

Minutes of the meeting of Full Council Held in the Community Office at 8pm on Tuesday 10th December 2013

Present:

Councillors:

Ian Hill – Chairman
David Tindale – Vice-Chairman
Tony Williamson
Rhian Woods
Barry Adby
Nick Greaves
Robin Wilson
Harvey Batten
Bob West (left at 9.10pm)
Tim Horton

District Councillor:

Angie Paterson

Press:

Janine Rasiah

Members of the Public:

4

156/13 Apologies for absence

Roddy Orr, Neil Boddington.

157/13 Chairman's Remarks

IH reported that there had been a meeting of the Town Hall Charity Body at which RW resigned as Chairman and TH was elected as Chairman. IH thanked RW for all her work as Chairman to the Town Hall Charity Body over the recent years. IH said that we desperately need more people to be on this Body and asked that Councillors let the Clerk know if they would like to join.

158/13 To receive Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest notified.

159/13 Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 12th November 2013 to be signed as a correct record

The following changes were agreed : **Minute 146/13 Broadband on Hills**, ...serve from a box at Turville via Northend not Christmas Common; **Minute 155/13 Oxfordshire Local Plan**. The words; 'It is possible' to be inserted before SODC.

Resolved: That with the two changes stated above these minutes were agreed as a correct record of this meeting and that they be signed by the Chairman.

160/13 Matters arising from the Minutes

SSSI Footpath on Watlington Hill (Minute 144/13 refers)– RB reported that a letter was sent to Beechwood Estates as a matter of urgency on this issue and was reported to the Strategy Committee in November as fencing had been put up with no possibility of access. IH and RB drafted the letter which

expressed our concern on this issue. It was also noted that a lot of material has been torn up and left on our land. The letter included the points of our distress on the breakdown of communications and also asking that the rubbish be removed. This has now been done. We have a reply from the Estates Manager of Beechwood who has put the letter to his Board.

TH stated that for more than 20 years this land has been accessed and it is not unreasonable to make a request that there is a new right of way. It could be considered a dereliction of duty that Beechwood Estates have made no effort to initiate to increase access to the countryside.

HB asked if we could be taking this issue too far in as much as they are our Landlord of the Sports Field and that we could damage that relationship.

Resolved: That this be an agenda item for the Strategy Committee Meeting on the 28/1/2014 and the letter sent to Beechwood Estates will be included in the papers.

Community Governance Review (Minute 147/13 refers) – RB has spoken to 3 of the 5 residents of Hollandridge Lane, 1 was keen, 2 were quite keen to be part of the Watlington Parish rather than Pishill Parish but were concerned about changing historic boundaries and about the increase in Council Tax this would impose on them. It was agreed to wait until we receive responses from Pyrton and Pishill Parish Councils before deciding on this issue. This will be further discussed in January 2014.

161/13 Public Questions

There were no public questions notified.

162/13 District Councillors Report – Angie Paterson

Council Tax – This will be going through Council on Thursday week and information will be sent to Parish Councils quickly after this meeting

Tree Leaf fall – Ian Matten, the officer who oversees this issue has spoken to AP on this and a reply will be sent to us.

Neighbourhood Plan – AP stated that she would be very happy to help in any way with this and will attend any meetings that the group would like her to.

SMHA – The outcome on this will not be out until January 2014.

Air Quality Action Plan – This did not go to the Cabinet Meeting for discussion as it was withdrawn. This is because Central Government have given SODC a grant to do a piece of research to see if a low emission zone would be appropriate in areas that there are problems. There are about a dozen streets that have a problem with air quality and research will be done on how to deal with specific areas. This is an urgent issue but there needs to be more detail.

163/13 County Councillors Report

It was noted that Caroline Newton had sent through a report which was circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. IH stated that there is notice of a source of funding that we may want to follow up.

TW said that it is interesting that the Leader of the Council seems to be running everything as there is no reference to any other cabinet members in the report.

TH stated that he went to a meeting at Didcot and he was the only person who spoke. He noted that there is a real decrease in OCC commitment to trees, and grass cutting to verges as well as footpaths.

164/13 Thames Valley Police Report

No report had been received.

165/13 To receive the Balance of Accounts and approve the list of Payments

Tim Horton read out the Balances of Accounts and proposed that all payments be made apart from the payment to OPC which should be sent when we receive a satisfactory report from them and BA and KT be delegated to send payment when they receive this report.

Resolved: That the Balance of Account be signed and the list of payments be signed by the Chairman. That all payments be settled apart from the payment to OPC which is delegated to BA and KT to be settled when a satisfactory report is received from them.

166/13 Working together with WATNEXT – Email sent by WATNEXT was attached to the agenda.

IH stated that he had a meeting with Keith Lovelace and Peter Richardson and that he now has some idea of what they are trying to achieve. Some Councillors have attended some of their meetings as ‘individuals’ and not as Parish Council representatives. At the moment Council have given no opinion on any of their issues. Council has had a policy of not getting involved in Campaign Groups so that decisions made by them do not conflict with Council’s opinions on other issues. A Watlington Parish Council formal representative on this group could cause problems and the feeling was that this should not happen.

It was agreed that if WATNEXT have any issues that come from their meetings that they contact the Clerk and let her know so that if necessary issues could be discussed by a committee of the Parish Council. This way we could both be of use to each other. An informal exchange of information could be useful so that work is not duplicated. RW said that WATNEXT have put a huge amount of effort into researching issues that the Parish Council have not got the resources to do and if they come up with ideas that Council could take up with OCC or SODC we should facilitate these. It was agreed that there should be a free exchange of information.

It was noted that many of the issues WATNEXT are looking into will need to be looked at in the context of the Neighbourhood Plan.

After discussion it was:

Resolved: That the WATNEXT group be invited to give a written monthly report to Full Council which would be taken under Reports from other Organisations agenda item.

IH to formally write to WATNEXT on this way forward.

167/13 Committees:

A: FINANCE - 25/11/2013 and Confidential Note from the Meeting (this to be taken in confidential session if needs to be discussed) – Tim Horton

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council.

TH stated that the Precept and Budget Issue will be taken under a separate agenda item and that the meeting on the 25/11 focused mainly on these issues. The Confidential Note will be discussed at the end of this meeting.

Car Park New Entrance Scheme- TW stated that with regard to having a relationship with partner bodies we would need to go through our financial regulations as there could be a risk in taking out a joint contract. There would need to be a set of governing rules on how things are dealt with.

B: PLANNING – Rhian Woods

There was no meeting in December but a meeting has just been held prior to this meeting. 2 applications were considered and both were approved.

C: STRATEGY – 26/11/2013 – David Tindale

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council.

Buses- It was noted that it was useful to have procedural information. It was noted that there has

been a lot of misunderstanding on the Thame bus service which will now be operated by 2 bus companies. This is also the case with the Wallingford bus service: Mon –Tues will be operated by White’s Coaches and Friday will be operated by GoRide and this should see the service improved.

TH said that he is looking into producing a Bus Timetable that is unique to Watlington.

Broadband – RB said that he is looking forward to working on this with RWn.

Speed Awareness Week – This will be further discussed at the next meeting once a piece has been put in the Watlington Times.

HGV Register – BA reported that he has spoken to Chris Hume and PC Ian Kent on this issue.

D. OPERATIONS –20/11/2013 – Barry Adby

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council.

Speeding in Christmas Common – It was noted that at a previous police check drivers were doing over 38mph on a regular basis which should have resulted in this area being a regular speed van check point but that this did not happen. They need to put a SID in place but cannot do this at the moment. RB said that there should be a record of the complete check they did last time. It was noted that Cookley Green and Park Corner have been approved for regular speed van checks.

Drains in Car Park – BA stated that we have received advice from OPC to put in a soakaway which would cost in the region of £12,000. The Committee will be meeting at the Car Park at 10am prior to the 10.30am meeting on 15th January 2014 and this issue will be further discussed.

Car Park Entrance Scheme – We have received a communication from Mark Francis at OCC which states that OCC would not be able to co-ordinate or help in any way with this scheme.

Ingham Lane/Brook Street Repairs – OCC have now completed these works. It was noted that there was some chaos in the Town which was not helped by residents ignoring the road closure signs. It was noted that the stretch by Pilgrims Cottage has not been done as a drain needs replacing and that the cottage has no foundations.

RW said that some signs were put near the Town Hall zebra crossing signs which was a safety issue as it obscured drivers view of small children at the crossing. Care should be taken where signs are placed and they should not be alongside a zebra crossing. BA said that it would have been much more helpful to have a gateman there.

E. ALLOTMENTS –No Meeting

F. PAVILION AND SPORTS FIELD – 11/11/2013 – Tony Williamson

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council.

TW reported that there is a special meeting of the Committee on the 12th December 2013.

G. AFFORDABLE HOUSING – There has been no meeting.

H. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP – 19/11/2013 – Ian Hill

To appoint 3 Parish Council Members to the Neighbourhood Plan Core Committee (NPCC)

Discussion took place on this and IH stated that he would be happy to be considered but that he could only do a maximum of 6 months on the committee. NH had stated that he would like to be considered but is on sick leave at the moment. RW and NB had also stated their interest.

Resolved: That Neil Boddington and Rhian Woods be appointed to the Neighbourhood Core Committee with Ian Hill appointed for a maximum of 6 months in a temporary capacity when the membership can be reviewed at this stage.

Resolved: That Full Council gives power of delegation to this steering committee to make the decision of appointing the 3 non-councillor members of the NPCC.

It was noted that we have had 11 applicants to date.

It was thought that there will need to be some rules for the operating of this committee and that meeting will need to be held in places so that the public can attend. The whole population of Watlington should be able to see the minutes of the meetings. The NPCC Committee should report to Full Council. IH noted that these requirements were included in the draft Terms of Reference for the NPCC.

168/13 Draft Budget (Income and Expenditure) for 2014/2015 and setting of precept – Paper was attached to the agenda.

TH reported on this paper. He stated that the draft budget has an income gap of £7727 on the current precept which would be a £7.00 increase on Band D (8% increase would be needed). However the programme for works next year is very busy even compared to this year. An amendment to this will come from the Finance Meeting which will be held on the 7th January, to the Full Council meeting on the 14th January 2014 after which SODC will need to be notified of the precept agreed on. It was noted that Planning should have £100 allocated for the Planning Award.

RO stated that we are not making allowances for depreciation and a study will need to be done on what money needs to be put aside.

50% of the precept would be available in uncommitted reserves. TH said that our Reserves position is quite strong.

169/13 Correspondence for Information - List Attached to Agenda

Correspondence will only be discussed if urgent and if it cannot be passed to the relevant committee to discuss.

There was no correspondence that needed discussing.

170/13 Report on 33 High Street and Charlotte Cox Charity

IH had given out a paper on this and suggested that Councillors take this away to read. The 33 High Street Group needs to have a discussion about this and they will then bring back a recommendation to Full Council for the January Meeting.

171/13 Representation on other bodies – To note reports that have been received

To Appoint a Governor for Watlington Primary School – No Parish Councillors had put themselves forward for this position. All Councillors to have a think about this with a view of suggesting an appropriate resident to put forward for this position which can then be discussed in the January Meeting.

172/13 Other Matters for Discussion at the discretion of Chair

Twinning – It was noted that we have been invited to Mansle and that we will be discussing this with the Twinning Committee in the first instance.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 10.05PM AND THEN WENT INTO CONFIDENTIAL SESSION TO DISCUSS STAFF AND PENSIONS.

According to: Confidential Session: EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: THAT under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for items of business of the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 7,8 and 9 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act.

