

CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL  
ON TUESDAY 27 JULY 2021 COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM

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

Cllr K Baldwin (from Item 47) Cllr C James  
Cllr S Baylis Cllr M McBride  
Cllr R Crapper Cllr M Mead  
Cllr M Crossland Cllr D Wesson  
Cllr P Handley (until Item 55) Cllr K Wood  
Cllr F Harold

Apologies: Cllr J Sangster  
Cllr N Field-Johnson (County Councillor)

Absent: Cllr L Little

In attendance: Several members of the public

Officers: Ron Spurs – Town Clerk

44 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Bull declared an interest in Item 56(a) relating to the Grant Application for Carterton Carnival as she is one of the organisers.

Cllr Wood declared an interest in Item 60 relating to a payment for the Allotments as she is a Committee Member and Allotment holder.

45 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 15 June 2021, previously circulated to Members, were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

46 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning Committee held on 15 and 22 June 2021, which were Noted.

47 AMENITIES AND ECONOMIC REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities and Economic Regeneration Committee held on 22 June 2021. One amendment was required to the Minutes under Item 1, Election of Chairman, which should read ‘Nominations were received from Cllr Wesson and Cllr McBride’ rather than ‘Cllr Little and Cllr McBride’. The Minutes would be amended accordingly. Cllr Handley expressed his concern that Cllr Wood had been elected as Chairman of the Committee when she was not present until later in the meeting.

The Minutes were approved as a correct record, with the amendment detailed above.

#### 48 URGENCY COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Urgency Committee held on 5 July 2021, which was convened to approve the purchase of Polling Cards for the forthcoming Election for a Town Councillor vacancy in Gateway Ward. The purchase of Polling Cards was Approved.

The minutes were noted.

#### 49 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE TOWN

Council received the Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Town Meeting held on 23 April 2019, which had been previously circulated. The approval of the Minutes was required in order to make arrangements for the binding of the Minute Book for that year.

Previously the Minutes had been approved at the next Annual Assembly meeting, but due to Covid restrictions in place at the time, no meeting was held in 2020 and the meeting scheduled for 2021 had not yet taken place. The Clerk had checked the rules around this and confirmed that the Minutes could be approved at any full Council meeting.

The Minutes were approved as a true record and signed by Cllr McBride, who was Chairman of the Council at that time.

#### 50 ADJOURNMENT FOR MEMBERS OF PUBLIC TO RAISE MATTERS

Sue James – Grant Application for Carterton Carnival 2021. Having planned the May Day Fair for the last 15 years and Carterton Celebrates for the last four years, herself and Kayleigh feel they have expertise in planning this type of event but had left the planning Committee for the Carnival as they felt their experience and advice were being ignored. Detailed risk assessments and event plans were drawn up for the May Day Fair and Carterton Celebrates and they always ensure that the necessary licences are in place and all health and safety protocols followed. These include on-site waste management, Public Liability Insurance and adequate First Aid provision. She hoped that the 2021 Carnival would also comply with the necessary regulations. It had been suggested at the last Council meeting that Carterton Celebrates should be self-funding. If this was to be the case, should not the Carnival also be self-funding. She asked to see the Accounts for the Carnival held in 2019 so that Council Grants and how they are spent were open and transparent. She asked whether the Carnival was a Council run event or being run by an independent committee. She hoped the Council would approve the Grant Application, so that a safe and quality event could be organised, but if it is approved she hoped that a Grant would also be accepted from the May Day Fair, Carterton Celebrates and other public events organised for our town and residents. There should not be one rule for one and a different rule for another.

Harry Watts wished to speak on a matter not on the Agenda. A Motion was put forward to request that he leave the meeting, which was approved, and Mr Watts duly left.

Linda Moore. She thanked the Council for putting the Minutes of the Urgency Committee meetings on the Council website and asked that they be published as soon as possible after each Council meeting. She had previously asked to see the Annual Financial Statement and wondered if this was available yet. The Clerk said this was awaiting final approval by the External Auditor.

## 51 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 and had no report to make at this time.

(b) Cllr Leverton – South and West Carterton. Cllr Leverton attended a meeting of full Council at the Spice Hall in Banbury. Meetings were not currently being held in County Hall due to Covid restrictions. He was pleased to be invited to Chair an Appeals Panel regarding a member of OCC staff. He had attended Parish Meetings at Filkins, Alvescot and Langford and had a meeting with the Chair of Broadwell Parish regarding a highways issue. Following a recent Conservative meeting, he had been asked to join the opposition front bench as its shadow Public Health and Equalities portfolio holder. He has also been appointed as the County's Armed Forces Champion for RAF Brize Norton.

## 52 ADJOURNMENT FOR DISTRICT COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

Cllr Bull - Carterton North West, Inclusion Champion and member of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The ICE Centre had taken over the Shopmobility scheme in Witney, which reopened successfully on Monday this week. Three members of the public have already been assisted and, following enquiries from the public, they would be seeking support from WODC to expand the service further.

Together with Cllr Crossland, they are currently assisting several residents in their Wards, particularly with regard to overhanging trees etc. They would follow up the issue of the footpath leading from Price Way on the Swinbrook Park development into Shilton Road, which they understood would be done in late summer 2021.

Cllr Crossland – Carterton North West. Cllr Crossland had continued to help individual residents in her Ward. She had attended the Lowlands Planning Committee when the planning application for the ARRG Pavilion came up for discussion. Because she had a standing interest as a Town Councillor, she had left the meeting while this was discussed, but was able to report that the Committee had voted to approve the application.

Cllr Leverton - Carterton South and Armed Forces Champion. He had attended a very lengthy meeting last week to discuss the 2050 housing issues. He attended a Zoom meeting with SERFCA to discuss the Army Cadets resuming physical meetings, which would begin soon.

He was pleased to announce that a Veterans' Hub was being formed in Carterton to enable veterans access to many different areas of expertise, including financial help, housing, health and mental health. This would be funded by two military charities and it was hoped the Hub would be up and running in October/November 2021.

Cllr McBride – Carterton North East, Chairman of WODC and Vice-Chairman of the WODC Environmental Committee. As Chairman of the District Council, he said that they did not hold a meeting in June and the July meeting was scheduled for tomorrow, so he had nothing to report on this. He had been able to remain in the Lowlands Planning Committee meeting when the Pavilion was discussed and could also confirm that it had been approved.

Cllr Mead – Carterton South, Leader of WODC. Cllr Mead reported that West Oxfordshire had the highest number of Covid cases in Oxfordshire. She had requested the provision of a local drop-in Vaccination Centre, which had been approved and is up and running this week in the Town Centre Shop in Witney. Yesterday they delivered 258 Pfizer vaccinations. The Centre would return in 8-10 weeks to deliver the second jabs.

The Oxfordshire Growth Board has been renamed as the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

A letter had been sent out by Parliament concerning the formation of unitary councils, which is underway in some areas. She had been assured that Oxfordshire, being part of the Ark Growth Board, would not be affected and those that had already begun the process were due to complete by 2023.

Shopmobility has been run in the centre of Witney for many years but stopped last year due to the pandemic. The ICE Centre had approached the District Council to take over running it and the scheme was now up and running again.

She highly recommended downloading the LocalFree App, which was working well, with many businesses in Carterton subscribing to it. There were currently 224 discounts available via the App.

The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 involves Carterton and a consultation is underway on their website. This is a strategic planning document that aims to set out how to achieve aspirations for the area up to 2050. She recommended everyone should read it and take part in the consultation.

The Monitoring Officer at WODC, Keith Butler, would be retiring at the end of July 2021. He would be very much missed. With West Oxfordshire growing rapidly, the role would be broken down into three roles – Monitoring Officer, Returning Officer and Democratic Services Officer.

The Chairman thanked the District Councillors for their reports.

## 53 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor welcomed Cllr Kurt Baldwin, newly elected Councillor for Upavon Ward. There would be an election taking place on 2 September 2021 for a new Councillor in Gateway Ward. As there have been several new Councillors elected recently, a Councillor Training Session would be organised in September.

He expressed his thanks to Sue and Kayleigh James for the fantastic Carterton Celebrates Week. He particularly enjoyed the Bandstand Concert on Sunday afternoon, which was very well attended. He thanked Katie Zasada and the Deputy Mayor for their help in ensuring he visited as many events as possible during the week.

On 19 July, himself and Cllr Mead attend the annual Base Commander's Reception at RAF Brize Norton. He particularly enjoyed the music provided by the Royal Air Force Band.

Last Thursday, along with his wife and Cllr McBride, he attended at all faiths service at Thorney Lakes, which was a lovely setting and very enjoyable event. He had a long conversation with Col Crowley, Chief Executive of SERFCA, who had thanked him for attending their meetings during the pandemic.

This Thursday he will be meeting with Stagecoach to discuss local bus services.

A Battle of Britain Fish & Chip Supper would be held on Friday 17 September 2021 at Brownes Hall and have tentatively booked the RAF Brize Norton Military Wives Choir.

An informal discussion group has been set up with local parishes and the first meeting would be held on 7 September 2021. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor would attend in the first instance but may extend this to other Councillors in the future if this would be of benefit.

#### 54 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Clerk said that arrangements are now being made for the annual Battle of Britain Civic Service, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas Lights switch on. Whilst we hope that these events will run as in previous years, they will be dependent on any Covid restrictions in place at the time.

#### 55 REVIEW OF ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The Anti-Bullying Policy had been circulated with the Agenda. The policy is a reminder that Council Members should respect each other and particularly drew attention to paragraph 2.5:

*False or malicious allegations of harassment or bullying which damage the reputation of a fellow employee/member will not be tolerated and will be dealt with as serious misconduct under the Disciplinary Procedure or a referral to the Standards process.*

Cllr Handley expressed his concern that he had not been contacted to discuss a current issue and therefore the Council were not adhering to the correct procedure. He left the meeting at this point.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the Anti-Bullying Policy.

#### 56 GRANT APPLICATIONS

(a) Carterton Carnival 2021. Michelle Clarkson had applied for a Grant of £3,500 towards the cost of putting on a one-day Carnival on Saturday 28 August 2021 on Alvescot Road Recreation Ground. Cllr Bull, as one of the organisers, stated that she had declared an interest and would not therefore speak or vote on this item.

The event would include a funfair and attractions, individual stalls and food vendors. The Grant would be used to fund a free evening music event from 5pm to 10pm and would include staging, bands, insurance, waste bins and disposal. Details of income/expenditure from the previous Carnival in 2019 were circulated with the Agenda.

Cllr Mead encouraged support for the Carnival, which had been a great success last time and would bring the community together. Cllr Crossland referred to Sue James' comments earlier that the Council should support all events equally and was assured that each application for funds would be considered on its merits.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE a Grant of £3,500 on a drawdown basis.

(b) Carterton Community Centre Fire Doors. The Manager of the Community Centre has applied for a Grant of £3,039 towards part of the total cost of £6,078 to make necessary repairs to the fire doors to ensure fire safety standards are maintained. A quote from Dukes Fire Safety had been circulated with the Agenda.

There was a discussion as to whether this application should be funded from the Grants budget or the Amenities budget. It was felt that the doors were part of the fabric of the building and yet did not seem to be covered by the terms of the Lease. Cllr Bull, as Outside Body Representative for the Community Centre, said that this had been discussed thoroughly by the Community Centre Committee and was felt to be fair for this to be funded on a 50:50 basis.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE that the sum of £3,039 should be paid from the Amenities budget.

(a) ARRG Football Pitch. The Council are responsible for maintenance of the football pitch to ensure it is suitable for use and safe for players. It has been three years since it last received attention and a quote, previously circulated, was obtained from the Council's contractor, UBICO. The work would include weed killing £210, chain harrows £48, spiking £74 and fertilising £300, making a total cost of £632 plus VAT.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE this work as detailed above.

(b) Tree work at Lavender Place. Following a concern raised by the resident of 27 Lavender Place that the trees near his property were becoming unstable due to large branches failing, the Tree Surgeon carried out a detailed inspection of the trees on this land. Although the Council are reluctant to fell trees, on this occasion the Tree Surgeon felt the best option was to fell three trees and remove the stumps to give the healthiest specimens the best chance of reaching their full potential. The cost would be £1,000.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE this work as detailed above.

(c) Town Hall Fire Alarms and Emergency Lighting. Following a recent fire alarm and emergency lighting service by Azura, the engineer noted that some areas in the old part of the Town Hall were not adequately covered by either. A quote, previously circulated, had been obtained to bring this up to specification and on completion the Council will be issued with the relevant Certificates. Council were asked to consider the three options set out in the quote.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE Option 1 from the quote, which includes the installation of additional smoke/heat detectors to ensure the main escape routes are covered, at a cost of £1,125.

(d) Tree work at Heather Close. Following concerns raised by the resident of 53 Heather Close regarding large branches falling into his garden from a tree on Council land to the rear of his property that had damaged furniture in his garden. The Tree Surgeon had inspected the Bird Cherry tree and recommended that it is felled due to poor condition. Whilst there, he noticed that two other trees required attention – an Ash tree in decline and a dead Sycamore tree. He recommended felling the Ash and reducing the Sycamore to leave as monolith of 5m for biological reasons. Council were asked to consider carrying out the work to all three trees at a cost of £1,400 plus VAT.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the work to all three trees as detailed above.

(e) Allandale Fencing. The fence installed by the Family Centre's contractor (Perry Kerslake) has been inspected and deemed safe. The Town Council had previously agreed to pay for the fence using our preferred supplier McCracken & Son at a cost of £1,145. However, the work had been done by Mr Kerslake at a cost of £1,050 and Council were asked to consider this payment.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the payment to Mr Kerslake. A letter would be sent to the Allandale Centre Committee stating that they would be responsible for any necessary repairs to this fence. The letter would also remind them of the correct procedure to be followed when works need to be undertaken and stress the importance of involving the Council's two Outside Body Representatives, Cllr Bull and Cllr Crossland, who had been appointed to support them.

(f) Town Hall Flag Poles. Having recently had problems with both flagpoles outside the Town Hall, it was noted that they had not been inspected and serviced since their installation (one is over 20 years old and the other approximately eight years old). A quote was sought from a specialist company, previously circulated, at a cost of £1,273 plus VAT.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the above work to the Flag Poles.

(g) Town Hall Door Entry System. The door entry system to the Town Hall is over 20 years old and some of the numerical buttons have started to fail. The Council's contractor, Azura, have quoted for a modern replacement, previously circulated, at a cost of £2,545 plus VAT.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the above work to the Door Entry System.

#### 58 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Financial Statement to 30 June 2021, set out at Annex A, was Noted.

#### 59 RECEIPTS

Receipts to 30 June 2021, previously circulated, were Noted.

#### 60 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Council RESOLVED that the Accounts for July 2021, set out at Annex B, be APPROVED for payment.

#### 61 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

62 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

63 CONFIDENTIAL ITEM FROM THE MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES AND ECONOMIC REGENERATION COMMITTEE

64 CARTERTON CRIER MAGAZINE

Confidential item.

The meeting ended 8.25 pm

21 September 2021

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Town Mayor