

CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE TOWN HALL
ON TUESDAY 16 OCTOBER 2018
COMMENCING AT 7.45 PM

- Present: Cllr M McBride – Chairman
Cllr M Mead – Vice-Chairman
- Cllr R Crapper Cllr D Melvin
Cllr E Hatton Cllr P Scott
Cllr J Hayes Cllr D Wesson
Cllr N Leverton
- Apologies: Cllr J Bull, Cllr D Bulley, Cllr S Coul, Cllr C Delaney, Cllr L little
Cllr S Scott-Stovold, Cllr C Wilson
- Officers: Ron Spurs – Town Clerk
Teresa Whitford – Admin Officer
- In attendance: Cllr P Handley (County Councillor)
Five members of the public

95 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Crapper declared an interest in Item 106, Request for Financial Assistance from Cotswold Flower Club, as his wife is a member.

96 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 September 2018, previously circulated to Members, were received. Cllr Scott said that under Item 87, Motion of No Confidence, he had concurred with Cllr Wilson's statement rather than Cllr Little's and that the comments he had made were not included.

A vote was taken and Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the minutes as a correct record. Cllr Scott abstained.

97 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor had attended a number of events representing Carterton in the wider community as well as within the town:

- On 21 September, the Battle of Britain Fish & Chip Supper took place at Brownes Hall. The Mayor expressed his thanks to all those who had helped to make it a very successful evening.
- On 30 September, Hook Norton Brass Band performed. This was the last performance of the season. The concerts had generally not been well supported this year and taking a break next year was being considered.
- On 5 October, the Mayor attended the Chairman of Cherwell District Council's Charity Bingo Night.
- On 12 October, the Mayor and his wife attended a Civic Dinner at the Barracks in Bicester.

- On Sunday 14 October, the Mayor attended a Civic Service in Witney.
- This morning, the Town Council hosted the Allotments Association for the presentation of a Diploma for Innovative Projects awarded by the International Office of Allotment and Leisure Gardens. The presentation was followed by a tour of the Allotments to see the excellent work being done.
- This afternoon, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor attended the Lord Mayor of Oxford's Afternoon Tea.

Future events were as follows:

- 19 October - Brize Norton Recognition Awards for Valued and Outstanding Service (BRAVOS).
- 26 October - Chairman of West Oxfordshire District Council's Civic Reception for Soldiers of Oxfordshire.
- 28 October - Afternoon Tea for the Retirement of Rev & Mrs Blakey at St John's Church.
- 30 October - Lord Lieutenant's Award Ceremony in Oxford.
- 9 November - South Oxfordshire District Council Race Night.
- 10 November - Murder Mystery Night in Didcot.
- 11 November - Remembrance Service at St John's Church, followed by the laying of Wreaths at the War Memorial. He hoped as many Councillors as possible would attend.
- 5 December - Town Council Christmas Dinner at The Windmill Restaurant.

The Mayor had met with the new Station Commander at RAF Brize Norton who had offered a visit round the base for Members of the Council in early December.

98 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.

99 ADJOURNMENT FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO RAISE MATTERS

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

100 ADJOURNMENT FOR COUNTY COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

Cllr Handley said he had attended the public meeting held at the WI Hall last week regarding the bollards to prevent traffic using Swinbrook Road to access the new housing development at Swinbrook Park. The Fire Service were satisfied that local Fire Stations were familiar with the road network and the bollards would not cause any problem. There was a concern that the bollards were heavy and not easily moved. The Clerk said the bollards weighed 40kg each, which was too heavy for the emergency services to remove. The Fire Service would carry out a site visit to test how removable the bollards were.

The Clerk had written a lengthy report that had been sent to OCC and believed that they had failed to grasp the level of local concern over this issue. The legal office at the County Council had confirmed that there was a Road Closure Order in place as part of the planning permission for the housing development and that locks for the bollards would be fitted later this week. There were still some outstanding signage issues. The legal department also said that David Wilson Homes intend to keep some of the roads in their ownership, so not all the roads would be adopted by OCC.

Work would commence to resurface the town centre crossroads on 5 November, with the road being closed for two nights. A previous meeting with OCC had discussed reducing the width of the pavements to allow filter lanes for buses and to look at the timing of the traffic lights, together with improving the junction at Wycombe Way/Black Bourton Road, but they did not seem to have taken this forward. Cllr Handley suggested reinstating the Traffic Advisory Committee held in previous years to improve communication between the town and OCC over highways issues.

Cllr Handley had been in touch with West Oxfordshire District Council regarding extending the servicing of electric blankets and mobility scooters to Carterton.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Handley for his report.

101 PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Council received the Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning Committee held on 18 September and 2 October 2018. These were noted.

102 ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Council received the Minutes of the Administration Committee held on 9 October 2018. The Committee recommended that Council approve the following:

(a) Gender Neutral Councillor Titles. The Clerk had submitted a report to the Committee suggesting that, in line with West Oxfordshire District Council, Carterton Town Council adopt gender neutral titles for all Councillors. The Committee had unanimously agreed that this should be adopted. Council voted unanimously to APPROVE the adoption of gender neutral titles.

(b) Sale of Council Owned Land. After a lengthy discussion, the Committee recommended that the Chair of the Amenities and Economic Regeneration Committee form a working group to evaluate each application from residents to purchase or transfer amenity land. Each application would be assessed on its individual merits. The Committee also recommended that Council adopt the Policy that had been circulated to Members. A vote was taken and Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the Policy and set up a working group. Cllr Scott and Cllr Hatton abstained.

103 EVENTS WORKING GROUP

Council received the Notes of the Events Working Group meeting held on 25 September 2018. These were noted.

104 URGENCY COMMITTEES

Council received the Minutes of the Urgency Committee held on 14 September 2018, which had been convened for the approval of funds up to £6,000 for legal work by Knights Solicitors relating to a Subject Access Request made by Cllr Little, together with £5,000 allocated for ongoing legal costs relating to the Council's claim against Cllr Little. The Committee also approved payment of the outstanding invoice from Knights Solicitors for £1,050 plus VAT.

Council received the Minutes of the Urgency Committee held on 5 October 2018, which had been convened for the approval for further funds of £4,000 for legal costs relating to the Subject Access Request.

The above Minutes were noted.

105 BLACK BOURTON CEMETERY – CONTROL OF RABBITS

Council received a report by the Town Clerk for approval to appoint NBC Environment as the Council's chosen contractor to cull rabbits at Black Bourton Cemetery. There has been a rabbit problem at the Cemetery for many years, with the destruction of plants and flowers left on graves. This has now escalated to become a health and safety issue, with the risk of graves being undermined by rabbit holes.

NBC Environment, who are the preferred contractor with West Oxfordshire District Council, visited the Cemetery and submitted their report to Council. They recommended a programme of out of hours shoots, initially three times a week for two weeks to reduce the population, dropping to once a week for two weeks, then monthly for three months, and finally quarterly. The police and local residents would be informed. The cost would be £1,430 for the initial programme, then £520 annually thereafter.

The use of gas or ferrets were not an option due to regular public access and the proximity of a neighbouring property. Rabbit proof fencing would have to be dug very deep into the ground, which would have to be done by hand due to the fence being very close to gravestones and could cost thousands of pounds. This would also require the neighbouring landowner's permission.

Cllrs McBride and Wesson said they would reluctantly support the proposal. Cllr Leverton suggested the Cemetery be closed to the public while the works were carried out. Cllr Hayes had concerns as to whether shooting with an air rifle was humane and suggested rabbit proof fencing be installed in the long term. Teresa Whitford said that the contractor believed that shooting them was more humane than the other methods.

Cllr Mead said that government guidelines on shooting rabbits stated that residents would need to be informed, the work would be best carried out during the daytime as night time shoots required that the Council had to be the owner/occupier to have the shooting rights, and that other methods be considered before resorting to shooting. She had concerns about firing guns in a Cemetery where people were laid to rest and would prefer that the work be carried out on the adjoining property where the main warren is located.

A vote was taken regarding an initial cull of the rabbits, with five in favour and two against. Cllrs Hatton and Mead abstained.

Cllr Scott proposed the Council look into the cost of installing rabbit proof fencing. A vote was taken, which was unanimously in favour.

Council **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE**, albeit reluctantly, an initial cull of the rabbits and to look into the cost of installing rabbit proof fencing.

106 APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Council had received the following applications:

- (a) Cotswold Flower Club. An application had been received for £1,000 to cover the cost of demonstrators for their monthly meetings between October 2018 and May 2019, which includes the cost of flowers and travel.
- (b) Carterton Football Club. An application had been received for £5,000 to replace broken goals, repair floodlights, provide further LED illumination for training nights, purchase

equipment for youth teams, repair leaking roof, repair ceiling in Social Club, repipe gas to the oven in the upstairs kitchen and reinstate a boiler for the upstairs heating system.

Cllr Scott said the Football Club had made substantial changes recently and provide a fantastic opportunity for the youngsters of the town.

Cllr Leverton had met with Phil Godfrey, the new Chairman of the Club. The Club had recently become a Limited Company and Cllr Leverton would prefer more information on this, particularly how this might affect the Club's Constitution.

Cllr Melvin was concerned that the Council were not informed about the change in status and suggested the Club make a presentation to the Council as to how they see the future of the Club.

Cllr Mead suggested the funds be made available to the Club on a drawdown basis on production of individual quotes and invoices. She said the Football Club was set up for the community as a non-profit organisation and wondered if they were now running it as a business.

The Clerk had asked Cllr Leverton and Cllr Little to contact the Club Chairman. Cllr Little, as a Trustee of the Club, had reported back that she supported this application. As the funds were sought mostly for repairs and equipment for the building, the Council from a landlord's perspective would not have any problem with this, but discussion was needed on the points raised by Cllr Leverton. A vote was taken, with all in favour, excepting Cllr Hatton who abstained.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the sum of £1,000 for Cotswold Flower Club and up to £5,000 for Carterton Football Club, to be made available on a drawdown basis.

107 NEW ALLOTMENTS – REQUEST FOR FUNDING

Council received a report from the Town Clerk to consider a request from the Allotments Association seeking the sum of £3,855 to set up the new Allotments at Elmhurst Way. This consists of £1,995, plus delivery and keys, to purchase a second-hand shipping container, and £1,500 start-up grant, which would be used as follows:

- Purchase machinery, main gate padlocks and keys, extra keys to the container for members and wheelbarrows.
- National Allotment Membership, Third Party Liability Insurance and membership of Royal Horticultural Society.
- Weatherproof noticeboard, security container for exposed water taps, fruit trees and wildflower seeds, postage and secretarial work.
- Raised bed constituents (sleepers and soil) to provide facilities for an autistic boy.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the sum of £3,855 to be awarded to the Allotments Association.

108 AMENITIES WORK FOR AUTHORISATION

(a) Hollybush Road Green Area. Tree maintenance required for 15 trees at a cost of £1,750.

(b) Glenmore. Purchase of seven bollards to protect verges from parked cars. The bollards are supplied by Glasdon and are made from low maintenance Durapol, at a cost of £12.62 each, totalling £88.34 plus installation. If the bollards are successful, they could be implemented in other problematic areas.

(c) Town Hall Reception Lighting. The previous Receptionist employed by the Council required subdued lighting to manage a health condition. Brighter lighting is now required and the Council's preferred contractor, Peter White, has quoted for new lighting that meets current Health and Safety requirements, at a cost of £184.

A vote was taken, with all in favour. Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the above works.

109 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Financial Statement to 30 September 2018, set out at Annex B, was APPROVED.

110 INCOME RECEIVED

Income Received during September 2018, previously circulated, was Noted.

111 DEBIT CARD TRANSACTIONS

Debit Card transactions for September 2018, previously circulated, were Noted.

112 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Cllr Scott commented that it was wrong for the Council to pay solicitors fees in respect of the harassment claim by Cllr Little. Cllr Hayes said he also did not approve of this payment.

Cllr Hayes asked what the payment to WBS for Consultancy was for and the Clerk replied that it related to advice sought regarding Council governance.

Council RESOLVED that the Accounts for September 2018, set out at Annex C, be APPROVED for payment.

113 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.

114 MINUTES OF ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE – NJC PAY REVIEW

Confidential item.

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm.

20 November 2018

Town Mayor

1. **Training Course** - I attended a Red Cross First Aid Course. **Noted**
2. **Correspondence** – the previous distributor of the Crier has lodged a claim in the Small Claims Court for 50% of one month's delivery charge - £475. I have responded that the Council will seek to dispute the claim. **Noted**
3. **Commemorative Poppy Display** - Request for Councillor assistance to display and remove the Poppies twice daily, 9.00am and 5.00pm – week commencing 5 November 2018. **Cllrs Crapper, Hatton, Leverton, McBride, Mead and Melvin volunteered.**
4. **Christmas Closure** - The Town Hall will be closed to the public from 12 noon on 24 December 2018 until 9.00am on Wednesday 2 January 2019. **Although closed to the public, the Clerk would be working either at the Town Hall or from home during this period, with the exception of the Bank Holidays.**
5. **Transport Plan** - Cllr Peter Handley presented the plan to a meeting of Councillors. **The Councillors who attended were in favour of supporting the plan and the Clerk would write to the appropriate people.**
6. **Diary Dates**

Tuesday 6 November	Planning Committee
Sunday 11 November	Remembrance Sunday
Tuesday 20 November	Planning & Town Council

**R Spurs
Town Clerk**