

Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council Held in the Community Office at 8pm on Tuesday 11th October 2011

Present:

Councillors:

Ian Hill – Chairman
David Tindale – Vice-Chairman
Robert Barber
Tony Williamson
Nick Hancock
Tim Horton
Nick Greaves
Roger Beattie (until 8.50pm)
Ted Backhouse (until 8.40pm)
Barry Adby
Rhian Woods
Harvey Batten

Officer:

District Councillor:

Kristina Tynan
Angie Paterson

County Councillor:

Roger Belson

Press:

Jennifer Maxfield – Henley Standard

Members of the Public:

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129/11 Apologies for absence

Charles Rowton-Lee, Di Tolan

130/11 Chairman's Remarks

Ian Hill said how shocked we all were to hear of Barbara Williamson's illness and subsequent problems. It is good news that she is now in Abingdon Hospital and Council's thoughts are with Barbara and Tony and their family.

Ian Hill also said that he was saddened to hear the news about the death of Nathan Buckland and Council stated that their thoughts are with his family at this difficult time.

Ian Hill stated that some good news to report is that Watlington in Bloom received the Gold Award from the Britain in Bloom Competition and the Best in Category award for Large Village. Terry Jackson showed Council the Trophy received and she and her committee were thanked on behalf of Council on this Gold Award, improving on the Silver Gilt and Best in Category Award last year.

The judges report was very positive and some aspects were outstanding. A few areas were pointed out which can be improved upon for the next year.

131/11 To receive Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations on interest from Councillors relating to items to be considered at the meeting, in accordance with the provisions of the Councils Local Code of Conduct.

War Memorial Planting (Operation's Committee Item) – Tim Horton declared an interest in this item as he is the Vice-Chairman of the Watlington in Bloom Committee. He signed the 'Declaration of Interest' book and left the room for the discussion and vote on this issue.

132/11 Minutes of the Full Council Meeting on the 13th September 2011 to be signed as a correct record 33 High Street (Minute 110/11 refers) - The following amendment to this minute was agreed as follows: 'Tony Williamson stated that he was the Parish Council representative in relation to WS Atkins/County plans for the library both before and when Age Concern became involved. There were ideas about how the library improvement and extension could be funded, including building 3 houses overlooking the Paddock. In all past discussions the view was that the purpose of the Charlotte Cox Charity was for the benefit of the people of Watlington and that this included the future of the library. He said that when 33 High Street became involved in the Library plans it was accepted by the Parish Council that the £125,000 sale of its lease was part of the financing of the Library'

May 2011 Election(Minute 120/11) – The following amendment to Point 6 was agreed to be as follows 'When the Returning Officer was challenged about 2000 missing votes he said the outcome was sound since no-one challenged it within 21 days. There was however considered to be a doubt about the accuracy of the results in closely challenged areas'

Buses (Minute 122/11 – The following amendment to this minute was agreed as follows ' ...there is a big gap between the 7.30am bus and the 9.45am bus.'

Resolved: That with the amendments shown above these minutes are a correct record of this meeting and that they be signed by the Chairman.

133/11 Matters arising from the Minutes

TPO on Trees bordering Lampits Close – This letter will be sent this week. Angie Paterson asked that a copy be sent to her.

134/11 Public Questions

There were no public questions notified.

135/11 District Councillors Report – Angie Paterson

Angie Paterson said that Anna Badcock sent her apologies.

Core Strategy – This is at the next stage of the Inspector's Examination, 2 chapters of Housing Distribution. This is a Public Hearing and anyone is welcome to attend.

Crime Rates – Tomorrow the Chief Constable is giving a presentation at SODC, reviewing crime rates etc.

Town and Council Forum – This is being held on 22/11/2011 at the SODC Offices in Crowmarsh.

Car park Regulations Review – This document has been sent out to all Councils. There are a number of changes that have been made. One change is that a ticket will need to be taken, even

for the free periods. It is worth looking to see if any changes have been made in any car park that people regularly use. There will be a leniency in the first month of the changes.

Localism Bill – Waiting for this to come. It will come in different stages.

Waste and Recycling Arrangements – David Tindale asked if any changes will be made to the current arrangements. Angie Paterson stated that the collection pattern will remain the same. Angie Paterson stated that District's recycling rates are one of the best in the Country.

136/11 County Councillors Report – Roger Belson

Triathlon Event 18/9/2011 – Roger Belson said he has received a number of comment on this from other Councils. Pishill with Stonor, Assendon and Bix and Christmas Common were effectively land-locked with the added problem of escorts etc not turning up and not answering their phones etc. It is the Organisers intent to put this on again next year but they will need to take note of all the comments about the problems that happened this year.

Ted Backhouse asked if they can just close road without any consultation. Tony Williamson asked if the Organiser could formally inform us when they are going to publish notices etc for next year.

It was noted that there have been several weeks of letters being published in the Henley Standard on this issue.

Barry Adby reported that he was the only person who attended the 'Wash Up' meeting at County Hall with OCC Officers. There was no representation from any other Council. He reported that Peter Ronald originally turned the request for a Triathlon down but Henley Town Council persuaded OCC to change their minds. Apparently more people from areas that were land-locked wanted to go out than they had envisaged; roads were closed ½ hour before scheduled; phone numbers for escorts were wrong; marshals were not from the local area and did not seem to know what was happening etc. Barry Adby also stated that OCC reported that local pubs had suffered financially by people not being able to get to them and the Organisers attitude was that this was just 'bad luck' He said that although Henley Town Council had persuaded OCC to allow this event, most of the route did not affect Henley at all. The route needs to be seriously looked at if this event is to be put on next year. They do not close roads for that length of time for the Tour de France. Some roads were closed for 13 hours and 5 villages totally landlocked.

Tony Williamson asked if it was possible to enter into a dialogue about the routes and whether it could be staggered. Barry Adby stated that it was diabolical that a Commercial Entity could entirely close roads for hours and cause local businesses to lose money. It was asked if the Organisers could have a meeting with all affected Councils prior to a route being determined. Barry Adby stated that he did attend a meeting at the Henley Management College prior to this year's Triathlon but no-one was allowed to ask any questions and there was no discussion allowed it was purely for the Organisers to tell them what would happen. There should be an opportunity for Councils to give their opinions.

Roger Belson asked that all comments that WPC has received be sent to him.

It was agreed that this issue be an item for the next Operation Committee meeting.

Ponding on Roads – Tim Horton said that with the approach of winter he has noted some work going on but is very concerned about the B4009 through Britwell Salome where there is regular ponding on a very dangerous corner. Cars give it a wide berth which involves them going on the other side of the road on this very dangerous spot. He said that he has raised this issue directly with OCC but nothing seems to have been done. He asked that Roger Belson make representations to OCC to use this money immediately on transport schemes.

Community Bus Fund – Tim Horton stated that the Government has given £270,000 to be spent on Community Buses and he is very concerned that OCC, who have already received the money are waiting nearly two years to put any funding into schemes. He stated that there is a meeting on the 20th October at OCC and he asked that Roger Belson make representations to ask OCC to use this money immediately on transport schemes.

Electoral Boundary Divisions – This will reduce the number of County Councillors from 74 to 63. Divisions will now have 8,500 electors as opposed to the previous 6,500. The proposal OCC accepted after Consultation will be that this area now takes in Chalgrove and goes up to Oxford and includes villages south of Nettlebed. It will be a massive area and will now take in more Parish Councils. He stated that in future the Council may have to receive written reports as it will be impossible for one County Councillor to be able to attend all of the Parish Council meetings.

Ian Hill thanked both Angie Paterson and Roger Belson for attending our meeting.

137/11 Thames Valley Police Report

There was no report received from PC Ian Kent.

138/11 To receive the Balance of Accounts and approve the list of Payments

The Clerk had prepared a sheet showing the Balances of Accounts and a list of Payments. Tony Williamson read out the Balances of Accounts and proposed that the List of Payments be settled.

Resolved: That the Balances of Accounts be agreed and the List of Payments be settled and these both be signed by the Chairman.

139/11 Committees:

A: FINANCE – 20/9/2011- Tim Horton

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council.

Tim Horton stated the some items on the agenda were deferred to the meeting in November, due to the absence of the Chairman. However there was a lot of discussion on some matters especially the update to the Budget figures. He thanked the Clerk for work on this item. The public conveniences were discussed and the amount in earmarked funds was noted. Discussion took place on the 25 year SODC lease, of which we are now coming to end of the period for which SODC gave a single 5 year payment in advance when WPC took over the management of these. This issue needs a fundamental review in the light of improvements for the future, with the contract with SODC having another 20 years to run. The Operations Committee to look at possible improvements that could be made.

Tim Horton also stated that Staff Reviews were discussed with initially a self appraisal to be made.

B: PLANNING – 13/9/2011 and 4/10/2011 – Rhian Woods

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council.

Rhian Woods stated that there were several contentious applications:

P11/E1459/RET Hunters Moon, Christmas Common – This was refused but we would be supportive of his is a section 106 Agreement was put in place to retain it as accommodation ancillary to the main house in perpetuity.

P11/E1499 and P11/E1636/LB - Christmas Common Farm .This application was deferred from the last Planning Meeting for a site visit and discussed prior to this meeting. Both applications were approved.

P11/E0281 Watcombe Manor Industrial Estate – This was refused although the previous application was supported as new information had been given about the loss of employment space although the slightly increased size of the affordable unit was welcomed.

P11/E1516/LB 36 High Street – It was agreed to send No Strong Views on this application as all works were internal there were no external works for us to judge.

C: STRATEGY – 27/9/2011- David Tindale

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council.

Proposal to empower local councils

Resolved: That Watlington Parish Council support the following planning policy/guidance to apply to large planning applications.

1. That any applicant or representatives of any applicant who submits such an application that will have a significant effect on an area must, if requested by Watlington Parish Council attend a meeting of:

(i) that Council to answer questions from elected councillors; and

(ii) a Town Meeting, should one be duly called, to answer questions from all electors.

2. That any applicant who submits such an application that will have a significant effect on an area must, if requested by the Parish Council, or a Town Meeting, pay for the Council or Meeting to get an independent assessment carried out as to how the proposed development will affect the sustainability of the local communities.

Grant Application by Watlington Pre-School – There is no budget item this year for grants to other bodies so WPC are unable to consider this application. It was noted that the Pre-School have been given grants in the past.

Buses - It was resolved to support the efforts of Go-Ride to sponsor through the use of County-held ‘Challenge Funds’ new bus services. It was noted that the 125 service to Wallingford will be shortly up for review. If anyone has any comments please ask them to send to the Parish Office. It was stated that this service is not as good as the old service and the time keeping is not great.

Resolved: That we put a note in the Watlington Times asking for comments on this service

Hedge at Bulrushes, Cuxham Road – It was noted that OCC are meant to be dealing with this dangerous hedge in view of visibility and the Clerk to contact OCC for an update on this issue.

Watlington Speaks – Ian Hill reported that Caroline Lye is hoping to put something together on this shortly. We are very aware of the changes going on with Neighbourhood Plans etc. We want to have a publishable document, about 4 pages summarising what has been done, what has been dealt with and what cannot be achieved. Anton Nath, ORCC is looking for something sooner rather than later and there is money in the budget to do this. Tony Williamson said that it needs to be clearly labelled ‘Watlington Speaks’ and that it is not a local plan.

D. OPERATIONS – 21/9/2011- Barry Adby

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council.

Dogs in Recreation and Sports Field Area – It has been noted that people are not picking up after their dogs in these areas. A number of people have been spotted not doing this and their vehicle registration numbers have been given to our PCSO who has been to see the people concerned. We are going to ask Mrs Nabb from Chalgrove to come and discuss with us how they have been addressing this issue. Harvey Batten asked if we have considered having a blanket ban on dogs in these areas.

War Memorial Planting – Barry Adby reported that an issue arose last week with the British Legion requesting that planting of this area be done by WPC and not the Watlington in Bloom group.

Resolved: That the War Memorial be planted and maintained by WPC for this year.

Gorwell Road Closure 26/10/11 for 2 weeks – Barry Adby has been speaking to OCC and the Bus Companies regarding this. It was noted that vehicles will be diverted from the High Street, right into Chapel Street and Love Lane and then Couching Street. Bus stops on the High Street and Gorwell will be moved to Shirburn Street and users will need to use the stops outside the central area of the Town. Tim Horton said it does look like it could be disaster and will need a whole signage regime. Lorries going down the High Street would be unable to turn right into Chapel Street so could end up getting stuck without anywhere to turn. Tim Horton said we should be asking our County Councillor, Roger Belson to speak to the Cabinet Member concerned urgently regarding this. It was agreed to send an urgent letter to OCC stating that ‘Watlington Parish Council are concerned about traffic entering Love Lane and Chapel Street and then coming to the High Street, which will be closed at the Junction of Gorwell, where they will have to turn round and come back via Chapel Street and Love Lane. Also can you confirm that OCC will now put Road Ahead Closed signs at the Junction of Love Lane/Paul’s Way and Chapel Street to avoid this happening and also signs at the top of Love Lane to stop cars from coming this way. We note your diversion with regard to the buses and we suggest that one of the parking bays in Shirburn Street is suspended for the duration of these works to allow buses to stop in the temporary location. We also note that Thames Valley Police are also concerned about this closure. We would also like OCC to assure us of your confidence that the road closure and diversions in place, will work or if not would like to suggest that these works be carried out over a number of weekends which would not affect the Town in such a big way’. It was noted that it is important that the Schools know about this issue.

E. ALLOTMENTS – Nothing to report.

F. PAVILION AND SPORTS FIELD – No Meeting. Next Meeting scheduled for Wednesday 26th October at 7.30pm in the Pavilion.

G. AFFORDABLE HOUSING – 15/9/2011- David Tindale

Resolved: That these minutes be accepted by Council.

This meeting explored an alternative proposal submitted by Rhian Woods and it was agreed that this be looked at in parallel with the developers’ sites and exceptions sites. If Councillors would like a copy of the alternative proposal contact the Clerk. The next meeting is scheduled for the 3rd November and we are hoping that Anna Kennedy, ORCC will be able to attend. Rhian Woods stated that we would not be identifying sites until the SODC Site Allocation, Core Strategy and Localism Bill goes through.

140/11 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.

Letter No 971 David Buckle, SODC – re Election Costs – refer this to the Strategy Committee.

Letter No 951 to be passed to the Town Hall Charity Body.

141/11 Representation on other bodies – To note reports that have been received
There were no reports received.

142/11 Other Matters for Discussion at the discretion of Chair
To note any other matters raised by Members of the Council

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.35PM