

CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2022 COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM

Present: Cllr J Bull - Vice-Chair
Cllr K Baldwin Cllr M McBride
Cllr R Crapper Cllr M Mead
Cllr M Crossland Cllr D Wesson
Cllr P Handley Cllr K Wood
Cllr N King Cllr L Wood
Cllr L Little

In attendance: Cllr N Field-Johnson (County Councillor)
Members of the public x 4

Officers: Rachel Brown (Clerk) – virtual attendance
Kay Linnington (Deputy Clerk) - virtual attendance

131 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Cllr Baylis, Cllr Harold, Cllr Leverton and Cllr Sangster.

132 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr K Wood Item 146 – Allotment holder

133 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 15 November 2022, previously circulated, were approved as a true record.

Following the query from Cllr Handley, he confirmed that the Clerk had responded to him that the £700 cost for mowing Willow Meadows included VAT. Under Item 136, Administration Committee of 6 November 2022, he had asked for written confirmation of when the Complaints Procedure had been approved by full Council and he had not yet received this.

Queries were also raised in relation to political proportionality of committees and the progress of the Football Club lease, which the Clerk will respond to.

134 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Council received the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 15 November 2022, which were noted.

135 EVENTS WORKING GROUP

Council received the minutes of the Events Working Group meeting held on 9 November 2022, which were noted.

136 ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Council received the minutes of the meeting of the Administration Committee held on 6 November 2022. The Committee recommended the following items for approval:

(a) Budget and Precept for 2023/24. The Committee had agreed the budget unanimously, with one amendment – that the CCTV donation remain at £10,000. It was recommended to Council that the Precept is increased by 3%. This would generate a precept of £432,879 (including £4,608.88 election expenses) and the remainder of the funding required would come from the Council's general reserves. This would cost a Band D household £76.99 per annum, which is an increase of £2.24 per year.

Council RESOLVED that the budget be approved (proposed by Cllr McBride and seconded by Cllr Mead); and that the Precept is increased by 3% (proposed by Cllr McBride and seconded by Cllr K Wood).

(b) Standing Orders. It was suggested to change 'Chairman' to 'Chair' throughout the document. Cllr Handley queried whether the outgoing Chair may vote for themselves if they were a Mayoral candidate themselves.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the Standing Orders. The Clerk would seek clarification on Cllr Handley's query on the casting vote for the outgoing Chair.

137 ADJOURNMENT FOR MEMBERS OF PUBLIC TO RAISE MATTERS

A member of the public expressed their thanks to Cllr King and the Town Clerk for the rapid response with regard to an overgrown hedge at Glenmore Park and commended the Council for their vote to allow the Clerk to authorise such minor works without having to come back to the full Council meeting for approval.

138 ADJOURNMENT FOR COUNTY COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

(a) Cllr Leverton – South and West Carterton

Cllr Leverton had given his apologies for this meeting.

(b) Cllr N Field-Johnson – North Carterton

Cllr Field-Johnson's report for December had been circulated with the agenda. A full Council meeting took place today at County Hall. Current administration is very Oxford-centric. LTNs, bus gates and dividing Oxford City into six districts are causing a lot of concern amongst residents and businesses. The A40 improvements have now being postponed but Park & Ride at Eynsham still going ahead. The Botley Road closure scheduled to take place from January 2023 has been postponed until the spring. These works will result in huge disruption for travelling to and from Oxford for a year, but we will then have a 21st century train station. Stagecoach has cancelled some rural bus services, with Brize Norton particularly affected as the SI service no longer serves the village.

He attended the Brize Norton Parish Council meeting on Monday this week and a group called Lone Star was there talking about the development of Christchurch land on the Brize

Norton/Carterton boundaries. Discussions are still at an early stage. This would include a light industrial estate linked to the airbase, plus three housing developments of 2,000 houses each.

OCC has agreed to expand its membership from 63 to 69 councillors according to population. No decision has been made as to where these seats will be held. The County's budget meeting will be held in February 2023 and it is expected there will be a 5% increase in Council Tax.

Cllr Handley raised the issue of where the money is being spent from that set aside for the Fire Station for Carterton and was concerned that the firefighters may be relocated to surrounding areas. Cllr Field-Johnson would look into this but said we would not have a major say in how the money is spent.

139 ADJOURNMENT FOR DISTRICT COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

(a) Cllr Bull – Carterton North West

Since our last meeting I am pleased to say that the missing bit of path coming out from Swinbrook Park has now been completed and the resident that first brought this to mine and Councillor Crosslands attention has been into the town hall to thank us both for our help with this matter.

I have also finally resolved the waste bins issue that residents of Blenheim court were having and my thanks go to WODC officers and Cottsway housing for their assistance with this matter.

Most of my time has of course been taken up with the Lantern parade, I had the pleasure of going in to 2 schools to help the young people make the wonderful lanterns. We also held a full weekend of public workshops, and my thanks go to Cllr Leverton and his wife Sue, Cllr Harold, Cllr Kim Wood and Cllr Liz Wood and Cllr Mead who without their help we would not have been able to support so many of the children and young people to make their lanterns. My special thanks go to Katie Zasada who does all the work behind the scenes to ensure we have all the right materials.

I was of course honoured to attend the remembrance parade and wish to thank the people of Carterton and beyond for showing their support for this great occasion. I chair the Events Working Group that oversees this event and wish my thanks to go to everyone that is involved. We are of course starting to plan for the King's coronation.

I have attended all council and sub committee meetings for the district and continue to raise the issue of suitable CCTV within our town. It is hoped that an update will be available in the New year which I will of course report back on as soon as it is available.

May I take this opportunity to wish all residents of Carterton and my colleagues a Merry Christmas and a Happy New year.

(b) Cllr McBride – Carterton North East

Since our last meeting there has not been a full District Council meeting, but I have attended the Climate and Environmental Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting. We were updated on the Ubico Business plan and an Air Quality update - no information is available for Carterton as no monitoring is carried out here.

The draft new West Oxfordshire Council Plan 2023 – 2027 was discussed in respect of Climate and Environment issues.

Service Performance Report was presented as well as the Committee and Cabinet Work Programmes.

I have also been involved with our County Councillor concerning the resurgent problem with flooding of the underpass. Options to solve the recurring problem will be discussed.

Following an on-site visit with a resident and representative from Ubico, the problem of repeated missed collections from one of the communal sites seems to be resolved.

Cllr McBride clarified a point from his report regarding the Climate & Environment committee, that there is a lot more detail available if anyone would like a link to the WODC documents. He highlighted the issue of air quality monitoring, that this is not done for Carterton and there is no legal requirement to do this. The only places in West Oxfordshire that currently fall below government targets are Bridge Street in Witney and an area of Chipping Norton. It was queried whether RAF Brize Norton was a problem and wondered if Cllr Leverton, as Armed Forces Champion, could follow this up. Cllr Field-Johnson responded to the issue in Cllr McBride's report on the underpass on Upavon Way, which again was flooded. The County Council will make one further attempt to clear it and get the pumps working properly, but it could be more cost effective to replace it with a crossing.

(c) Cllr Mead – Carterton South

Finance management and overview scrutiny meeting on 7 December 2022. This was our first look at the proposed budget for 23/24 as with all councils inflation as well as heating costs have all gone up which has affected the budget. WODC have enough in reserves to see us through the next 12 months. A consultation is currently running on the WODC website.

Environment and climate overview scrutiny meeting on 8 December 2022. We covered a wide range of topics but once again budgets and cost savings were the thread to all conversations from the waste contract to the new Council Plan all of which will have an impact on our Town.

Network Rail briefing on the Botley Road closure on 12 December 2022. The original 9th January date has now been pushed back to at least March. The closure of Botley road will have an impact on the residents of Carterton who use the bus service for getting to work and/or college/uni. It is a large but much needed update to the station and track and the disruption is unavoidable, the delay will give OCC and Network rail the time to make the whole thing run smoother and less impact on the commuter.

Case work has been taken up with a housing issues, missed bin collection and the biggest is the five building sites on Milestone Road causing obstructions and the road being muddy but it looks like this will be solved soon.

Cllr Crossland said she had received good feedback from the public on how the Council had worked on the issues of the bollards on Swinbrook Road and the reinstated section of pathway on the junction of Price Way and Shilton Road.

140 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Leverton had given his apologies. Cllr Bull, as Deputy Mayor, said that the Christmas Lights and Lantern Parade had been a great success. It is estimated that around 400 lanterns were made either in the schools or at the public workshops. Her written report expressed thanks to Cllr Kim Wood, Cllr Liz Wood, the Mayor and his wife, Cllr Mead and especially to Katie Zasada for all her work to support the Lantern Parade. Thanks were expressed in turn to Cllr Bull who had worked extremely hard to deliver the Lantern Parade.

141 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk's report had been circulated with the agenda, as follows:

(a) Clerk's Delegated Authority. Payments authorised by the Clerk's delegated authority were:

- £290.00 for event insurance for the Christmas Lights
- £277.20 for LED lights for the lantern parade
- £600.00 (£500 + VAT) for first aid cover for the Christmas Lights
- £200 Honorarium for the Mace Bearer

(b) Christmas Closure. The Clerk proposed that the Town Hall be closed from 23 December 2022 and re-open on Tuesday 3 January 2023. The emergency phone number should be displayed on the door and noticeboards. A discussion took place as to whether the Town Hall should remain open during the Christmas break or, if closed, whether staff should take the three days 28-30 December as annual leave. An urgency committee would meet to discuss this further.

(c) Amenities Meeting. The Town Clerk and Mayor recently surveyed areas in Carterton to determine where additional maintenance is required, and where bins could be provided. As the quinquennial reports on the council's buildings are also now available, the Clerk would like to request that the Amenities Committee meeting is brought forward to January, so these items can be addressed earlier.

(d) Remembrance Sunday and Christmas Lights. A meeting will be held in the New Year to discuss the Remembrance Sunday service and Christmas Lights event. The Clerk would like to extend her thanks to all the town council staff and the many volunteers who helped with these events. The snow globe proved very popular and the Clerk would like to thank Emma Phillips, Market Towns Officer at West Oxfordshire District Council, for arranging this.

(e) Grant to Carterton WI. A letter of thanks has been received from Carterton Women's Institute for the grant of £20,000 towards the cost of replacement windows and doors.

(f) An issue has come to light with the car park at Morrisons supermarket where parking tickets are being issued in error due to a faulty camera system. The Clerk has written to Euro Car Parks asking what they are doing to address the issue. In the meantime, residents should be aware that Morrisons are able to cancel any fines issued in error.

(g) A written complaint has been received from a member of the public about the conduct of Councillors at the last Town Council meeting and the Clerk has responded to it.

Cllr Field-Johnson and Kay Linnington left the meeting at this point.

142 GRANT APPLICATIONS

(a) Carterton Food Angels. A grant of £9,000 is sought towards the continuing work of the Carterton Food Angels (formerly Carterton & Brize Coronavirus). The group operates on a voluntary basis to provide and deliver individual food parcels to residents in need by referral. The food is stored in two rooms at Carterton Community Centre. Funding is needed to pay for lease of the space at the Community Centre, electricity costs and staple food items.

After a thorough discussion, council RESOLVED to defer this application until the January 2023 meeting and invite the applicant to attend.

143 WODC MONITORING OFFICER RESPONSE

A response had been received from Monitoring Officer following a complaint by Cllr Little alleging that Cllr McBride had breached the code of conduct by re-posting on his personal Facebook page a post from the Carterton Town Council Facebook page about legal proceedings between the Town Council and Cllr Little that contained some inaccuracies. The Monitoring Officer concluded that an appropriate way of disposing of the matter would be for Cllr McBride to provide a public apology to Cllr Little for re-posting inaccurate information and for any reputational damage and damage to her wellbeing this may have caused and that this should take place in a Carterton Town Council meeting. It was also recommended that Cllr McBride attend some social media training.

Cllr McBride read out a statement and then made a public apology to Cllr Little. Cllr Little accepted his apology.

Cllr Handley left the meeting at this point.

144 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Financial Statement to 30 November 2022, previously circulated and set out at Annex A, was noted.

145 RECEIPTS

Receipts for November 2022, previously circulated, were noted.

146 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

The Accounts for Payment for November 2022, previously circulated and set out at Annex B, were approved for payment (proposed by Cllr K Wood and seconded by Cllr Mead).

147 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.

The members of the public left the room.

148 Confidential item

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

17 January 2022

Town Mayor