

CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT CARTERTON WI HALL
ON TUESDAY 18 JANUARY 2022 COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM

Present: Cllr J Bull - Vice-Chairman
Cllr K Baldwin (from Item 128) Cllr M McBride
Cllr S Baylis (until Item 136) Cllr M Mead
Cllr R Crapper Cllr L Sanders
Cllr M Crossland Cllr J Sangster
Cllr P Handley Cllr D Wesson
Cllr L Little (until Item 136) Cllr K Wood

Apologies: Cllr F Harold, Cllr N Leverton
Cllr N Field-Johnson (County Councillor)

In attendance: Members of the public x 3

Officers: Ron Spurs – Town Clerk
Kay Linnington – Deputy Clerk
Stella Catt, Alex Fleming, Katie Zasada

The Vice-Chairman was sad to report that a youngster from Bampton who attended Carterton Community College had passed away. Our thoughts are with their family and friends at this sad time.

118 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Crossland Item 139 - Streatfield House Lease (the applicant is a friend)
Cllr Sanders Item 135 - Accounts for Payment (Allotments Secretary)
Cllr Wood Item 135 - Accounts for Payment (Allotments Committee member)

119 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 16 November 2021, previously circulated to Members, were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. Cllr Little abstained.

The Town Council meeting scheduled for 14 December 2021 had been cancelled due to Covid restrictions, with urgent matters being dealt with by the Urgency Committee.

120 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 16 November and 14 December 2021, which were Noted.

121 ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Administration Committee held on 7 December 2021, which were noted. The following items were recommended for approval by Council:

(a) Polling Cards for election of a Town Councillor in Shillbrook Ward on 20 January 2022. See Item 122 below – Urgency Committee.

(b) Budget and Precept 2022/2023. This would be considered later in this meeting.

122 URGENCY COMMITTEE

Council received the minutes of the meeting of the Urgency Committee held on 13 December 2021, which was convened following the cancellation of the Council meeting scheduled for 14 December 2021. The following items were Approved:

- (a) Accounts for Payment for December 2021
- (b) Upgrade of the fuse board to provide a power supply for the Sensory Garden
- (c) Removal of Reception work surfaces in preparation for new desks
- (d) Polling cards for election of a Town Councillor in Shillbrook Ward

The Minutes were Noted.

123 HR COMMITTEE

Council received the minutes of the meeting of the HR Committee held on 11 January 2022, convened to consider the appointment of a Town Clerk following the retirement of the present Clerk in February 2022. The Committee approved that the full-time post should be advertised with a salary of SCP 27 £40,876. A job specification and advert for the role were agreed.

The Minutes were Noted.

124 ADJOURNMENT FOR MEMBERS OF PUBLIC TO RAISE MATTERS

Liz Wood spoke on Items 127 and 128, Mayor's Announcements and Town Clerk's Announcements. She asked if the announcements could be itemised in more detail on the agenda so that members of the public could raise matters on these topics. She believed the public should be able to raise any matter during the 15 minutes rather than solely items that are on the Agenda.

Cllr Little and Cllr Handley expressed similar concerns. The Clerk said that the current procedure was set out in the Standing Orders and if Councillors wished it to be changed, this could be done when the Standing Orders were next reviewed in May 2022.

Kathy Godwin asked if the dates of forthcoming meetings could be put on the Council website. Martin Rawlins asked when the Council's new website was being launched. The Clerk said that a soft launch of the website had taken place and more content was gradually being added. A list of forthcoming meetings was also posted on the Council's noticeboard at the Town Hall.

125 ADJOURNMENT FOR COUNTY COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

(a) Cllr Field-Johnson – Burford and North Carterton. Cllr Field-Johnson had given his apologies for this meeting.

(b) Cllr Leverton – South and West Carterton, Armed Forces Champion. Cllr Leverton had given his apologies for this meeting, but had submitted the following report:

He had attended the normal round of meetings, ranging from Risk management, Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Audit and Governance and a Teams meeting regarding proposed changes to the Crossroads. He reminded Councillors that he had arranged a meeting with the relevant Officers via Teams at 4.00pm on Tuesday 1 February 2022 and would appreciate if as many as possible could attend. Cllr Handley said he was unable to attend this

meeting and encouraged Councillors to push to ensure both the crossroads and fire station projects go ahead without delay and ask for regular updates.

Cllr Mead reported that the partnership between Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council that had worked well for the last three years was now coming to an end.

126 ADJOURNMENT FOR DISTRICT COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

(a) Cllr Bull - Carterton North West, Inclusion Champion and member of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Cllr Bull had attended the Aladdin Pantomime at Carterton Community College. She was pleased to accompany the Mayor to the Lord Mayor and Councillors Christmas Reception at Oxford Town Hall and the Pantomime organised by the Freemasons at The Playhouse in Oxford. The Tree Planting to celebrate the 50th Birthday of Carterton Community College had been postponed for the time being.

Both Cllr McBride and herself had enjoyed being involved in the workshops for the Lantern project for this year's Christmas Lights event. Cllr Wood expressed her thanks to all involved in this event.

(b) Cllr Crossland – Carterton North West

Cllr Crossland had attended the Lowlands Planning Committee meeting on 5 January 2022.

(c) Cllr Leverton - Carterton South and Armed Forces Champion

The Clerk read out Cllr Leverton's report, as follows:

He supported the Veterans Hub that went ahead in November, which was welcomed by all those that attended. He thanked the Agencies that are supporting the Veterans and their families in our community. The December and January meetings were not able to go ahead because of Covid concerns.

He was extremely honoured to be invited in his role as Armed Forces Champion for the District to the full dress-rehearsal of a Passing Out Parade at the Royal Military College Sandhurst.

He thanked Cllr McBride for substituting for him at the recent Lowlands Planning Committee meeting. The day-to-day meetings of the District Council continued and it made a welcome change to be able to attend meetings in person.

(d) Cllr McBride – Carterton North East, Chairman of WODC and Vice-Chairman of the WODC Environmental Committee

Cllr McBride had attended a meeting of the Audit & Special Purposes Committee on 24 November 2021 and the Environmental Committee on 2 December 2021. As Chairman, he had attended various civic events, including a Tree Planting and a Carol Service in Burford, together with the Aladdin Pantomime at Carterton Community College.

(e) Cllr Mead – Carterton South, Leader of WODC

The District Council's Budget Consultation had taken place with positive feedback. It had been highlighted that residents were often unaware of which services were provided by County and District Councils, so this would be set out in a forthcoming newsletter.

Only 3% of District staff were away from work due to Covid, though a proportion of those were able to work from home rather than take sick pay. The biggest risk has been emptying bins, but staff were managing to keep this service running despite staffing shortages.

127 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Clerk read out the Mayor's announcements, as follows:

As Mayor, the Christmas period had been a particularly busy time, with the most memorable event being the Lord Mayor and Councillors Christmas Reception at Oxford Town Hall on 6 December and the Pantomime at The Playhouse in Oxford courtesy of the Freemasons of Oxfordshire on 7 December.

The Christmas Lights switch on was extremely well received by the public and by his guests in the Town Hall. He thanked all those that made events like this happen, particularly the Clerk and Town Hall Staff, together with the Councillors who helped with the lantern making and had rolled up their sleeves and got stuck in, quite literally! A special mention was given to Cllr McBride who went above and beyond more than once to ensure the children of the Town had a wonderful Lantern experience.

A big thanks also went to Mrs Leverton who accompanied him whenever possible and who, along with Cllr McBride, hosted the guests in the Mayor's Parlour at the switch on. His last thanks went to his friend and Deputy Mayor, Cllr Bull, who had gone above and beyond more times than he could remember in the last year.

He was awaiting a quote from the Regalia company regarding the Mayor's Chain of Office.

128 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The first phase of the Tree Project, to plant trees along Brize Norton Road, has been completed. The trees would be part of The Queen's Green Canopy and a plaque would be installed in due course. Planning for the second phase along Burford Road would commence shortly. Cllr Little asked about funding and said that the Wychwood Tree Project could supply trees. The Clerk said that it was recommended to plant more established trees as the saplings from the Wychwood Project were more suited to wilder spaces.

Discussions had been taking place with the County Council and David Wilson Homes to complete the footpath leading from the Swinbrook Park development at the junction of Price Way into Shilton Road. An agreement is close to signature and he thanked Cllr Bull and Cllr Crossland for their work on this.

The Remembrance Sunday and Christmas Lights events had proceeded well and there would be a meeting of the Events Working Group on 26 January 2022 to discuss what could be learned to improve the events for next year.

The Town Hall refurbishment was continuing. The Kitchen had been refitted and the Reception office painted. The paintwork in the remainder of the downstairs needs some work and this is an Agenda item later in this meeting.

The Trefoil Guild's Sensory Garden project is under way, supported by Emma Phillips at WODC and Ubico. A similar project is being considered outside St John's Primary School.

With regard to the Cemetery, the owners of the adjacent land had been approached but there had been no progress so far to source more land. In the meantime, officers were looking into the consecration of the remaining section to provide more burial spaces.

129 INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Council received the Interim Report of the Internal Auditor, previously circulated. No major issues were highlighted. The Report was Noted.

130 S137 GRANT APPLICATION

The Oxfordshire Play Association had submitted a Grant Application for £2,000, towards a total cost of £4,500, to deliver a Play and Activities Day on Alvescot Road Recreation Ground in 2022. The event would be free of charge and open to everyone. Previous events held in the town had been very successful and welcomed by the community.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE a Grant of £2,000 to the Oxfordshire Play Association. A date for the event would be set in due course.

131 CARTERTON FAMILY CENTRE – YOUTH WORK PROVISION

The Family Centre were awarded a Council Grant in 2020 to fund Year 1 of a three-year primarily street-based youth work project. In October 2021, an application was received for funding for Year 2, but it became apparent that the provision of detached youth work, which was a key element of the project, was not being met and a decision was deferred. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor subsequently met with two of the Trustees and the Manager of the Family Centre, where it was agreed that a new request for funding would be made to Council.

Council was asked to consider the new application for Year 2 of the project at a cost of £16,200, which had been updated to address the issue of provision of detached youth work, ie to interact with young people at risk of committing crime in the areas they congregate.

A thorough discussion took place. Concerns were raised that the provision of detached youth work was still not being delivered and that the drop-in sessions at The Flat from 3.30pm to 5.30pm did not address this adequately. The original contract was for 30 hours detached youth work, but this seemed to have dropped to 14. The application said that a programme had been run at the Community College, but it was noted that over 50% of teenagers in the town attended secondary schools elsewhere and it was unclear how those youngsters were being reached. It was suggested approaching the County Council to see what they could offer. It was also suggested that the youth workers give a presentation to Council on their work.

It was felt that the work the team were doing was important and valuable, but that the application in its current form was not what the Council had envisaged.

Council RESOLVED to DECLINE the application. Cllr Bull and Cllr Little abstained.

132 BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2022/2023

The Budget and Precept for 2022/2023 had been discussed at the meeting of the Administration Committee held on 7 December 2021. The Committee had recommended that Council approve the Budget and make no increase to the Precept, with the view that it kept residents' bills from rising unnecessarily whilst at the same time addressing the Auditor's advice about the amount held in Reserves.

Cllr Handley and Cllr Crossland suggested that the Precept be increased slightly to keep it in line with inflation. Cllr Mead said that by leaving it unchanged Council would be eating into its Reserves at a time of rising costs. It was proposed to increase the Precept by 2%.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the Budget, subject to a decision on setting the Precept below. Cllr Baylis, Cllr Handley and Cllr Little abstained.

Council RESOLVED to set a Precept of £411,042, representing an increase of 2%. Cllr Little and Cllr Sanders abstained.

133 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Financial Statements to 30 November and 31 December 2021, previously circulated and set out at Annex A and Annex B respectively, were Noted.

134 RECEIPTS

Receipts to 30 November and 31 December 2021, previously circulated, were Noted.

135 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

(a) The Accounts for payment for December 2021, previously circulated and set out at Annex C, were Approved by the Urgency Committee at its meeting on 13 December 2021. This was Noted.

(b) Council RESOLVED that the Accounts for Payment for January 2022, set out at Annex D, be APPROVED for payment. Cllr Baylis and Cllr Little abstained.

Cllr Handley asked why payments for the Allotments portals appeared on the list twice. The Clerk would check this prior to payment.

136 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.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

137 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FROM MINUTES OF THE LAST TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Confidential Item.

138 REDECORATION OF TOWN HALL GROUND FLOOR

Confidential Item.

139 LEASE EXTENSION – FIRST FLOOR, STREATFIELD HOUSE

Confidential Item.

The meeting ended 8.10 pm

15 February 2022

Town Mayor