

CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 16 OCTOBER 2012
AT 7.45 PM

Present:	Cllr A Coomber -	Town Mayor
	Cllr Mrs L Little -	Deputy Town Mayor
	Cllr Mrs D Bulley	Cllr Mrs C MacRae
	Cllr R Crapper	Cllr N MacRae MBE
	Cllr Mrs M Crossland	Cllr Mrs N Miah
	Cllr A Farmer	Cllr P Scott
	Cllr H Jobes	Cllr M Steward
	Cllr P Madden	

Apologies: Cllr Mrs L Walcott and Cllr W Walcott MBE

74 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 September 2012, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

75 MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk was asked to establish whether cheque 10156, which had not been presented, was still valid. It was confirmed that the Clerk would assist Cllr Mrs Little in running any training sessions for Councillors.

76 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No DPIs were declared. Cllr Scott declared an interest as Chairman of the Chamber of Trade, the NAG and in Planning Application 0034/2012. Cllr Madden and Cllr Steward declared an interest as Trustees of Brownes Hall. Cllr Farmer declared an interest in Carterton Football Club. Cllr Mrs Little declared an interest as a Governor of Edith Moorhouse and in the Community College. Cllr MacRae declared an interest as a Governor of St Joseph's and Gateway Schools. Cllr Mrs MacRae declared an interest as an allotment holder, a Governor of St John's School and a member of St John's Church PCC.

77 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor had attended an awards evening at Carterton Community College, the Tops In Blue Concert at RAF Fairford, Civic Services in Didcot, Thame, Woodstock and Witney, and the Witney Town Mayor's Charity Dinner. He had attended the Remembrance Observance meeting with Cllr Mrs Bulley, the new SWO and several others, and the first meeting of the Events Committee. He was due to be at the St Frideswide Civic Service that afternoon but tendered his apologies because of the Council meeting. The Mayoress had attended Carterton WI's 90th Birthday.

78 ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC TO RAISE MATTERS

WODC Cllr Howard referred to pressures on the WODC budget and an expected reduction in grant aid. He said that the District Council would be consulting on the LDF towards the end of November. He passed on Cllr Handley's apologies and reported on Cllr Handley's efforts to change the catchment area for Carterton Community College. Cllr Mrs Crossland confirmed that any new development within the town would be part of the College's catchment area.

79 ADJOURNMENT FOR COUNTY COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

Apologies were received from Cllrs Couchman and Handley.

80 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk's Report, copies of which had previously been circulated, was received. The decisions taken on the Report are recorded at Annex 'A'. See below.

81 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 18 September and 2 October. These were noted.

82 RECREATION COMMITTEE

The Council received the Minutes of the Recreation Committee meeting held on 2 October.

There was some discussion about the need for an Events Committee and whether this was replicating work carried out by the Recreation Committee. It was noted that the Christmas Lights Switch-On was the next event and that Councillor involvement was needed in this to ensure its smooth running. There was no agreement on the need for a budget for the Events Committee.

Cllrs Farmer and Steward commented on the fact that Gordon Hill had made an excellent job of resurfacing the Brownes Hall car park.

RESOLVED that the recommendations set out in the Minutes of the Recreation Committee be approved with the exception that there be a budget for the Events Committee. It was agreed that this be reconsidered as part of the budget setting process.

83 REQUESTS FOR GRANT AID

The Committee received requests for three grants under s137 of the Local Government Act 1972

RESOLVED that the following awards be made:

Organisation	Purpose of grant	Power	Amount requested	Amount awarded
Prickly Tales Hedgehog Rescue	Incubator	s137	£499.95	£250
St John's Church	£6,000 shortfall in money for building work	s137	Any contribution	£4,000
Life Education Centres, Thames Valley	Subsidies cost of healthy choices educational programmes	s137	£300	£300

It was agreed that Kilkenny Cricket Club should be asked to resubmit their application for a Recreation Grant.

84 TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET

The Council received a paper from the Working Group set up to consider the budget for 2013/14.

The group had identified a need for some £70,000 additional expenditure in 2013/14. Of this about £35,000 would be one-off costs and the other £35,000 recurring costs. It had been assumed that building work and land purchase would be funded from reserves, s106, or grants. The requirement for an additional £70,000 might be reduced a little as a result of a carry over from the current year.

This additional spending would potentially increase the precept from £342,963 (per Band D dwelling: £66 pa/£1.26 pw) in the current year to £397,963 (£76 pa/£1.47 pw) in 2013/14. The working group had considered how this might best be funded and offered a number of options:

- To raise the precept by 15%
- To raise the precept by a smaller amount, say 5% and reduce expenditure on discretionary heads
- To raise the precept by 3%, with the remainder from the reserves
- Increase the precept by sufficient to cover the £35,000 recurring costs mentioned above (a 10% increase) and fund the one-off costs from the reserve and/or cuts in discretionary expenditure.

The Council discussed these options. It was noted that the precept had been held at the same level per dwelling for the last three years and that this had resulted in a decrease in real terms. It was also noted that the Council was having to take on additional work, as other public bodies were reducing their expenditure. Whilst recognising that some money could be taken from the reserve, the Council felt that it needed to retain a level of at least £400,000 to allow future land purchases for allotments, a burial ground and sports pitches. Council noted that the precept in Carterton is low in comparison to a number of other towns in West Oxfordshire and that an increase of 15% was equivalent to 21p per week for a Band D dwelling. The Council confirmed that it wanted to actively pursue improvements to the town centre to build on the arrival of Morrisons and also to improve recreational facilities in the town. It was therefore proposed that there should be an increase of 20% in the precept to help fund this programme of work

RESOLVED that the precept for 2013/14 should be £388,000.

85 RISK ASSESSMENT

The Council received a report on the measures in place to reduce risk. It was agreed that competitive tendering and the delegation limits set out in the Financial Regulations were additional controls.

The report was NOTED.

86 FINANCIAL CONTROLS

The Council received a report on the financial controls in place. It was noted that where work of a technical nature had been carried out, the work could be signed off by a Councillor rather than a member of staff.

The report was NOTED.

87 INTERNAL AUDIT

RESOLVED that Arrow Accounting be appointed as the Council's internal auditor for 2013/14.

88 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

The Council recognised that at some point, new lights would need to be purchased and it was agreed that a rough order of costs should be obtained so that a reserve could start to be established. In the short term, it was agreed that the Council's contractor should spend up to £500 on spares. Cllr Farmer said he would speak to Michael Lowe Opticians about using their power supply.

RESOLVED that up to £500 be spent on spares.

89 SKATEBOARD PARK

The Council received a report from ROSPA which had been commissioned following the unearthing of old equipment at The Dell and damage to the Skatepark equipment. The inspector had also looked at the BMX track. He had found three 'high risk' items, including ropes which had already been removed, a missing back board on the ramps and the old skate bowl which was being uncovered. He advised that the BMX track appeared unused and presented an unacceptably high level of risk.

RESOLVED that the work recommended by the inspector be put in hand at the Skatepark and that the Mayor consult the young people about the future of the BMX track. In the short term the Clerk was asked to take urgent action to reduce the risk levels.

90 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Financial Statement to 30 September set out at Annex 'B' was approved. A summary of Income and Expenditure by Budget Heading was also provided at Annex 'B'.

91 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Council RESOLVED that the Accounts set out at Annex 'C' be approved for payment.

92 COUNCIL INVESTMENTS

RESOLVED that the Council should invest in a 12 month bond with Santander and that Cllrs Jobs and Farmer should be signatories together with the Clerk.. Cllr Mrs Crossland asked that it be noted that she voted against this resolution.

The meeting ended at 9.40 pm.

20 November 2012

Town Mayor

1. **The Allandale Management Committee.** Cllr Miah has said she would like to serve on this Committee (Cllr Jobes having withdrawn). The Council is invited to confirm this appointment. **Council approved this appointment.**

2. **Litter Bins.** The Council asked that we clarify the position regarding the provision and emptying of new litter bins. It has been confirmed that in 2003 WODC introduced a new policy whereby Town and Parish Councils are required to both purchase the bins and pay WODC to empty them. The only exception to this is new developments where WODC purchase the new bins, but it still falls to the parish to pay for their emptying. We have an outstanding request for a bin by both of the bus stops on Monahan Way (right on the boundary of Carterton and Brize Norton parishes). WODC would buy the bins at £335.27 each and the Town Council would fund the emptying at £5.82 per visit. How would the Council like to proceed? **Agreed that WODC should provide 2 bins and that the Council would pay to have them emptied. The Clerk was asked to raise with WODC the problem of litter escaping from recycling bins.**

3. **Highways Surgeries will** replace the Traffic Advisory Committee which has now been wound up. The first surgery will be held on 14 November and is open to Town and Parish Councillors. OCC will be represented by Ian Clarke (the Area Steward) and Bert Pridgeon (who has responsibility for Carterton and the surrounding villages). Please note that the OCC reps will only be able to advise on problems that have been reported via the Highways Enquiries helpline and which have a reference number. **It was agreed that all Councillors would aim to report at least one problem within their ward prior to 14 November.**

4. **Forthcoming meetings and events:**

6 November	Planning and Admin
11 November	Remembrance Service
14 November	10am – 12noon. Highways Surgery Mayor's Parlour
20 November	Planning and Council
30 November	Christmas Lights
4 December	Planning and Council
11 December	Christmas Dinner