

CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING
ON TUESDAY 21 JULY 2020
COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM

Present: Cllr M Mead – Chairman
Cllr N Leverton - Vice-Chairman

Cllr S Baylis	Cllr L Little
Cllr J Bull	Cllr M McBride
Cllr R Crapper	Cllr J Sangster
Cllr M Crossland	Cllr D Wesson
Cllr C James	Cllr K Wood

Apologies: Cllr C Cook, Cllr P Handley, Cllr E Hatton

In attendance: Cllr N Field-Johnson - County Councillor (until item 37)
One member of the public

Officers: Ron Spurs – Town Clerk
Katie Zasada

29 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Bull – Allandale Centre Windows
Cllr Wood - Payments relating to Allotments and Security Cameras

30 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 June 2020, previously circulated to Members, were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

31 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Council received the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 16 June 2020, which were noted.

32 ADJOURNMENT FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO RAISE MATTERS

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

33 ADJOURNMENT FOR COUNTY COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

Cllr Field-Johnson reported that the HGV ban would commence through Burford from 1 August 2020, coming into effect from 1 September 2020 to allow local traders to apply for licences to continue to access the town centre.

Work continues to resolve the issue of pollution of the River Windrush. Work had also continued to improve the condition of the roads around the district.

He reported his concern that the matter of a unified council for Oxfordshire was once again being discussed. This would mean that the current system of County, District, Town and Parish Councils would no longer exist. Instead there would be one large unified Council running the

whole of Oxfordshire. There was a financial concern that the County is running at a £50m deficit due to the virus pandemic, with particular problems around Social Care, but he is also concerned with the political side. Other possible options would be for Oxford City to have its own unitary council and the rest of the county another; or separate unitary councils for Cherwell/West Oxfordshire and South Oxfordshire/Vale of White Horse, although he understood that one simple system was favoured. He would be asking Carterton Town Council for letters of support against the unitary approach. A report is awaited from the local government minister in September and he would update the Town Council in due course.

The Mayor thanked Cllr Field-Johnson for his report.

35 ADJOURNMENT FOR DISTRICT COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MATTERS

Cllr Bull - Carterton North West and Inclusion Champion: She had been selected to sit on the Health Committee, but no meeting dates had been arranged as yet.

Cllr Crossland – Carterton North West: The Lowlands Planning Committee had met this week and there had been an application for the Travellers site in Bampton to be increased in size. Over time the site had grown beyond the permission limit and it now sought to regularise the situation with a formal application. Whilst there had been some concern expressed over this, the Committee approved the application.

Cllr Leverton – Carterton South and Armed Forces Champion: He expressed his thanks to Cllr Wesson and the Mayor for coming out to raise the flag for Armed Forces Week, which had also coincided with the Parachute Regiment Veterans laying a wreath to commemorate the loss of all passengers and crew in a plane crash near Abingdon in 1965, which included members of the Parachute Regiment. A wreath is laid annually at the memorial in St Lawrence’s Church in Toot Baldon, but this had not been possible this year due to the lockdown. Along with the Mayor, he attended the Carterton Celebrates Business Market in the town centre on Saturday 18 July. He had a pre-meeting with the Deputy Lieutenant, Brian Crossland, regarding covenant funding in preparation for a meeting to be held in August. The Army Cadets were unable to return to their normal meetings until January 2021 and continue to operate via Zoom for the time being.

Cllr McBride - Carterton North East and Deputy Chairman of the WODC Environment Committee: As part of the Covid-19 recovery programme being developed at WODC, a Cabinet Advisory Group had been set up. Cllr McBride had been chosen as one of the five permanent members of the group. The first meeting would take place this week, followed by a meeting to discuss the climate emergency. The Advisory Group would report to Cabinet in September.

Cllr Mead - Carterton South and Cabinet Member for Health and Leisure: On the Health side of her portfolio, WODC continued to ensure food parcels were delivered to those who needed them. A meeting had been held with the food banks operating in the district and work continued to ensure plans were in place should there be a second spike of the virus over the winter. The Test and Trace centre was still holding fortnightly sessions at the Leisure Centre, which would move onto the Monahan Way Pavilion car park once the Leisure Centre reopens. On the Leisure side, they were doing their best to get the Leisure Centres open as soon as possible.

36 MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor was pleased to be able to start promoting the town again at local events. She had attended the Armed Forces Day event, as reported above by Cllr Leverton, and the Local Businesses Market organised by Carterton Celebrates. It was really nice to see the community beginning to come out again. On Sunday 19 July she attended all the Open Lawn Sales, again

as part of the Carterton Celebrates Week. Each one was raising money for charity by selling a variety of different things, for example bric-a-brac, plants, cakes, teapot bird houses, Christmas items, pantomime costumes.

Today there had been a Community Litter Pick, which was very well attended. The Carterton Celebrates website had details of other events taking place this week. She would send a letter of thanks to the organisers of the Carterton Celebrates Week for their efforts to continue with the event despite the lockdown situation.

She expressed her thanks to the Town Hall Staff, who continued to keep Council business running by working from home. Discussions are taking place on how to ensure that conditions are safe for staff to return to the office in September.

37 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Clerk reported that he had used his authority to purchase three security cameras, to be used initially at the Allotments where there had been some recent security problems but could be deployed to protect other Council assets.

It was good to see some new stalls on the Market. Carterton continues to offer pitches free of charge to stallholders.

With regard to Staff returning to work in September, workstations would be assessed and a Risk Assessment carried out to ensure staff can work safely. An intercom system may be used initially for members of the public to access the building. Staff have been using the building on occasions during the week to print/scan documents etc that cannot be done from home. Everyone has pulled together to do a good job during the Covid-19 crisis.

38 WORKS FOR AUTHORISATION

(a) Replacement of height restriction barrier at Willow Meadows. The barrier had been removed due to damage caused by a vehicle. The cost of a new barrier plus installation is £1,187.23 inclusive of VAT. Cllr McBride asked whether this was due to vandalism or accidental damage and whether there was sufficient signage to warn people of the height restriction. Cllr Mead said the barrier had been hit several times over the years despite there being warning signs. The new barrier would have appropriate signage.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the replacement of the barrier as detailed above.

(b) Replacement of Allandale Centre windows at a cost of £2,200 plus VAT. During the ongoing renovation work some of the windows not highlighted in the Quinquennial Report were found to be in poor condition and the Project Manager has recommended replacing with UPVC. The Town Clerk highlighted three things for consideration – Item 15.1 of the Lease (previously circulated to Councillors) covering when repairs should be made by the landlord; he had requested a cost breakdown for the work that was still awaited; and the Quinquennial Report had only highlighted the need to replace one window. The works did not therefore fall under the landlord's responsibilities.

Cllr Bull said she fully supported the work that the Family Centre do. She had looked at the Quinquennial Report and the Lease and could conclude that only the one window had needed replacing, all the others being satisfactory. Under Item 23.8 of the Lease, it says the tenant should ensure that carrying out any work should not make the property unsafe. It would seem from the Project Manager's report that the windows had become unsafe since the roof works had been carried out and it was therefore not the Council's responsibility.

Cllr Crossland agreed with Cllr Bull and also had concerns about the ongoing cost to the Council.

Cllr Little said the Council should consider how many families the Centre will help once it is open again. She said that the works would be to the benefit to the Council as landlord and we need to have a secure building. Whilst she understood that the roof works had impacted on the windows, the Council should have attended to the roof when it was first recommended that it be replaced several years ago. She recommended a compromise between the landlord and tenant.

Cllr Leverton said that while we are awaiting the cost breakdown the Council did not have sufficient information to make a decision at this point and it should be deferred until the information was available.

Cllr James asked if we could see more evidence so that an informed decision could be made. The Clerk said that there was no Council meeting scheduled for August, but once more details were available he would circulate this to Councillors.

Council RESOLVED to defer this item until sufficient information was available.

(c) Topping up of bark safety surface at Alvescot Road Recreation Ground play area at a cost of £1,296.06. The Playground Inspector had highlighted that the bark under the play equipment needed topping up. The cost includes supply, raking and levelling of existing bark and spreading a new layer. Cllr Bull said that some of the matting was also in need of repair and the Clerk confirmed that this would be attended to.

Council RESOLVED to APPROVE the topping up of the bark as detailed above.

39 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Financial Statement to 30 June 2020, set out at Annex A, was noted.

40 INCOME RECEIVED

Income Received during June 2020, previously circulated, was noted.

41 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Cllr Bull queried what the two different payments to UBICO in June related to. The Clerk explained that there are two contracts for emptying of litter bins, the original contract plus the addition of the bins at the new playgrounds. She also queried the underpayment of £430.68 to Altodigital as this suggests that their prices have increased significantly. The Clerk would look into this.

Council RESOLVED that the Accounts for July 2020, set out at Annex B, be APPROVED for payment, with the exception of the payment to Altodigital as detailed above.

42 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

43 EXTRAORDINARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Confidential item.

44 SOLAR PANELS

Confidential item.

45 TOWN HALL REFURBISHMENT

Confidential item.

46 COUNCILLOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Confidential item.

47 YOUTH WORK PROJECT

Confidential item.

48 RENT FOR COUNCIL OWNED PROPERTIES

Confidential item.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm.

15 September 2020

Town Mayor