

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2011
IN THE MAYOR'S PARLOUR, WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL**

PRESENT:

Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore (Town Mayor)	Cllr P Jay
Cllr J Cooper	Cllr Mrs V Edwards
Cllr T Gardiner	Cllr A Glees
Cllr Mrs A Grant	Cllr C Carritt.
Cllr Mrs L Glees	Cllr P Redpath
Cllr Mrs T Redpath	Cllr Mrs P Richardson
Cllr E Poskitt	Cllr Mrs E Jay

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Huw Mellor, property advisor to WTC, and 7 residents.

WTC/142/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs B Yoxall (Deputy Mayor) and Mrs E Stokes

WTC/143/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

WTC/144/11 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Mr Mellor from Kemp and Kemp updated WTC about the WODC Local Development Framework (LDF) meeting which he attended on behalf of the council. At this meeting Mr Mellor reaffirmed to WODC the views of WTC that had recently been submitted in writing. He advised WODC that WTC might be sympathetic if small windfall sites on brownfield sites arose that might accommodate 1 or 2 dwellings. The WODC officers had not asked Mr Mellor any questions. It was noted that a rumour is circulating in Woodstock that WTC might support building on the New Road recreation ground. WTC refuted this suggestion and Cllr J Cooper confirmed that Mr Mellor had said no such thing at the LDF meeting. Mr Mellor then spoke about the WODC planning policy consultation. This was initially meant to end in October but is being extended by a further 6 weeks because of the volume of representations received. A third consultation phase is currently envisaged. Cllr Mrs T Redpath noted that the national planning consultation was due to expire and asked whether WTC should be particularly aware of anything in this. Mr Mellor reported that this document will attempt to compile 1000's of pages of regulations into 50 pages and so will not go into detail. It is thought will contain a fundamental move to say yes to new developments rather than no. It will be adopted in the New Year. 'Sustainable Development' will be a fundamental requirement of new developments. If local planning policy documents are not up to date the default will be to adopt the national policy until they are. Therefore at present this is a catch up period for district councils. Due to the timings involved it was suggested that WTC might like to try and encourage WODC to finalise and adopt its local policy now rather than undertake a third consultation phase. The Mayor proposed that WTC write to WODC to urge it not to give weight to the draft national planning policy until it becomes law. This motion was seconded by Cllr Mrs T Redpath.

RESOLVED

That WTC write to WODC and urge it not to give weight to the draft national planning policy until it becomes law and copy the letter to its local MP.

ACTION: The Clerk will write to WODC and copy the letter to the local MP.

The Mayor asked Mr Mellor to comment on a Department for Transport 'Stopping-Up Order' that had been received that relates to the redevelopment of the Former Railway Station site. Cllr C Carritt suggested that this was a tidying up procedure as the highways configuration was no longer logical. Mr Mellor suggested that this was therefore a formality that should not be of concern. The Mayor thanked Mr Mellor for attending the meeting and he left at 8pm.

WTC/145/11 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 13th September 2011 were approved and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

WTC/123/11 Planning Matters (d) Ref: 11/1329/P/FP: the resolution was inserted to record that WTC has no comment to make about this planning application.

WTC/124/11 Community Centre Update: on page 72 the second line was amended so that the words 'Working Group' were inserted after 'Community Centre'.

WTC/126/11 Meetings of Committees and Sub-Committees (a) Finance Committee (ii) Budget Review: Cllr Mrs T Redpath proposed the insertion of some revised wording for this minute. Cllr P Redpath seconded this motion. Discussion followed. This motion failed (3 votes for the amendment, 8 votes against and 3 abstentions). It was suggested that in future proposals for substantive amendments to the minutes are circulated by the proposer to Cllrs and the Clerk beforehand to enable them to consider the matter before the meeting. The Mayor suggested that the comments be considered by the Finance Committee when it comes to approve the minutes of its meeting. The third sentence was amended to read 'He referred to a VAT table that had been produced by the Finance Assistant and said that potentially there was a £60k VAT reclaim to come from the Shipton Road S106 money.' The word 'He' at the beginning of the fifth sentence was deleted and 'Cllr P Redpath' inserted. On page 75 the first sentence of the second paragraph was amended so that the words 'an accountant' were inserted after 'The Town Mace Bearer'.

WTC/129/11 Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club: it was noted at the end of this item that WTC had decided not to write a rebuttal letter to the Woodstock and Bladon News.

The Minutes of the adjourned meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 20th September 2011 were approved and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

WTC/140/11 Property Working Group (iii) 24 Market Place: the following insertion was made at the beginning of this item 'Cllrs P Redpath and Mrs T Redpath both declared personal interests as they know the tenant. The first sentence was deleted. The second sentence was amended as follows: 'The CMfP updated the council on this tenancy and proposed that WTC ask Carter Jonas to request the tenant to surrender her lease and if not WTC would have to take legal proceedings to terminate the tenancy.' The resolution was amended to read 'That WTC asks Carter Jonas to request the tenant to surrender her lease and if not legal procedures will have to be put in place.' Item (vi) Property Budget, the words 'and so it was important to avoid avoidable costs' were deleted from the end of the second sentence.

WTC/146/11 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Sharone Parnes addressed the Town Council and distributed a paper to all Cllrs for consideration. He had attended the meeting at which WODC had resolved to reduce the number of Woodstock Town Councillors from the current 16 to 12 in future. He said that Mr Butler and Mr Broomfield went to great lengths to facilitate

discussion and congratulated them on this. Mr Parnes suggested that WTC might consider writing to them to note this.

Mr S Wallis spoke on behalf of Ms L Humphries about her concerns relating to planning application 11/1454/P/FP, The Holding, Shipton Road to replace one bungalow with 11 units. The residents were worried about road safety, loss of privacy, precedents being set and the lack of affordable housing. The Mayor advised Mr Wallis that residents can speak at the WODC planning meetings but Mr Wallis said that both he and Ms Humphries work and so are unable to do so.

WTC/147/11 *REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS*

WTC noted a report from County and District Councillor Ian Hudspeth that had previously been received and circulated.

District Cllr J Cooper reported that the 3 month WODC trial of all plastics collections is underway.

WTC/148/11 *COMMUNICATIONS*

The Mayor thanked everyone involved in securing a fourth gold medal for Woodstock in the small town category of Britain in Bloom. She was pleased to report that Cllr Mrs P Richardson had been singled out and presented with a special award for her work within the community. Cllr Mrs T Redpath advised that it was very unusual for an individual to receive such a reward. All Cllrs congratulated Cllr Mrs P Richardson on her achievement. Cllr Mrs P Richardson said that residents had pulled together in order to achieve the result. The Mayor noted that there are only two benches on the Market Square at present. One was recently demolished by a van and therefore removed for health and safety reasons. The second bench was damaged during the fair. WODC has offered WTC two replacement benches. The Mayor has concerns over the location as this is not the first time that vehicles have collided with the benches. She asked that this matter be an item on the next agenda in the hope that better sites might be identified before replacement benches ordered. It was noted that OCC owns the Market Square and that WODC had contributed the benches when the Town Square had been redeveloped. The Mayor confirmed that WODC had passed a resolution to reduce the number of Woodstock Town Cllrs from the current 16 to 12 in 2012. The current WODC recycling scheme was discussed. The Mayor reported that new recycling containers had been offered to Woodstock. WTC agreed to accept this offer of new street furniture. The Mayor noted that the civic reception was taking place the next evening and thanked the Marlborough School for hosting the event. It was noted that former WTC Cllr Mr G Myatt had recently suffered a misfortune whilst helping with a WTC distribution. A card will be sent to him to wish him well.

ACTIONS:

- 1. The Clerk will put Market Square benches on the next agenda.*
- 2. The Clerk will notify WODC that WTC would like the new recycling street furniture on offer.*
- 3. The Clerk will buy a card and arrange for this to be sent to Mr Myatt.*

WTC/149/11 *QUESTIONS*

None

WTC/150/11 *MOTIONS*

Cllr C Carritt asked that the following motion be considered by the Council:

- a) That WTC resolves to adopt a policy for the publication of Newsletters as set out in a document that had previously been circulated.

- b) That WTC investigates the commercial distribution of newsletters to all Woodstock households and allocates a provisional budget item of £720 for year 2012/13 for this purpose.

Cllr C Carritt asked that these two issues be voted on separately. WTC decided to defer this matter until the next meeting.

***ACTION:** The Clerk will put this motion on the next agenda.*

WTC/151/11 PLANNING MATTERS

(ii) Planning Applications

The following planning applications were received and considered

(a) Ref: 11/1514/P/LB

38 Oxford Street, Woodstock

Internal alterations to include replacing softwood flooring with flagstones.

RESOLVED

That WTC has no comment to make about this planning application.

(b) Ref: 11/1454/P/FP

The Holding, Shipton Road, Woodstock

Erection of eleven apartments with associated parking, storage areas and improvements to existing access. Cllr Mrs T Redpath proposed that WTC object to this proposal on the grounds of: overdevelopment; the access position and increased traffic movement; because the justification for not taking into account affordable housing is debatable. This motion was seconded by Cllr P Redpath. Discussion followed. Cllr J Cooper proposed that the motion be amended to include a further objection on the grounds of WODC Housing policy H11 Part (a) 'Allocated Land' because this development is within the allocated site. Cllr C Carritt seconded this amendment and it was accepted by Cllrs Mrs T Redpath and P Redpath. Cllr E Jay proposed two further amendments to the proposal: to include concerns about the privacy of residents living in the existing development and to note that this could create an unwelcome precedent for future developments. Cllrs Mrs T Redpath and P Redpath accepted these amendments. It was noted that although WTC objects to the current proposal it would be content with the original proposal submitted by Pye, subject to the access not coming off the main road.

RESOLVED (13 votes for, 1 abstention)

That WTC objects to this planning application on the following 6 grounds:

- 1) Overdevelopment - WTC considers this to be overdevelopment of the site
- 2) Highways concerns - WTC objects to the access position and is also concerned about the increased traffic movements that will result from this development.
- 3) Lack of Affordable Housing - WTC considers that the justification for not taking into account affordable housing is debatable.
- 4) Allocated land - WTC objects to this planning application under WODC Housing Policy H11 part (a) as it is allocated land.
- 5) Loss of Privacy - WTC is concerned about the future privacy of residents living in the existing development.

- 6) Setting a precedent – there are several other similar plots of land in this area and WTC considers that if this planning application was to be approved it would create a precedent for future developments.

However, Woodstock Town Council would be content to receive a development that matched the original proposal by Pye, subject to access not coming off the main road.

- (c) Ref: 11/1373/P/FP
6 Cadogan Park, Woodstock
Alterations and extensions to include raising the height of the roof to create first floor accommodation.

RESOLVED

That WTC has no comment to make about this planning application.

***ACTION:** The planning comments will be relayed to WODC by the office staff.*

- (ii) S106 Funding from the Former Railway Station Development
An explanation from WODC about the S106 funding allocation relating to the Former Railway Station Development was received and considered by WTC. Cllr Mrs V Edwards suggested that this should be investigated further.

***ACTION:** The Clerk will write to WODC and request further information about the timings of this decision.*

- (iii) Minerals and Waste Plan Consultation.
Cllr J Cooper presented an oral report about the OCC Minerals and Waste Plan Consultation and its possible effects on Woodstock. He proposed that WTC respond to the consultation and inform OCC that it resists the intensification of the Slape Hill Quarry which is used for construction waste, the proposal to take minerals between the A40 and A4095 is of concern and that if OCC should proceed WTC asks that a railway terminus be built. Cllr C Carritt seconded this motion.

RESOLVED (13 votes for, 1 abstention)

That WTC participate in the OCC Minerals and Waste Consultation and inform OCC that WTC resists the intensification of the Slape Hill Quarry near Glympton, has concerns about the proposal to take minerals between the A40 and A4095 and asks that if OCC should proceed, a railway terminus be built.

***ACTION:** The Clerk will submit WTC's comments to the OCC Minerals and Waste Consultation.*

WTC/152/11 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE MAYOR'S COMMITTEE

This item was deferred from the TC meeting of 20th September.

Cllr P Jay reminded Cllrs of the motion at WTC/132/11 (c) that was proposed by him, seconded by Cllr T Gardiner and amended by Cllr P Redpath that:

1. Two council meetings a month.
 - a. The Town Council moves to two Town Council meetings a month starting at 7.30pm and of 2 hours duration with an absolute maximum of 2.5 hours.
 - b. Meeting 1 will be the standard agenda items and Meeting 2 will be an issues agenda.

Exceptions to this would have to be approved by the Clerk/Mayor. One set of minutes will cover the business of both meetings.

2. That Most Committees are disbanded but that
 - a. The Finance Committee is retained.
 - b. A new Human Resources Committee consisting of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the leaders of the main working groups will be established and called as and when required to deal with staffing issues.
 - c. All other committees are disbanded and become working groups instead.

3. Working Groups

- a. That the following working groups be part of WTC: Environment, Property, Bloom, Strategy, Communications, Christmas Lights, Community Centre, Bowls and Tennis Club, Allotments.

It is envisaged that some of these would be permanent e.g. Environment and Property whilst others would be time limited, established as required e.g. Christmas Lights, Bowls and Tennis Club and then disbanded.

- b. A new highways working group be established that would amalgamate all of the current WTC traffic/transport/highways groups. The Traffic Advisory Committee which is not a committee of WTC will continue to be serviced by the Town Hall Staff.

4. Trial Period - that this system is trialled for 6 months.

The Mayor's Committee agreed that

1. The Clerk should only service two meetings a month and therefore in months where there is also a Committee Meeting the Clerk's Deputy will assist as required.
2. The Clerk's Deputy can work Wednesday afternoons instead of Friday afternoons in order to get council papers out at an earlier date.

5. That the points be taken separately.

Cllr P Jay reminded the meeting that Cllr C Carritt had correctly pointed out that item (1) of the resolution would require a change in the Standing Orders and that this is why this item had been deferred. Cllr P Jay had drafted some wording that might be used to change the Standing Orders and this had been circulated to Cllrs. Discussion followed.

Cllr C Carritt proposed the following amendment to clause 1 of the deferred proposal that:

- (i) There shall be a presumption against meetings continuing after 10.30pm
- (ii) Where business cannot be completed before 10.30pm meetings will normally be adjourned
- (iii) Where late planning applications are received these will be accommodated by a 'Planning Applications Update' standard item late in the agenda list
- (iv) Where important new business arises that cannot be left to a future meeting, then an ETC shall be called immediately before the resumption of any adjourned meeting.
- (v) That sub para 1b about standard and issues agendas be deleted

Cllr Mrs T Redpath seconded this motion.

The Council then voted upon the separate parts of the original deferred motion:

1. Two council meetings a month.
 - a. The Town Council moves to two Town Council meetings a month starting at 7.30pm and of 2 hours duration with an absolute maximum of 2.5 hours.
 - b. Meeting 1 will be the standard agenda items and Meeting 2 will be an issues agenda.

Exceptions to this would have to be approved by the Clerk/Mayor. One set of minutes will cover the business of both meetings.

There were 5 votes for, 7 votes against and 1 abstention so this part of the motion failed

2. That Most Committees are disbanded but that
 - a. The Finance Committee is retained.
 - b. A new Human Resources Committee consisting of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the leaders of the main working groups will be established and called as and when required to deal with staffing issues.
 - c. All other committees are disbanded and become working groups instead.

Cllr C Carritt proposed that the proposed 'Human Resources Committee' at (b) is called 'Personnel' instead. This amendment was accepted by Cllrs P Jay and T Gardiner

RESOLVED (11 votes for and 3 abstentions)

That WTC adopt the amended item 2 of the motion as described above relating to committees.

3. Working Groups
 - a. That the following working groups be part of WTC: Environment, Property, Bloom, Strategy, Communications, Christmas Lights, Community Centre, Bowls and Tennis Club, Allotments.

It is envisaged that some of these would be permanent e.g. Environment and Property whilst others would be time limited, established as required e.g. Christmas Lights, Bowls and Tennis Club and then disbanded.

- b. A new highways working group be established that would amalgamate all of the current WTC traffic/transport/highways groups. The Traffic Advisory Committee which is not a committee of WTC will continue to be serviced by the Town Hall Staff.

RESOLVED (10 votes for and 4 abstentions)

That WTC adopt item 3 of the motion as described above relating to working groups.

4. Trial Period

- a. This system is trialled for 6 months.
- b. The Clerk should only service two meetings a month and therefore in months where there is also a Committee Meeting the Admin Assistant will assist as required.
- c. The Admin Assistant can work Wednesday afternoons instead of Friday afternoons in order to get council papers out at an earlier date.

RESOLVED (12 votes for and 2 abstentions)

That WTC adopt item 4 of the motion as described above relating to the trial period.

The Council then voted upon Cllr C Carritt's amendment to clause 1, seconded by Cllr Mrs T Redpath that:

- (i) There shall be a presumption against meetings continuing after 10.30pm
- (ii) Where business cannot be completed before 10.30pm meetings will normally be adjourned
- (iii) Where late planning applications are received these will be accommodated by a 'Planning Applications Update' standard item late in the agenda list
- (iv) Where important new business arises that cannot be left to a future meeting, then an ETC shall be called immediately before the resumption of any adjourned meeting.
- (v) That sub-para 1b about standard and issues agendas be deleted

RESOLVED (12 votes for and 2 abstentions)

That WTC adopt the amended motion as described above relating to the number of council meetings a month.

ACTION: The Town Council will start the 6 month trial as described above.

WTC/153/11 ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

A letter from the Environment Agency was received and considered. Cllr P Redpath noted that its contents were part of the continuous assessment made of rivers by the Environment Agency, which highlights old and vulnerable water systems.

Cllr P Redpath recently met with three staff from the Environment Agency who have concerns that:

1. Water goes over the sluice and erodes from behind.
2. The constant building of a dam by the Black Prince.
3. Weed growth.

In order to rectify the identified problems the sluice will require the installation of sandbags and bars at a cost of several hundred pounds. The Green Gym will remove the dam by the Black Prince later that week and deal with the weeds over the coming weeks. Mike Trumper of the Environment Agency will send a letter to WTC detailing the work that is required to be undertaken by the end of March 2012. Cllr T Gardiner asked for clarification for the sluice costs. Cllr P Redpath advised that it will cost between £600 and £1,000. There is an allocation of £1500 in the budget. The Mayor asked for confirmation that this was new work and not associated with recent work undertaken. Cllr P Redpath confirmed that it was new and different work. He said that the Environment Agency will fast track the Woodstock vole surveys. Cllr C Carritt said that he fully supported Cllr P Redpath on this matter but had serious concerns about the long term requirements and legal responsibilities relating to the Mill Race. He suggested that this was the responsibility of Blenheim Estate and asked that this matter be an agenda item for the next meeting. Cllr Carritt asked whether this had been an unscheduled visit by the Environment Agency. Cllr P Redpath confirmed that this was so and that the Environment Agency was aware of the Blenheim situation.

ACTION: *The Clerk will put the Legal Responsibility for the Mill Race on the next agenda.*

WTC/154/11 OCC CONSULTATION ABOUT THE EXPANSION OF THE WOODSTOCK CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Information from OCC was considered that confirmed that it is not OCC policy to consult Parish or Town Councils about schools. Cllr Mrs P Richardson reported that the second phase of the consultation about the expansion of the Woodstock Primary School is now finished. The school governors have met with architects who have put forward proposals and are currently drafting plans for discussion on 3rd November. Cllr Mrs T Redpath noted that she had objected to the proposals as a resident of Woodstock as she is concerned about the substantial increase in pupil numbers. She suggested that many residents might have been unaware of the consultation. Cllr C Carritt noted that the details of the consultation had been posted on the WTC web site. He had also sent in his observations as a resident.

WTC/155/11 WREN APPLICATION PHASING

The Chairman of the Community Centre Working Group answered questions about the phasing of the Community Centre project. She asked that in future Cllrs address any questions to the members of the Community Centre Working Group in the hope that this would avoid the need for these to come to full council. Discussion followed. Cllr T Gardiner suggested that the issue was not with the Community Centre refurbishment but concerned the WREN VAT. Cllr P Jay said that as the VAT matter was moving forward the Council should move to the next business.

WTC/156/11 FINANCIAL ISSUES

(i) To receive the List of Payments for September 2011

It was proposed and seconded that the list of payments made in the month of September 2011 amounting to £18,222.95 be received and approved.

RESOLVED

That the list of payments made in the month of September 2011 amounting to £18,222.95 is approved.

(ii) To receive the Bank Reconciliation Statements for September 2011

The Council received and considered the Bank Reconciliation Statements for September 2011.

(iii) To receive the Summary and Detailed Income and Expenditure Statements for September 2011

The Summary and Detailed Income and Expenditure Statements for September 2011 were received and considered.

(iv) External Audit

It was noted that the external auditors BDO LLP have now approved the 2011/12 accounts. The Mayor proposed that WTC approve and accept the Annual Return and that the Town Clerk and Finance Assistant conduct a review of the effectiveness of the internal audit and report back to Council in December. Cllr Mrs E Jay seconded this motion.

RESOLVED

That WTC approve and accept the Annual Return and that the Town Clerk and Finance Assistant conduct a review of the effectiveness of the internal audit and report back to Council in December.

(v) Disposition of Council Funds at 30th September 2011

The disposition of council funds at 30th September 2011 was noted.

WTC/157/11 VAT

The Mayor reminded Cllrs that WTC had resolved under WTC/126/11 (iii) VAT that the Clerk should contact Mr Frank Collingwood (the Town Mace Bearer and a qualified accountant) and ask him to advise WTC about the VAT issue. A record of the conference call between Mr Collingwood, the Clerk and the Deputy Mayor had been previously circulated. Mr Collingwood recommended that WTC take specialist advice from a VAT expert at Critchley's Accountancy company. The Clerk and Deputy Mayor had therefore spoken to the VAT expert and reported his recommended approach to assessing the WTC VAT position and the associated costs which were suggested to be within a budget of £1,500 plus VAT. Cllr P Jay proposed that WTC follow the advice of Mr Collingwood and consult the VAT expert at Critchley's accountancy company. This proposal was seconded by Cllr T Gardiner. Discussion followed. Cllr P Redpath said that he had spoken to Roger Symes the internal auditor and recommended that WTC consult the adviser used by Chipping

Norton Town Council who was Andrew Marsden and had previously given advice to WTC in VAT – who would charge less.

RESOLVED (10 votes for, 2 votes against and 2 abstentions)

That WTC follow the advice of Mr Collingwood and consult the VAT expert at Critchley's accountancy company within a budget of £1,500 plus VAT.

Cllr Mrs T Redpath left the meeting at this point. Further discussion followed during which the Mayor reminded Cllrs of WTC Standing Order 33

WTC/158/11 ***HISTORIC WOODSTOCK***

Cllr Mrs L Glees reported that the tendering process for the plaque designs had now been completed. Eight artists had expressed an interest and three had been interviewed. Cllr Mrs L Glees reported that Mr Giles McDonald had been an outstanding candidate who was very enthusiastic and had committed to installing 5 or 6 plaques by next April. Cllr Mrs L Glees proposed that Mr McDonald be appointed to create the plaques for use in the Historic Woodstock project. This motion was seconded by Cllr P Jay. Polystyrene examples of Mr McDonalds ideas were circulated to Cllrs. Cllr Mrs L Glees notified Cllrs that there would be an opportunity for WTC to consult with Mr McDonald later. The Mayor fully supported the appointment of Giles McDonald.

RESOLVED

That Mr McDonald is appointed to create the plaques for use in the Historic Woodstock project.

Cllr Mrs T Redpath rejoined the meeting at this point.

Cllr J Cooper asked that WTC thank Cllr Mrs L Glees for her work on this project and this was agreed.

WTC/159/11 ***CHRISTMAS LIGHTS***

WTC agreed to defer this agenda item until the next Town Council meeting.

WTC/160/11 ***WINTER WEATHER ISSUES***

WTC agreed to defer this agenda item until the next Town Council meeting.

WTC/161/11 ***MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES***

(a) Meeting of the Parish Transport Representatives

As the Deputy Mayor was not present at the meeting WTC agreed to defer this agenda item until the next Town Council meeting.

(b) Oxford Consultative Committee

The papers previously circulated from the meeting of 21st September 2011 were noted.

The Mayor asked that the Council consider the report from the Allotments Working Group next and the Council agreed to this request.

(c) Allotments Working Group

The Chairman of the Allotments Working group presented the proposals of the allotments working group that WTC:

- (i) Complete the lease between WTC and Blenheim Estates and pay the legal fees needed to secure it.
- (ii) Include the land in its Public Liability insurance cover.
- (iii) Allow the Association to run a (metered) water supply from eth Green Lane cemetery.
- (iv) Refer those who want to be on the waiting list to the Association.
- (v) Pass the rent collected by the Association on to Blenheim Estates.
- (vi) Elect one Cllr to act as the link between the Council and the Association Committee, working closely with the Clerk to ensure that the lease is compiled with.

Cllr C Carritt proposed an amendment to the motion to include an additional eighth point that an annual report would be received from the Allotment Association to WTC in April each year. This amendment was accepted.

RESOLVED

That WTC:

- (i) Complete the lease between WTC and Blenheim Estates and pay the legal fees needed to secure it.
- (ii) Include the land in its Public Liability insurance cover.
- (iii) Allow the Association to run a (metered) water supply from eth Green Lane cemetery.
- (iv) Refer those who want to be on the waiting list to the Association.
- (v) Pass the rent collected by the Association on to Blenheim Estates.
- (vi) Elect one Cllr to act as the link between the Council and the Association Committee, working closely with the Clerk to ensure that the lease is compiled with.
- (vii) Receive an annual report from the Allotment Association in April each year.

It was noted that any WTC expenditure would be paid back from the 'Awards for All' grant.

The Clerk/RFO asked that Agenda Items 20 (c) Finance Committee items (ii) and (iii) be considered next and the Council agreed to this request.

(c) Finance Committee

(i) Minutes

WTC agreed to defer the review and consideration of the minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on Tuesday 6th September 2011.

(ii) Budget Review

The revised budget review was received and considered. The Chairman of the Finance Committee reported that adjustments had been made to the budget

review to better reflect the anticipated cost of the cemetery extension and that the WTC target reserves of £50k would be maintained. The Chairman of the Finance Committee proposed that WTC accept the revised budget review. This motion was seconded by Cllr Mrs A Grant.

RESOLVED (8 votes for, 3 votes against and 3 abstentions)
That WTC accept the revised budget review.

(iii) Budget 2012/13

The Clerk/RFO reminded Cllrs of the timetable for submitting budget bids for consideration for the 2012/13.

WTC/162/11 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was proposed that in view of the special or confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they are asked to withdraw.

RESOLVED

That in view of the special or confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they are asked to withdraw.

WTC/163/11 FREEMEN AND TOWNSMEN

WTC agreed to defer this agenda item until the next Town Council meeting.

WTC/164/11 STAFFING UPDATE

a) Letter from the Deputy Clerk

The Mayor reported that the Deputy Clerk had decided not to return to the UK and had therefore submitted her resignation. Cllr C Carritt proposed that WTC send a card thanking the Deputy Clerk for her work for the Council and wishing her luck for the future. This was agreed. The Council agreed that the scale for new member of Administration staff would be SPC 16.

RESOLVED

That a card be sent to the former Deputy Clerk thanking her for her service to WTC and that new administrative post will be at SPC 16 and that the Clerk should start the process of recruiting a new administrator.

ACTIONS:

1. *The Clerk will arrange for a card to be sent to the former Deputy Clerk*
2. *The Clerk will start the recruitment process to find an new administrator*
3. *The commencing salary point for this post will be SPC 16*

b) Approval for additional hours for Budget Preparation by the Finance Officer.

The Mayor proposed that:

1. WTC approves an additional allocation of 25 hours to the Finance Assistant to enable him to undertake the budget preparation for 2012/13

2. That the WTC policy from now on is that the Finance Assistant be automatically allocated an additional 25 hours annually for the budget review and future budget preparation, and a further 25 hours annually for the end of year accounts and audit requirements.

This motion was seconded by Cllr E Poskitt.

RESOLVED (Unanimous)

that:

1. WTC approves an additional allocation of 25 hours to the Finance Assistant to enable him to undertake the budget preparation for 2012/13
2. That the WTC policy from now on is that the Finance Assistant be automatically allocated an additional 25 hours annually for the budget review and future budget preparation, and a further 25 hours annually for the end of year accounts and audit requirements.

c) Deputy Caretaker

It was noted that the Clerk is progressing the recruitment of a Deputy Caretaker.

WTC/164/11 **PROPERTY UPDATE**

The minutes of the property working group held on 29th September 2011 were received and considered.

(i) Payments

The CMfP reported that the collection of rent payments by Carter Jonas had improved. WTC would like tenants to pay their rent by standing order. It was noted that the tenants must set up these standing orders as Carter Jonas are unable to do so.

(ii) Capability Brown

The CMfP reported that the Property Working Group recommends that if the 'Capability Brown' drawing were sold, the funds raised should be dedicated to upgrading decoration in the Town Hall, particularly the Mayor's Parlour. The CMfP proposed that the picture be valued. The Mayor seconded this motion.

RESOLVED

That the 'Capability Brown' picture is valued.

***ACTION:** Cllr Mrs E Jay will work with the Clerk to investigate the costs of valuing the picture and make a recommendation to Council.*

(iii) Fees

The CMfP proposed that the Town Clerk be asked to develop a list of the charges for the current Council solicitors and explores alternative firms' charges for similar items for consideration by the Property Working Group and then the full council,

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk will develop a list that compares the charges of the current Council solicitors with that of others for comparable services.

(iv) Park Street Guttering

It was noted that this came in £1k under budget. The CMfP asked the Council to approve an additional £306.58 for Michael Lunt's fees associated with this work.

RESOLVED

That ETC approved Mr Lunt's additional fee of £306.58.

The Mayor asked Cllrs to agree to a 10 minute extension to the meeting and they agreed to this request

WTC/165/11 WOODSTOCK BOWLS AND TENNIS CLUB

The Chairman of the Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club Working Group updated the council about progress on the lease. WTC's solicitor has recommended a further time extension of four weeks be granted to enable the lease to be completed.

RESOLVED (Unanimous)

That WTC agree to a further four week time extension to enable the lease to be prepared and signed.

WTC considered the outstanding issues as noted by Henmans in a record of telephone conversation with Carter Jonas of 6th September 2011. The Mayor proposed that WTC retain the items 1 and 2 but concede items 3 and 4 listed in this note for the record. This motion was seconded by the Chairman of the Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club working group.

RESOLVED (10 votes for and 1 against)

That WTC wishes to retain items 1 and 2 but is happy to concede items 3 and 4.

***ACTION:** The Clerk will notify Henmans of the Councils decisions.*

The Mayor proposed that approval be given for a second independent legal opinion to be sought from Blake Laphorn about this matter. This was seconded by Cllr A Glees. Discussion followed.

RESOLVED (8 votes for and 5 votes against)

That WTC will seek a second legal opinion on the Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club Lease.

***ACTION:** The Mayor will secure the services of a second legal advisor.*

It was discussed whether the Mayor should respond to recent letters about the Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club in the Woodstock and Bladon News and two possible drafts were considered.

RESOLVED (7 votes for, 3 votes against and 4 abstentions)
That the Mayor will send a response to Woodstock and Bladon News.

The Mayor asked Cllrs to agree to a further 5 minute extension to the meeting and they agreed to this request

WTC/166/11 OWL RESERVE

The council received and considered a report from Cllr P Redpath about an offer that had been made to WTC that would enable the land at the OWL nature reserve to be extended at minimum cost to WTC. Cllr P Redpath recently met with one of the current owners who advised him that the brothers would be willing to gift this land to WTC with the proviso that there is no cost to them to do so. WTC would bear any costs incurred by the transfer of ownership. The Mayor suggested that, based on experience, it was important to know the potential future maintenance costs of this land. Cllr P Redpath reported that most of the OWL nature reserve maintenance is undertaken by volunteers and therefore costs very little. Cllr P Redpath proposed that WTC proceed with this transfer of land, applies to OCC to release the funds held for this piece of land, and uses Pye S106 money and the OCC funds (if secured) to open up this site. Cllr C Carritt suggested that this was a good opportunity for WTC and that the purchase should proceed, however he requested an amendment to the motion so that the Environment Working Group brings details of the plans for this area to the council for further consideration. This was accepted.

RESOLVED

That WTC proceeds with the transfer of this gift of land to extend the OWL nature reserve and agrees to bear all costs associated with the legal transfer of this land for both sides. The Environment Working Group will bring details of the plans for this area back to council for further consideration.

WTC/167/11 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

There were no documents to seal.

The meeting rose at 10.45pm.

Signed Date