



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 9th August 2022 at 6.30pm

Cllrs. present: Elizabeth Poskitt (Mayor)
Jo Lamb (Deputy Mayor)
John Bleakley
Ann Grant
Sharone Parnes – joined the meeting at 18.34
Matthew Parkinson
Ulli Parkinson
Nick Manby-Brown
Cllr Spencer-Churchill

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

01/08/22 **Apologies for Absence**

To receive and consider for acceptance apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from; Cllr Meg Manson and Cllr Kate Bailey.

02/08/22 **Minutes of last meeting**

To consider for approval, the minutes of the Town Council meetings held on Tuesday 14th June, Friday 22nd July and Tuesday 26th July 2022 (previously circulated)

It was agreed **to defer the** accepting of the minutes of the 14th June and 22nd July to the next meeting. It was **resolved** to accept the minutes of the 26th July as a true and accurate of the meeting.

03/08/22 **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

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.

04/08/22 **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 raised questions and commented on:

- Sustainable Woodstock noted that WTC supports the policies against climate change
- Water meadows WTC must provide evidence that town council has maintained it
- Meadow not been grazed for several years
- Himalayan balsam overrunning
- Unmanaged trees in meadows

05/08/22 **Reports from Outside Bodies & Organisations** – No written reports received

06/08/22 **County Councillor's Report**

To receive the monthly Parish report from Oxfordshire County Cllr Graham

Some Members raised concerns as the report was submitted quite late and did not allow time for Members to process its content. Some Members were also concerned as the reports are usually reported on a monthly basis and the last report was heard only 2 weeks ago. Members sought clarity from the Clerk who advised that the timing of the report did not allow time for consideration and perhaps it would be best until the next meeting to consider County Cllr Grahams report as part of usual practice.

The Mayor allowed County Cllr Graham to proceed which included;

- 20mile an hour is scheduled for April/May 2023
- Health centre discussion are at high level and proceeding.
- Delay in implementation of public consultation on hotels, it is likely to be a public.

This was followed by a question-and-answer session regarding the above No decisions were made.

07/08/22 **District Councillor's Report**

To receive the monthly report from West Oxfordshire District Cllrs Poskitt & Cooper (attached) Thank you to Blenheim Palace for hosting the chair reception.

08/08/22 **Amendment to Standing Orders relating Non Members attending confidential sessions in Committee Meetings.**

Recommendation: *'A Councillor is entitled to attend all meetings and committee meetings of the Council, regardless of that Councillor's membership of a particular Committee. A Councillor is not however, entitled to remain in a meeting where a Motion has been passed to exclude the Public and Press for the purposes of discussing confidential or prejudicial information, unless that Councillor can demonstrate that remaining in the meeting is essential to the performance of their duties.*

The Clerk explained this item and the purpose for placing this on the agenda. The main reason being to exclude non Committee Members from remaining in a meeting when confidential matters are being discussed, especially staffing matters.

The recommendation was discussed and debated in depth.

Cllr M Parkinson reminded Members of the Standing Orders (26 c Once proposed and seconded any motion to permanently a motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall lay on the table, without debate, until the next ordinary meeting of the council.)

In light of 26c in the Standing Orders it was agreed to debate and discuss this at the September 2022 meeting.

09/0822. **To appoint a Working Group to review Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations** *NB – Anything that is highlighted in bold in the original Standing Orders or Financial Regulations are statutory requirements. No additional items to be included can be in highlighted in bold as they are not statutory requirements.*

Working group to be Cllr M Parkinson, Cllr A Grant and Cllr Spenser Churchill
It was agreed by all to accept this motion

10/08/22 **To consider forming a Finance Committee – 5 Members**

For the purpose of;

- supporting the RFO at peak times of the financial year,
- To attend meetings to discuss the budget and make recommendations. And explain any amendments,
- To look at Audit documents after the interim audit and main audit to identify actions which need to be taken,
- To ensure the budget is on track and ensure the reserves are at the adequate level previously agreed by Council.

Cllr Manby -Brown proposed and amendment to allow assets be included as part of the committee function, the amendment was seconded by Cllr Lamb.

After some discussion the meeting moved to a vote to accept the amendment.

The outcome of which was:

For 5 Members. **Against** 3 Members. **Abstention** 1 Member

Therefore, the motion was carried.

A further amendment was proposed by Cllr Parnes for the membership of the committee to comprise of Members who have not been appointed to any other committee of the Council. Cllr Grant seconded the amendment.

The meeting moved to a recorded vote

The outcome of which was:

For; Cllr Grant, Cllr Parnes and Cllr Spencer-Churchill.

Against: Cllr Manby- Brown, Cllr Lamb Cllr Poskitt, Cllr M Parkinson, and Cllr U Parkinson.

Abstained; Cllr Bleakley. 0

The meeting moved to vote on forming a Finance and Assets Committee. A named vote was called for. The outcome of which was;

For; Cllr Bleakley, Cllr Manby- Brown, Cllr Lamb, Cllr M Poskitt, Cllr M Parkinson.

Against; Cllr Grant, Cllr Parnes, Cllr U Parkinson, and Cllr Spencer Churchill.

Therefore, it was **resolved that** Woodstock Town Council will form a Finance and Assets Committee. The membership of which will be agreed at the September Town Council meeting.

11/08/22 **To appoint an internal control panel**

The Internal Control Panel will meet with the RFO and Clerk quarterly to do some internal control tests. The panel will comprise of 3 non-bank signatory Members. The tests will include:

- a) Checking a few payments in that quarter against the invoice to see if it has been signed, entered correctly and shows on the bank statement
- b) Check the amount held in petty cash
- c) Other things may come to mind during the process
- d) To report back any findings good or bad to Council

It was agreed to **defer** this item until after the Finance & Assets Committee has been appointed.

12/08/22 **RFO Reports**

1. To discuss the cost of the recent Poll and Election costs noting that if there is a shared election with the District Council the Town Council shares these costs. Members discussed this due to some confusion regarding payments of the Poll and Election costs.

It was agreed for the Clerk to contact Electoral Services and the accounts team to seek further clarification of the timescale of invoices being raised to ensure the invoices are paid in the financial year of the Council for Elections, By Elections and Polls. **Action – The Clerk**

2. To add internal control measures;
 - I. All invoices will require a wet signature of the Members authorising them, the folder will be held in the office,
 - II. The Mayor signs the Payments and Receipts list and bank reconciliations at each Town Council meeting,
 - III. The Cost Centre report be approved at each meeting, the purpose of this is Council will note the amounts against the budget and identify any areas of concern. If there are any concerns these can be discussed at the meeting,
 - IV. Payments list with redacted payments for salaries and names will be added to the documents on the website. Will be scanned versions uploaded to the website to allow for redactions.

It was **resolved** to accept and implement the internal control measures as stated above.

13/08/22 **Motions – To consider written motions raised by Council Members**

AGENDA/ REPORTS DEADLINE

Motion proposed by Cllr Grant seconded by Cllr M Parkinson

WTC resolves that the deadline for requesting an item be put on the agenda is 12 noon on the Tuesday a week before the scheduled meeting

The deadline for submission of accompanying papers/reports for an agenda item is 11am 4 working days prior to the meeting date. (as our meetings are usually held on a Tuesday this would result in the Wednesday before).

*This paper must include a recommendation or a proposal unless just for noting. If a paper/report **has not** been submitted to accompany an agenda item by this deadline then*

the item is to be removed from the agenda before it is circulated and posted in the public arena.

*Any additional information relating to an agenda item must be circulated by the (Councillor/Clerk) providing the additional information (this may be done by email) by 5pm on the day before the meeting allowing over 24 hours to be considered. **This must be additional information only and not a full paper***

Members unanimously agreed to this motion. It was **resolved** to add the Agenda Reports deadline to be included in the Standing Orders.

Motion by Cllr S Parnes:

Woodstock Town Council requests that the Town Hall staff prioritise - via sourcing and instruction of a suitable provider of IT support services - the reformatting and republication of all Council minutes published on the website since the meeting chaired by the Deputy Mayor on December 7th, and ensure Minutes published (without prior Council agreement or consideration) in non-searchable scanned image versions will be converted and republished as searchable text documents as per practice before the un-notified change in format; this, for enhanced accessibility and transparency.

Cllr Manby-Brown seconded the motion.

Cllr Poskitt added an amendment to the motion for the work to be carried out internally as offered by Cllr Manby-Brown together with Cllr Parnes. This was seconded Cllr Grant.

The amendment was accepted unanimously

The original motion with the accepted amendment was voted on

It was then **resolved** to accept the amendment and the amended motion and the amended motion. **Action – The Clerk.**

14/08/22 **Planning & Licensing**

To consider response to the following applications: -

22/01815/HHD 40 Westland Way Woodstock Oxfordshire

Rebuild existing garage structure with a parapet flat roof and converting this space into part of the main house. First floor extension and increasing the sliding doors at the rear.

No objections

15/08/22 **Stench Permeating Woodstock – Report from Cllr Grant**
Accept the notes and recommendation.

Members noted the report and agreed unanimously the recommendation which was for The Clerk to write to West Oxfordshire Council as they have been liaising with Environmental Health regarding this issue with WTC giving any assistance they may need together with copying in Thames Water which will inform them of our intended action. **Action – The Clerk.**

16/08/22 **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 matter to be discussed is deemed as legal privilege.

Cllr M Parkinson proposed seconded by Cllr Grant.

Cllr Bleakley left the meeting for 5 minutes and re-joined the meeting during discussion of the next item.

17/08/22 1. **To consider whether to object to the Notice of application for registration of a person in adverse possession Land adjoining 8 Glyme Close Woodstock (OX20 1LB by noon on 12th August 2022**

It was **resolved** to give delegated authority alongside the Town Clerk to Cllr Lamb, Cllr Grant & Cllr M Parkinson to write a letter to Freeths to gather the information and act on the Councils behalf. It was also agreed for the delegated Members and Clerk to work on a response for Council to approve before sending the final response by the extended deadline as stated above.
Action 1 – Delegated Members and the Clerk. Action 2 All Members.

2. **To note the extension granted by HM Land Registry to respond by noon on 5th September 2022**

Cllr Manby-Brown extended his thanks to Cllr Parnes for managing to obtain an extension of time and to those who have worked on this matter.

Cllr Poskitt also thanked Cllr Parnes, Cllr Grant, Cllr Lamb, Cllr M Parkinson for their hard work.

18/08/22 **Close the meeting**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:14

Signed: *K.A. Crowhurst*

Date: 3rd August 2022

Meeting called by Karen Crowhurst - Locum Town Clerk