

CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE TOWN HALL
ON TUESDAY 16 JULY 2019
COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM

Present: Cllr M Mead - Chairman
Cllr N Leverton – Vice-Chairman

Cllr J Bull Cllr M McBride
Cllr C Cook Cllr D Melvin
Cllr M Crossland Cllr J Sangster
Cllr P Handley - until Item 52 Cllr D Wesson
Cllr E Hatton Cllr K Wood
Cllr C James

Apologies: Cllr R Crapper, Cllr L Little

Absent: Cllr S Baylis

Officer: Ron Spurs – Town Clerk

In attendance: Cllr N Field-Johnson (County Councillor) – until Item 52
Mr S Harley and Mr D Constable (Town Councillor candidates)

The meeting was preceded by the Co-option of a Councillor to fill a vacancy in Upavon Ward. Three candidates had applied, and each gave a short presentation. A vote was taken and Council duly welcomed Cllr Maxine Crossland as the new Town Councillor for the Upavon Ward. Cllr Crossland signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined members at the table.

41 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

42 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 June 2019, previously circulated to Members, were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

43 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 18 June and 2 July 2019, which were noted.

44 EVENTS WORKING GROUP

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Events Working Group held on 30 April 2019, which were noted.

45 ALVESCOT ROAD RECREATION GROUND WORKING GROUP

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Alvescot Road Recreation Ground Working Group held on 27 June 2019, which were noted.

46 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 21 June Children from all the local primary schools came to the Market Square to sell the plants they had grown as part of this year's Open Gardens event.
- 23 June Carterton Open Gardens. The Mayor visited most of the gardens, which she said were stunning.
- 23 June 10th Anniversary of The Homestead. The Mayor, accompanied by Cllr Leverton and his wife Sue, attended their celebrations that included planting a tree, singing songs and enjoying refreshments.
- 24 June Armed Forces Week. Raised the Armed Forces flag at the Town Hall in the morning and then in the afternoon raised the flag at Castle Square in Oxford, accompanied by Cllr Leverton and Cllr Handley. The Mayor was very pleased to have the opportunity to represent Carterton at this event.
- 25 June Dorchester Abbey. Invitation from the Lord Lieutenant to a special evening for all new Mayor and Chairs in Oxfordshire. Cllr Crossland and her husband Brian Crossland DL were also there.
- 29 June Three Bases Charity Cycle Ride. The Mayor, accompanied by Cllr Leverton, Cllr Melvin and Cllr Wesson, met with cyclists taking part in a cycle ride that visited RAF, Army and Navy stations to raise money for the Royal British Legion.
- 2 July The Mayor had the great pleasure in opening The Shake Shop, which is proving to be extremely successful and will be a real asset to the town.
- 7 July Ride of Respect. Over 300 motorcyclists taking part in the Ride came to the Alvescot Road Recreation Ground. Next year will be their 10th Anniversary and they are intending to host a bigger event.
- 10 July The Mayor and her husband Jason, accompanied by Cllr Leverton and his wife Sue, attended a Concert at to Blenheim Palace featuring the Buddy Ensemble, where children with special needs were performing alongside their able-bodied buddies. The event was supported by the Oxfordshire County Music Service and included orchestral and drama pieces on the violin and brass instruments, together with performances in sign language and by the wheelchair dancers. It was a truly inspirational evening.

The Mayor highlighted the displays at the Town Hall and Community Centre for the next two weeks as part of the public consultation for the future of the Pavilion on Alvescot Road Recreation Ground. She urged Councillors to encourage members of the public to attend and fill out the questionnaires provided. On the Thursdays of each week Councillors will be on hand to answer questions from the public.

Carterton Carnival takes place this coming Saturday 20 July. A lot of planning and organisation has gone into the event. The Town Council will have a stall on the Recreation Ground, which will be the point of contact for lost property and persons and needs to be staffed at all times. Councillors were encouraged to assist with this.

47 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.

48 ADJOURNMENT FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO RAISE MATTERS

There were no members of the public present.

Cllr Field-Johnson had produced a Report for Councillors, which was previously circulated to Members. The report highlighted the following:

(a) Major progress on improving Oxfordshire's roads. Repairs and improvements continue, with 13,159 potholes repairs over the last year and more to come over the summer. OCC recently announced an extra £13 million for road maintenance for this financial year and the money would be spent across towns and villages for resurfacing, drainage, bridge repairs and footways. Last year's extra cash saw more than 37 miles of road resurfaced.

(b) Pilot project to restrict traffic outside schools. The County Council is considering launching a 'School Streets' project to reclaim roads outside schools from traffic at the start and end of each day. This would reduce air pollution outside school gates and make it easier for children to walk, cycle or scoot to school. Six schools have already expressed an interest in joining the pilot.

(c) NHS announces Oxfordshire's new joined-up health and care system. Oxfordshire is to be part of a new 'integrated care system' created by the NHS in England, which also includes Buckinghamshire and Berkshire West. The NHS and local authorities in the three areas aim to deliver integrated, person-based health and care services as locally as possible.

(d) Moving forward with housing infrastructure funding bids. The County Council will conclude contract negotiations in the next few months to formally secure infrastructure funding relating to four strategic transport projects in the Didcot Garden Town area. OCC is also working with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government and Highways England to complete the clarification stage of its £102 million bid for projects associated with the A40 between Witney and Oxford. A planning application has been submitted for a proposed Park & Ride site on the A40 north-west of Eynsham.

(e) Major investment to improve Botley Road in Oxford. The County Council is planning to spend £9.1 million on bus, cycle and pedestrian improvements on Botley Road. Public consultation has recently been completed and construction is due to start in Spring 2020.

(f) Bus stops on Shilton Park. Work will commence in the next few months to remove some of the road markings around bus stops on Shilton Park. The bus stops themselves will remain, pending work that is underway to start a community bus service. Cllr Mead asked whether this would stop people who park there being given parking fines and Cllr Field-Johnson said that these would be revoked if the people concerned write in.

(g) Underpass on Upavon Way. He had received a number of complaints about the condition of the underpass, which is flooded and full of debris. This should be attended to this week. Cllr Crossland stressed the importance of the underpass remaining open and not being replaced by a crossing, particularly for the 400 or so children from St John's Primary School who use it to get safely to services at St John's Church.

(h) He and Cllr Handley continue work to get a new slip road onto the A40, but this has been postponed until next year, as has a slip road onto the A34 to ease congestion at the Wolvercote Roundabout in Oxford.

Cllr Handley gave a verbal report.

He reported on his meeting with the Chief Executive. The former Fire Chief, Simon Furlong, has been appointed as the new Transport Manager whilst Bev Hindle is seconded to the Oxfordshire Growth Deal, and Cllr Handley has requested that Simon Furlong be reinstated.

More importance is being given to the improvements to junctions surrounding RAF Brize Norton.

The Chief Executive said the bollards between Swinbrook Road and Swinbrook Park were intended to be removable. The locks were corroding and would be changed in the short term, but a more permanent solution would be needed going forward. Cllr Bull asked that as soon as a final decision is reached the public are informed. Cllr Hatton highlighted the importance of only releasing the decision to the public once the County have reached a permanent and final decision. Cllr Field-Johnson said that his understanding was that the bollards were to remain, but a solution was being sought as to how they could be unlocked/removed when necessary. Cllr Melvin said that the problem is not the locking mechanism but that the bollards weighed 80kg and is too heavy to be moved.

Cllr Handley had today chased up the proposals for improvements to the Crossroads in the town centre.

The new Fire Station, to be built as part of the Brize Meadow development, is intended to house Police and Ambulance services as well. Opening it for community use is also being considered.

Regarding the funding of the Carterton Community College and primary schools, the County have responded that they are unable to write off the debt but acknowledge that a solution needs to be found.

The Mayor thanked the County Councillors for their reports.

50 MOTION - ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Cllr Cook, supported by Cllr McBride, proposed a Motion to the Town Council to undertake a ten-year project to reduce the carbon footprint of the town.

This would include reducing the Town Council's energy consumption by 25% within the next five years, working towards WODC's commitment to net zero emissions by 2030 and establishing a Cross-Party Working Group to undertake an in-depth review of the Council's current carbon footprint and agree on a net Zero Carbon Strategy to be brought before Council within 12 months. Suggestions for the Working Group to discuss included vehicle electrical charging points, solar panels on Council buildings, work with schools, planting of trees and wildflowers and scope the prospect of reinstating the old Carterton-Witney railway line for recreational use (cycle route, similar to the Camel Trail in Cornwall).

Cllr McBride said he supported this Motion not for himself or for publicity, but for his grandchildren, to make a positive contribution to the town and its residents. When he was Mayor last year primary school children had visited the Town Hall and talked about the elimination of single-use plastics. There are many other ways to achieve the aims of this project and he urged Councillors to vote in favour.

All Councillors were in favour of the Motion and made the following comments:

Cllr James queried whether the timescale was achievable. Cllr Wesson was particularly in favour of solar panels on Council buildings. Cllr Bull emphasised working with the local schools and Cllr Hatton said she had been in contact with RAF Brize Norton to organise a Walk to School day.

Cllr Handley said the amount of pollution generated by the UK as a whole was very low. Manufacture of the batteries for electric vehicles generates as much in emissions as the life of the vehicle itself. Plastic is a big problem. The new Garden Village at Eynsham will generate a considerable amount of new traffic on the roads.

Cllr Crossland particularly emphasised creating more green infrastructure and suggested a programme of tree planting to re-create the tree-lined avenues along the main roads through the town that were here when she first came to Carterton in 1972.

Cllr Melvin said there are already some projects in progress, such as sowing wildflowers on pieces of unused land. He would also like to encourage cycleways, as well as making all Council buildings as energy efficient as possible.

Cllr Sangster particular supported the idea of a cycle route from Carterton to Witney, as well as improving the cycle paths within the town itself and leading to RAF Brize Norton.

Cllr Leverton emphasised the importance of this and it is something the Council cannot compromise on.

Cllr Wood commented on the need to offset pollution from aircraft at RAF Brize Norton and Cllr Field-Johnson suggested working with them on this. Cllr Cook would look into whether some of their lighting could be turned off during the night.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the project and the setting up of a Working Group to deliver it.

51 BURIAL FEES FOR CHILDREN

New Regulations will come into force in England and Wales on 23 July 2019 to ensure that families are not charged for the burial of children under the age of 18. Parents will be able to apply for a payment from the Children's Funeral Fund to cover expenses charged by local authorities. In light of this, it is proposed that the Town Council waive burial fees for interment and Exclusive Right of Burial in respect of children under 18.

The Council currently does not make a charge for stillborn babies and children up to one month old and charges a reduced rate for children up to 12 years old. The full adult price is charged for persons aged 12 years and above. The Council's records show that there have only been six children's burials at the Cemetery since 2007, so any financial loss to the Council would be small. Many local councils do not charge fees for the burial of children.

A vote was taken, with all in favour. Council RESOLVED to APPROVE that burial fees are waived for children under the age of 18.

52 APPOINTMENT OF CARTERTON PCSO

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) work as part of the local Neighbourhood Policing Team and their key role is to provide an increased visible Police presence, working alongside regular Police Officers, to reduce crime and making communities safer.

It is proposed that the Town Council enter into a contract with Thames Valley Police to fund one PCSO for a period of three years at a cost of £18,487 plus VAT for the first year (subsequent years may be varied). The officer would work within the Parish of Carterton unless for operational reasons he/she is required elsewhere, for example if there was a critical incident that required urgent resources to manage a scene. The officer would be tasked operationally by

TVP, with regular meetings with Council officers to identify specific areas of concern. An Agreement had been drawn up and circulated to Councillors with the Agenda.

Councillors were very supportive of this initiative. Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the funding of a PCSO for a period of three years.

53 AMENITIES WORK

The following works were considered by Council:

(a) Re-surfacing of War Memorial. It has proved difficult to maintain the grass around the War Memorial in good condition. It is proposed to remove the existing turf and replace it with a permeable stone/resin surface. The work would be carried out by UBICO at a cost of £906.73 plus VAT. Samples were available at the meeting and there was a choice of four colours. A vote was taken and the colour chosen was the SUDwell Silver Kit. The new surface would be laid before Remembrance Sunday.

(b) Refurbishment of border to the front of The Beehive Public House. The existing hedge is overgrown and unattractive. The Clerk has written to both Oxfordshire County Council who own the land and to Wadworth's Brewery and neither have raised any objections. UBICO would undertake the work to remove the existing hedge and replace it with grass and trees, at a cost of £931.13 plus VAT.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the amenities works as detailed above.

54 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Financial Statement to 30 June 2019, set out at Annex B, was noted.

55 INCOME RECEIVED

Income Received during June 2019, previously circulated, was noted.

56 DEBIT CARD TRANSACTIONS

Debit Card transactions for June 2019, previously circulated, were noted.

57 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Cllr McBride queried the payment of £5,191.20 for Electrical Testing of Council properties as this figure seemed rather high. The Clerk clarified that this included the replacement of the consumer unit at the Squash Club.

Council RESOLVED that the Accounts for July 2019, set out at Annex C, be APPROVED for payment.

58 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 items follow.

Council received the confidential items discussed at the meeting of the Town Council held on 18 June 2019, approved earlier in this meeting, which were noted.

The meeting ended at 8.36 pm.

17 September 2019

Town Mayor

- 1 **Representatives on Outside Bodies** – verbal update.
 - (a) Squash Club. Cllr McBride has been in regular contact with the Squash Club and would report any problems that may arise back to the Council.
 - (b) Carterton Community Centre. Cllr Melvin is working with the Community Centre and would report any problems.
 - (c) Allandale Centre. Cllr Bull and Cllr Hatton are working hard to ensure the smooth running of the building works and the Family Centre's time at the Town Hall while the work is taking place.
 - (d) Army Cadet/Scouts Building. The Clerk reported issues with contacting the Army Cadets and he would follow this up.
 - (e) Football Club. There are still some issues with the Lease of the Football Club. The Clerk had circulated a letter from the Council's solicitor to Councillors in March. He continues to try to resolve the issues and this may come back for Council to consider at the September meeting. The Outside Body Representative still needs to be confirmed and no reports has been received from them.
- 2 **ARRG Pavilion Consultation** – Cllrs Mead and Melvin have volunteered to man the displays at the Town Hall on 18 July and 25 July respectively. At least two more volunteers are required to man the displays at the Community Centre between 15 and 28 July. Councillors were urged to contact the Town Hall if they could help.
- 3 **Website/Facebook** – The Council website and Facebook page require some improvement. The Clerk has spoken to a local web designer, together with other Council website designers for comparison, and will report back to the September Council meeting.
- 4 **BMX Track** – Quotes are being sought to refurbish the BMX Track. Due to the value involved, this will probably need to go out to Tender.
- 5 **Christmas Lights** – The Clerk and Assistant Clerk will meet with the Council's supplier tomorrow regarding new lights for Alvescot Road, particularly for the trees.
- 6 **Court Case** – The Town Council will be going to Oxford County Court on 25 July 2019 with the intention to strike out allegations made by Cllr Little relating to claims of harassment. The Clerk would keep Councillors updated.
- 7 **CCTV** – There is a mismatch in what Carterton Town Council pays compared to what Witney Town Council pays. Both councils are charged £10,000 per annum, yet Carterton only has four cameras and Witney has 57. The Mayor reports that there is ongoing work within WODC to move this project along. In the meantime, the camera on ARRG is suitable to have a PIR light installed and this should be done in the near future.

8 **Diary Dates:**

Monday 15 July Commencement of ARRG Pavilion Consultation (until 28 July)
Friday 19 July Commencement of Carterton Celebrates (until Sunday 28th)
Saturday 20 July Carterton Carnival 11.00am – 5.00pm
Thursday 1 August ARRG Working Group 10.00am
Tuesday 6 August Planning Committee
Tuesday 20 August Planning Committee
Monday 26 August Bank Holiday – Town Hall Closed

Ron Spurs
Town Clerk