

**MINUTES OF THE RECONVENED MEETING OF THE
WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2011
IN THE MAYOR'S PARLOUR, WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL**

PRESENT:

Cllr B Yoxall (Deputy Mayor)	Cllr J Cooper
Cllr T Gardiner	Cllr C Carritt
Cllr P Redpath	Cllr Mrs T Redpath
Cllr E Poskitt	Cllr Mrs E Jay
Cllr P Jay	

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Two residents attended this meeting.

WTC/130/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Mrs V Edwards, A Glees, Mrs E Stokes, Mrs A Grant, Mrs L Glees and Mrs P Richardson. The Mayor (Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore) also sent her apologies due to a previous engagement, therefore the reconvened meeting was chaired by Cllr B Yoxall (Deputy Mayor)

WTC/131/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs P Redpath and Mrs T Redpath both declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 11 (b) Property Working Group 4 (iii) 24 Market Place as they know the tenant.

It was agreed that Agenda Item 11 (b) Property Working Group be deferred to later in the meeting as it will be taken in camera.

WTC/132/11 MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES CONTINUED

(c) Mayor's Committee (Item carried forward from the WTC meeting of 12th July 2011)

The Council considered an item that had been deferred from the WTC meeting of 12th July 2011. This was Agenda item 5 of the Mayor's Committee report: 'Time Management Review of Woodstock Town Council'. Cllr P Jay proposed and Cllr T Gardiner seconded the motion that WTC approves all of the actions recommended under this item as follows:

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.

Discussion followed. Cllr P Jay considered it important that WTC accommodate the Mayor's wishes, if only on an experimental basis for the six month period as proposed. Cllr P Jay referred to a separate paper received from Cllr Mrs T Redpath which he considered to be inappropriate. He reminded Cllrs that, in his opinion, their role was to set policy and that the Clerk should be left to run the administration. Cllr Mrs T Redpath said that her aim was to suggest ways by which the minutes could be produced more quickly. She objected to two Town Council meetings a month and would like the current system retained. Cllr J Cooper said that he would like the council to move to action minutes with no narrative. He would also prefer a structure of committees with delegated powers that would be able to make decisions if an item is in the budget and complies with council policy. Cllr P Redpath did not like the idea of a standard agenda and queried what would happen about urgent matters. Cllr C Carritt noted that recommendation one would require a change to the Standing Orders (S.O's) and so this matter will need to stand adjourned until the next meeting. He asked that the points be taken separately. His preference was for one meeting a month as he was concerned that Cllrs might be less likely to attend a meeting with standard agenda items. Cllr E Poskitt queried the number of months in which WTC currently has two meetings and the Clerk confirmed that this was most. Cllr B Yoxall supported the idea of having two shorter meetings rather than one long one. Cllr E Jay queried what would happen to the A44 working group if there was a new highways working group. She was advised that as this is not a council working group it would remain separate.

Cllr P Redpath asked for an amendment to the proposal so that it was not taken as a whole. This was seconded by Mrs T Redpath. Cllr P Jay said that he was happy to accept the amendment but reminded Cllrs that at least part of the motion had to be adjourned until to the next meeting. The amendment was then voted upon.

RESOLVED (6 for, 1 against and 2 abstentions)
That the motion will be voted upon item by item.

Cllr P Jay said that the Council could now, as a courtesy to the absent mayor adjourn the discussion until it's next meeting, in which case the amended motion must take precedence as the first item on this subject at the next meeting. He asked the Deputy Mayor to decide whether or not it was right to vote on the motion tonight or adjourn it until the next meeting as a courtesy to the Mayor and because of the S.O's. Discussion followed. Cllr T Gardiner considered that the council was obliged to adjourn it due to the S.O's. Cllr C Carritt reminded Cllrs that anything that could change the S.O's must stand adjourned but that other parts could be voted upon that night for ratification at the next months meeting. Cllr E Poskitt supported this idea. The Deputy Mayor considered that WTC could vote on whether to accept the proposals and then convey this matter to the next meeting for further discussion and final decision. Cllr P Jay then summed up his motion and said that he would prefer to adjourn this discussion and defer the matter. He suggested that the deferment be voted upon.

RESOLVED (4 votes for, 3 against and 2 abstentions)
That the amended motion is adjourned to the October meeting.

***ACTION:** The Clerk will ensure that this item is included on the next TC agenda.*

WTC/133/11 BBC OXFORD

The Council received and considered a letter written by the Deputy Mayor that asked the BBC to consider modifying the current geographic region covered by the local news slots at 6.30pm and after the national news at 10pm Monday-Friday. The Deputy Mayor proposed that this letter be sent by WTC. Discussion followed. Cllr Mrs E Jay proposed an amendment that the third paragraph be deleted and this motion was seconded by Cllr Mrs T Redpath. A vote was taken on the amendment.

RESOLVED (4 votes for, 3 against)
That the amendment was passed and the third paragraph will be removed.

The amended motion was then voted upon.

RESOLVED (5 votes for 4 votes against).
That the amended letter be sent to BBC Oxford.

***ACTION:** The Clerk will send the amended letter to BBC Oxford.*

WTC/134/11 *WIFI UPDATE*

The Clerk reported that the WiFi is now up and running on the Town Hall.

WTC/135/11 *CHRISTMAS LIGHTS*

The Deputy Mayor said that he was awaiting a response from Chris Baylis about people who may be approached to help collect Christmas Lights donations this year. Cllr C Carritt reported that SEC staff had failed to turn up to a meeting that had been arranged to look at the lighting post by The Crown. Cllr P Redpath said that in the budget review the budget had been revised to reflect the technical repairs required.

WTC/136/11 *ELECTORAL REVIEW OF OXFORDSHIRE*

The electoral review of Oxfordshire was noted.

WTC/137/11 *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/138/11 *FREEMEN AND TOWNSMEN*

This matter was deferred until the October meeting.

ACTION: The Clerk will ensure that this item is included on the next TC agenda.

WTC/139/11 *LEGACY FUND*

Four letters received so far were noted. It is hoped that more will follow. These will be discussed at the Annual Town Meeting in March and then decided upon.

WTC/140/11 *PROPERTY WORKING GROUP*

The minutes of the Property Working Group meeting held on 23rd August were received and considered. Cllrs P Redpath and Mrs T Redpath both declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 11 (b) Property Working Group 4 (iii) 24 Market Place as they know the tenant. The following matters were discussed:

(i) Park Street Block

A potential problem with an external wall at 2 Park Street has been investigated by a structural engineer. His report will be discussed further by the Property Working Group. No urgent action is required. This work is not covered by the WTC insurance policy. The repair to the leaking roof of 6/8 Park Street was awarded to Abbey Roofing following a tender exercise and is currently underway. This repair is not covered by insurance as it is wear and tear. The lease of 8 Park Street is being amended to reflect a change of tenant. There will be no cost to WTC.

ACTIONS:

1. *The PWG will further consider the wall at number 2 Park Street.*

2. *Carter Jonas will arrange for the tenancy agreement of 8 Park Street to be amended at no cost to WTC.*

(ii) Town Hall

Two quotes for preparing and re-oiling the Town Hall doors were received and considered. The prices were comparable.

RESOLVED

That the estimate from Mr J Grant be accepted because the work was clearly explained and because he is aware of the security aspects associated with this work. It was considered that the other estimate was less clear.

***ACTION:** The Clerk will notify Mr Grant that he has been awarded the work on the Town Hall doors.*

(iii) 24 Market Place

CLrs P Redpath and Mrs T Redpath both declared a personal interest as they know the tenant. The CMfP updated the Council on this tenancy and proposed that WTC ask Carter Jonas to request the tenant to surrender the lease or if necessary take legal action to terminate the tenancy. This motion was seconded by Cllr T Gardiner.

RESOLVED (4 votes for, 4 votes against, the other Cllrs abstained. The Deputy Mayor used his casting vote and voted for this proposal).

That WTC ask Carter Jonas to request the tenant to surrender the lease or progress this through the WTC solicitors if necessary.

***ACTION:** The Clerk will notify Carter Jonas of the WTC decision and instruction.*

(iv) First Floor Community Centre

The current lease of the tenant using the 1st floor of the Community Centre had expired and is being re-negotiated by Carter Jonas on behalf of WTC. Carter Jonas had made recommendations concerning the new lease.

RESOLVED

That the new 3 year lease will include break points for both parties at the end of years 1 and 2, Carter Jonas will negotiate the rent within levels agreed by WTC, no dogs other than dogs for the blind or disabled will be permitted and the other tenants must be allowed access to the upstairs kitchen between the hours of 9am until 5.30pm.

***ACTION:** The Clerk will notify Carter Jonas of the WTC decision and instruction.*

(v) La Galleria

It was noted that La Galleria currently owes rent for the cobbled area.

RESOLVED

That Carter Jonas is given WTC's permission to issue La galleria with notice if the rent for the cobbles is not paid.

***ACTION:** The Clerk will notify Carter Jonas of the WTC decision and instruction.*

(vi) Property Budget

A series of budget items were referred to the Finance Committee for consideration. Cllr T Gardiner reminded WTC that it was not so long ago that the council had had to take out a Public Works Board Loan for property. Cllr J Cooper reminded the Council that not all costs were avoidable such as those arising from a change in tenant.

(vii) Carter Jonas Rent Collection

It was noted that although the Carter Jonas rent collection and reporting had improved a letter would be sent itemising the past failings in the procedure against the points in the original agreement.

***ACTION:** The CMfP will work with Cllr Mrs V Edwards, the Finance Officer and the Clerk to compose a letter to Carter Jonas.*

(viii) Community Centre Licensing

It was recommended that appropriate staff be trained in the alcohol licensing laws as alcohol is sometimes sold or provided at the Community Centre. The CMfP proposed that WTC support a day's training in Alcohol Licensing procedures for the Town Clerk and Caretaker and that Council agree that hirers wishing for licensed events at the Community Centre should be asked to take out Temporary License for the rest of this year and perhaps until the refurbishment is completed and new terms of hire agreed.

RESOLVED

That WTC support a day's training in Alcohol Licensing procedures for the Town Clerk and Caretaker and that Council agree that hirers wishing for licensed events at the Community Centre should be asked to take out Temporary License for the rest of this year and perhaps until the refurbishment is completed and new terms of hire agreed.

(ix) Forms and Terms for Hiring the Town Hall

It was agreed that the new forms and terms for the hire of the Town Hall should be finalised as soon as is practical. The Property Working Group members suggested that they ask Cllr Mrs L Glees whether she is able to assist the CMfP with this matter.

(x) Upholstery in Mayor's Parlour

Quotes for an upgrade of the soft furnishings have been received. It was discussed whether an application could be made to the Legacy Fund. Cllr P Jay reminded Cllrs that the Legacy Fund can only be used for one project and not multiples.

(xi) Capability Brown Drawing

Discussions arose about the future of the Capability Brown drawing. Cllr Mrs E Jay reported information she had gathered about the possible costs of restoring the picture. The CMfP proposed that the Council explores the possibilities of selling the Capability Brown picture in its present state once the Compton Verney exhibition closes. Cllr Mrs E Jay seconded this motion. A Member called for a named vote:

For: Cllrs Mrs E Jay, P Jay, T Gardiner, E Poskitt and B Yoxall (5)

Against: Cllrs Mrs T Redpath and J Cooper (2)

Abstentions: Cllrs P Redpath and C Carritt

RESOLVED

That the Council explores the possibilities of selling the Capability Brown picture in its present state once the Compton Verney exhibition closes.

ACTIONS: The Clerk will:

- 1. Notify Compton Verney that the Capability Brown picture should be returned to Woodstock Town Hal at the close of the exhibition.*
- 2. Ensure that this item is included on the next TC agenda.*

WTC/141/11 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

There were no documents to seal at this meeting.

The meeting rose at 9.35pm.

Signed Date