

Woodstock Town Council  
The Town Hall,  
Woodstock,  
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Telephone: 01993 811216  
Website: [www.woodstock-tc.gov.uk](http://www.woodstock-tc.gov.uk)  
Locum Town Clerk: Karen Crowhurst

**Minutes of the meeting**

**held on 11<sup>th</sup> October**

**6.30pm**

**At Woodstock Town Hall**

**Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of Woodstock Town Council held in The Town Hall, Woodstock on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at 6.30pm**

**Cllrs. present:** Elizabeth Poskitt (Mayor)  
Jo Lamb (Deputy Mayor)  
Linda Addis  
John Bleakley  
Ann Grant  
Sharone Parnes  
Matthew Parkinson  
Ulli Parkinson  
Nick Manby-Brown  
James Spencer-Churchill  
Linda Addis

**In Attendance:** Karen Crowhurst – Locum Clerk  
West Oxfordshire District Cllr. Cooper

6 members of the public

**ETC 01/10/22 Apologies for Absence**

To receive and consider for acceptance apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr K Bailey, County Cllr Andrew Graham and District Cllr Julian Cooper. Cllr S Parnes gave apologies for arriving at 18.34pm

**ETC 02/10/22 Minutes of last meeting**

To consider for approval, the minutes of the Town Council meetings held on Tuesday 14th June, Friday 22nd July, 9th August 2022 and the Extraordinary Meeting 16th August 2022 – numerical orders, add ETC for extraordinary meetings  
Minutes were approved 14th Aug, note the numerical orders.

Members had already approved the minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at a previous meeting. It was **resolved** with the above suggestions to accept all other minutes as a true and accurate record of those meetings.

**ETC 03/10/22 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

Interests were received from Cllr E Poskitt and Cllr M Parkinson, in relation to 13.5 on the agenda.

**ETC 04/10/22 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 no questions or offered any comments.

**ETC 05/10/22 County Councillor's Report**

To receive the monthly Parish report from Oxfordshire County Cllr Graham

No report was received.

**ETC 06/10/22 District Councillor's Report** to receive the monthly report from West Oxfordshire District Cllrs Poskitt & Cooper (previously circulated)

Members noted the report.

**ETC 07/10/22 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.'*

After considering the advice received from the Clerk and the National Association of Local Councils Solicitor the meeting moved to a recorded vote The outcome was:

For 9 Against 0 Abstained 2

It was **resolved** to accept and implement the amendment to the standing orders.

**ETC 08/10/22 Civility and Respect Pledge**

To pass a resolution to sign up to the civility and respect pledge

To agree to sign up to the Civility and Respect pledge, national campaign. *The National Association of Local Councils is supporting the national project to put civility and respect at the top of the agenda and start a culture change for the local council sector. Signing up to the pledge demonstrates the council is committed to standing up to poor behaviour across the sector and driving through positive changes that support civil and respectful conduct. This is the result of growing concerns about the impact of bullying, harassment and intimidation on local councils, councillors, clerks and council staff and the effectiveness of local councils - Documents previously circulated.*

**Pledge**

**Our Council –**

1. Has agreed it will treat all councillors, clerk and all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.
2. Has committed to training councillors and staff.

3. Has signed up to the Code of Conduct for councillors.
4. Has good governance arrangements in place including, staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy\*.
5. Will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.
6. Will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens.
7. Will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model / champion council e.g. via the Local Council Award Scheme.
8. Will support the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate

Cllr Parnes commented on number 8 in the pledge as sanctions and changes in legislation is questionable.

Cllr Parnes placed a motion to defer this item which was seconded by Cllr Grant, a vote was taken by a show of hands with the majority not wishing to defer this item. After a further vote it was not for Woodstock Town Council to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge.

Due to the Council adopting the previous Code of Conduct in April, the Clerk advised that as 6 months had not past since the council adopted the previous Code of Conduct the rule within Standing orders state a special resolution would be needed,. This had to be signed by 8 Councillors.

The Clerk advised that If Council would like to adopt the new Code that a Council Member would need to propose a motion in writing and to collect signatures on the motion which could then be placed on the next agenda . No Councillor came forward at the meeting.

#### **09/10/22 Policies for adoption** (previously circulated)

I Woodstock Town Council – Equalities Policy

II. Woodstock Town Council Members and Officers Protocol Policy

After receiving a request to change the wording from Chairman to Chair a vote was taken by a show of hands. 8 Members were in favour of adopting the Equalities Policy and 2 Members abstained. Therefore, it was **resolved** to adopt the Town Council Equalities Policy and include a reference to the Internationally recognised IHRA Definition of Antisemitism Policy.

It was **resolved** to adopt Woodstock Town Council Members and Officers Protocol Policy. 9 Members were in favour. 2 Members abstained.

#### **10/10/22 Appointment of Membership to the Finance and Assets Committee – 5 Members**

After some discussion and noting the advice received from the Manager of Democratic Services regarding the lawfulness of the resolution at the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022 the following Members were appointed to the Committee:

Cllr Bleakley  
Cllr Manby-Brown  
Cllr Lamb  
Cllr Poskitt

The meeting moved to a vote by show of hands. 6 Members were for the appointment. 5 Members abstained from voting. Therefore, the resolution was carried.

It was **resolved** to accept the appointment of the above members.

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

It was agreed to remove this item until a later stage if needed.

### **11/10/22 Audit Matters**

- a) To decide whether to continue with a sector led External Auditor or opt out

After a vote was carried out and the outcome was unanimous, it was **resolved** that Woodstock Town Council will continue with a sector led External Auditor.

- b) To note that the existing Internal Auditor is no longer providing an audit service and to request the Clerk to source 3 quotations for a new auditor

Members noted that the current Internal Auditor has ceased with audit provision. It was agreed for the Clerk to obtain 3 quotations.

### **12/10/22 RFO Reports**

- a) To note the Cost Centre report of budget against actual income and expenditure at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022

It was agreed to defer the report to November meeting to allow for concerns to be Investigated.

- b) To approve the schedule of payments from 30th June – 31st August 2022 i  
It was agreed to defer this item to the November meeting - unanimous vote.

- c) To approve the bank reconciliations presented

It was agreed to defer this item.

- d) To add the RFO to Unity Trust Bank account in order for payments to be raised 3,

Members were advised that this is in progress.

### **13/10/22 Motions**

#### **To consider written motions raised by Council Members**

#### **a) Bladon Parish Council Response to Planning App 22-01715-OUT Land East of Park View Motion - proposed by Cllr Sharone Parnes and seconded by Cllr Grant.**

The Council **resolves** that:

1. *Woodstock Town Council notes and fervently endorses the contents of Bladon Parish Council's response (dated 08/08/2022) to Planning Application 22/01715/OUT Land South of Perdiswell Farm / Land East of Park View;*
2. *The Town Council appreciates, agrees with, and fully supports the content associated with Bladon Parish Council's 22 mentions of Woodstock, in their submission; and*

**3. The Town Council will cite the entirety of this Resolution in/as a supplementary submission (late representation) to the Cherwell District Council Planning Authority, attaching the Bladon Parish Council document, and explicitly requests Planning Officers take note of Woodstock Town Council's support and endorsement of it.**

### **Background**

The Bladon Parish Council document is available from the Planning section of Cherwell District Council's website, <https://planningregister.cherwell.gov.uk>

Cllr Bleakley seconded the motion 9 Members were in favour of the motion, there were 2 abstentions. Therefore, the motion was carried.

#### **b) Motion proposed by Cllr Grant seconded by Cllr Spencer-Churchill**

*Due to the error according to Standing Orders 7 changing within 6 months of the original agreement minute 14/06/2022 of agreeing to forming a Finance Committee, the Council agrees to rectify this error under Standing Order 4xii The Council may dissolve a Committee and Sub Committee at anytime and the agreed committee shall be dissolved from immediate effect and reconsidered as per the original decision item deferred until a permanent Clerk appointed. – Paper to Council previously circulated.*

This Motion was covered earlier on in the proceedings.

#### **c) Motion proposed by Cllr Manson seconded by Cllr Manby-Brown**

*To authorise to spend (within budget) of approximately £2000 to cut the grass of Meadows 5 and 6. Only one quote has been submitted due to reluctance of other companies to take on the project.*

An amendment to the motion was received from Cllr Manby-Brown to increase the amount from £2,000 to £2,680.00 excluding Vat which was seconded by A grant. All Members were In favour of amended motion.

It was **resolved** to appoint Bawden Arboriculture, Ecology & Woodland Management to carry out the work required in Meadows 5 and 6 at the cost of £2680.00 excluding VAT

#### **d) Motion proposed by Cllr Grant seconded by Councillor Parnes**

WTC agrees that:

- a) The clerk undertakes to consult utility providers and tenants to understand where cost controls can be implemented, including but not limited to the exploration of technology, such as smart meter and controls.*
- b) To report back findings and recommendations with any financial costs to the council at the meeting of Tuesday 11th October 2022 for implementation prior to winter 2022/23*

The Clerk requested for delegated authority be granted to a Member of the Council to assist the Clerk with this matter due to time constraints. Members agreed to delegate authority to Cllr Ann Grant to work alongside the Clerk regarding this matter. The deadline was also changed until the meeting in November.

#### **e) Motion proposed by Cllr Parnes**

The Council resolves

*to note and record its position that: Woodstock Town Council is concerned by the failure of Oxfordshire's Liberal-led district councils to continue working on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Councils like Cherwell District Council (CDC) have to restart working on their Local Plans,*

*opening them up to planning by appeal. This now heightens the prospect of the Blenheim application for major development on land south of Perdiswell Farm being passed on appeal 4 with loss of infrastructure funding on top of the £30 million of Government infrastructure funding already lost by OCC this year.*

Cllr Grant seconded the motion. However, the motion was rejected after a vote by a show of hands.

**14/10/22 To note the meeting notes of the Environment Committee held on 29th June (previously circulated) and agree recommendations arising from the notes.**

The recommendations arising from the meeting for Town Council approval are:

- 1) Residents to be written to regarding the boundary of the Watermeadows on an annual basis.
- 2) To add additional work to the grass cutting contract to enable more regular work be carried out at the Water meadows.
- 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.
- 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.
- 5) To consider the proposal of appointing a specialist or company to oversee the implantation of the Management Plan at the Water Meadows.
- 6) To consider high risks and associated costs to minimise risks identified, arising from the ROSPA report for the Water Meadows – (*Documents previously circulated*)
- 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 £300. The Environment Working Group will get quotes to make good other areas deemed to be Moderate Risk.
- 8) Burials Officer clarification
- 9) Cemetery fees – to consider any new charges presented.
- 10) Appointment of Mr Maurice Parkinson to the Environment Working Group.
- 11) To consider undertaking a new tree survey and any associated costs

Above items should not have been included and have previously been agreed upon

**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 contractual privilege.**

Cllr M Parkinson proposed the exclusion of the press and public. This was seconded by Cllr Grant.

**15/10/22** To consider the quotations for decorating the exterior and interior of the town hall  
(previously circulated)

After considering the quotations presented by best value for money it was **resolved** to accept the quotation for the amount of £15,475.00 as presented by Breckon and Breckon, for the Exterior of the Town Hall and Interior Painting of the Administration Office and the hall and stairway .

Although not on the agenda but contained within a property report, Council **resolved** to accept option 1 for the service agreement of a fair proportion of the rising utility bills to be assessed and applied to each unit at the Community Centre.

**16/10/22** Close the meeting

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.16pm