



Minutes of the Meeting of the Strategy Committee Held in the Community Office at 8pm on Tuesday 27th January 2015

Present:

Councillors:

David Tindale - Chairman
Ian Hill
Tim Horton
Nick Greaves
Robert Barber
Tony Williamson
Keith Lovelace
Nick Hancock
Robin Wilson

Officer:

Kristina Tynan

Members of the Public: 3

1/15 Apologies for absence

Bob West, Roddy Orr, Elizabeth Winton, Rhian Woods, Neil Boddington

2/15 Chairman's Remarks

There were none.

3/15 Minutes of the Strategy Meeting held on 25th November 2014 were received by Council on the 9th December 2014 to be signed as a correct record

Resolved: That these minutes were a correct record of this meeting and that they be signed by the Chairman.

4/15 Declaration of Interests

There were none notified.

5/15 Matters Arising

1. **Civil Parking Enforcement** – TH stated the parking enforcement is no longer a Police issue as it has now become a civil matter. At the Annual Parish Forum at SODC in November 2014 which both IH and TH attended, John Backley (SODC) said that he was not expecting to do much on this issue for a year or two. There has been a consultation about on-street car parking sent out on this by SODC and we have responded to this. We wish to ensure that shoppers do have a better chance of finding an on-street parking space. However we do now have a car park order for the Hill Road Car Park and the 2 hour spaces are not presently being enforced but this may be a way of doing this. TH suggested that we write to John Backley to see if we could use some of SODC's wardens and ask if they could give some time to Watlington, as they already do Henley, Thame and Wallingford. A few hours a week would probably suffice. Discussion on this item was further had in Minute 7/15 item 2.

2. **Broadband** – RB stated that March is approaching when supposedly Watlington will go live, but said that we have seen nothing in writing confirming when or if Cabinet 2 would follow.

3. **Community Speedwatch Scheme** – KL said that he has now got a small group of volunteers who will need to be trained by our PCSO. A meeting needs to be set up with the volunteers and the PCSO. It was noted that Michelle Jacques would return as Watlington's PCSO in February.

6/15 Main Discussion Items

1. **Charlotte Coxe Charity – 33 High Street** – Consultation Response – *This Consultation was referred to Strategy from Full Council – response deadline 31/1/2015*

RB said that he was very alarmed to see six options with one preferred option and that Council needs to think long and hard before disposing of property especially when the other ½ of the property is still owned by the Charity. He said that the figures given by NG show that it is feasible to do the property up and then let it. RB then referred to Greg Stacey's figures which stated that if the money from the sale is put into bonds at a 3% rate would yield £9,000 however the rate is only 2% so would only yield £6000. If the property is kept then options for the future are available. The Charity is for the public good and is not just about money. NH said he agreed with this.

DT said that if the property was let an allowance for a letting agent and a budget for future repairs would have to be taken into account. RB said that at the meeting in January which was attended by NG, IH and TH there seemed to have been some difficulty in explaining why there was a disconnection of service. It was noted that this was a complex matter. The roof was redone on 33 and County had to find a viable way of doing the extension to the library with the money that was available.

TH said that all the money collected for this project was greater than was expended on this project and this has left some moral obligations. FOWL had raised £43-44,000 and the Charity should make a re-payment to FOWL or go ahead and do the work of refurbishing 33 High Street. TH said that NG has stated that FOWL would not see any of this money which was against what NG had initially agreed with TH. Monies have gone back into OCC and have not been used for anything on 33 High Street. If money was wanted to put into something it would have to come out of resolution of OCC and would take a long time.

NG said that there was an offer for 33 High Street for £250,000 and he said he is not sure if this is still on the table.

TH said he does not have a lot of faith in NG's figures. TH said last year the case was set out and Council agreed not to continue with the asset and that this CCT is solely responsible for the use of the invested monies. WPC together with Stephen Harrod can only advise This could be transferred into an asset of considerable value.

RB said that there is no point in investing money at a time where we are seeing the lowest rate of interest in history. There is an asset and we should keep it. He referred to other assets in the past which have been sold.

RWn stated that if the property was detached there would be more a reason to sell but as the properties and joined it would be a better asset to keep 33 and 35 High Street together.

TW said he would support the option of getting a charity commission scheme that included the ability to sell the property.

IH said it would be dependant on how the Trust is run. OCC have the right to take any decisions they want. They do not have to take our advice. He went on to say that once they have the Charity Commission's permission OCC may be inclined to go ahead with a sale which we may not be able to stop. He also said that he is ambivalent about selling or keeping 33 High Street. Rent monies would take a long while to build up but there may be more benefit in keeping the properties together as any future sale of the combined property would be more attractive than selling each separately. A sale now might result in pressure to use the money raised in the short term before a clear community need is apparent. On balance he was in favour of selling the

property now.

IH stated that Mr Clark (OCC) thinks that WPC are behind them selling the property and that is what he thinks our view on the Consultation will state.

It was asked if it would be sensible to ask Peter Clark what his view would be on project managing etc. the renovation of 33 High Street. TH stated that in an open paper IH and TH made a recommendation in the light of the FOWL money some of the funds raised from the sale of 33 High street should be separate and invested separately to be drawn down for the Library use when or if might be needed in the future.

NG asked that an apology be given to him by TH if he cannot find a written record in writing about the fact that NG had stated that he would agree with TH about the money going to FOWL.

RB said that the sale of the property would generate a sum of money. There are no formal suggestions for a community project on the table that we could take to an Annual Parish Meeting.. As we do not have such a project in mind at the moment any progress on using such a sum of money would be likely to take a long time to come to fruition.

TH stated that he has said previously that he wanted some indications to launch a debate and said that the sale of 33 High Street should go ahead and then have the debate with the community on where best to make an investment.

The options on the Consultation were discussed and Options 1, 3, 4 and 5 were ruled out. There was then a vote on Option 2 and Option 6.

Vote:

Option 2 – 4 in favour

Option 6 – 4 in favour

The Chairman abstained from voting.

Resolved: That we contact OCC and notify them of our debate and vote and ask Mr Clark to come to a meeting as soon as can be arranged to give more information on Option 2 and Option 6.

2. Youth Club Issues – letter was attached to the agenda.

The letter was discussed and it was noted that they need people to act as Trustees and also need more volunteers to help run the Tuesday and Thursday Youth Club nights.

TH stated that the Finance Committee receive an annual letter from the Youth Club committee to endorse their grant but felt that the other issues they refer to were such significant issues for the community that they should be brought to this committee. Both Chinnor and Chalgrove Parish Councils have a sub-committee for running their youth clubs. Watlington has been fortunate in having a good independent committee but if they could not continue then the Parish Council would need to face the reality that WPC would have to deal with the issue of having a youth club. TH said he has some ideas eg honoraria for volunteers to be paid and the need for DBS checks. What advice do we as a Council that gives the youth club their greatest part of their income give them? TW said that it is interesting that some organisations eg FOWL and WEG have lots of volunteers but that others struggle to get them and asked if there is anything that the Youth Club could do to be in the same position. It was suggested that parents be approached but it was noted that they have already done this with no success.

IH suggested that we could help them with support in generating a sales pitch for trustees and volunteers. DT suggested that we speak with Chinnor and Chalgrove Parish Councils to see how they run their clubs. They need a facilitator to assist them to build a better image and if we could help them with this.

IH and TH met with 2 of the Trustees and had a good meeting. It was suggested to them that it would be good for them to have a projects this summer eg a Fun Run that would provide a focus for increasing community involvement with the Club. Such an event should be promoted early, and

it would be good to get information into the Watlington Times. IH and TH will continue to informally discuss any issues with the Trustees.

Resolved: That we leave this issue with IH and TH to discuss with them and report back to this committee when necessary.

3. Standing Orders 2014/2015

IH reported that the model standing orders that OALC have put out have been totally re-written and therefore we need to amend our Standing Orders which will need to have reference to the photographing of meeting etc.

Resolved: That IH/KT go through the document which will then be sent to the Policy Action Board and DT to go through and will be an item for the March Full Council meeting to agree.

7/15 Short Discussion items

1. **Watlington Footpath 4** – IH, RB and TH had a meeting with Beechwood Estates Land Agent, Richard Drew on 9/1/2015. It was noted that the Estates Manager has now left. A good exchange of views was had. We have not heard anything back from Richard Drew and the Clerk has sent an email to him.

Resolved: That IH, RB and TH be allowed to make a judgment and progress to a follow up meeting when some communication from Richard Drew is received.

2. **Car Park Order** – *This has now been published in the Henley Standard. Do we wish to enforce it in some way. - This item was deferred from last meeting.*

IH said that Henley and Thame were talking about appointing a Traffic Warden between them and suggested that we contact them and ask if it would be possible that Watlington could pay for the use of a Warden for a day a month for example. Discussion has been had in the Operations Committee of perhaps marking out the 2 hour spaces in a distinctive colour eg blue to make them stand out more. Council could periodically do a day in the Car Park and put on warning notices on the 2 hour bays if people stay over this time and could also record the vehicles parking in the car park.

He said that we need to be doing something now that the Car Park Order is in place.

3. **Facebook Review** – *See summary of posts attached to the agenda.*

Our Facebook page is very popular especially on our updates of the road works. It is showing that if you have got something that people are interested in it is a very good way of engaging people.

8/15 Update on on-going issues that are not agenda items for this meeting

1. **Buses** – TH gave out a note on the T1 and 101 GoRide services to the meeting.

TH reminded members that at the last Full Council meeting it was agreed that any subsidy that might be given was for support of weekend services.

TH stated that The 5 Parishes Group have pressed for some subsidy to be restored to the service from OCC and there is a lot of work going on by the Group and also the County Councillors involved. The Group have agreed in principle with GoRide to consider subsidising: retention of all Sunday services (four in each direction); reduction of the Saturday evening service by removal of the first and last journeys between Watlington and Oxford in each direction (from Watlington the 18.15 and 00.15 service); and an addition of two bus journeys on Friday nights in both directions. The Group have asked to see some viability figures and any payments made by Parish Councils would be stage payments. The Watlington share of the subsidy would be 35% based on population. A review of the service would be held in November 2015 by the 5 Parish Group. After discussion it was:

Resolved: To support the principle of the retention of all Sunday services (four in each direction); reduction of the first and last journeys between Watlington and Oxford in each direction (from Watlington the 18.15 and 00.15 service); and an addition of two bus journeys on Friday nights in both directions and to contribute £1747 if Fridays are to be included or £1305 if only the Saturday

and Sunday services are agreed.

The money to be taken out of General Reserves as agreed in the January Full Council meeting.

9/15 Correspondence

1. ORCC – Asking for support for the ACRE funding not to be withdrawn by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – **Agreed that WPC would support this. The Clerk to Action.**

2. Charles Eales – **IH and the Clerk have responded to this letter.**

3. WBA – Asking for Feedback or thoughts about the Christmas Fair.- **It was noted that this was an excellent event. TH suggested that we ask for the return of a 2nd Christmas tree by the War Memorial and to ask for a better communication system in the High Street as it was not possible to hear the music at both ends of the High Street. TH has passed on these comments directly to the WBA.**

4. Peter Clark OCC –Re meeting of the Charlotte Coxe Advisory Board – **Noted.**

5. Graham Smith – Memorial Club and Charity Commission –This letter was discussed and it was noted that the present Constitution does not include the relevant clause but does refer to the Declaration of Trust and the relevant text is in this. It was agreed that we need to make sure that this is the case and it was:

Resolved: That KT ask to see a draft of the Constitution and that WPC is minded to agree this in principle but want to see the Constitution before formal agreement is given.

10/15 Items for Future Meetings

**Review of Solicitor
Icknield Community College Link
Staffing Issues**

11/15 Any Other Business to note – Items to be notified to the Clerk in advance of the meeting.

LTP 4 – IH reported that the OCC Cabinet were considering LTP4 and he said that Watlington only appears once in the document. There is nothing much about this side of the County at all. He said that it is disappointing that after all our comments given that none have been taken into consideration.

**THE MEETING THEN WENT INTO CONFIDENTIAL SESSION AT 9.55PM TO DISCUSS
ECOTEC AND THE ROAD WORK PROBLEMS IN WATLINGTON.**

According to:

Confidential Items 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 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act

ECOTEC AND THE ROAD WORK PROBLEMS IN WATLINGTON PUBLIC MINUTE

Resolved: That a group of Councillors will look into the whole situation in Watlington regarding the effect these works have had on our local businesses.