



Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council held in the Community Office at 8.00pm on Tuesday 12th January 2016

Present:

Councillors:

Ian Hill –Chairman (IH)
Matt Reid – Vice-Chairman (MR)
Tom Bindoff (TB)
Rachel Huckvale (RH)
Tony Williamson (TW)
Roger Beattie (RB)
Terry Jackson (TJ)
Robin Wilson (RW)
Jo Read (JR)
Bob West (BW)
Jeremy Bell (JB)

Officer:

Sarah Pullen

District Councillor:

Anna Badcock

Members of the Public:

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1/15 Apologies for absence

Jane Bryant, Jon Lorimer, Elizabeth Winton.

2/15 Chairman's Remarks

IH reported that the Clerk's daughter is in hospital but is hoping that she will be out by the weekend. She will be popping into work when she can and will pick up emails.

IH said that Dr Steve Nicholson will retire at the end of March and thanked him for his 35 year service to the community. He has been unable to get anyone to take over the partnership as yet. There is a new doctor starting in Chalgrove. Dr Hoy will also cover Watlington.

It was agreed that a formal letter of thanks be sent to Dr Nicholson and IH will draft this.

3/15 To receive Declarations of Interest

Agenda Item 12 – Youth Club – RB declared an interest in this as one of the two remaining trustees and current signatories to the Youth Club bank account.

4/15 A) Minutes of the Full Council Meetings held on the 8th December 2015 to be signed as a correct record

The following amendments were agreed: Minute 190/15 page 71 'note' should read 'not'; Minute 194/15 page 72 under "Social Care" should read "... is still subject of a great debate" ; Minute 198/15 page 75 under 33 High Street the final four lines from "This shadow ..." should be deleted as they duplicate the preceding text

Resolved: That with the amendments shown above the minutes from the meeting be agreed as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

B) To accept the notes of the Outreach Meeting held on 23th November 2015

It was noted that Jeremy Bell was not present and that JR left half way through the meeting.

With these changes it was:

Resolved: That with the amendments shown above the notes from the meeting be agreed as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

5/15 Matters arising from the Minutes

(Minute 198/15 under Planning refers) IH has had a meeting with Chalgrove and they were unaware of Ecotec's involvement in the current planning application for the Solar Farm site.

Icknield Community College Link – MR suggested that Jane Bryant take over this link role and this was agreed.

33 High Street – It was noted that OCC do not want to have a meeting yet. WPC are hoping to take over the whole of the Charlotte Coxe Trust once OCC have set everything up to protect the Library. There should be 3 WPC representatives not 2 as stated in the last Minutes.
This to be an agenda item for the next Full Council meeting.

6/15 Public Questions

Gill Bindoff – Update on Neighbourhood Plan and Budget

GB gave a brief update and said that the NP is making good progress. There are 50 active people working on it with 6 on the Co-ordination Group and 7 working parties have been set up. These started just before Christmas. There was a meeting with a SODC Mentor yesterday following the meeting with Pyrton. The Mentor confirmed that our NP is on track. There is an ambitious target of early to mid-April to have completed information gathering and to start on preparing the NP policies. The Traffic and Development Sites groups have had several meetings and have identified gaps that need to be filled. Owner and Developer information on sites are being sought.

GB stated that there is an urgency to go ahead with the Housing Needs Survey and this should be done in this current financial year. Savings will be made by using volunteer help in distributing and collecting the questionnaires and there will be a much higher response rate by doing this. About 60 volunteers will be needed to do this. GB said that she would like the Parish Council to support the Housing Needs Survey from this year's budget as there is money available. The £2000 put into next year's budget for the NP can then be used for match funding for other professional work/surveys needed. GB also asked that the PC support the change to the Terms of Reference for the NP Co-ordination Group.

7/15 District Councillors Report – Anna Badcock

AB said that she has very little to report due to the Xmas break. She asked if there were any questions. OCC are setting their budget for the next financial year. If there are any problems with rubbish collection please either contact AB or the Clerk or report it via the Biffa website.

SODC are working on a Corporate Strategy which is like a Business Plan and which will prioritise things that SODC do.

Q: Is it correct that Public Access is not provided open on a Saturday which is the only time many people are available.

A: This is the case but there is now "Open Technology that allows round the clock access. If there is no response from telephoning or via the SODC website please contact AB.

Q: What date in February will the grant decisions be made?

A: AB said she did not know but it may be on their website or send an email to the grants department.

Q: TW mentioned his email dated 11/1/16 which he sent to AB and SH regarding the NP.

A: AB said that this is not an issue that should be directed to her it should be directed to the NP Group.

TW then read out the email to the meeting:

Dear Anna and Steve,

I am very concerned that all the effort that has been and is being put into the Neighbourhood Plan will get nowhere because:

- *although a number of people are working very hard in good faith on a lot of detail as suggested by SODC, who see the risk of challenge and that SODC will be to blame if it has not advised us fully. Other people similarly worked very hard in good faith before the Council elections last May*
- *all I have heard about the NP still leads me to feel it is designed for parishes to choose which*

- fields to put their extra houses in.*
- *because of its position Watlington has a real strategic issue about housing and traffic which will not be ignored by the voting electorate many of whom have strong views.*
 - *These strong and differing views need to be respected and reasoned with openly.*
 - *the only way I can see is for SODC and OCC to work with the Parish Council, so that the NP can deal with Watlington's strategic traffic issue. The amount of houses likely to be needed in Watlington are sufficient to fund some ways forward. If Watlington's situation does not fit the standard NP formula then can SODC and OCC work with us to find a legal solution, which is as little open to challenge as possible?*
 - *it seems to me that we need SODC and OCC to work with us to devise a proper way of presenting the strategic issue to the electorate, which involves -*
 - *showing clearly that a bypass is not a practical possibility, both because of cost and because it would be contrary to OCC traffic strategy for South Oxfordshire.*
 - *showing how 200 houses could provide a way of reducing traffic in the centre by using Pyrton Lane, Willow Close etc*
 - *showing how 200 houses could be built on scattered sites around the town and how traffic in the centre would then be dealt with*
 - *showing if there is another way in which traffic could be reduced in the centre by another route that did not use Willow Close*
 - *my experience in Watlington tells me that if any of these proposals are put up in a Neighbourhood Plan on its own it will be rejected, unless there has first been an open and honest explanation and discussion of the whole range of views*
 - *the draft NP could then be drawn using the results of the consultation and then going into the detail that is necessary on the sites and on the environmental and infrastructure issues. I would be grateful if you could both comment on this at tomorrow's Parish Council Meeting, and I hope some advance notice helps you.'*

TW said that he feels that SODC and OCC should be working with the Parish Council on the NP. IH stated that this would be up to the NP Steering Committee. This was not something that should be discussed at a Full Council meeting as it should be looked at by the NP Steering Committee before it comes to a FC meeting. TW asked that the NP Steering Committee consider this issue. TW said that he thinks that SODC only go for single track. AB stated that there is a set process as laid out by Government legislation. TW said that it should work to changes as needed for Watlington. AB advised that this should then go through our MP John Howell as SODC can only implement legislation as set by the Government. TW said that this could be done by interpretation of the law. AB suggested that TW has a meeting with John Howell as she cannot respond to TW's email and neither can Gill Bindoff.

AB requested that in future meetings only relevant questions be asked of her otherwise she will only answer questions that are given to her in advance.

IH thanked AB for attending the meeting.

8/15 County Councillors Report

SH had sent his apologies for this meeting.

9/15 Thames Valley Police Report - the report was attached to the agenda.

The report was noted. It was asked how often the PCSO is in Watlington.

10/15 To receive the Balance of Accounts and approve the list of Payments - Tony Williamson

TW read out the Balance of Accounts and proposed that the list of payments be settled as per the prescribed process.

Resolved: That the Balances of Accounts and the list of payments be settled and that they be signed by the Chairman.

11/15 Committees:

A: FINANCE – 6/1/2016 – Tony Williamson

Resolved: That Council accept these Minutes.

Precept and Budget 2016/2017

Congratulations were given to IH regarding the discussions on the budget. The precept would be

the largest increase for many years. A summary of the issues and items that WPC have had to look at for the next financial year was distributed. The issues were a significant challenge to the Finance Committee with the SODC Street Cleansing being cut in half, an increase needed in the maintenance of our Green Spaces. Grants to bus services and the Children's Centre have also been allocated. Also £2000 has been put in towards new play equipment in the Paddock. For the NP Budget £2000 has been allowed to attract match funding for professional services/surveys, £4000 for the NP Administration and £1000 for other costs.

After discussion it was:

Resolved Unanimously:

i) To increase the annual payment of Council Tax Band D from £78.19 to £92.70 and other bands proportionately

ii) To establish a precept (being the Band D figure multiplied by the Tax Base of 1152.4) of £106,828.00. This equates to an increase of £1.45 for each month for the 10 months payable.

iii) To approve the Finance Committee budget figures (titled Budget Recommendation for Full Council on 12th January 2016) which was attached to the agenda.

3. Neighbourhood Plan – Request from Steering Committee and NP Forum following the meeting held on 4/1/2016 to commission a Housing Needs Survey ASAP.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That WPC supports commissioning a Housing Needs Survey. This could be done in two ways if there is not sufficient money available in the current budget:

1. We fund the survey out of the £2000 allocated for professional advice/surveys in 2016/2017.

This would then only leave £500 available to apply for any match funding grants.

2. That we commission the survey when we are awarded a grant from SODC which would allow us to use the £2000 allocated towards match funding grants.

That WPC support Option 2.

It was reported that the Clerk and Rachel Gill since the Finance meeting have been through the current NP Budget and confirmed that there are sufficient funds available to pay for the Housing Needs Survey within the current year's budget. After discussion it was:

Resolved Unanimously: That the Housing Needs Survey be funded out of the current NP Budget.

PSFC Budget

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: To accept the principle:

1. That public money should not be used to support private sports/events etc.

2. That if a committee member representing a particular organisation is not present at a meeting where an issue is discussed and there are representatives of that same organisation present who have discussed and given their opinions, that absent member should not then be allowed to negate their representatives' comments.

After much discussion on this recommendation it was:

Resolved Unanimously: To Accept Point 2 above but not point 1 and to write to the Football Club to let them know that we disagree with Point 1 above.

B: PLANNING – 5/1/2016- Jeremy Bell

Resolved: That Council accept these Minutes.

JB reported that the Committee had approved 4 applications but did not make a decision on the application for Northend as existing plans were not given.

C: STRATEGY- There has been no meeting.

D. OPERATIONS – There has been no meeting.

E. ALLOTMENTS

TB said that he has cut the hedge.

F. PAVILION AND SPORTS FIELD – 3/12/2015 – Ian Hill

Resolved: That Council accept these Minutes.

IH stated that discussion of the budget took up the majority of the time in this meeting. Costs are increasing and the PSFC cannot continue to meet all the costs. Half the costs of the utilities should be met by the Sports Club. Keith Woolfson has managed to negotiate a deal with the Utility Companies which should reduce these costs by about 30% and thanks were given to him for dealing with this issue.

G. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE – 30/11/2015 and the meeting of the 4/1/2015 of the NP Steering Committee and NPC Committee.

Resolved: Council to accept these Minutes

JB thanked Gill Bindoff for her report given earlier in the meeting and said he had no further comments to make.

Resolved Unanimously: That the NPCC Forum terms of reference be changed so that it can include people who do not live in Watlington. (Councillors all have the current Terms of Reference), the wording to now read 'and others who regularly use Watlington'.

TW said that this error should have been spotted earlier. TW also said that the meeting on the 30/11/15 only had a verbal report and not a written report from the Coordination Committee. Members need to have some form of written information on progress submitted before the meeting if they are to be able to discuss them.

There was also discussion about declaration of interests and the impression that had been given that the Forum CG did not trust members of the property development industry to declare their interests. IH said that we had to trust people's integrity and could not single out a specific group for special treatment.

TJ said that she did not attend the meeting.

12. Youth Club

RB asked that Carol Martin be allowed to join the table for discussion on this issue and this was agreed. RB reported as follows.

Watlington Youth Club has been in difficulty for some time with nobody coming forward to join the management committee over the past few years. The Club stopped meeting last summer and did not reopen at the start of the September term, although several attempts have been made and are still being made to revive it.

The only two remaining members of the management committee have for a long time been trying to step down and have now decided that they will do so even if no replacements are found. This raises a problem as the Club has a significant fund held in a bank account that is reserved for capital expenses for the Youth Club, and preferably as seed funding for a dedicated Youth Centre in the town. These two members have asked if the Parish Council will take over responsibility for these funds until such time as suitable use is found for them.

There are a number of issues that need to be resolved and the resolution below is for the Parish Council to agree to take over management of these funds in the short term and to investigate the options for the longer term future of services for the youth of the parish.

JR stated that she has been involved with trying to set up a new committee for a long time and this is proving very difficult. There has been some progress and they now have about 7 people interested but it is proving difficult to get everyone together. Gill Cottle has asked if WPC could manage the Youth Club finances and be signatories on their accounts.

After discussion it was:

Resolved: That this Council is prepared to take the actions below should it not prove possible to set up a functioning Youth Club management structure in this financial year:

(a) set up a separate bank account for the financial assets of the Youth Club and take responsibility for the equipment and materials of the Youth Club currently stored at the Sports Pavilion; and

(b) establish a small working group to report on the need for a Youth Club in the parish, and on the requirements to be met if it is to be re-established, and these were agreed to be JR, TW, MR and TJ; and

(c) investigate the longer term requirement for management of the capital fund, including whether it is necessary to establish a separate charity (CIO) for this purpose.

TW said that back in 2002 and the Suggestions for Better Watlington, 21 people volunteered to help with the Youth Club. Carol Martin took on the role of Treasurer and has been it ever since. Thanks were given to Carol Martin for her work as Treasure over many years.

It was noted that there is currently no Youth Club running in Watlington.

13 Correspondence for Information - **List Attached to Agenda**

No 1 (2016) – Operations Committee to look at this as an agenda item.

14 Reports from Organisations and Representation on other bodies – To note reports that have been received

Age Concern – TW reported that 126 people have completed the survey. The 8 page document is worth a read.

Go Active Gold – SODC are running an event in the Town Hall on the 25th January for over 60's. This is to encourage them to do more exercise.

Five Parishes Bus Group – The Wallingford and Reading services are likely to cease from July with OCC ceasing their subsidies. The Oxford Bus service will potentially be partially funded but will probably lose the 6.30am service and 3 afternoon services which would mean that if you miss the 1.30pm bus from Oxford you would not be able to then get a bus until 5.30pm which is a big gap. This group are meeting with Thames Travel next week to discuss options. It was thought that we need to encourage people to use the Oxford Service and complain about the potential cuts.

Sports Club – Their AGM will take place on 28/2/2016.

15 Other Matters for Discussion at the discretion of Chair

Room Sensor for Lights in the Community Office – It was suggested that this would be a good idea.

Miranda Strubel had asked to address the Parish Council and this was agreed.

MS said that she is a PHD student and is doing research into Red Kites and there will be an article in this month's Watlington Times. She said she has a lot of information and is happy to discuss any issue with the PC at a suitable time.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.58PM