

CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE TOWN HALL
ON TUESDAY 16 APRIL 2019
COMMENCING AT 7.45 PM

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

Cllr J Bull	Cllr D Melvin
Cllr R Crapper	Cllr P Scott
Cllr E Hatton	Cllr D Wesson
Cllr N Leverton	Cllr C Wilson
Cllr L Little	

Apologies: Cllr J Hayes

Absent: Cllr S Coul, Cllr C Delaney

Officers: Ron Spurs – Town Clerk

In attendance: Three members of the public (Kim Wood, Sandie Baylis, Cliff Cook)

219 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Little said that she was recording the meeting. Cllr Mead declared an interested in Item 233, Carterton Gymnastics Club, as she knows them very well.

220 COUNCILLOR VACANCY

The Town Clerk said that following the forthcoming elections on 2 May 2019 there would be a vacancy in Upavon Ward and the Council would have the opportunity to co-opt a new Councillor.

221 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 March 2019, previously circulated to Members, were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

222 MINUTES OF URGENCY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Urgency Committee held on 22 March 2019, convened to authorise expenditure of £10,000 in relation to defending the counter claim by Mrs L Little, were noted.

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Urgency Committee held on 29 March 2019, convened to agree a three-year rent review period for the lease with prospective new tenants of the ground floor of 1 Streatfield House, were noted.

223 EVENTS WORKING GROUP MEETING

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Events Working Group held on 26 March 2019, which were noted.

224 PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Council received the Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning Committee held on 19 March and 2 April 2019. The Minutes were noted.

225 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:

- 22 March Thame Charity Dinner (accompanied by his wife Jenny).
- 23 March Didcot Masked Charity Ball.
- 25 & 27 March St John the Evangelist Primary School Outreach Programme - together with Cllr Hatton and other Councillors, the children visited the Town Hall and held a mock Council meeting.
- 29 March Helen & Douglas House celebration of their 10 years in Carterton.
- 3 April Meeting the candidates for the new Rector post at St John's Church, accompanied by the Town Clerk.
- 4 April Presentation of Freedom of the Town to Mrs Dee Bulley. The scroll was presented by Brigadier Dennis Blease DL. A photo album put together by Town Hall staff was also presented to her.
- 6 April South Oxfordshire District Council Chairman's Charity Dinner.
- 9 April Day visit to RAF Brize Norton Medical Wing, accompanied by Cllr Wesson.
- 13 April Cherwell District Council Chairman's Charity Dinner.

Future events:

- 27 April St George's Day Dinner at Carterton Community Centre. The guest list currently stands at 81 people attending. The Mayor would be grateful for any donations of Raffle Prizes.

226 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.

227 ADJOURNMENT FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO RAISE MATTERS

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

228 ADJOURNMENT FOR COUNTY COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

The Mayor expressed his disappointment that there were no County Councillors present.

229 CARTERTON CRIER

Fyne Associates have been commissioned by the Town Council to produce the magazine since 2015. A total of 7,000 copies are produced each quarter and delivered to homes and businesses in Carterton at a cost of £13,000 plus VAT per annum, which includes delivery by Royal Mail. Fyne Associates have agreed to produce the magazine for a further year at the same price.

Cllr McBride had heard only positive comments about the magazine. Cllr Little asked why the format had changed and the Clerk said that a report had come to Council earlier in the year. The new format is more modern and although the number of pages had been reduced the magazine was larger in size. A vote was taken, which was unanimously in favour.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the commissioning of Fyne Associates for a further twelve months (four issues) at a cost of £13,000 plus VAT.

230 CARTERTON SQUASH CLUB

The Squash Club had approached the Council in 2018 requesting a longer-term lease to provide the Club with more security. Originally, at the meeting of the Town Council in March 2018, it had been decided to grant a lease for a period of fifteen years, subject to negotiation over plans, costings and timescale of their proposed improvements to the facilities, but this was later rescinded at the Town Council meeting in March 2019 pending further discussions with the Club.

The Town Clerk and Cllr Mead met with a Squash Club representative, Dave Middleton, on 22 March 2019 and items discussed included membership, renovations, wheelchair accessibility, quinquennial works and finances. Mr Middleton confirmed that it would be acceptable to the Club for the lease to run for a five-year term.

Cllr Melvin asked why the rent figure on the existing lease was higher than that in the Town Clerk's report. Cllr Mead explained that a reduction had been applied due to a joint responsibility for cleaning costs. Cllr Melvin said he felt this was an opportunity to enter into a new relationship with the Club and review the terms and conditions of the lease, particularly for maintenance and rent.

Cllr Hatton said that the rent charged should reflect the fact that the Club is a private business.

Cllr Little said she was disappointed with the way the Council has handled this. The Clerk's report mentioned unapproved action by two Councillors who had been in independent discussions with the Squash Club regarding developing it with the Football Club, stating that individual Councillors are not empowered to undertake such negotiations as they are contrary to the Local Government Act 1972. Cllr Little said she would never make decisions by herself on behalf of the Council. She had intended to arrange a meeting with the Squash Club and Carterton Football Club Ltd to explore the possibility of the Football Club sharing the Squash Club facilities should football matches be permitted on Swinbrook Road Recreation Ground. The idea did not progress any further and the meeting did not take place. Whilst the Squash Club was a private membership club, they were keen to involve the community and she believed the Council should support the Club. The Clerk said that no individual had ever been refused membership.

Cllr Scott said that he had never entered into negotiations as a single Councillor. He fully supported offering the lease for five years.

A vote was taken, with the majority in favour and Cllrs Bull and Melvin abstaining.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE a new lease for the Squash Club for a period of five years, with the conditions remaining the same as the existing lease, and for the quinquennial works to be commenced.

231 AMENITIES WORK FOR APPROVAL

(a) The Parade, Burford Road. The new grass area nearest to Streatfield House could not have a tree planted due to a large area of concrete below the surface that could not be removed. It is proposed to install a bench on a concrete base instead, at a cost of £485.87 plus VAT.

Cllr Little suggested asking the shops in the Parade if they would like to make a contribution towards the cost of refurbishing this area.

(b) The Parade, Burford Road. Repairs to concrete haunching underneath and behind decorative kerbstones, including hire of a breaker and generator, supply and laying new concrete haunching and kerbstones if necessary, back filling with soil and re-laying turf where needed, at a cost of £423.19 plus VAT.

(c) The Parade, Burford Road. Purchase of a small hand mower for the Town Warden to maintain the new grass areas around the trees, at a cost of £64.99 including VAT.

(d) Empire Drive Playground. The Town Council is now responsible for this new recreational area. The grassed area around the playground has been damaged along one side by careless parking/driving. It is proposed to purchase 20 verge markers, to be used in this area and for future use in other problem areas around the town, at a cost of £12.75 each plus VAT.

Cllr Bull suggested fencing off the whole play area rather than the markers. This would go to the next meeting of the Amenities and Economic Regeneration Committee for consideration.

(e) Empire Drive Playground. UBICO have advised that the bin at this playground now needs to be emptied twice a week as it becomes full after a couple of days. A lot of the litter is dog waste bags and UBICO recommend the installation of a dog waste bin and another litter bin at the far end of the green, at a cost of £790.37 plus VAT.

A vote was taken and, with the exception of Item (d), Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the amenities works above.

232 PROVISION OF BEEHIVES

Cllr Hatton tabled a report proposing that the Council purchase five beehives, one to represent each primary school, to be sited on land belonging to Cllr Crapper who had kindly volunteered to house them. A teacher from St John the Evangelist Primary School was interested in the role of Beekeeper. The cost of training for this would need to be looked into. Each hive would cost £500 to purchase.

Cllr Little said it was a good idea in principle, but more information was needed. She suggested asking local businesses to sponsor a beehive. Cllr Scott said that more than one person would need to be trained to ensure continuity for the future.

The general consensus was that this could be a worthwhile project that required further investigation and then brought back to a future meeting.

233 APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING – CARTERTON GYMNASTICS CLUB

A request had been received from Carterton Gymnastics Club seeking funding to provide a new facility to be called The Vault. The Club currently hires a small sports hall at Carterton Community College. The Club was in the process of leasing a building on the West Oxfordshire Business and Retail Park, which would include a fully equipped gymnasium and a smaller gymnasium for pre-school classes that could also be used for adult recreational classes, birthday

parties and sports such as free running, martial arts, dance, Pilates and fitness. The Club needs to raise £370,000 to convert the building and kit it out with top quality equipment and request that the Council consider a grant of £2,500 towards the cost of pre-school gymnastics equipment.

Cllr Little said this was a worthwhile project to encourage youngsters to take part in sport and she believed the Council should support this application.

A vote was taken, with all unanimously in favour.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the sum of £2,500 towards pre-school gymnastics equipment for The Vault.

234 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Financial Statement to 31 March 2019, set out at Annex B, was noted.

235 INCOME RECEIVED

Income Received during March 2019, previously circulated, was noted.

236 DEBIT CARD TRANSACTIONS

Debit Card transactions for March 2019, previously circulated, were noted.

237 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Council RESOLVED that the Accounts for April 2019, set out at Annex C, be APPROVED for payment. Cllr Little and Cllr Wilson abstained.

238 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.

239 MINUTES OF TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF 19 MARCH 2019

Council received the Confidential items of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council on 19 March 2019. These were approved and signed by the Mayor.

The meeting ended at 8.25 pm.

14 May 2019

Town Mayor

1 Diary dates:

Easter Town Hall Closure	Friday 19 to Monday 22 April 2019 inclusive
Annual Town Meeting	Tuesday 23 April 2019 at 7.00pm – St John's Church
St George's Day Dinner	Saturday 27 April 2019
Planning	Tuesday 30 April 2019 at 7.30pm
Amenities & ER	Tuesday 30 April 2019 at 7.45pm
Elections	Thursday 2 May 2019
Planning	Tuesday 14 May 2019
Annual Town Council	Tuesday 14 May 2019

2 The Town Clerk said that Cllr McBride, during his term of office as Town Mayor, had been extremely supportive in what had been a challenging year and had dealt very well with some difficult issues during Council meetings. He had been an excellent example of what a Mayor should be. **Noted**

Ron Spurs
Town Clerk