

CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE TOWN HALL  
ON TUESDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2016  
COMMENCING AT 7.45 PM

Present: Cllr Mrs L Little - Town Mayor  
Cllr N Leverton - Deputy Mayor

Cllr M Brennan Cllr M McBride  
Cllr R Brooks Cllr Mrs M Mead  
Cllr Mrs D V Bulley Cllr D Melvin  
Cllr Miss S Coul Cllr P Scott  
Cllr R Crapper Cllr Mrs S Scott-Stovold  
Cllr Mrs C Delaney Cllr Mrs C Wilson  
Cllr J Hayes

Officers: Ron Spurs - Town Clerk  
Tan Marchant – Assistant Clerk

Absent: Cllr Mrs N Miah

*The meeting was preceded by the presentation of a trophy to Hook Norton Brass Band. Cllr Mrs Bulley presented the trophy, which was awarded for their performance at the summer Bandstand Concerts on the Alvescot Road Recreation Ground.*

*This was followed by a presentation given by Mr Robert Pritchard, Community Liaison Officer for SSE, concerning the smart meter installation programme.*

#### 80 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Brennan, Leverton, Mrs Mead and Scott declared an interest in the grant application from Brownes Hall as they are on the Committee. Cllr Miss Coul declared in an interest in the grant application from Citizens Advice as she works for them.

#### 81 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 October 2016, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

#### 82 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor was invited to the Bravo Awards Ceremony at RAF Brize Norton, where she presented an award to one of the Ambassadors for Brize Norton. She was very pleased to mention that Cllr Mrs Delaney was presented with an award as one of Brize Norton's unsung heroes and Jenny Withers also received an award, so well done to them both. Cllr Scott said that Jenny Withers had been promoted to a regional role and suggested that the Council acknowledge the work she had done for the town over the last four years as Community Development Officer.

The Mayor attended the Big Brew for SSAFA on Saturday 29 October, where a total of £300 was raised for the Carterton & West Oxfordshire branch. Along with Blesson Kallimel and his wife and helpers, the second session of the drop in for soup and a chat was held on Thursday 3 November at the Town Hall and was attended by over 25 people.

The Mayor expressed her thanks to Jenny Withers and Jo Smith for their support to the Clerk and herself in taking the project for the Children's/Family Centre forward to the next step.

The Mayor had chaired several meetings regarding the withdrawal of the 64 bus service, which ceased in July this year, to facilitate reinstating a bus service between Carterton and Swindon. She would be meeting with the Manager of Pulhams Coaches next week and would update Councillors on any progress. A petition containing almost 300 signatures had been received by the Town Council, which would be passed on to our MP and the Oxfordshire County Council Transport Officer.

Sunday saw our Remembrance Service and Parade, which was very well attended, and the Mayor thanked Councillors and Staff who helped on the day and over the last few weeks. Thanks were also extended to St John's Church. Cllr Mrs Wilson said that on Thursday last week every child from St John's Primary School walked to the Memorial Garden with poppies they had made. The Mayor said that Mr Ray Scott, whose son was killed in Afghanistan, attended the Remembrance Service at St John's Church and had laid a wreath for his son at the Memorial Garden. He had been very impressed by the poppies made by the children.

The Mayor said a big thank you to everyone who came to see the Small Business Saturday UK Tour Bus on the Market Square on Monday 14 November and gave particular thanks to Cllr Mrs Scott-Stovold who had organised the bus to come to Carterton. They were joined by Cllr James Mills, Chairman of West Oxfordshire District Council, and although he could not be there on the day, it was fantastic to have the support of Robert Courts MP, member of parliament for Witney, who had the following to say:

*"Thank you, everyone, for coming today to the Carterton Business Bus event. I would love to have attended myself, but am on Parliamentary duties today - I am however with you in spirit!*

*Supporting small businesses that make up the lifeblood and essence of our West Oxfordshire town is a core part of my plan for West Oxfordshire and I will do everything I can to support them.*

*I am therefore hugely encouraged by this Carterton Chamber of Trade initiative, supported by other organisations, which shows the "go ahead" spirit that is such a part of Carterton.*

*I hope everyone has a useful and enjoyable morning, and look forward to hearing from you in due course with your ideas to drive forward the economy of Carterton and the surrounding area."*

#### 83 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk's Report, copies of which had previously been circulated, was received. The Report is attached at Annex A. See below.

#### 84 ADJOURNMENT FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO RAISE MATTERS

No members of the public were present.

#### 85 ADJOURNMENT FOR COUNTY COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

No County Councillors were in attendance on this occasion.

## 86 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning Committee held on 18 October and 1 November 2016. These were noted.

## 87 ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Administration Committee held on 1 November 2016 and the following items were presented for approval:

- (a) Draft Budget for 2017/18.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the budget as presented.

- (b) Draft Precept for 2017/18. The Committee had recommended that Council approve a 5% increase in the Precept, amounting to an additional £25,166 pa, and giving a Precept for 2017/18 of £528,498. Cllr Scott said that the decision to increase the Precept was arrived at after considerable discussion. Cllr Leverton felt that 2% would be the right amount due to the increase in houses on the new development at Swinbrook Park. Cllr Scott said that the 5% increase would be a safety net for possible expenses due to the spending cuts at OCC and WODC. Cllr McBride said that there could be a cap put on rises in the future and this could be the last opportunity the Council has to raise it. Cllr Miss Coul said she seconded what Cllrs Scott and McBride had said. Cllr Mrs Little said that if the Precept was increased the Council needed to tell the public how it would be spent and the Clerk said it would be used for services no longer funded by OCC.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the increase in Precept as detailed above. Cllr Mrs Little asked for her abstention to be noted.

- (c) Carterton Market Charging Policy.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE that the rent-free period be continued.

- (d) Anti-Bullying Policy.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the Anti-Bullying Policy.

## 88 RECOMMENDED TREE MAINTENANCE

A report had been previously circulated to Councillors. In 2011 the Council commissioned its first comprehensive inspection of all trees situated on Council recreational land and this was carried out by Tree Work Environmental (TWE), a company recommended by Alison Leask of WODC. They numbered each tree, reported the issues and work required and produced a spreadsheet listing all this information along with the next recommended inspection date. The inspection, however, did not include many other trees on Council owned land, mostly on the Glenmore Park estate. The Council has a duty of care for trees in relation to public safety and TWE were asked to provide a quote to develop another cost effective tree management strategy to deliver in the short, medium and long term. The cost of the survey would be approximately £2,292 plus VAT. The report asked whether Council would approve a tree survey as outlined above.

Cllr Mrs Mead said this seemed a lot of money to be spending on trees. Cllr McBride asked whether this would be a one off cost and the Clerk said that a survey would need to be done every five years. Cllr Brennan said the cost was approximately £10 per tree, so was not

excessive. His concern was that there were probably a lot more trees in Carterton that the Council would have to take on due to OCC spending cuts. The Clerk said he was loath to get involved in maintenance of trees that the Council did not own, but Cllr Miss Coul said that it would be remiss of the Council not to survey its trees.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the tree survey as detailed above.

## 89 APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

RESOLVED that the Council in accordance with its powers under Sections 137 and 139 of the Local Government Act 1972 should incur the following expenditure which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure here set out:

(a) Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire. The CAB had applied for a grant of £1,000 to support their core advice service. They have 56 volunteers and 19 full and part-time staff, and supported a total of 508 of their clients living in Carterton.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the grant of £1,000 as requested.

(b) Brownes Hall. Brownes Hall had applied for a grant of £5,000 to supply and fit UPVC replacement fascia and guttering following the full replacement of the deteriorated felt roof. This was part of their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Refurbishment Project, since Brownes Hall will have been in existence 50 years in April 2018. Cllr McBride said his concern was that they were due to sell a piece of land to Aldi for £94,000 to extend their car park and queried whether this grant was necessary. Cllr Mrs Little said the hall was a valuable asset to the town and would benefit from refurbishment. She asked whether the Social Club approved of what Brownes Hall Committee were proposing to do and Cllr Leverton said that the Committee were landlords of the building and merely let the room to the Social Club. He further explained that the roof replacement alone cost nearly £80,000. He said the Social Club were very happy with the plans and the building would be more energy efficient after modernisation. The Social Club would be responsible for redecorating their part of the building.

Cllr Brennan asked why the Social Club and Brownes Hall were separate and Cllr Leverton said it came about in the early days when there were some financial difficulties and the Social Club were given the opportunity to take over the bar area.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the grant of £5,000, which would be paid to Brownes Hall on receipt of the Invoice for the work. Cllr Mrs Delaney, Cllr Leverton and Cllr Scott did not vote.

## 90 EXTERNAL AUDIT

(a) Annual Return. Council received the Annual Return from the External Auditor.

(b) Issues Arising Report. Cllr McBride said that it would have been helpful if Councillors had had sight of the Report prior to their meeting to discuss the Precept, although this would not have made any difference to the outcome. The Clerk said items were looked at in the order of business at the time.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the Annual Return and Issues Arising Report.

91 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Financial Statement to 31 October 2016, set out at Annex B, was APPROVED.

92 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Cllr McBride queried the cheque paid to Ellis Whittam and remembered discussing at a previous meeting whether Council would be continuing with their services. The Clerk said that the Council was tied into the contract for a further year and it would not be of financial benefit at this time to change to another company. Cllr McBride also queried the sum of money paid for the Pampas Playground fencing. The Clerk explained that the brick wall had been removed for safety reasons and had been replaced as a matter of urgency by metal fencing specially designed for children's playgrounds. The residents have been very pleased with the result.

Cllr Scott queried the cheque paid to WODC for general maintenance, asking that the Council check that the work was being carried out according to the contract, specifically litter picking on Alvescot Road Recreation Ground. He also asked about the two bins outside the Pavilion that do not appear to be emptied. The Clerk said that their work was checked regularly and that the bins were not part of the contract and had been reported to WODC. The Clerk would follow up these issues.

Council RESOLVED that the Accounts for Payment for November 2016, set out at Annex C, be APPROVED for payment.

93 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

RESOLVED that as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting.

Confidential item follows.

94 ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE: STAFF PAY – NJC PAY SCALES

Confidential item.

The meeting ended at 8.45 p.m.

13 December 2016

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Town Mayor

1. **1 Streatfield House** – Verbal update. **The Lease had now been signed by all parties and the property is let to Hunters Estate Agents, the proprietor being Mr Scott Foley. Work would continue to let the space on the first floor.**
  
2. **Children's Centre** - As you are aware, Officers and Councillors have been working with the Manager of the Children's Centre and Jenny Withers, RAF Community Officer, to identify how a Children's Centre can continue to operate in Carterton. Funding has been secured from the Military Covenant, and OCC will consider an application for funding at the next Cabinet Meeting. The application has been supported by Officers. In December a report will be submitted to Council to request financial support for the project. **The Military Covenant had agreed to provide the project with £20,000. OCC had agreed to give £30,000 and would be spent as part of a three year business plan. The Clerk would put together a report to request support from the Town Council at the December Council meeting.**
  
3. **Allandale Centre** - Councillors resolved that I should write to Ms Jill Bull of ICE asking her to clarify her intentions regarding the lease of the Allandale Centre which expires in January 2018. The letter was hand delivered. So far no reply has been received. I intend to write to Ms Bull again and ask that she responds to the Council within 21 days. If no response is received, Council will assume that she does not wish to enter into negotiations to renew the lease. When this matter was discussed previously with Ms Bull, she did state that the Allandale Centre was not big enough for her needs. **Noted.**
  
4. **Diary Dates:**

Friday 2 December -	Christmas Lights Switch On
Saturday 3 December -	Mayor's Christmas Carols on Market Square at 10.00am
Tuesday 6 December	Planning Committee (if necessary)
Tuesday 13 December -	Planning and Town Council
Friday 23 December -	Town Hall will close at 12.00 noon
Tuesday 3 January	Town Hall reopens
Tuesday 10 January	Planning Committee (if necessary)
Tuesday 17 January	Planning and Town Council

**Ron Spurs**  
**9 November 2016**