

CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING  
ON TUESDAY 20 OCTOBER 2020  
COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM

Present: Cllr S Baylis Cllr N Leverton  
Cllr J Bull Cllr L Little (until Item 71)  
Cllr C Cook Cllr M McBride  
Cllr R Crapper Cllr M Mead  
Cllr M Crossland Cllr J Sangster  
Cllr C James Cllr D Wesson  
Cllr K Wood

Apologies: Cllr P Handley, Cllr E Hatton

In attendance: Cllr N Field-Johnson (County Councillor) – until Item 78  
Several members of the public

Officers: Ron Spurs – Town Clerk  
Katie Zasada

Before commencing with the first Agenda Item, Cllr Mead wished to say a few words:

*I was elected as Mayor of Carterton in May 2019 and it has been an honour and a privilege to serve as the Mayor of my hometown. There have been many high points and some challenges, but I can honestly say that the good people of Carterton have made it so much easier. Promoting our town has been a joy and something I would relish without being Mayor of the town.*

*There have been many highlights in my term as Mayor, including the reincarnation of the much loved Carterton Carnival; the Battle of Britain Fish and Chip Supper; the Carterton Remembrance Service – it was such an honour to preside over this last year and it gave us a huge opportunity to remember all those that gave us much more than we could ever give. The service itself and the number of people in attendance was heart-warming. I enjoyed making Lanterns with the children for the Christmas Lights switch-on, which was really well attended and truly astounding. The town has funded a PCSO, which will bring many benefits and it was a delight to propose this to the Council. Poppy has now started patrolling and getting to know the residents and traders of Carterton. The Market has gone from strength to strength and the local town shops have bucked the trend as we now have far fewer empty shops than surrounding major towns. My regular walk around to see and greet all the traders has been welcomed by all.*

*The pandemic has tested both residents and Councillors alike. My term as Mayor should have ended in May. However, as the crisis reached a peak it seemed sensible to continue. I have been working closely with the local voluntary community groups to ensure our vulnerable isolated residents receive the care, food parcels, prescriptions and advice they may require. During this I have met some fantastic local people willing to give up so much for their community and it has made me very proud of our town and its people.*

*My decision to stand down is not one that I have made lightly, especially during a pandemic. I certainly would have preferred to do this in the traditional way but it is just not possible. My position at West Oxfordshire District Council has changed in the last month, with me being elected Leader of the Conservative group. The role takes up a great deal of time and I do not think it fair to try and carry on a Chairman of the Town Council at the same time. I hope that*

*you all understand this. My heart will always be with Carterton and its residents and I will be remaining a Town Councillor to support the Council and the newly elected leaders.*

*During my time as Mayor I have had the very able assistance of Katie Zasada and the Town Clerk, Ron Spurs, without whom this job would have been much harder and less enjoyable. I thank them both and all of the Town Hall Staff. As Mayor, I have also had the support and friendship of Cllr Nick Leverton as my Deputy and his help has been invaluable. I wish the very best to the new Mayor and their Deputy and offer my full help and support should it be required in the future.*

#### 68 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR

There were two nominations for the post of Town Mayor – Cllr Leverton and Cllr Bull. A vote was taken, with the majority in favour of Cllr Leverton. Cllr Little abstained.

Council RESOLVED to appoint Cllr Leverton as Town Mayor and he duly took over as Chair of the Meeting.

#### 69 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

There was one nomination for the post of Deputy Mayor – Cllr Bull. A vote was taken, with the majority in favour. Cllr Little abstained.

Council RESOLVED to appoint Cllr Bull as Deputy Mayor.

#### 70 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Crossland - Item 86, Women's Institute Hall

Cllr Wood - Item 84, Payments relating to Allotments (allotment holder)

#### 71 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 September 2020, previously circulated to Members, were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. Cllr Little abstained.

#### 72 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 15 September 2020, which were Noted.

#### 73 EVENTS WORKING GROUP

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Events Working Group held on 17 September 2020, which were Noted.

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

Cllr Leverton reminded the members of the public who wished to speak on the subject of the WI Hall that this part of the meeting was conducted in the public domain and that Council would discuss this topic in closed session later in the meeting.

Jenny Maxwell, President of Carterton WI and a Trustee of the WI Hall, gave some background to the letter to be considered at Item 86. The ladies who bought the land and built the Hall in 1922 were forward looking and would know that now was the time to move forward again. The building is in a poor state of repair and is no longer fit for purpose. Extensive archives are held

of the history of the hall, so this would not be lost if the hall was replaced with a modern building fit for the changing needs of the town. Only a small number of car parking spaces would be required. They would be most grate for any help the Council could provide with the project.

Brian Crossland, Deputy Lieutenant, had been approached by the ladies of the WI a few years ago seeking advice on how to move forward. Having looked after their Accounts for several years, he could see that over the last four years the WI had spent nearly £12,500 purely on maintenance of the hall, which is almost all of what they make from their Coffee Mornings. As the Coffee Mornings are not possible during the Covid-19 crisis, there is potential for serious financial difficulty and further deterioration of the building. He put forward the suggestion that the Council consider taking over the site and replace the hall with a new building with residential properties above to bring in an income. He urged the Council not to be emotionally involved in this old building but rather look to the possibilities for the future.

Another member of the public asked if the current Police Station building had been designated as a Community Asset. The Clerk said that this had been applied for several years ago but was rejected.

The Chairman thanked the members of the public for their contributions.

#### 75 ADJOURNMENT FOR COUNTY COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

Cllr Field-Johnson congratulated Cllr Michele Mead on her excellent work during her term as Mayor of Carterton. He also congratulated the new Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor and looked forward to working with them both.

At the beginning of the year he had earmarked £5,000 towards the Carterton Bus Service project. He asked for clarification on the status of the project. The Clerk said that Council had agreed to support the project and had been in regular contact with West Oxfordshire Community Transport, but their services had been curtailed by the Covid crisis and the earliest start date would be Spring 2021.

He was pleased to commit funds to Carterton Educational Trust, who had been supporting young people in the town during the Covid crisis. He had also funded testing equipment for the River Windrush.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Field-Johnson for his report.

#### 76 ADJOURNMENT FOR DISTRICT COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

Cllr Mead – Carterton South and Cabinet Member for Health and Leisure. WODC are in the process of publishing their comprehensive Covid-19 Recovery Plan, which will go to the next meeting of the full Council for approval. All District Council services are continuing as normal during the crisis.

Cllr Bull - Carterton North West and Inclusion Champion. Cllr Bull is now a member of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and is able to offer advice and information on a range of health topics if needed.

Cllr Crossland – Carterton North West. Cllr Crossland has been part of a Covid Recovery Group at WODC and they have drawn up an extensive report on how the District could move forward post-Covid. They were pleased to see in the interim report that a technical hub for Carterton was being considered to promote a thriving economic future.

Cllr Leverton - Carterton South and Armed Forces Champion. Work continues on the Salt Cross development at Eynsham.

#### 77 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor expressed his thanks to Cllr Mead for the good work she had done during her term as Mayor and his congratulations on her appointment as Leader of West Oxfordshire District Council. He also thanked the Town Councillors for stepping up during these challenging times.

Cllr Crossland, together with Cllr Leverton and Cllr McBride, had met with a gentleman seeking funding to build a railway station in Carterton. The details of the project would come at a later date but in the meantime he seeks a letter of support from the Town Council to assist in his bid for a feasibility study. Cllr Field-Johnson said that a rail link between Carterton/Witney/Oxford is currently being looked at. Council agreed in principle to a letter of support, but Cllr Leverton would first look at the other work being done on this.

#### 78 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Clerk said that during his working life he had worked with some inspirational leaders and some that were not so good. Cllr Mead had been really good leader and he expressed his thanks for her support during her time as Mayor. He looked forward to working with Cllr Leverton in the same way.

A letter of thanks had been received from the Rotary Club of Witney for funding for the Crocuses to be planted in Tower Square.

He updated Councillors on the latest working arrangements for the Town Hall during the Covid crisis. Staff had reverted to home working. The team had responded exceptionally well and the recent staff changes had not impacted on the service provided. He expressed his thanks to his colleagues for their commitment and ability to adapt to the changing situation.

#### 79 WORKS FOR AUTHORISATION

(a) Verge in Burford Road. The verge to the front of the Allandale Centre and St John's Church would benefit from work similar to that carried out in front of The Beehive and The Parade. A quote has been sought to remove existing vegetation, rotovate the ground, supply and spread topsoil and lay turf, at a cost of £849.36 plus VAT.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE refurbishment of the verge as detailed above.

(b) Past Mayor Badges. Having used those previously ordered, replacement badges were needed. The cost for three badges from Vaughtons is £591 plus engraving at 36p per character and VAT.

Council felt the cost of the Badges was rather high and the item would be discussed further at the next meeting of the Administration Committee.

#### 80 GRANT APPLICATION

A Grant Application had been received from the RAF Brize Norton Airplay Youth Club, seeking funding of £5070.78 to redevelop the Youth Club garden. The refurbishment would seek to provide a space for activities, growing vegetables and a 'chill out' area for the older youngsters.

Whilst Council supported the application in principle, it was felt that the information given in the two quotes supplied by the applicant was insufficient to make a decision at this time. Further information would be sought and the item was deferred until the next Council meeting in December 2020.

#### 81 BRING SITE FACILITY

The Clerk said that WODC were in the process of making decisions on the future of various bring sites around the District and the site in the car park near the Town Hall is one of those under consideration. A considerable amount of complaints are received at the Town Hall regarding this site. The bins are constantly full, with extra waste and flytipping around the site, a good deal of which appears to be trade waste.

A thorough discussion took place, which included whether CCTV and enforcement would improve matters, whether public consultation should take place and whether removing the bring site would increase flytipping.

Cllr Mead said that the amount of householder waste at the site is minimal. Enforcement was costly and may have to be paid for by the Town Council. Other sites that had been removed had not caused further problems with flytipping. The bring sites came about following the end of the scheme where skips were placed at the end of streets for residents to dispose of their waste. More recently households have been provided with recycling bins and these were available in larger sizes if required. Bulky waste can be collected by the District Council for a nominal fee and Dix Pit is not too far away. There should not therefore be any need for a bring site.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE that West Oxfordshire District Council should remove the site.

#### 82 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Bank Reconciliation Statement to 30 September 2020, set out at Annex A, was noted.

#### 83 INCOME RECEIVED

Income Received to 30 September 2020, previously circulated, was noted.

#### 84 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Cllr Bull and Cllr McBride had discussed with the Clerk about meeting prior to full Council to go through the payments in more detail. This would ensure they had sufficient knowledge to authorise the payments and address any issues prior to approval at full Council. The Clerk would look at the possibility of including more detail on the nature of individual payments on the documentation.

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

#### 85 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

86 MINUTES OF URGENCY COMMITTEE MEETING

Confidential item

87 WOMEN'S INSTITUTE HALL

Confidential item

88 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND LANTERN PROJECT 2020

Confidential item

89 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2020

Confidential item

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm.

17 November 2020

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Town Mayor