

CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE TOWN HALL  
ON TUESDAY 18 JUNE 2019  
COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM

- Present: Cllr M Mead - Chairman  
Cllr S Baylis Cllr M McBride  
Cllr J Bull Cllr D Melvin  
Cllr C Cook Cllr J Sangster  
Cllr R Crapper Cllr D Wesson  
Cllr P Handley Cllr K Wood  
Cllr E Hatton  
Cllr C James
- Apologies: Cllr N Leverton, Cllr L Little  
Cllr N Field-Johnson (County Councillor)
- Officer: Ron Spurs – Town Clerk
- In attendance: Jo Smith and Megan Neal – Carterton Family Centre (Items 31-32 only)  
One member of the public

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Bull declared an interest in Item 38, Accounts for Payment, as she is the recipient of a cheque refunding her for purchases relating to Carterton Carnival.

21 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 May 2019, previously circulated to Members, were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

22 AMENITIES AND ECONOMIC REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities and Economic Regeneration Committee held on 28 May 2019. The Committee had recommended to Council approval of the following items:

- (a) Replacement of the roof at the Allandale Centre, as part of the current refurbishment of the building, subject to clarification as to whether this was originally included in the £120,000 agreed by Council.
- (b) Terms of reference for the Alvescot Road Recreation Ground Working Group, to take forward the project to consider replacing the Pavilion with a more suitable building.
- (c) Reinstate and upgrade the BMX Track at The Dell, at a cost of approximately £27,500.
- (d) Improvements to the verge at the front of The Beehive, at a cost of approximately £7,000.
- (e) Refurbishment of the Town Hall, particularly the Reception area, Kitchen and Council Chamber, taking into account security of the building for evening/weekend bookings.
- (f) Refurbishment of a small area of Council land between Bracken Close and Heather Close to seed with ‘Beebombs’ to form a wildlife habitat for bees and butterflies,

at a cost of £175 plus VAT to prepare the area and £75.99 to purchase the Beebombs.

- (g) Cleaning of the War Memorial, at a cost of £450 plus VAT.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the above items.

## 23 ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Administration Committee held on 28 May 2019. The Committee had recommended that Council approve the following item:

- (a) Appointment of part-time handyperson for Black Bourton Cemetery, at a cost of £1,440 per annum plus on-costs.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the appointment of a Cemetery Handyperson.

## 24 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 21 May 2019, which were noted.

## 25 URGENCY COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Urgency Committee held on 4 June 2019, which were noted. Cllr Handley said that he understood all expenditure had to be approved by full Council. The Clerk said that the terms of reference stated that the Urgency Committee had the power to approve expenditure where a decision needed to be made before the next scheduled Town Council meeting.

## 26 ALVESCOT ROAD RECREATION GROUND WORKING GROUP

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Alvescot Road Recreation Ground Working Group held on 10 June 2019, which were noted.

## 27 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Mead said that her Monday morning meetings with the Town Clerk and Councillors from 9.30am-11.00am have been successful. She will email round the main topics discussed at the meetings for information.

On Friday 7 June she met with Grp Capt James, Station Commander at RAF Brize Norton. Topics of discussion included Carterton Family Centre, Battle of Britain and Remembrance Sunday.

She asked if Councillors could come forward with ideas for getting involved in fundraising for local charities. Cllr Handley suggested applying for funding from the Police 'ill-gotten gains' fund to cover the cost of a PCSO for Carterton. Cllr Mead said that they released monies every three months and on the last occasion had received 900 applications. They gave 60 charities £1,000 each. It could be a useful resource for grant funding but would not be enough for a PCSO.

On Friday 21 June, the local primary schools will be selling plants that they have grown themselves in school, on the Market Square 3pm-5pm, and the Mayor encouraged Councillors to come along to give their support.

On Saturday 29 June, which is Armed Forces Day, a Charity Cycle Ride will be coming through the Market Square to raise money for the RBL Poppy Appeal. The riders will be setting off from RAF Brize Norton at 9.00am and their 125-mile route will take in RAF, Army and Navy bases, finishing at Yeovilton. The Mayor asked Councillors to come along and give their support.

Following the closure of Hunters Estate Agents, the new tenant at 1 Streatfield House will be The Shake Shop. The Mayor will be cutting the ribbon to open the new shop on Tuesday 2 July at 3.15pm.

On Sunday 28 July at 6.00pm there will be a Songs of Praise service at St John's Church, which brings all the local churches together. The Mayor usually gives a short address at this service, but she will be away in Belgium and the Deputy Mayor will be in Thailand. Cllr Wood volunteered to do this on the Mayor's behalf.

## 28 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.

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

The member of the public present did not wish to speak.

## 30 ADJOURNMENT FOR COUNTY COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

Cllr Field-Johnson had given his apologies for this meeting, but had produced a Report for Councillors, which was circulated at the meeting. The report highlighted the following:

(a) Major £3.5 million highway improvement programme. More than 50 miles of Oxfordshire's roads will be improved by 'surface dressing', together with a new technique called Surface Seal, which is an additional treatment added to a newly dressed road to prevent defects, cracks and potholes.

(b) Rolling road closures for the OVO Energy Women's Cycle Tour. The cycle race came through Oxfordshire on Wednesday 12 June. It started in Henley-on-Thames, travelling through Wallingford, Didcot, Harwell, Wantage, Faringdon, Burford and Charlbury, finishing at Blenheim Palace.

(c) Social Workers identify 'county lines' risks. Social workers, Police and NHS are working together using a new screening tool in their work to help children being exploited by drugs gangs and those who may be at risk.

Cllr Handley gave a verbal report.

He said that the County Council has £92 million in its reserves and had a large underspend this year. He requested that the Town Council write to support him in seeking to use some of that money to write off the £2 million debt at Carterton Community College, together with the two primary schools that were part of the Federation. The Community College is the only school in town still in local authority control and he believed the Council stood a good chance of succeeding in this. He explained that the debt has occurred as the school is 357 pupils short of capacity. Writing off the debt would enable the College to fulfil its function until the new housing developments were complete, which would bring in more pupils. The Town Clerk said he would prepare a letter to OCC.

Cllr Handley continues to work towards getting the town's roads repaired, particularly Corbett Road, which he hopes will be attended to in July/August. The road surface in Lawton Avenue is also in a poor condition, but the holes in the road do not meet the 40mm depth criteria. He had made a case that the road is used by school children on bicycles and the elderly attending the Day Centre and he had been assured that it would be attended to in the school holidays.

Cllr Bull said that the potholes in Sellwood Drive had been marked up with white paint for repair and asked how long it would take until the repairs were done. Cllr Handley said that potholes marked with white paint should be attended to within 28 days. He would follow this up.

Cllr Handley said the condition of the roads in the county have been particularly highlighted of late when ten of the cyclists taking part in the OVO Energy Women's Cycle Race were injured after a crash due to the uneven road surface near Didcot.

The Mayor thanked the County Councillors for their reports.

### 31 ALLANDALE CENTRE ROOF

This matter had been discussed at the last meeting of the Town Council, when Cllr Leverton raised the issue of whether the money set aside for Quinquennial works included the repair of the roof. The Clerk had investigated this and concluded that Council, at its meeting in March 2019, had approved giving £120,624 to the Family Centre to be used to match-fund a grant of £500,000 from Libor. Paragraph 21 of the Lease states that any alterations to the building must be approved by Council.

At the Amenities and Economic Regeneration Committee meeting on 28 May 2019, it became apparent that it was possible to reduce the cost of the roof replacement from the original cost of £49,050 to £32,000 plus VAT. If the Council commissioned the roof replacement separately the VAT could be reclaimed, and this could be achieved through an agreement drafted by the Council's solicitor.

Cllr Hatton and Cllr Melvin had attended a meeting at the Allandale Centre with Jonathan Longden, their Project Manager, and the Trustees of the Family Centre. Cllr Hatton said the work of the Family Centre is vitally important and the delay over a decision on the roofing work is delaying the whole refurbishment project. Cllr James said that the proposal for the refurbishment was dated August 2018 and that the delay had also been due to it only coming before the Council recently. Cllr Melvin said that further savings had been identified from the original refurbishment specification by reducing their contingency fund. He believes the Council only stands to gain from this project and strongly suggested the Council approve the extra funding needed.

Cllr Bull said that the Council had pledged the Quinquennial money and, as the roof had been identified in the Report, its repair should come out of that money. If the Town Council were to refurbish the building it would not make some of the internal changes and add rooflights and this would keep the cost down.

Cllr McBride said that the Report had stated that the roof would need replacing but not necessarily now and is not essential for the Family Centre to continue doing the excellent work they are currently doing. He said that if £120,624 for the works highlighted in the Quinquennial Report over the next five years were all done as part of the refurbishment, there would surely be further maintenance needed during this period. The Clerk said that the Council has a responsibility for the exterior of the building under the terms of the Lease. Cllr McBride was concerned at the amount of money the Council was spending on the Family Centre (£90,000

over three years, £120,624 and a further £32,000) and wondered whether residents would consider this value for money.

Cllr Handley strongly believed the roof replacement was needed and represented good value for money and he could see no reason to delay it further. He was concerned as to whether Cllr Bull should declare an interest as a previous tenant of the building.

Cllr Hatton stressed that it was logical to replace the roof as part of the current refurbishment rather than have a big upheaval to replace it further down the line. She felt that the Council should not lose sight of the fact that this is about supporting families in the town.

Cllr Melvin said the Council has a duty to make sure the roof is replaced, particularly as the asbestos poses a hazard. The finished building will be infinitely better, and he strongly believed this should go ahead.

A vote was taken, with eight in favour and three against. Cllr McBride asked for his vote against to be recorded in the minutes. Cllr Wood abstained. Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the sum of £32,000 for replacement of the roof. This part of the project would be managed by the Town Council and the VAT reclaimed.

### 32 ALLANDALE CENTRE ALTERATIONS

Carterton Family Centre had raised funds to modernise the Allandale Centre and have submitted plans to the Town Council for approval, in line with Paragraph 21 of the Lease. The plans had been available for examination by Councillors at the Town Hall since 5 June 2019. The refurbishment will increase the value of the premises in the long term.

A vote was taken, with all in favour. Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the proposed alterations to the Allandale Centre.

### 33 DRAFT ANNUAL RETURN FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2019

- (a) Annual Internal Audit Report – Members noted this Report.
- (b) Annual Governance Statement 2018/19 - Members RESOLVED TO APPROVE the Annual Governance Statement at Section 1 of the Annual Return, which was then signed and dated by the Chairman and the Clerk.
- (c) Accounting Statements 2018/19 - Members RESOLVED to APPROVE the Accounting Statements at Section 2 of the Annual Return, which was then signed and dated by the RFO and the Chairman.

### 34 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS – INCREASED BUDGET FOR 2019

The Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor, requested that the Council authorises an additional sum of £5,000 from the existing budget to improve the Christmas Lights display this year, particularly to include lights in the trees.

Cllr Handley said that the existing lights were all blue and white and asked if some different colours could be included. Cllr Cook asked how much the budget was and the Clerk said that it was around £18,000. There would be a further report on this at a future meeting of the Council.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the sum of £5,000 to purchase more Christmas Lights.

35 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Financial Statement to 31 May 2019, set out at Annex B, was noted.

36 INCOME RECEIVED

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

37 DEBIT CARD TRANSACTIONS

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

38 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Cllr Melvin said that Carterton pays disproportionately more for CCTV than Witney. The Clerk said he sits on the CCTV Management Committee at the District Council and confirmed that Witney has 57 cameras and Carterton has four, yet both pay the same sum of £10,000. This needs to be addressed. A project was started by Thames Valley Police in 2013 to reorganise the whole CCTV system in the Thames Valley area, but nothing further had happened. Technology had moved on and the equipment warrants updating.

Cllr Handley suggested asking RAF Brize Norton for a contribution to CCTV. The Clerk said that RAF Brize Norton used to pay £5,000 per year, but this stopped about three years ago when the five-year agreement came to an end.

CCTV would be an Agenda item for the next meeting of the Town Council.

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

39 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.

40 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FROM ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MINUTES OF 28 MAY 2019

Council received the confidential items discussed at the meeting of the Administration Committee held on 28 May 2019:

- (a) HR Report.
- (b) Town Clerk's Appraisal.
- (c) NALC Pay Scales.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the above items.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm.

16 July 2019

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Town Mayor

- 1 **May Day Fair** – the Carterton, Witney and District Branch of Save the Children have written to thank the Town Council for its support of their May Day Fair 2019, which raised in the region of £6,500. **Noted**
  
- 2 **Sue James BEM** – we are pleased to report that Sue James has been awarded the British Empire Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for her services to Save the Children. **The Councillors send their congratulations.**
  
- 3 **Diary dates:**
  - Friday 21 June School children selling plants on Market Square
  - Sunday 23 June Open Gardens Day 1-6pm
  - Saturday 29 June Armed Forces Day
  - Tuesday 2 July Planning Committee 6.45pm
  - Tuesday 16 July Planning & Town Council 6.45pm & 7.00 pm
  - Friday 19 July Commencement of Carterton Celebrates (until Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>)
  - Saturday 20 July Carterton Carnival 11.00am – 5.00pm

**The dates were noted.**

Ron Spurs  
Town Clerk