

CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE TOWN HALL
ON TUESDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2019
COMMENCING AT 7.45 PM

Present: Cllr M McBride – Chairman
Cllr M Mead – Vice-Chairman

Cllr J Bull Cllr E Hatton
Cllr S Coul Cllr N Leverton
Cllr R Crapper Cllr D Melvin (from Item 180)
Cllr J Hayes Cllr D Wesson

Apologies: Cllr C Delaney, Cllr L Little, Cllr P Scott,
Cllr S Scott-Stovold, Cllr C Wilson

Cllr P Handley - County Councillor
Cllr N Field-Johnson - County Councillor

Officers: Ron Spurs – Town Clerk

In attendance: Cllr M Crossland - District Councillor
Two members of the public

165 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr McBride declared a pecuniary interest in Accounts for Payment as he is the recipient of a payment. Cllr Melvin declared an interest in Item 183 as he is a volunteer at Volunteer Link-Up.

166 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 January 2019, previously circulated to Members, were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

167 NOTICE OF COUNCILLOR VACANCY FOR SHILLBROOK WARD

The Clerk reported that Mrs Dee Bulley is no longer a Councillor for Shillbrook Ward and a Notice of Vacancy has been published. With the forthcoming Elections in May 2019, Council RESOLVED to let the vacancy stand until then.

168 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.

Events attended:

24 January Informal meeting with Brize Norton Parish Councillors, accompanied by Cllr Wesson.
26 January Didcot Charity Concert
31 January RAF Briefing at Fairford, accompanied by the Deputy Mayor. Slides from the Briefing had been circulated to all Councillors.
8 February Alvescot Road Recreation Ground Consultation at the WI Hall.
9 February Vale of White Horse Civic Dinner.
16 February Banbury Bollywood Night – event cancelled at short notice.

Future Events:

21 February	The Oxfordshire Gang Show at Radley College Theatre
1 March	Witney Town Council Annual Civic Reception and Citizen Awards
2 March	Vale of White Horse District Council Fundraising Concert
9 March	Save the Children AGM
9 March	Lord Mayor of Oxford's Charity Dinner

The Mayor reported that the Council is in the process of attempting to recover funds from Cllr Little through the Small Claims Court. Cllr Little had made a counter claim against the Council and the Clerk. Solicitors had completed the following steps:

- Finalised, filed and served the defence to the claim and counter claim.
- Filed and served the directions questionnaire of 1 February.
- Written to Cllr Little to request disclosure of the medical records on which she relies and for clarification of the basis of her counter claim, as requested by the Council's insurers.
- Updated the Council's insurers with the steps taken to satisfy their queries.

Outreach Programme – St John the Evangelist Primary School will be visiting the Town Hall on Wednesday 22 March 2019 with a group of children from their School Council. Cllr Hatton would accompany the Mayor on Monday 20 March to meet the children at the school to outline the programme for the event. The children will arrive at the Town Hall to meet staff and have light refreshments in the Mayor's Parlour, followed by a Mock Council Meeting in the Main Hall. The Mayor had also addressed the Carterton U3A Committee to see whether they wished to be involved in a future Outreach Programme.

The Mayor had been in contact with Mrs Dee Bulley and her daughter Kay to discuss commemorating Mrs Bulley's long service to the town.

Cllr Wilson had made a formal complaint against the Mayor. He had invited Cllr Wilson to the Town Hall to discuss this and had received an email saying she would respond sometime in the future.

169 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.

170 YORK ROAD – SPEEDING/VOLUME OF TRAFFIC

Cllr Hayes had been approached by a resident of York Road raising concerns over the speed and volume of traffic. The road was being used to avoid traffic lights and congestion on the main roads. Traffic noise was preventing children sleeping at night. The Clerk would write to RAF Brize Norton to see how this problem could be addressed.

171 ADJOURNMENT FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO RAISE MATTERS

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

172 ADJOURNMENT FOR COUNTY COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

There were no County Councillors present. Cllr Nicholas Field-Johnson had sent a Report, which was subsequently circulated to Councillors.

173 ADJOURNMENT FOR DISTRICT COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

Cllr Crossland, District Councillor for North West Carterton, gave an update on recent developments at West Oxfordshire District Council. Publica is a new Local Authority company that was set up 18 months ago, consisting of a conglomeration of four District Councils (West Oxfordshire, Cotswold, Forest of Dean and Cheltenham) in order to make economies of scale. A comprehensive report into how WODC functions has been widely praised for its successful operation across many service areas by a team from the Local Government Association, offering glowing praise for the authority, particularly for its strong financial position, approach to taking on major projects and the teamwork of both officers and politicians. An example of financial savings made include 8% on the Pensions Service (£1,970,000), with a target saving this year set at £881,000. They propose to make further savings by merging Revenue, Benefits and Customer Services; by restructuring HR and Senior Management Services; sharing telephone services, mobile phone licences etc. They predict that over the next ten years the combined councils could save a total of £35 million of taxpayers' money. Publica intend to promote this model to other councils.

Cotswold Garden Village to be built at Eynsham – Homes England have awarded the District Council a grant of £100,000 towards an Area Action Plan to examine how new developments like this will be taken forward.

Emergency housing for the homeless – there is a shortage of local housing and people have sometimes had to be housed as far away as Gloucester and Bristol. The District has acquired a large house in Chipping Norton, which is being converted into a Refuge for the Homeless. It will have five bedrooms with shared facilities, plus a ground floor self-contained flat for a larger family.

Cllr McBride, who serves on the Environmental Committee, reported that he is part of a Working Group looking at the issue of single-use plastics, initially concentrating on council offices.

174 URGENCY COMMITTEE MEETING

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Urgency Committee held on 29 January 2019, convened to authorise up to £10,000 expenditure on legal fees relating to Court costs in response to a counter claim against the Town Council and the Town Clerk by Cllr Little, and also to confirm the appointment of Knights Solicitors in Botley to act on behalf of the Town Council and Town Clerk.

The Minutes were noted.

175 PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Council received the Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning Committee held on 22 January and 5 February 2019.

The Minutes were noted.

176 EVENTS WORKING GROUP MEETING

Council received the Notes of the Meeting of the Events Working Group held on 29 January 2019.

Cllr Coul asked whether some of the Silent Soldiers would be left in place rather than stored away for next year. Council agreed that those currently remaining (two on the Town Hall, one

on the entrance to Carterton from Brize Norton and two on Monahan Way) should remain in place.

Cllr Leverton asked for clarification of the switch on date for this year's Christmas Lights, which had been set for Friday 22 November. The Clerk confirmed that this date was chosen to avoid a clash with Witney's event whilst maximising the use of the lights for the town. Cllr Hayes asked if a Saturday had been considered but Cllr Bull said there would be less involvement from the schools for the Lantern Parade.

Cllr Bull highlighted that the Events Working Group were in the process of organising a Carterton Carnival, similar to the Carterton Gala that was held in the 1980s and sought permission for a sum of up to £5,000 towards the running of the event, which was expected to be refunded from the proceeds. Cllr Coul expressed concern that the Council did not received three days' notice of this request, but the Clerk said the Council's General Power of Competence allowed it and had been brought to this meeting to avoid any delay in organising the event. A vote was taken with all in favour and Cllr Coul abstaining.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the sum of £5,000 for the Carterton Carnival, pending advice being sought on the legality of the proposal.

177 AMENITIES AND ECONOMIC REGENERATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities and Economic Regeneration Committee held on 5 February 2019.

The following works were discussed:

(a) Fencing at Bracken Close/Heather Close. Three new fencing panels are required to replace those that are damaged/rotten, at a cost of £475 plus VAT. Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the replacement of the fencing panels.

(b) Portaloo at new Allotments. The new Allotments are now in operation and the managers have requested that a Portaloo be provided for users, as the nearby Toilet Block is continually out of use due to vandalism. The Clerk had been in regular contact with David Wilson Homes, who are currently responsible for the Toilets, together with the District Council, to try to find a solution. Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the provision of a Portaloo on a temporary basis for a period of six months, at a cost of £18 per week, which includes weekly emptying.

(c) Bird nesting boxes. A suggestion had been received from a member of the public for the Council to install bird nesting boxes at Alvescot Road Recreation Ground and he would be willing to donate £100 towards this project. The RSPB website advises that nesting boxes are placed at a certain height and require cleaning at the end of the nesting season, which would involve an ongoing cost to the Council. Instead, Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the purchase of ten bird nesting boxes, which would be offered to residents for their gardens on a first come first served basis.

(d) Staff Toilets. There is currently no Staff Only toilet in the Town Hall and the Committee considered a proposal that the current Ladies Toilet be fitted with a digital lock and made into a Staff Only toilet. The Committee considered implementing this for a trial period of six months. After a discussion, it was felt that restricting the use of the Ladies Toilet would be detrimental to residents using the building. Council RESOLVED to leave the toilet facilities as they are.

(e) Cemetery ashes plots. The Committee considered a report by the Town Clerk to prepare a new Ashes section at Black Bourton Cemetery, comprising approximately 45 new plots. This would involve preparation of the ground and installation of paving stones, at an estimated cost of £975. Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the new Ashes section.

178 COUNTY ROADS PLAN

Cllr Peter Handley had given his apologies for this meeting, so this item would be considered at a future meeting.

179 AMENITIES WORK FOR AUTHORISATION

(a) Alvescot Road Recreation Ground Playground. Replacement parts were required to repair the toddlers multi-play unit that had been vandalised, at a cost of £1,749.10 plus VAT.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the above works.

180 ALVESCOT ROAD RECREATION GROUND – PUBLIC CONSULTATION

A Public Consultation, which had been advertised in the Witney Gazette, was held on 8 February 2019 at Carterton WI Hall, to seek the views of the public relating to a project to replace the existing Pavilion. All the visitors had indicated they would like to see the Pavilion replaced and the majority also preferred it to be resited. Two articles had been published in the Carterton Crier asking for opinions.

There are approximately 6,000 households in Carterton, and it is proposed to deliver an A5 leaflet to every household by Royal Mail, at a cost of £584 plus VAT, with a £75 pick-up charge. The leaflet would be produced in-house to keep costs to a minimum.

Cllr Bull queried whether a leaflet was necessary. The Clerk replied that the articles in the Crier had attracted only two responses and the Consultation Day had received 40 visitors. As Trustees of the Recreation Ground, the Council had a responsibility to ensure all residents had the opportunity to express their views.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the distribution of a leaflet to all households. Cllr Bull asked for her abstention to be noted.

180 SAVE THE CHILDREN – SPONSORSHIP OF MAY DAY FAIR 2019

This year marks the 100th Birthday of Save the Children and the 40th Anniversary of Carterton's May Day Fair, which last year raised £7,000 for the charity. The event will be held on the Alvescot Road Recreation Ground on Monday 6 May. A request has been received for the Council to sponsor some of the costs of running the event in exchange for publicity and a pitch on the day.

After a short discussion, Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the sponsorship of the Roaming Field Entertainment at a cost of £750. In sponsoring this item, the Council would receive a full A5 Programme advert and a free pitch outside or in Brownes Hall.

181 CARTERTON OPEN GARDENS

This year's Open Gardens event will take place on Sunday 23 June 2019, raising funds for Thames Valley Air Ambulance. The organisers would like to involve the five primary schools by running a life-size scarecrow competition and an art/colouring competition, with the artwork being displayed in the Town Hall prior to the event. The scarecrows and winners of the art

competition would then be displayed throughout the participating gardens on the day. In recognition of their involvement, the schools would be awarded £200 per school. A small sum of £50 was also requested for the purchase of haybales, making a total of £1,050

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the sum of £1,050 for this project.

182 CARTERTON CELEBRATES 2019

After the success of last year's Carterton Celebrates week, a request had been received from the organisers for financial support to run the event again this year. The expected cost amounts to a sum of £1,700 and includes the cost of advertising, town decorations, competition prizes, a flower festival, speaker expenses and refreshments for a Mayor's Reception.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the sum of £1,700 to support the event.

183 GRANT APPLICATION – VOLUNTEER LINK-UP

An application for a Grant had been received from Volunteer Link-Up, based at the Methodist Church in Witney. Over 120 residents of Carterton are currently supported by 20 local volunteers, which includes providing help with shopping, collecting prescriptions, DIY tasks, befriending isolated residents etc and in many cases enables people to stay in their own homes rather than moving into residential care. Funding of £500 was sought to produce leaflets to promote their services and their need for volunteers.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the sum of £500 to support their work.

184 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Financial Statement to 31 January 2019, set out at Annex B, was APPROVED.

185 INCOME RECEIVED

Income Received during January 2019, previously circulated, was Noted.

186 DEBIT CARD TRANSACTIONS

Debit Card transactions for January 2019, previously circulated, were Noted.

187 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Council RESOLVED that the Accounts for February 2019, set out at Annex C, be APPROVED for payment.

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm.

19 March 2019

Town Mayor

Clerk's Report – 19 February 2019

Annex A

1. The Charity SCOPE has written to advise of house-to-house collection dates for 2019. These will be between 1 April to 21 April 2019. **Noted.**
2. Life Education Wessex & Thames Valley have written to thank the Town Council for its grant supporting their work to tackle mental health problems, obesity and drug misuse in young people. **Noted.**
3. Cotswold Flower Club have written to extend thanks for their grant of £1,000 approved by the Town Council last October. **Noted.**
4. ARRG Consultation – 8 February 2019 at the WI Hall – next steps. **Approximately 40 people gave their views and all 40 were in favour of replacing the existing Pavilion. It is intended to consult every household in the town to seek their views and this is an item on the Agenda for discussion.**
5. Legal Update. **Mr Wiblin was in the process of taking the Town Council to Court for breach of contract, but this appears to have not been proceeded with.**
6. Elections – Information circulated. What officers will do and what they will not do. **Noted.**
7. Diary Dates:
 - 26 February 2019 Events Working Group
 - 5 March 2019 Planning Committee
 - 5 March 2019 Administration Committee
 - 19 March 2019 Planning & Town Council**The dates were Noted.**

Ron Spurs
Town Clerk