



Woodstock Town Council

The Town Hall, Woodstock, Oxford, OX20 1SL

Telephone: 01993 811216

Website: www.woodstock-tc.gov.uk

Locum Town Clerk: Karen Crowhurst

Minutes of the meeting of Woodstock Town Council held in The Town Hall, Woodstock on Tuesday 26th July 2022 at 6.30pm

Cllrs. present: Elizabeth Poskitt (Mayor)
Jo Lamb (Deputy Mayor)
John Bleakley
Ann Grant
Sharone Parnes
Matthew Parkinson
Ulli Parkinson
Andrew Grant
Nick Manby-Brown

In Attendance: Karen Crowhurst – Locum Clerk
Rachel Peters – To take the minutes
West Oxfordshire District Cllr. Cooper
Oxfordshire County Cllr. Graham
5 members of the public

26/07/1. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive and consider for acceptance apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr Meg Manson, Cllr Spencer Churchill, Cllr Kate Bailey and District Cllr Julian Cooper.

26/07/2. **Minutes of last meeting**

To consider for approval, the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 22nd July 2022 (previously circulated)

It was **resolved** to accept the minutes of Friday 22nd July not Tuesday as a true and accurate of the meeting.

Defer to next meeting.

26/07/3. **Declarations of Interests**

To receive any declarations of interests on the agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Council's Code of Conduct

Declarations were received from Cllr Grant in relation to item 24a on the agenda as the candidate is known personally to her.

Cllr Poskitt declared an interest about the Planning as she serves as a District Councillor and Chair of the Development Control Committee and Uplands Planning Committee.

26/07/4. **Public Speaking and Question Time**

This period of time designated for public speaking in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 3 mins per speaker with a maximum of 15 minutes in total being allocated. Although no prior notification is required, notification to the Town Clerk is welcomed

Members of the public spoke about

- The proposed parking scheme
- It was felt that the scheme is unfair, unjust and undemocratic. No words of leadership, reassurance or details comment from town council, accepting cc decision.
- The possibility that there are more permits being given than spaces provided in the town.
- Customers to businesses may go elsewhere, elderly and disabled will be disadvantaged.
- The Member of the public speaking asked the County Council to hold off implementing the decision.

26/07/5. **Reports from Outside Bodies & Organisations** – No written reports received

26/07/6. **County Councillor's Report**

To receive the monthly Parish report from Oxfordshire County Cllr Graham (attached)

Cllr Graham reported on:

- Health centre- County Council District Council, Woodstock Surgery and LPG have met and agreed to look at the Hensington Road site and is progressing.
- Home to school transport policy- enabling children to get to school. Improve the scheme policy.
- Cherwell development- back on plan, comment and objections - today is last day to submit to the consultation.

Questions to **Cllr Graham**

Cllr S Parnes - Why are responses not showing up on the website? This needs to be followed up. – Cllr Graham agreed to investigate this?

Cllr S Parnes Is Parking permit for hospitality staff imminent? Cllr Graham advised that this is a work in progress.

Cllr J Lamb – Suggested parking meters should be discreet; can Town Council be involved in the decision making for street furniture – needs to fit in with historic nature of town will be taken into account. - Cllr Graham advised that this is being taken into account.

Cllr U Parkinson- Concerns from Park View residents that Blenheim will be making a new connecting road, it will become a rat run– Cllr Graham commented that the design statements are conflicting and contradicting. – Cllr Graham advised that his response includes these concerns.

Cllr J Bleakley – Will the library be included in the health centre development? Cllr Graham responded to this question.

Karen Crowhurst – Do OCC meet with Parish councils outside of Town Council meetings. Strengthening Local Relationships could you look into this. Cllr Poskitt agreed

26/07/7. **District Councillor's Report**

To receive the monthly report from West Oxfordshire District Cllrs Poskitt & Cooper
Cllr Cooper

Cllr Cooper extended his gratitude to Blenheim Palace for holding on the meeting which was deemed to be productive

Members noted the report from Cllr Poskitt & Cooper which was previously circulated to all Members.

26/078. **To note the resignation of Rachel Faulkner from the Town Council**

Members noted the resignation of Rachel Faulkner and expressed their gratitude for her service.

26/07/9. **Notice of Poll**

- a) To note the notice of poll and date of the poll being held and agree whether to request poll cards to be issued

Members noted the date of the Poll, being 25th August 2022. After a short discussion it was agreed to request for poll cards to be issued which will cost around £400 on the basis that there is no cost to the Council. This was proposed by Cllr Parnes and seconded by Cllr U Parkinson.

A vote was taken by a show of hands. The outcome of which was:

For – Cllr Grant, Cllr Parnes, Cllr M Parkinson and Cllr U Parkinson'

Against – Cllr Poskitt and Cllr Manby – Brown.

Abstentions – Cllr Bleakley and Cllr Lamb.

26/07/10. **Policies for adoption**

- a) Woodstock Town Council Communications and Social Media Policy
It was agreed to defer any decision due to a previous decision to adopt the same type of policy. It was also agreed to schedule the newer version of the policy after the 6-month resolution has passed.
- b) Woodstock Town Council Complaints Policy/ Procedure, if approved to appoint the Complaints committee and appoint the Mayor/Chairman and Chairman, Deputy Chairman and 3 Members of the Council to Committee

After some discussion and deliberation, it was **resolved** to adopt the Complaints Policy/Procedure. The resolution was passed after a vote by a show of hands was taken. It was further **resolved** to call the panel a Committee with a composition of 5 Members.

Policy adoption vote. 7 for and 1 abstention.

Panel to Committee vote. 6 for and 2 abstentions.

The agreed Members appointed to the Committee, are:
Cllr Bleakley, Cllr Grant, Cllr Lamb, Cllr Poskitt and Cllr Parnes.

- c) To grant delegated authority to the Complaints Panel ensuring Full Council is consulted and informed about complaints being determined by the Panel

It was **resolved** to grant delegated authority to the Complaints Committee all in favour. Therefore, the motion was carried.

- d) Woodstock Town Council Vexatious Complaints Policy

It was **resolved** to adopt the Vexatious Complaints Policy. 6 Members were for this decision and there were 2 abstentions. Therefore, the motion was carried.

26/07/11. To consider the creation of a Woodstock Parish Council Facebook Page

To consider a motion from Cllr Kate Bailey, seconded by Cllr Meg Manson. that Woodstock Town Council has a Face Book page, the sole purpose of this page would be to promote and upsell the Town Council within the local Community. It would merely be

an online notice board/calendar of events and information portal ie it will not allow responses from the Public.

This page would be overseen by the Clerk and one other, Kate Bailey is happy to set it up in consultation with the current Clerk and would suggest another Cllr as an additional moderator.

By having an online presence, the Town Council would then ensure we engage with as much of the Community as possible ie by using all means possible to be sure vital information is disseminated around the entire Town.

During the Queens Platinum Jubilee and the Town poll, both equally important we had no option but to use other Social Media avenues to promote these events. This was done using our own means and Facebook pages. This is neither effective or good practice and can evoke unnecessary comments.

- a) To confirm the type of the Facebook page to allow comments or not
Decision – all in favour, motion carried.
- b) To appoint a Council Member or Members alongside the Clerk to manage the page
Decision – all in favour, motion carried.

26/07/10. To appoint a Town Council representative to SOFO Woodstock Museum

It was agreed to defer this item.

26/07/13. Environment Working Group Meeting Notes

- a) To note the meeting notes and agree the recommendations for Council consideration raised by the Environment Working Group.

Members noted the meeting notes.

1. Residents to be written to regarding the boundary of the Water Meadow on an annual basis. - This was agreed
2. To add additional work to the grass cutting contract to enable more regular work be carried out at the Water Meadows. -It was agreed to defer this recommendation.
3. To consider the quotation for the handrail at the cemetery if there is any additional cost further to the quotation previously approved by Town Council. – This item is ongoing.
4. To receive a report regarding the site visit in respect of the bridge at the Black Prince for Council to take into consideration when commenting on the proposal at item 15 on the agenda
5. To consider the proposal of appointing a specialist or company to oversee the implantation of the Management Plan at the Water Meadows. - It was agreed to defer this recommendation.
6. To consider high risks and associated costs to minimise risks identified, arising from the ROSPA report for the Water Meadows – (Documents previously circulated) – It was agreed for the Environment Working Group to look into this.
7. To consider the high risks and associated costs arising from the annual play area inspection and request that the Town Council instruct Wicksteed to repair equipment considered to be Moderate Risk. The cost would be £1,595 for New Road, from a budget of £3,500 and £1,414.80 for Budd Close, from a budget of £3,000.

It was agreed due to the need to make good the areas deemed to be Moderate Risk, for the work to be carried out. Members considered the budget and **resolved** to vire Cost Code 4978 as it is unlikely not to be spent in this financial year. A vote was taken by a show of hands, the outcome of which was 7 voted in favour - 1 abstention

8. Burials Officer clarification. – The Locum Clerk advised that the Council Administrator has agreed to be the Burials Officer due to the absence of a permanent Clerk.
9. Cemetery fees – to consider any new charges presented. - It was agreed to defer this item to enable time to gather more information.
10. Appointment of Mr Maurice Parkinson to the Environment Working Group
-
All agreed this appointment.
11. To consider undertaking a new tree survey and any associated costs
It was agreed to consider this time at item 20 on the agenda.

Signage at New Road Play Area

26/0714

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

26/07/15. **RFO Reports**

- a) To note the Cost Centre report of budget against actual income and expenditure at 31st May 2022

Members noted the Cost Centre report as being the current budget position. The Mayor then signed the report.

- b) To approve the schedule of payments from 1st May – 30th June 2022

It was **resolved** to accept and approve the schedule of payments from 1st May – 30th June 2022. All were in favor. The Mayor then signed the schedule of payments.

- c) To approve the bank reconciliations presented

The Locum clerk advised that she has been unable to access bank statements, which Members should have sight of to approve bank reconciliations.

- d) Internal Auditors report – To accept the Internal Auditors Report and agree any actions arising.

It was **resolved** to accept the report from the Internal Auditor and work towards implementing his recommendations contained within the report.

26/07/16 **Motions** – To consider written motions raised by Council Members

Motion proposed by Cllr Jo Lamb

“ Given:

1. the attractiveness and unobtrusive nature (as to size, location and colouring), of the 2 sun canopies erected at Brothertons Brasserie, 1 High Street, Woodstock, and
2. the location of at least 7 other additional sun canopies by businesses also located in the Conservation centre of the town and
3. the increasing health requirement to provide customers with sun protection due to changes in the climate and
4. the need to encourage the hospitality sector of our local businesses,

Woodstock Town Council exhorts West Oxfordshire District Council to reconsider this Planning matter and to take all necessary steps to ensure the withdrawal of Enforcement Notice No.2022/18 issued in respect of 1 High Street Woodstock and further, to support the Brasserie owners in any Appeal by them to the Planning Inspectorate which may be necessitated by the issuing of this Enforcement Notice.

After a lengthy discussion it was agreed for Woodstock Town Council to support Brothertons Brasserie appeal and write to the Planning Officer, the Heritage Officer and Giles Hughes, emphasising the support which will include some of the wording in the motions above. It was further agreed for Cllr Lamb, Cllr Poskitt to work alongside the Clerk to submit a response.

26/07/17 **Update on Memorial plaque for Colonel Nigel Clifford**

This item is still ongoing.

26/07/18. **Remembrance Day** – To agree Town Council arrangements

Cllr Poskitt advised that she would be working with the Town Council Administrator.

26/07/19. **Mayors Carols** – To agree Town Council arrangements

Cllr Poskitt advised that the carols will be held on or around December 18th 2022 and she is working closely with the school and the Reverend.

26/07/20. **To agree whether to undertake a free tree survey offered by Oxford Treescapes – Free Nature Recovery survey**

All Members agreed to the free survey and requested out of courtesy for the people carrying out the survey to inform the office when they are on site

26/07/21. **Reports from Committees and Working Parties** Nothing to Note

Properties Report – To receive a report from Cllr Ann Grant

26/07/22. Members noted the report.

Exclusion of Press and Public

To **resolve** the exclusion of press and public in accordance with the Press and Public (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as the matters to be discussed relate to staff.

The Mayor proposed a resolution to remove the press and any members of the public from the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Grant/

27/07/23. **Staffing Matters**

- a) To consider the appointment of the Rachel Peters as the Responsible Finance Officer to Woodstock Town Council for 8 hours per week at Spinal Column 21 start point £26,511 calculated on a pro-rata basis for a standard working week of 37 hours.

After taking into account the Locum Clerk has taken in receiving phone references and a CV and the conditions within the contract as well as Rachel already being employed by the Council it was **resolved** to appoint Rachel Peters as Woodstock's Town council Responsible Finance Officer.

- b) To consider Locum arrangements for an RFO if Rachel Peters is not appointed. (Documents previously circulated)

There was no need to discuss this item.

27/07/24. c) Appointment of Town Clerk for 30 hours per week at Spinal Column 26 £30,451 per annum which equates to £24,694.80 being the current salary point 26 within the 26-28 range in scale LC2 (24-28) as set out in the 2004 National Agreement on Salaries and Conditions of Service of Local Council Clerks in England and Wales.

A proposal was put forward to defer this item which was to consider deferring going ahead with the recruitment of a new Clerk at this stage during the discussion and thoughts and comments by other Members the proposal was

rejected. A further proposal which was seconded to retain the Locum Clerk until December whether that be as the Clerk if no Clerk is appointed or to provide support and training for a new Clerk if one is appointed was discussed. It was **resolved** to retain the Locum Clerk until December

Discussions continued further which led to a decision of proceeding with the process as soon as possible.

- d) To set a timeframe for the application process
 - Advertising
 - Deadline for applications
 - Shortlisting
 - Interviews

All of the above was discussed together. It was agreed to leave this actions to The Clerk in order to aide a quick process.

Cllr Grant proposed to use free advertising immediately on the basis of item c) 4 for 2 against 1 abstaining

- e) To appoint the interview panel from the Staffing Committee or other suggested Members

This was left to establish availability.

26/07/25. **Close the meeting** – There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.47pm.