

**ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE TOWN MEETING FOR CARTERTON  
HELD ON TUESDAY 9 MAY 2017  
AT ST JOHN'S CHURCH**

Present:	Cllr Mrs L Little -	Town Mayor
	Cllr N Leverton -	Deputy Mayor
	Cllr R Brooks	Cllr Mrs M Mead
	Cllr Mrs D Bulley	Cllr D Melvin
	Cllr Miss S Coul	Cllr P Scott
	Cllr Mrs C Delaney	Cllr Mrs S Scott-Stovold
	Cllr J Hayes	Cllr Mrs C Wilson
	Cllr M McBride	
Apologies:	Cllr M Brennan	
	Cllr R Crapper	
Officers:	Ron Spurs -	Town Clerk
	Tan Marchant -	Assistant Clerk
	Stella Catt -	Admin Officer
	Teresa Whitford	Admin Officer
	Scott Edwards	Admin Officer
	Alex Fleming	Town Warden
In Attendance:	PCSO Richard Connor -	Thames Valley Police
	Cllr Mrs M Crossland -	WODC Councillor
	Cllr N Field-Johnson -	OCC Councillor
	Cllr P Handley -	OCC & WODC Councillor
	Cllr H Howard -	WODC Councillor

16 members of the public

*The Mayor welcomed Councillors and members of the public to the meeting.*

1 MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

The Minutes of the Annual Assembly held on 9 May 2016 had been circulated, were confirmed as a true record, and signed by the Mayor.

2 MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

3 POLICING IN CARTERTON – PCSO RICHARD CONNER

PCSO Conner gave an update on policing services in the town. He said that from 1 June 2017 Thames Valley Police would be changing their operating model and that the current Police Officers would be moved to Witney, with Carterton being served by three PCSOs, who would continue to be based at the Carterton Police Station until the new Fire Station is built in 2018. He said Carterton Police Station was now closed to the public.

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.

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 PCSO Conner for his report.

### 3 MAYOR'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The Mayor thanked all the residents and children who had contacted her in support of the projects in which she had been involved. Many changes have taken place, not least the closure of the Children's Centre due to funding cuts. With the help of various organisations, a new model has been established and the Carterton Family Centre opened on 27 March, working from the Town Hall and several other venues, and the Mayor thanked everyone involved in keeping this vital service running.

The Bus 64 Service to Swindon was withdrawn in July 2016 and this affected a lot of residents. The Mayor said she had taken on this project to try to find a solution and had consulted with Robert Courts, MP for West Oxfordshire. There would be a public meeting in June.

HSBC Bank closed its Carterton branch on 5 May 2017. There is a proposal to close the Lloyds Bank branch in September 2017 and District Councillors have set up a petition, which Cllr Mrs Crossland has sent to the Lloyds head office.

The Mayor said that we continue to work closely with RAF Brize Norton and watch their expansion plans with interest.

The Mayor thanked numerous volunteers, and Morrisons and Asda stores, for their donations to the Food Bank. She also expressed her thanks to the County Councillors, Peter Handley and Neil Owen.

She said work continues with the second phase of the Masterplan for Carterton, to regenerate the town centre and beyond. New hanging baskets and planters had been installed. Work had started on the refurbishment of the Skate Park, with completion expected at the end of May. Housing and infrastructure was very much needed. Carterton had been reported to be the fifth best town to buy an affordable home.

Cllr Mrs Little said that it had been a tremendous honour to have been Mayor of Carterton.

#### 4 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Cllr Handley presented his report. He thanked the residents of the town for re-electing him and his colleague, Nicholas Field-Johnson, in the recent Oxfordshire County Council elections.

Despite Government cuts, the County Council was continuing to keep services running in some way, including funding for the Day Centre until next March, continuing support for the new Family Centre and pushing for a four-way junction at Minster Lovell. The new Fire Station was expected to open in 2018 and recruitment has begun for this. The new Station would include a house for training firefighters, rather than the towers that are currently used. The Ambulance and Police services would also use the new Station.

Carterton Community College and Gateway Primary School were currently experiencing some funding difficulties, with their budgets cut by £24K this year. This has come about partly because Burford School have taken on 270 pupils, which is 70 more than their target, and this had led to reduced pupil numbers in Carterton. On the plus side, there are more Sixth Form places at the Community College.

The expansion of RAF Brize Norton could lead to increased traffic on the roads. This could be eased by the proposed new four-way junction and a possible new entrance at the Alvescot side of the base.

A working party had been set up to look at resolving public transport issues and around 90% of villages and towns who had lost bus services had managed to organise some kind of replacement service, though he appreciated that this is not always straightforward.

Cllr Handley said he will continue to hold monthly surgeries for residents to discuss local issues.

Cllr Howard said that Carterton had recently lost the S7 Bus Service to the hospitals, which now only ran from Witney, and Stagecoach said they would need a subsidy to reinstate the service to Carterton. Could the County Council provide this subsidy? Cllr Handley said that major housing development is vital for the future growth of the town and this would provide S106 money that could be used for such things as reinstating the S7 bus service.

Ms Bull from the ICE Centre said that over 200 families use the Learning Disability service in this area and she was saddened that Cllr Handley had not mentioned the cuts to these services in Carterton. Cllr Handley was unaware of any particular cuts to the service and asked that Ms Bull speak to him after the meeting to discuss it further.

Cllr Nicholas Field-Johnson introduced himself as the newly elected County Councillor for Burford and North Carterton and said he looked forward to working for the town. The Report of the outgoing County Councillor, Neil Owen, is appended to these minutes.

#### 5 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

District Councillors Mick Brennan, Mrs Maxine Crossland, Henry Howard, Mrs Lynn Little and Norman MacRae MBE had supplied reports on the activities of West Oxfordshire District Council in the last year.

Copies of the reports are appended to these minutes.

## 6 MASTERPLAN AND LOCAL PLAN

The Mayor said that the first of two examination hearings for the West Oxfordshire Local Plan took place today. The Clerk had written to WODC expressing the Council's concerns about the growth of Carterton.

She said that the draft Local Plan substantially underestimated the economic needs and potential of RAF Brize Norton, and the Council believes that WODC has not identified 2,500 jobs in the Carterton area when carrying out their analysis. It appears to the Council that very little regard has been given by the District Council to the latent economic asset potential of RAF Brize Norton.

The Carterton Town Master Plan was produced in 2015, was approved by the Town Council who were supported by WYG Consultants, and is based on local consultation. The plan provides a joined up strategy for housing and employment growth, with environmental improvements (e.g. an extended Country Park) and a major regeneration initiative in the town centre (funded by new development). The major area for development identified in the plan is North Carterton.

Looking at other potential development areas within West Oxfordshire it is probable that development in Chipping Norton, Woodstock and Witney will be strongly resisted by local action groups. The Council has asked the Planning Inspector who is managing the Local Plan process to direct growth to Carterton. This will not be an unpopular strategy within West Oxfordshire.

Carterton Town Council feels that the Local Plan is the opportunity to address the pressing needs of Carterton's long term future.

In summary, most of West Oxfordshire is against growth, Carterton welcomes it.

## 7 SKATE PARK

The Town Clerk provided an update on the refurbishment of the Skate Park in Upavon Way. The Park is extremely well used by youngsters from Carterton and the surrounding villages, but it is no longer possible to maintain the equipment to safety standards.

The Council therefore decided to have a new Skate Park built. Several public consultations were held with users of the Park to determine the type of equipment they would like to see, a design was put together and the Council invited tenders for a new concrete Skate Park for Carterton. Concrete was chosen as it would last up to 30 years, as opposed to the wood and steel structures that need more frequent replacement. The cost was £100,000 and this had been partially offset by grant funding received. Work had now commenced and was expected to be completed at the end of May 2017.

## 8 GENERAL QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

Cllr Mrs Crossland asked why her report had not been included with the papers for this meeting. The Clerk apologised for this oversight and said that the report would be put on the Town Council website. She said that she is the Chairman of the WODC Planning Committee and completely supports the Town Council's vision for growth, but there are only six Carterton District Councillors on a Council of 49 people and in a democracy we are frequently out-voted by the small villages who club together to try to thwart some of our plans and desires. She said that residents are most welcome to speak to her about any concerns they have.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm.

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Town Mayor