

**ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE TOWN MEETING FOR CARTERTON
HELD ON TUESDAY 13 MAY 2014 AT 7.00 PM
AT ST JOHN'S CHURCH**

Present: Cllr Mrs L Little - Town Mayor
 Cllr H Jobes - Deputy Town Mayor

 Cllr Mrs D Bulley Cllr P Madden
 Cllr M Brennan Cllr Mrs M Mead
 Cllr R Crapper Cllr Mrs N Miah
 Cllr A Farmer Cllr Mrs J Smith
 Cllr M McBride Cllr M Steward
 Cllr N MacRae MBE

 Cllr P Handley - County Councillor
 Cllr N Owen - County Councillor

Officers: Caroline Ramsey - Town Clerk
 Tan Marchant - Assistant Town Clerk
 Stella Catt - Admin Assistant
 Teresa Whitford - Admin Assistant
 Scott Edwards - Admin Assistant

7 members of the public.

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

1 MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

Copies of the Minutes of the Annual Assembly held on 20 May 2013 were circulated, confirmed as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor.

2 MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

3 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Cllr Owen said he was attending his first Carterton Parish meeting and he commented on the wonderful church setting. He gave a brief financial overview of the County Council, saying that it receives less and less each year from Central Government. Although the economy is supposed to be improving, there are still a great deal of cuts to be made. He said one of the biggest issues of the year was the Home to School Transport issue: Oxfordshire County Council has now approved plans to change the criteria for free home-to-school transport as part of the ongoing need to make significant savings across its service areas. The County Council has also agreed to increase the amount it charges for spare seats on the transport it provides for children who are entitled to travel to and from school for free.

The decision, taken on 4 February by the Council's Cabinet, followed an extensive consultation process which began in November 2013 and included a series of 10 public meetings across the county. Under the new policy, which will be introduced from September 2014, children qualifying for free home-to-school transport will only receive the benefit if they attend their nearest available school within Oxfordshire. The policy will be phased in for

new starters, which means children currently in receipt of free transport to schools which are not their nearest available, will continue to receive the benefit until they move to a new school.

Cllr Owen finished by saying the best news of the year is that the Community College is going to get a Sixth Form at long last.

Cllr Handley said that a four-way junction onto the A40 at Minster Lovell is not being considered yet again, even though it was first discussed as long ago as 2004. Cllr Handley said that the Skatepark in Upavon Way is currently being tested to see if it would be suitable for a fire station. The County Council is looking at a station with full-time cover and RAF Brize Norton will release uniformed officers to man the station.

Cllr Handley said that there is limited money available to repair roads, which will cost £120 million. He pointed out that cracked roads are more serious than potholes. The money available for such works is less per head of population in Oxfordshire compared to other counties, and Carterton needs a population of at least 20,000 to be sustainable.

Cllrs Handley and Owen were thanked for their reports.

4 GENERAL ISSUES

Cllr McBride asked about a four-way junction onto the A40. He was told that in 1984 Douglas Hurd took up the issue on behalf of the Town Council but unfortunately no investment was made. The Town Clerk said she would write a letter of concern to the Prime Minister.

The question of recycling was raised and residents were informed that there will be a meeting next week to organise a Recycling Roadshow and Waste Management in Carterton.

5 GUEST SPEAKER - LIZ BOURNE

Liz explained what a Neighbourhood Plan is and how it would affect Carterton. The Government is supporting people who care about their communities and want to get involved in improving them. It believes that people understand the needs of their area best, which is why it is transferring power so people can make more decisions locally and solve their own problems to create strong, attractive and thriving neighbourhoods.

Neighbourhood planning enables communities to play a much stronger role in shaping the areas in which they live and work and in supporting new development proposals. This is because unlike the parish, village or town plans that communities may have prepared, a neighbourhood plan forms part of the development plan and sits alongside the Local Plan prepared by the local planning authority. Decisions on planning applications will be made using both the Local Plan and the neighbourhood plan, and any other material considerations.

A Neighbourhood Plan would provide the opportunity for Carterton to set out a positive vision for how we want our community to develop over the next ten, fifteen, twenty years in ways that meet identified local need and make sense for local people. We can put in place planning policies that will help deliver that vision or grant planning permission for the development we want to see. Everybody in the community would have their say. Parishes with a neighbourhood plan will receive 25% of any community infrastructure levy (CIL) arising from developments in their area compared to parishes without a neighbourhood plan who will receive just 15%. For every home developed, there is a levy on it of £80 per square metre. A development of 5000 homes would equal 25% of the money to develop our infrastructure.

Cllr Mrs Smith asked how to have a successful consultation. Liz said that you need to prove that you have brought the opportunity to as many people as possible.

Cllr McBride asked how long a Neighbourhood Plan was likely to take. Liz responded that it would usually take at least 18 months, but that the Thame Plan took 2 years.

Cllr Farmer asked if a Neighbourhood Plan could involve an area outside our parish. Liz said that it could, and that a Plan could also be a joint one with a neighbouring parish. In these circumstances, one of the parishes would need to take the lead and there would need to be a Memorandum of Understanding.

In answer to a query from Cllr Mrs Miah, Liz said that a Plan would last 25 years but would be reviewed after 5 years, at which time small changes could be made if appropriate.

Cllr Farmer pointed out that the CIL is capped on the number of dwellings (£100 per council tax dwelling in the town).

Liz was thanked for her presentation.

The meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.

Town Mayor