

**ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE TOWN MEETING FOR CARTERTON
HELD ON TUESDAY 8 MAY 2018
AT ST JOHN'S CHURCH AT 7.00 PM**

Present: Cllr Mrs L Little - Town Mayor
Town Councillors

Officers: Ron Spurs - Town Clerk
Tan Marchant - Assistant Clerk
Teresa Whitford - Admin Officer
Katie Zasada - Admin Officer

In Attendance: Insp Steve Hookham - Thames Valley Police
Cllr N Field-Johnson - OCC Councillor

Members of the public

1 MAYOR'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The Mayor welcomed Councillors and members of the public to the meeting. She read her review of the year from the Annual Report, as follows:

“As I come to the end of this mayoral year, I would like to take the opportunity to reflect on the last five years. As Mayor I have been able to achieve many positive things, with the help of many members of the public, local businesses and the military at RAF Brize Norton who all continue to strive to make Carterton a better place to live.

It has been particularly rewarding to have been given the chance to raise much needed funds for Carterton charities as well as for our key military ones that achieve so much by way of support for our local veterans – SSAFA, RAFA and RAFBF to name but a few.

I was thrilled that the Council was able to grant the Freedom of the Town to RAF Brize Norton in 2016. It was such a memorable day for both the town and the military, and it was such an honour to have the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire and Group Captain Simon Edwards at the ceremony. The flypast of the C17 was truly magnificent as were all the military personnel who took part in the parade – not forgetting the RAF Military Band.

I will continue my role as a family liaison officer and help as always at any repatriations that we may unfortunately have to deal with. I still support many of the families that I have met over several years with the help of SSAFA and in my role as Divisional Secretary.

I feel honoured to have received tremendous support from our former Prime Minister David Cameron during my time as Mayor. He opened the new Market Square in 2014, he has turned on our Christmas Lights, and one year he took the time to present cheques to the Mayor's Chosen Charities. He has also supported the town's Masterplan which is still ongoing (as we await the deliberations of the inspector regarding the Local Plan).

My thanks go to all the wonderful people who have donated food to the Carterton Community Food Bank and thank you to the volunteers who keep it running. Special thanks go to Shilton Church, Westwell Church and St Joseph's. The Food Bank has relocated to the Allandale along with the Family Centre of which I am now a trustee. After the alterations that are badly needed inside the premises I would hope to be running at full capacity by June with the help of the volunteers.

I am very glad to have instigated Carterton Lunch Club with Blesson Kallimel from Carterton's Victory Christian Fellowship church. The club – which the Victory Christian Fellowship and I fund – takes place on the last Thursday of every month (12-2pm at the Town Hall) and is free to all Carterton's senior citizens. My thanks go to Crawford's who provide fruit for each session, Blesson and his team who work so hard to prepare the food, and to all the residents who attend.

It has been a privilege to be Mayor and I wish the very best for whoever takes up the role in the ensuing mayoral year. One memory that I will never forget is meeting the Queen at Buckingham Palace – it was a huge honour.

I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to the members of the public who have inundated me with letters of thanks and good wishes, especially after such a challenging few months. Thank you to each and every one of you who have consistently helped me over the last five years to achieve so much. You have been absolutely magnificent.”

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

The Minutes of the Annual Assembly held on 9 May 2017 had been circulated, were confirmed as a true record, and signed by the Mayor.

3 POLICING IN CARTERTON – INSPECTOR STEVE HOOKHAM

Inspector Hookham gave an update on policing services in the town. He said his team covered a large area, including Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton, Kidlington, Eynsham and Woodstock. There are two Neighbourhood Policing Hubs, one based in Kidlington covering Kidlington, Woodstock and Eynsham, and one in Witney covering Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton.

He said there was some concern in the community about the lack of police presence at the Police Station and explained that this was part of a reorganisation, with the police officers being stationed at the hub in Witney. A team consisting of a Sergeant and four Officers are currently based in Carterton for a period of around three months looking at local issues and the night-time economy.

There had been a slight rise in violence against the person. The night-time economy was being looked at jointly with Witney and are working closely with the RAF Police as well. At this time of year there is usually an increase in antisocial behaviour, particularly littering.

Work continues with local schools, focussing on awareness of child exploitation and drugs. Neighbourhood Watch teams are expanding in the area and are looking to have one co-ordinator for Carterton. Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAG) continue to meet but will eventually be replaced by Neighbourhood Resilience Groups, and these work well with the Neighbourhood Watch schemes at highlighting local issues.

Carterton remained a low crime area. Around a quarter of police workload during the last year was connected with domestic incidents, the majority of which were non-crimes. They continued to carry out speed checks and follow up offenders. PCSOs would continue to make regular visits to schools, speaking at assemblies and giving internet safety advice etc. They also visit the ICE Centre and the Day Centre regularly.

Residents raised issues of caravan theft, cars being scratched, gangs working in the area stealing tools from vans. Insp Hookham suggested that property should be marked to make it easier to identify. He encouraged people to get involved with the Neighbourhood Watch schemes.

Insp Hookham said there are three PCSOs in Carterton. Cllr Bull said that PCSO Richard Conner had been a massive support to the ICE Centre, who work with young disabled people

During the year they have been working in conjunction with the Fire Service to carry out Safe & Well Checks, which involved fitting smoke alarms and giving advice. It has been so successful in Carterton that it is being rolled out to a wider area. The Fire Service had also been giving Crime Prevention advice to householders. The Carterton Police team had been working with the RAF Police, attending fetes and sharing information.

PCSOs are now able to use mobile phones for vehicle checks etc, which has meant they do not have to keep returning to the Police Station to do these. He encouraged residents to look at the TVP website and Twitter. He also supplied cards giving details of how to sign up for alerts, very much like Neighbourhood Watch, to receive details of problems in the local area.

Cllr McBride asked if there were any figures on how many crimes involved fraud and PCSO Conner said that this was not a particular problem in Carterton, although there had been some cyber-crime. Cllr Howard asked about the recent fire at the empty petrol station on Upavon Way and whether the two youngsters involved would be prosecuted. PCSO Conner said that this was part of an ongoing investigation and he was unable to give details at this time.

The Mayor thanked Insp Hookham for his report.

4 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Cllr Field-Johnson thanked the Mayor for her five years of service to the town.

He spoke about the County Council budget that remained far short of what is needed for social care and roads and agrees with residents about the awful state of the county's roads. He expressed his thanks to Cllr Henry Howard, who was not present today, for all his hard work and looks forward to working with the newly elected Councillors.

There are a number of issues that the County Council are working on at the moment. The County has approved a £250 million infrastructure budget, which will be used in particular to improve the A40 and the A34. Further funding has also been granted to bring more new homes into the Witney and Carterton area. Cllr Handley and himself have been working on a new junction onto the A40 and hopes this would be approved in the next few years.

A new Dragon machine has been purchased and around 3,000 potholes are being filled every month. The cost of this has to be balanced against the cost of social care.

He has been involved with his colleague in Witney to deal with the issue of travellers who were camped in a field. They cause damage and leave litter and it can take a couple of weeks to legally move them on and this needs to be tightened up.

His priority over the next few years will be improvements to the road network in and around Carterton.

A resident asked about approved facilities for travellers and Cllr Field-Johnson said that the County does have to provide facilities, but it has to be born in mind that the more facilities are provided the more travellers will come, so there has to be a balance.

A resident asked about fly tipping and Cllr Field-Johnson said he is conscious that there has been an increase. He has tabled a motion to reduce fees at County Waste sites to encourage people to dispose of their waste properly.

The Mayor thanked Cllr Field-Johnson for his report.

5 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

District Councillors had supplied reports on the activities of West Oxfordshire District Council in the last year, copies of which are appended to these minutes.

6 GENERAL QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

A resident asked about access to the Football Club since the development of the new Swinbrook Park estate. The Town Clerk said the Council was aware that the current signage is not up to standard and we are working to get this rectified.

Reverend Blakey said he was concerned at the shortage of space at the Cemetery in Black Bourton and asked if any progress had been made to provide a new facility. The Town Clerk said that the Council is investing money to ensure the existing Cemetery is up to standard. Landowners adjacent to the existing Cemetery have been contacted and have recently met with the head of Planning Services for West Oxfordshire, but the problem is finding a suitable location that meets the requirements.

A resident said that the Precept for Carterton was £5 higher than that for West Oxfordshire District Council and wondered how this was justified. The Town Clerk said that the Council had voted not to increase the Council Tax this year, but he would look into this and respond to her in due course.

Town Mayor

Report from Cllr Henry Howard WODC Cllr for Carterton North East (2018)

For Carterton Town Council Annual Meeting 2018

This past year my work as one of two District Councillors for Carterton North East Ward has continued with me supporting and promoting the needs and aspirations of the citizens of North East Carterton. Although I am primarily representing North East Carterton, as a District Councillor, the needs of all citizens of Carterton and West Oxfordshire need to be borne in mind. I am a member of four District Committees namely: Planning, Environment, Financial Management and Audit & General Purposes. Apart from my committee work I provide a wide range of assistance to residents on individual problems that require input from WODC. Most of the time, but not exclusively, these are housing issues. I am also the district's "Armed Forces Champion" and provide help and assistance to all serving and ex armed forces personnel within the District and particularly here in Carterton.

Planning: Cllr Mrs Crossland, as Chairman of this committee, will cover this subject as part of her report to you.

Environment: It has been an extremely busy year for the Environment Committee. We continue to have major issues with sewerage particularly around Brize Norton and the lower level areas around the District. At present we have a particular issue in Lipscombe Place and the potential for increased sewage issues if development to the North and West of Swinbrook Road go ahead without major network improvements by Thames Water. On behalf of the committee I am working closely with Cllr Mrs Crossland, Thames Water, our District Engineer, and Head of Planning to try and find a solution to these issues. The committee is also carrying out two studies to see how we can improve parking facilities throughout the District whilst retaining free parking and also a feasibility study into the cost and provision of Electric Vehicle charging points. These studies include Carterton.

Financial Management: This committee's prime responsibility is to oversee the work of district officers to ensure all income/expenditure is properly managed and also to assist with the preparation of the council's budget, providing advice on priorities, and the setting of Council Tax.

Despite continuing financial pressures, the committee and council officers are working hard to protect our services without the need to significantly increase Council Tax, and I pleased to be able to report that the rise in the District portion of Council Tax for the year 2018/19, is just £2.75 for a band 'D' property, (adjusted pro rata for other Bands).

We also set Investment Strategy and oversee results to ensure that under-performing investments are identified and replaced at the earliest opportunity. Specifically for Carterton, monies are allocated and added regularly to the pot for providing the second phase of our Leisure Centre. I am very pleased to report that this project is now well underway, the first stage of Planning complete, planning

approval given and hopefully the 2nd Phase will be up and running for public use by Christmas 2019.

Audit & General Purposes: This committee examines the internal audit and results of every department within the District Council. The aim is to ensure that rules and procedures are adhered to, are up to date and improved where necessary. “Full Accountability” is our watchword. I am very pleased to report that yet again the government’s selected outside auditor (Grant Thornton) has given us a “clean bill of health”. As to General Purposes, we oversee the Licensing Sub Committee and provide oversight of all council work not covered by the other specialist committees.

I, in co-operation with my fellow Carterton District Councillors, continue to work hard to promote Carterton and provide the best service we can, and ensure that the needs and aspirations of Carterton are recognized in all aspects of District Council work.

This work is both exciting and rewarding and I hope will benefit the whole town. It is a task that I shall continue to carry out as well as I am able, now and into the future.

Cllr Henry Howard
WODC
Carterton North East Ward

14 March 2018

REPORT OF WODC CLLR MAXINE CROSSLAND CARTERTON NORTH WEST WARD

The main thrust of my work this year has been **planning**. As Chair of Lowlands and Ex Officio member of Uplands Planning Committees I have been at the heart of planning across the district. I even featured on a recent BBC2 programme, The New Builds Are Coming, although I did not know I was being filmed at the time!

One of our main problems is in proving to the satisfaction of government inspectors that we have made adequate provision for **sufficient land supply** to meet the number of homes required across the District for the **next 5 years**, and additionally to have identified further sites which can be developed up to 2031.

Our earlier projections showing a need for approx, 5 000 new homes across the District was rejected by HM Inspectors and after reviewing additional data it seems likely that we shall have to increase that number to around 15-16 000. We should hear the Inspector's verdict within the next few weeks. His word is law!

This pressure from above for extra housing, although justified in terms of human need, has caused great dismay across the District as developers push to put in more and more houses in places that locals wish to preserve as open countryside. We planners have to find the best compromises we can. Examples of this dilemma faced us recently with applications for development along Upavon Way and North Carterton.

When deciding whether to approve or refuse applications, planners are required to decide whether such development will do more good than harm to the locality. If the site is in open countryside, in areas of special interest or beauty, or in a conservation area, a refusal to build is more likely. In built up areas we have to consider whether the plans are over intensive, too intrusive or have significant disadvantages such as flooding risks, highway objections or are too far from facilities to be sustainable. We do our best to be fair to everybody within the framework of government guidelines that we must obey.

I have fought hard to protect Carterton from applications which were not up to standard or should make more financial contributions than they were originally offering and have had some success with developers who listened to advice and resubmitted applications along the lines suggested by local members.

I was pleased to see the **traffic calming drop down bollards** recently installed along Swinbrook Road, thus restoring this road to relative peace and quiet, with traffic for the football club and Shilton Park now redirected along Shilton Road onto Elmhurst Way.

After years of campaigning and saving the s106 contributions from local developers, our much-needed Leisure Centre is about to get its long awaited

extension. Phase 2 will cost around £7.5 million, incorporate a range of exciting new facilities including a state-of-the-art, multipurpose hall offering, amongst other things, individual trampolining pens. All being well this should open in autumn next year.

Following a hard campaign WODC has prioritised the needs of our town and created a **Carterton Improvement Committee**, whose members include the Leader, Cabinet members, Strategic Directors, officers of the council and local members. Through this committee my push to see the land along Upavon Way redeveloped continues apace. Work has finally begun on 153 replacement homes for the private market at Reema Central. To help get the replacement married quarters started, the District has offered to share the cost of redeveloping Reema North, but to date there has been no response from the military. The Osprey site is now in the ownership of a housing association, and I keep lobbying my contact on their board to commence work.

Problems with infrastructure have also occupied a significant amount of my time. Working in close co-operation with Cllr Howard, we have put sustained pressure on **Thames Water** to deal with the flooding /drainage /sewage overflow problems along Swinbrook Road and its offshoots. Thames Water has finally conceded that the entire system needs upgrading, and work is progressing to replace all the pipework, albeit in a somewhat piecemeal fashion. However, Cllr Howard and I are monitoring the situation, and contact the WODC Engineering Officer as and when necessary.

I led the campaign to **save Lloyds bank from closing**, but despite a petition with over 800 signatures and a meeting between Lloyd's Area Management, our MP and myself, they refused to change their minds.

I am hopeful that a very new national initiative, **the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal**, to which we have signed up, will provide tangible benefits for Carterton. This will provide £215 million of additional government funding for Oxfordshire, along with a package of planning freedoms and flexibilities for the Oxfordshire authorities. It could even unlock the door to an upgraded A40. As part of the local Development Control Team I look forward to representing Carterton's needs in future discussions.

I am proud to say that West Oxfordshire maintains its position as one of the **lowest charging council tax authorities in the country**. This year's rise will be £2.75 pa per household – i.e. about 5p a week.

Apart from planning, much of my other work is confidential, helping individual residents with problems and supporting our service families in a variety of ways by invoking our commitment to the Military Covenant when applicable.

Maxine Crossland

9 April 2018

**Report of Cllr Norman MacRae MBE JP
Carterton Annual Town Meeting 2018**

This, as some of you will know sees me complete my fourth and final year as Chairman of West Oxfordshire District Council. As I said last year, *“It is, and has been a tremendous privilege to hold this office, which takes me to every corner of the District, and beyond, as I attend numerous diverse events. What I find particularly noteworthy is the massive amount of volunteer support within our community where many, many people help make our society and District the wonderful place it is to live and work in! I particularly want to pay tribute to the Lions Clubs, Round tables and Rotary Clubs in West Oxfordshire in supporting my Road Safety poster competition in our Primary Schools and other charitable events that I have held.”* Those comments made at this time last year remaining in force, most strongly in force and, once more I would like to give my thanks to all who have supported me both this past year and over the past four years.

Again, as last year, I remain as Chairman of our Licensing Committees. These committees are dedicated and determined to ensure the highest standards are kept by those licensed by us. Probably the closest most members of the public come into contact with a license holder is when they use a taxi. I would like to ensure all that we strive for the highest standards and will not hesitate to take action against any licence holder not adhering to our requirements. I am sure many of you will have seen in the press where we have acted in the public (your) interest.

My role as the Chairman of Standards Committee remains extant. We have, again, not had to sit this year. Several anonymous letters have been sent to both myself and our Monitoring Officer. Quite simply, and hopefully obviously, we do not act on anonymous letters. I will not dwell further on this matter or, clearly, not on the issues raised in the anonymous letters.

As in the opening paragraph to this report, I quoted directly from my report of May 2017. I will do so again in the penultimate paragraph of that report here. *“Away from my duties mentioned above, I work in the same manner as my fellow Councillors to try and ensure West Oxfordshire remains a safe and pleasant place in which to live and work. As I said in my report last year [2016] I am acutely aware that a significant number of the people I represent spend long hours from home. If my help is needed by a constituent. The easiest way to contact me will be by email to norman.macrae@westoxon.gov.uk or 07747 440670.*

My final words are to Cllr Henry Howard who ceases to be a Councillor today, 8 May. Henry has been a driving force towards ensuring the progress of Phase II of the leisure centre. I am

very pleased to be able to say that in the summer, work should commence on this long awaited and much needed facility. Well done and thank you Henry.

Norman MacRae
Chairman
West Oxfordshire District Council
Carterton North East Ward
May 2018