

CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL
ON TUESDAY 15 MARCH 2022 COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM

Present: Cllr N Leverton Chairman
Cllr J Bull - Vice-Chairman

Cllr K Baldwin Cllr M McBride
Cllr R Crapper Cllr J Sangster
Cllr P Handley Cllr D Wesson
Cllr F Harold Cllr K Wood
Cllr N King

Apologies: Cllr S Baylis, Cllr M Crossland, Cllr L Little, Cllr M Mead, Cllr L Sanders

In attendance: Cllr N Field-Johnson (County Councillor) – until Item 167
Members of the public x 3

Officers: Kay Linnington – Deputy Clerk

Prior to commencing the meeting, the Chairman reminded Councillors that business should always be conducted in an orderly manner as set out in the Standing Orders. Cllr McBride formally apologised to Cllr Handley for raising his voice at the last meeting.

163 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Wood Item 177 - Accounts for Payment (Allotments Committee member)

164 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 15 February 2022, previously circulated to Members, were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. Cllr Handley, Cllr King and Cllr Sangster abstained.

165 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 15 February 2022, which were noted.

166 ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Administration Committee held on 1 March 2022, which were noted.

The Committee recommended the following items for approval:

(a) Upgrading of Councillor IT equipment. The current iPads had been in use for a number of years and the Committee discussed whether to replace them. The Committee recommended deferring this item pending further research. This was noted.

(b) Review of hire charges and burial fees. The Committee recommended that no changes be made at this time.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE that no changes are made to the charges and fees for the financial year 2022/2023. Cllr Handley abstained.

(c) Confirmation of WODC Loans. A statement had been received from WODC confirming the temporary loans held in respect of Carterton Town Council totalling £590,000. This was noted for audit purposes.

(d) Past Mayor's Badges/Mayor's Chain of Office. Past Mayor's Badges were last purchased in 2009 at a cost of £104.18 each. The Committee deferred this item pending further research. The Committee recommended the purchase of a new Chain of Office (£923.35) and velvet collar (£266.81). Should the current storage case not be suitable for the new Chain, then a new one would need to be purchased at a cost of £485.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the purchase of a new Chain of Office and velvet collar as detailed above.

167 ADJOURNMENT FOR MEMBERS OF PUBLIC TO RAISE MATTERS

Liz Wood spoke on Items 170 and 171, Mayor's Announcements and Deputy Town Clerk's Report. She expressed her concern about the continuing difficulty for members of the public to get items put on the Agenda and had previously asked if these announcements could be itemised on the Agenda so that members of the public raise matters on these topics. A number of residents had signed a letter to the Council a while ago asking for a public meeting, but this had not happened.

The Chairman said that items to be considered for the next Agenda should be sent to the Deputy Town Clerk. It had not been possible to hold the Annual Town Meeting last year due to concerns over Covid, but a date for the next Meeting would be published shortly.

168 ADJOURNMENT FOR COUNTY COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

(a) Cllr Field-Johnson – Burford and North Carterton.

Cllr Field-Johnson gave his report towards the start of this meeting as he had another parish meeting to attend after this one. His written report for March had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting, which highlighted the following:

The County Council set its budget for the year at its meeting on 8 February 2022, which included a 5% increase in Council Tax. The meeting had been overshadowed by a protest outside relating to the Council's motion to impose a vegan diet at all council-catered events. The motion would need to be ratified by Cabinet on 15 March 2022 and Conservatives would be urging them to seek change through education and choice rather than diktat.

Work continued to reduce the speed limit on the majority of the county's 30mph roads to 20mph. Compliance by motorists will be voluntary as it will not be enforced by the police.

Britain's first Zero Emission Zone pilot scheme started on 28 February in Oxford, covering New Road, Bonn Square, Queen Street, Cornmarket Street, New Inn Hall Street, Shoe Lane, Market Street, Ship Street and St Michaels Street. This will be a precursor to the introduction of a larger zone covering most of the city centre by 2023, subject to further consultation. All petrol and diesel vehicles will incur a daily charge of between £2-£10, enforced via automatic number plate recognition cameras.

A working group has been set up to review the extent and cost of the current partnership between OCC and Cherwell District Council and a transition plan would then be prepared.

WODC have taken over the cleaning of the underpass on Upavon Way, though this will continue to be funded by OCC. The underpass is no longer flooded.

(b) Cllr Leverton – South and West Carterton, Armed Forces Champion, Shadow Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Cllr Leverton said that the proposal to provide only vegan food at council-catered events had been passed, with plant-based options to be made available on school menus for part of the week.

He had arranged a further meeting to discuss improvements to the traffic flow at the town centre crossroads.

He was pleased to report that he had been appointed as Shadow Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and was also Chair on Grievance Panels.

A meeting had been held to discuss the Oxford Transport Strategy and he was disappointed that it did not include improvements to bus services in our area and in particular for the villages.

He attended an Armed Forces Champions conference regarding the upcoming Covenant changes, which is very positive for ex-serving members and their families.

A number of road and pavement repairs are under way, which has been driven by Fix My Street. He encouraged Councillors to use this service to report any issues raised by residents.

Following on from Cllr Field-Johnson's report, the Zero Emission Zone in Oxford city centre has come into effect with a rapid expansion planned to encompass the majority of the city within the ring road. Parking charges in the city centre have been increased.

He had also attended several local parish meetings.

169 ADJOURNMENT FOR DISTRICT COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

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

Together with Cllr Leverton, she attended a meeting of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, where she continued to raise the issue of access to dental services. The Health Watch committee continued to do regular consultations and engage with the public on this.

She met with the Trustees of the Family Centre and their new Manager to discuss funding and other matters.

As part of the Events Working Group, she is involved in planning events for the Platinum Jubilee. On Thursday 2 June, the Oxfordshire Play Association will be holding a Play and Activity Day on Alvescot Road Recreation Ground. On Friday 3 June, a Street Party for children is being planned on the Market Square, to include picnic food and a children's entertainer, followed in the afternoon/evening by live music.

The Carterton Carnival Committee is meeting once a month. Plans are progressing well, with commitments from stallholders and funfair rides. It is hoped to have a walking procession with a fancy dress theme. It is anticipated at this point that the event will be self-funding and that a Council Grant will not be needed.

(b) Cllr Crossland – Carterton North West. No report at this time.

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

Together with Cllr Norman MacRae, he had attended the AGM of the South East Reserve Forces Cadets Association (SERFCA) at the Army and Navy Club in London.

The Veterans Hub has restarted, after being closed for a few months due to Covid, and will be held at Carterton WI Hall every fourth Thursday each month.

Carterton Leisure Centre had been used as a collection point for donations to support those affected by the war in Ukraine. There has been an overwhelming response from the public, volunteers and RAF personnel. It is estimated that over 1,000 m² of donations have all been sorted and boxed up by volunteers. The people of Carterton have responded with great generosity and he expressed his thanks to everyone involved.

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

Since the last Town Council meeting in February, he had attended the Audit & General Purposes Committee and chaired the main District Council meeting in February where the balanced Budget was approved.

He also attended a special combined Climate Environment and Economic & Social meeting to discuss the pass comments to Cabinet on the Master Plan for West Eynsham Strategic Development Area.

He is working in conjunction with St John's Primary School and the District Biodiversity and Land Management officer looking at school involvement with the Wildflower project on Shilton Park.

(e) Cllr Mead – Carterton South, Leader of WODC. No report at this time.

170 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

He expressed his thanks to the Deputy Mayor who had covered for him during the two weeks he needed to be in isolation and also to the staff for the extra work incurred.

Together with Cllr McBride, he had met with Bill Oddy at WODC regarding litter bins in the town and had arranged for some changes in response to feedback from members of the public. There is an option for the Town Council to purchase further bins for an additional emptying cost.

A lunch had been held for the retirement of Ron Spurs from his post as Town Clerk. He wished to record his thanks to Ron for his excellent service.

Following on from Cllr Bull's update on events for The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, he said that it takes a great deal of effort to put on events for the town and he urged Councillors to contact Cllr Bull if they are able to offer any help.

Work is taking place looking at road safety in the town, including the possibility of speed detectors and flashing speed indicator signs.

The next edition of The Crier magazine would be distributed in the near future. A small working group consisting of Cllr Bull, Cllr Crossland and Cllr Harold meet regularly to put

together contributions for the magazine. There will be an article showing the latest plans for the new Pavilion, giving the opportunity for residents to give their feedback.

171 DEPUTY TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Deputy Clerk had no report to make at this time.

172 TOWN HALL LAPTOPS

The Town Hall laptops were purchased in 2016 and staff are now experiencing a variety of technical problems with them causing a backlog of work. Broadband issues have been ruled out. The Council's IT provider has carried out some maintenance, but the problems persist. Quotations for four replacement laptops were obtained from Currys/PC World and Altodigital, circulated with the Agenda, with the costs as follows:

Curry's/PC World	£1,876.00	(£469.00 per unit)
Altodigital	£1,747.36	(£436.84 per unit)

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the purchase of four new staff laptops from Altodigital. Cllr Handley abstained.

173 PCSO CONTRACT RENEWAL

The Council have funded an extra Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) to work in the town for a number of years now with good feedback from the public. The Contract, circulated to Councillors with the Agenda, is now due for renewal at a cost of £4,859 per quarter.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the renewal of the PCSO Contract for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

174 WORKS FOR AUTHORISATION

(a) Foxcroft Drive. The area around 15-17 Foxcroft Drive is overgrown and unsightly. Council was asked to consider whether to prune and generally tidy the area at a cost of £175 or to remove the undergrowth altogether at a cost of £290. Works are also required to a multi-stemmed Hawthorn tree, which is structurally unbalanced and likely to become unstable. It is recommended that the height is reduced to that of the boundary fence or just below, which would then regenerate at a more long-term manageable level. The cost of this work would be £350 plus VAT.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the removal of the undergrowth and tree works as detailed above, subject to confirmation that the land is owned by the Council.

(b) Home Close. This unofficial pathway has been used extensively by residents for over 20 years for access between Home Close, Richens Drive and the adjacent RAF housing. It consists of a gap in the fence and 8-10m of grass that becomes slippery in wet weather and presents a hazard for users. As part of the pathway will be on MOD land, permission from the landowner would be required. The Council's contractor supplied the following quote:

Excavate 14 lm x 1.2m wide new footpath, 150mm in depth, removing spoil from site.
Lay 28 lm of 50mm x 150mm concrete path edging and lay 100mm type 1 hardcore sub base upon a geotextile membrane.
Top new pathway with 1mm tarmac to a depth of 50mm.
Cost: £2,470

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE that the above works are taken forward, subject to a legal agreement with the landowner.

(c) Carterton streets – weed spraying. The kerbs around the streets of the town are sprayed twice per year to control weed growth. Treatments would take place in May and September/October at a total cost of £2,109.12.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the weed treatments as detailed above.

(d) Willow Meadows. Work is required to remove a collapsed section of a Willow tree from the brook and re-pollard the remaining unstable section of the tree at a total cost of £1,080.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the tree works as detailed above.

(e) Market Square – Ground Lights. The ground lights have not worked for a while and a quote was sought to repair and convert the 16 lights from compact florescent to Bayonet Cap LED. This would result in a reduced power consumption from 160w to 112w and allow easier access for maintenance and changing of the lamps. The total cost would be £570.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the above works to the Market Square ground lights.

(f) Alvescot Road Recreation Ground. The close board fence that runs the length of the playground has suffered some storm damage. The cost of repair would be £575.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the repair of the fence.

(g) Alvescot Road Recreation Ground. A resident of Spurrett Gardens that backs onto the recreation ground has reported an issue with ivy growing over into their property. An inspection has revealed a lot of vegetation and Laurel bushes are growing against the fence and it is suggested to make a gap of approximately a meter wide cut between the fence and the shrubs at a cost of £300 plus VAT.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the removal of vegetation as detailed above.

175 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Financial Statements to 28 February 2022, previously circulated and set out at Annex A, were noted.

176 RECEIPTS

Receipts between 16 February 2022 and 15 March 2022, previously circulated, were noted.

177 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Council RESOLVED that the Accounts for Payment for March 2022, set out at Annex B, be APPROVED for payment. Cllr Handley abstained.

178 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

179

Confidential Item.

180

Confidential Item.

181

Confidential Item.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm

19th April 2022

Town Mayor