

# Minutes of the Meeting of the Strategy Committee Held in the Community Office at 8pm on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013

**Present:**

**Councillors:**

David Tindale – Chairman  
Harvey Batten – Vice-Chairman  
Tony Williamson  
Nick Greaves  
Barry Adby  
Bob West  
Tim Horton

**Officer:**

Kristina Tynan

**Members of the Public:**

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48/13 Apologies for absence

Robert Barber, Neil Boddington, Roddy Orr and Ian Hill.

49/13. Minutes of the Strategy Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2013 were received by Council on the 8/10/2013 to be signed as a correct record

**Resolved:** That these minutes be accepted as correct record with two changes. Page 20 to read 'The review of the Local Traffic Plan' instead of 'the relief road' and Page 21 should read 17<sup>th</sup> October not 7<sup>th</sup>. These were then signed by the Chairman.

50/13 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest notified.

51/13 Matters Arising

**Watlington Hill SSSI proposed works** – It was noted that a letter has been sent to Beechwood Estates on this issue but no reply has been received yet. It was agreed that if a reply comes that this be discussed at the December Full Council meeting.

52/13 Discussion Items

Main Discussion Items

**1. Shirburn Street/Love Lane Parking plus other Highways issues** – email from Mark Francis and Caroline Newton which states that the Britwell Road funding could be used towards amending the parking bays –email was attached to the agenda

Discussion took place on this and it was:

**Resolved:** That the money from the Britwell Road Funding should be used if necessary towards amending the parking bays in Shirburn Street. The Clerk to contact Mark Francis regarding this.

## **2. Watlington and the Local Transport Plan for Oxfordshire – Update on Meeting at OCC.**

TH stated that he had taken away from the meeting that we are being encouraged through the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) to consider local transport issues and that therefore OCC will not put money into those schemes and they will be taken out of the LTP. He suggested that we write back to OCC in response to the letter from Tom Flanagan (No 259 ) and ask them to readdress the fact of Watlington not being in the LTP process. **DT/TH to write this letter**

If highway issues were wholly within the NP it would be harder to look at other issues as we would be constrained to issues within the NP area and would not be able to look at things in a broader context. If the Watlington NP takes off it would be in the interest of the Council to promote this matter as it would not be in the remit of the NP Group to consider strategic highway matters.

TH said that he has raised this issue with Mrs Ducker (SODC) and said it would be useful for Council to have a conversation with the District Council on what support they could give to transport issues that were within the NP. Mrs Ducker warmed to the idea that there is scope to receiving plans at some stage for enhancements to NP processes.

TW stated that if we look at new housing providing some funding for traffic relief that there is an enormous amount of road design and experience in controlling traffic in the country with some of the schemes being in Oxford and we could draw on this expertise.

DT said we are at the beginning of the NP process but it was worth keeping in mind and that Planners and traffic people will need to be invited to give their opinions.

It was noted that SODC are about to issue some statements on pollution soon which OCC will need to discuss so there will be a link with the Councils on this issue.

## **3. Watlington Sewerage Outfall and the Environmental Agency – email from the Environmental Agency was attached to the agenda.**

The main gist of the email stated *'We are currently carrying out a criminal investigation in to what has been happening. As part of this, we have carried out additional inspections of the STW and have deployed additional monitoring equipment. We have also be pushing Thames Water to deal with issues at the STW. Whilst our investigation is ongoing, I regret we are not able share any details of our findings with you or confirm the actions we will be taking; doing so would compromise our case*

*We are concerned about the impact of groundwater infiltration in to the sewer network and consequences this has for the STW. We are pushing Thames Water to produce an Infiltration Reduction Plan (IRP) for the area. Groundwater infiltration is not regarded as 'storm conditions' so any storm discharges made because of this are not permitted. An IRP will seek to understand and minimise infiltration. Our regulatory position statement on discharges from groundwater infiltrated surcharged sewers is available on our We would welcome the opportunity to meet with local residents and Thames Water once our current criminal investigation is concluded and a draft version of the IRP is available for people to contribute to.'*

It was agreed that this item be scheduled in for discussion in March 2014.

TH stated that he had a request from Cuxham Parish Meeting to give them copies of his papers on this issue and he has done this. Cuxham are very worried about this issue. TH said that if any Councillor wanted information on the criminal investigation he has deposited papers on this.

**4. Outreach Meeting in Christmas Common** – Paper from Robert Barber was attached to the agenda.

a) **Broadband** – It was agreed that we ask Robin Wilson if he would be willing to co-ordinate this.

b) **Speed awareness week** – It was thought that this would be a good idea if we could get sufficient volunteers to run it.

**Resolved:** That we put an article into the Watlington Times explaining what it would entail and asking for volunteers.

If we get enough volunteers that this would be co-ordinated by the Operations Committee.

c) **HGV Register** – It was noted that there is a statutory 7.5 tonne weight limit in Watlington and that we leave this issue to the Police and Trading Standards. It was noted that we do regularly report illegal HGV's but not worth having a register unless there is an effective way of doing this.

d) **Code for cyclists and safety for cyclists and walkers** – Agreed to defer this item.

e) **Place names signs for Howe Hill** – It was agreed that we ask Colin White from the Chiltern Society for his views on this.

**5. Chiltern AONB Management Plan** – Summary Document attached with link to papers. Comments deadline 10<sup>th</sup> January 2014. Parish input is vital.- It was agreed to ask Robert Barber to respond to this consultation.

**6. Community Led Plan for Howe Hill**- see attached letter from P Richardson asking for comments on the Howe Hill Survey

After discussion it was:

**Resolved:** That a meeting be set up with Mr Richardson and discuss this in detail. DT said he was not sure of the strength of feeling with all the residents and asked that this be clarified at the meeting. It was agreed that RB,HB and BW meet with Mr Richardson and that the Clerk arrange this meeting.

**7. Northend Gritting** – It was agreed to write to the County Council asking for this road to be gritted if conditions are very bad as residents would be severely affected for a long time.

**8. Rubbish/Litter in hedgerows and verges** – It was agreed that we ask Robert Barber to contact the National Trust regarding this issue.

#### 53/13 Short Discussion items

1 . **Buses** – TH said that quite a lot has been happening. Whites Coaches have handed in their contract for the Watlington to Wallingford bus route but are keeping the Friday service. GoRide have bravely stepped in to cover the Mon-Thurs service. This will happen in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of December. IH and TH have looked at specific proposals to timetables . GoRide will also be doing the Thame service. Negotiations have been going on with OCC to ensure a continuity of service. IH and TH will give publicity to this in the Henley Standard , Watlington Time, our website etc and will explain the timetable implications.

TH stated that there have been a lot of complaints about Thames Travel, buses not turning up and late arrivals of buses.

TH went to the Annual Meeting on Transport at County Hall and there were a number of complaints about this company from a variety of sources. The OCC officers agreed to intercede with Thames Travel. All buses in Oxford City will be on a more stringent standard for lower emissions from January 2014 which means that the buses coming from Oxford to Watlington will be a lot cleaner.

TH said that even before the changes to the Wallingford buses, there was discussion on a Community Route service which would incorporate, Watlington, Ewelme, Chalgrove and Benson on a taxi bus principle which would be a very flexible service and would also meet commuter needs to Junction 6. It would be a 7 day service with a call up service and would have a minimum charge.

As a matter of urgency, TH and IH will give publicity to the changes in service and new timetabling of buses.

Regarding the Wallingford service and GoRide, this would continue until 2015 when the next 4 yearly bus review will take place.

2. **Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG)** – changing the way it buys Maternity services and therefore looking for the views of the Parish Council – letter was attached to the agenda.  
It was noted that this is a far and wide consultation and individuals have also been contacted. After discussion it was :  
**Resolved:** That Watlington Parish have no comments to make.
  
3. **Britwell Road** – email from Caroline Newton – asking for thoughts of the Parish Council on this road – email was attached to the agenda.  
This was discussed and it was:  
**Resolved:** That we ask Mark Francis to look at this and comment when the meeting takes place on Shirburn Street changes to parking bays.
  
4. **CPRE** – Should we become a member of this organization?  
It was noted that this issue has been discussed in the past and as before it was  
**Resolved:** That we do not become a member of CPRE so that we can maintain our impartiality if we came into conflict over any issue.
  
5. **WPC stand at Christmas Fair on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2013?** - It was agreed that we do not have a stand at this event.
  
6. **WPC Reception – suggestion to hold in Late Spring/Early Summer instead of December** – Discussion took place on this issue and it was noted that it will be the 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Town Hall in 2014 and it was thought it would a good thing to mark this occasion. It was agreed that we do not hold a Christmas Reception this year and that TH and the Clerk look into this with Ted Backhouse and come back with a proposal on dates and a schedule.

#### 54/13 Correspondence

1. **OCC – Delay and Danger** – Decision making on road repairs – Response to our letter dated 8<sup>th</sup> August 2013. – Letter was attached to the agenda.- It was noted that this response was not very convincing.

**Road repairs in Ingham Lane/Brook Street** – It was noted that the next two weekend work will only take place on the Sundays and not Saturdays. TH reported that on

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December, the flagpole on the Town Hall will be removed and a new one put up and as this entails a cherry picker having to be used it is useful that this can be done whilst the road is closed as otherwise it would necessitate a road closure order which would be expensive.

It was noted that on the first weekend of the repairs there were no gatemen and this led to chaos in the town. It was also said that the signage could have been better and that there was no signage at Junction 6. It was said that there is concern about the next two Sunday's work. TH said that OCC let themselves down by not communicating with Parish Councils on how road signage would be best done. HB said that as no-one is enforcing the road closure people do as they want. It was noted that the phone numbers stated on the documentation were not manned. The Clerk to contact our PCSO to see if she can be in the Town on the next two Sundays.

**Resolved:** That we write to OCC with suggestions on how best to deal with future road closures in Watlington . It was agreed that TH draft this letter.

2. **A Craddock – Shirburn Street** – Attached to the agenda. – It was noted that this has been passed to Thames Valley Police.
3. **J Harbottle – Land at Willow Close** – letter was attached to the agenda – After discussion it was:  
**Resolved:** That we re-iterate our previous comments to them.

55/13 Items for Future Meetings

Review of Solicitor

Icknield Community College Link

Watlington Sewerage Outfall and the Environmental Agency – March 2014

Code for cyclists and safety for cyclists and walkers

56/13 Any Other Business to note – Items to be notified to the Clerk in advance of the meeting.

**Fire Cover in Watlington** – BA reported that there is a problem with fire cover and quite a few time recently the fire engine has not been able to turn out. He suggested that we write to the Chief Officer and perhaps the local Business regarding this issue. The Fire Service is recruiting at the moment. It was agreed that it would be useful to get some information from the Chief Fire Officer so that this issue can be discussed with known facts.

**Swimming Pool** – It was noted that we have heard nothing further from the Icknield Community College on this issue. KT will contact ICC for an update.

**THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.24PM**