Environment Agency and County Council need to be involved to discuss the issue with the channels.

Cllr M Parkinson has asked for a separate meeting to discuss the issues raised. Neil has agreed for another further meeting (with a final conclusion to be meeting the issues made). There are significant ecological reasons for why and how the land is managed all of which can be explained. Cllr E Poskitt raises the point of having an emergency plan for any future such events. Cllr T Redpath would like to suggest that the role of WTC is to facilitate a conversation with the Environment Agency, Blenheim and OCC and then discuss with residents what can be done in the future and as climate changes occur (i.e., barriers/raising banks). Cllr P Redpath reminds us that one of the grills has been removed which did make a difference. The Mill Stream and ditch by Green Lane have been filled in therefore removing the run-offs. There is some personal responsibility to be taken by the residents due to landscape and building changes.

Motion raised by Cllr M Parkinson amended to

“Woodstock Town Council agrees to request a ‘post mortem’ of the flooding event with a detailed dissection of the specific details and to prevent any dramatic impact in the future with the input of expert advice and all relevant parties on the matter”

RESOLVED: The motion was carried with all in favour. C Carruthers to arrange a further discussion with Neil Clennell of Wychwood. Cllr P Jay has requested that Cllr M Parkinson responds to all residents who have communicated to the council by letter/email.

WTC223/20 MINUTES OF THE BUDGET SETTING MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 15th DECEMBER 2020:

The Council **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting on Tuesday 15th December 2020 were a true record of the meeting with the following amendments: -

C Carruthers has asked for the public participation to be removed from the record, and replaced with Mrs Hilary Brown of Sustainable Woodstock, addressed the meeting in regard to the Grants. A hard copy of the update is available (on request via the Clerk) for anybody who would like a copy.

Page 105 **Suspension of SO3B1** Cllr E Poskitt reduce the motion paragraph as agreed with Cllr M Parkinson

Page 107 **WTC210/20** paragraph 2 line 4 - add are, ‘they are...’

WTC224/20 REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK:

- i. Solar Farm Planning App 20/01817/FUL
Cllr Parnes requested this be brought back to Full Council at January’s meeting, the application is approved by WODC but he would like us to review WTC’s Resolution and the original Town Council’s decision but also whether the conditions meet WTC’s submissions.
- ii. Green Spaces – Neighbourhood Plan
Troy Planning have instructed WODC to start the SEA/HRA Screening of the plan, once we have reached Reg 14 they will then come back to us with a consultation response, this can hopefully run concurrently avoiding delays. The plan then goes out for 5 weeks consultation with Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England.

iii. Flower Tubs – War Memorial

Cllr E Poskitt has requested the below quote for work to be done in the garden at the War Memorial in her role as member of Bloom. David Doherty is familiar with the War Memorial garden as he tidies up this garden at specific times of the year, such as before Remembrance Sunday and has kindly supplied the below quotation which I am happy to approve under my delegated powers.

“Remove 2 Berberis, 2 Potentillas, 2 Conifers and all of the Ivy

The total cost is £248.00.

I suggest that we do the work before the end of February to avoid problems with birds nesting”.

iv. Tree Survey 2020

The survey has been circulated to Boward Trees, Dowdeswell and Colin Briggs requesting them to quote for undertaking the High and Medium risk works.

To date I have received 1 quotation back from Boward, I have chased the other two and will give them until the end of the month.

v. Collapse Tree Tag No. 320 - Field maple at New Road recreation ground

The week between Christmas and New Year the above tree fell during the high winds into the garden of 15 Cadagon Park. After trying our three normal contacts, I instructed Town & Country Trees to attend and remove the tree. They have subsequently come back with the attached quotation to finish off the area and make safe.

I am happy to approve this under my delegated powers, but wish to notify the Council of the work.

vi. Urgent Business

As per the Government Guidelines the Officers are working from home or attending the Town Hall at limited intervals. I would like to request that business during the Council meetings are kept to urgent business and that any matters that can wait, are left until we are operating in more of a normal capacity. I have attached the notice from 21st April 2020 as a reminder.

WTC225/20 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' UPDATE:

The monthly Parish report from Cllr I Hudspeth was received by Council without question or comment. Cllr Ian Hudspeth had circulated his thoughts regarding the current pandemic situation and the budget which is going to cabinet next with and the meeting on the 9th February. Cllr A Grant raised concerns about residents who have been in contact regarding getting to Islip for Covid-19 vaccinations and therefore is there anything that can be done in respect of advertising the free car service available. The GP surgery need to be informed to advertise more prominently. Cllr A Grant will give C Carruthers the contact number to be circulated to all members of the council if residents do get in touch. Cllr E Poskitt also suggested residents can use the 'Volunteer Link Up' (which does charge by the mile). Also, 'Better Care Fund' used to join up health, care and social services which means more people can recuperate at home. Cllr J Cooper asked about using Kidlington vacant buildings as vaccination centre, Cllr I Hudspeth confirms that it is completely the NHS who decide on locations without consultation. Cllr S Parnes asked about parking charges in the OCC area for keyworkers etc. Cllr I Hudspeth confirms charges were suspended in the previous lockdown but at the moment there is no plan to bring this back and also that enforcement is still being actioned for the necessary.

The District Councillors' report was received by Council. Cllr M Parkinson has had concerns from residents that the recycling bins are to be removed. Cllr J Cooper confirms that the bin is to be removed but after a consultation only. It would also allow for more parking. Cllr E Poskitt also reported that most of the items can be recycled in domestic bins. It will be assessed and monitored and reinstated if required. Cllr P Jay asks about the parking and the WTC parking policy (instated 2-3 years ago) for stricter enforcement and resident parking plan. Cllr J Cooper has discussed this matter in detail with WODC and would raise the matter again at the WODC Council meeting the next week.

WTC226/20 COMMUNICATIONS:

There were no communications presented to Council.

WTC227/20 QUESTIONS:

There were no questions presented to Council.

WTC228/20 MOTIONS PRESENTED TO THE COUNCIL:

(i) Resumption of Online Availability of Meeting Background Papers and Reports:

Cllr S Parnes proposed the following motion seconded by Cllr M Parkinson

“Woodstock Town Council RESOLVES that: “In view of the intensified emergency restrictions (commonly perceived as a third lockdown) imposed in January - and towards supporting enhanced public access, convenience, accessibility, timeliness, and transparency – the Town Clerk is requested to resume the Town Hall’s recent practice of posting background papers and reports alongside Agendas online with the statutory three clear delays before each meeting in accordance with the prescribed time in which Council Members are expected to routinely receive these documents. The Council acknowledges with appreciation the Town Hall staff’s previous efforts to facilitate the online availability of these documents and requests the practice continue ~~until and including the beginning of the next municipal year (ie), the May Annual Town Council and May Town Council Meetings) at which time a presumed newly elected full Council can take a view on continuity of it.”~~”

Cllr A Grant requested the strikethrough of the above section of the motion. She proposed the addition of the below paragraph. Cllr Parnes accepted the deletion as above, but did not accept the proposed amendment. He noted that the addition should be treated as a motion in its own right and not be added as a justification for it not being submitted within the specified timescale for it to be added to the Agenda.

Cllr A Grant proposed the members vote on the acceptance of the amendment, seconded by Cllr J Cooper.

“WTC agrees that Agenda items will be restricted to the need of necessity and not include non essential items during the extraordinary conditions our staff is having to work under. This will be under the Clerks jurisdiction whose decision will be final”

VOTE (on amendment): For: 9 Against: 1 Abstained: 0

RESOLVED: The motion was carried, and the amendment included.

A vote for the proposed motion including the amendment was taken, Cllr S Parnes requested a named vote:

VOTE: For: 5 Cllrs A Grant, J Cooper, U Parkinson, S Parnes, M Parkinson.
Against: 3 Cllrs P Redpath, S Rasch, P Jay.
Abstaining: 2 Cllrs E Poskitt, P Redpath.

RESOLVED: The motion was carried

(ii) Co-option for Current Casual Vacancies:

Cllr S Parnes proposed the following motion seconded by Cllr M Parkinson

Woodstock Town Council RESOLVES: “Noting the two recently arising casual vacancies in the Town Council Membership, and the legislated and practical opportunity to co-opt in the remainder of the current 4-year term, towards heightened opportunity for wide representation the Council requests Town Hall progression of the Co-option Policy process without delay, with a view to enabling any applications to be considered in time for a new Councillor to take office for the February meeting (even if an ETC will be required for this purpose).”

VOTE:	For:	2	Cllrs, S Parnes, M Parkinson.
	Against:	7	Cllrs P Redpath, S Rasch, P Jay, A Grant, J Cooper, U Parkinson, T Redpath.
	Abstaining:	1	Cllrs E Poskitt.

RESOLVED: The motion was not carried.

(iii) Christmas Lights in Woodstock

Cllr M Parkinson proposed the following motion seconded by Cllr A Grant

“Woodstock Town Council resolves to formally approach Blenheim Estates and in turn their supplier of the ‘Christmas Lights Trail’ to discuss whether they would be able to aid in the decoration of the Town for the next festive period”.

VOTE:	For:	10	Against:	0	Abstained:	0
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RESOLVED: The motion was carried.

(iv) Open Air Gym

Cllr M Parkinson proposed the following motion seconded by Cllr A Grant

“1) Woodstock Town Council investigates the initial and maintenance costs of an open air gym from (if possible) 3 companies with a view to putting this into the budget for 2022. This may come back to the council for confirmation at a later date.

2) Woodstock Town Council consults with WODC and other relevant parties to ascertain an appropriate location for an open air gym to be established on Town Council land. This may come back to council for confirmation at a later date”.

VOTE:	For:	8	Against:	0	Abstained:	2
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RESOLVED: The motion was carried

WTC229/20 PLANNING:

Council considered the following applications, and their responses are shown below: -

- i. Ref: APPLICATION NO: 20/03057/HHD – 26 Banbury Road, Woodstock
Alterations and erection of single storey rear and side extension

RESOLVED: that WTC have no objection to this application.

- ii. Ref: APPLICATION NO: 34 Westland Way, Woodstock
2 storey side extension and alterations to existing building

RESOLVED: that WTC have no objection to this application.

WTC230/20 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER – JANUARY 2021:

- i. To approve the list of payments totalling £17,645.57 made in the month of December 2020 - The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the payments in December 2020.

C Carruthers requests that the RFO no longer uses personal names when processing payments, only to use job descriptions/reason for payment/business names.

- ii. To approve the Bank Reconciliation statement to 23rd December 2020 – The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Bank Reconciliation for December 2020
- iii. To receive and consider the summary and detailed income & expenditure statements for December 2020 – The Council **NOTED** the Income and Expenditure statements without query or comment.

Cllr P Jay proposed and seconded by Cllr M Parkinson the motion that the Town Council approve the statements i-iii above.

VOTE: For: 10 Against: 0 Abstained: 0

RESOLVED: The motion was carried.

- iv. To receive and approve the Budget review report and spreadsheet – The Council **resolved** to approve the Budget Review. Cllr P Jay raises the point of tax from the residents have not been spent in full, mainly due to the pandemic and this does need to be addressed by year end.

WTC231/20 PROPERTY PORTFOLIO:

Cllr A Grant circulated a Property report detailing the below:

- i. 2 Market Street Retail Unit
The new tenant has agreed the heads of terms but are now deciding what names should be put on the leases as it is a business partnership, it is hoped this will soon be confirmed.
- ii. 4 Market Street
The new tenant moved into the flat on the 1st January 2021.
- iii. 2&4 Market Street
The Sub Water Meters will be fitted to mid January to these properties.
- iv. Community Centre Car Park

Breckon and Breckon will obtain quotes for the work on the Car Park and hopefully work will commence in early spring

The meeting closed at 9:24pm

Chair:

Date: