

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Operations Committee on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2012 at 10.30am in the Community Office

**Present:**

**Councillors:**

Barry Adby – Chairman  
Ted Backhouse – Vice-Chairman  
Robert Barber  
Roger Beattie  
Neil Boddington  
Ian Hill  
Linda Nicholson  
Tim Horton  
Tony Williamson (until 10.45am)

**Officer:**

Kristina Tynan

**In Attendance:**

PC Ian Kent – Thames Valley Police

94/12 Apologies for Absence  
There were none.

95/12 Minutes of the Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2012 which were accepted by Council on the 9/10/2012 to be agreed  
**Resolved:** That these minutes are a correct record of this meeting and that they be signed by the Chairman.

96/12 Declarations of Interest  
There were none.

97/12 Matters arising  
There were none other than agenda items.

98/12 PC Ian Kent – Discussion on parking and any other police issue.  
**Parking Concerns** – Ian Kent reported that further to concerns raised by the WPC and the community he has instigated looking into this issue and stated that concerns raised relate to the High Street and Couching Street at general times and Love Lane at school start and finish times. He will be arranging some checks with the PCSO's on these areas. However there are only limited resources for this. The Thame sector

consists of 5 beats and covers 100sq miles. The sector has at the moment 5 Beat Officers and 11 PCSO's. However one beat officer is due to retire imminently and he will not be replaced which puts more work onto the 4 remaining officers. Thame is the largest sector and IK stated quite often it is difficult for him to get out of Thame with the amount of work there to come over to Watlington. He is sharing Thame with the Chinnor Beat Officer. The Wheatley Officer is also due to retire soon and it is not yet clear if he will be replaced so there is a possibility there will soon only be 3 Beat Officers.

IK said that our PCSO, Diane Greenwood has put together a operation over the last few weeks doing checks on parking transgressions and has put together a report on it. To do this there needs to be a mix of 2/3 PCSO's at any time and they are combining an approach of education and enforcement. They have been advising motorists in the High Street and Couching Street areas about their parking transgressions. He said that the parking down the High Street is quite often legal but still the buses are unable to pass as people are parking very badly.

As regards Love Lane, the PCSO's have spoken to a number of people regarding parking on double yellow lines. There is a problem as there is with many schools. IK said that the police will try to continue their presence at key times in these locations but that they do have a lot of other areas to cover and may be deployed to investigate crimes that are designated to them which will affect their ability to deal with traffic offences, which has happened a lot over the last few weeks.

BA said that there needs to be double yellow lines put on the bend by the schools, however this would have to be part of a traffic order. He also stated that our PCSO is unable to put tickets on some cars parked on yellow line as they are in such poor condition that a case would not stand up in court. BA has spoken to OCC who say they do not have money to repaint them. IK stated that with the new legislation, there does not have to be signs put up if the yellow lines are in a good clear condition. He also said there is problems giving tickets in Hill Road, Lewknor as the yellow lines are quite often covered with mud and leaves due to the amount of farm vehicles using this lane. Some tickets that have been given out in this area have been contested successfully and therefore the police will only give out tickets if the yellow lines are very clear and visible.

TH said that the lines are bad in many places in Watlington and that we should write to OCC stating that the police are unable to enforce tickets as the line condition is so poor. This was discussed and it was:

**Resolved:** That we send a letter to OCC regarding this issue.

RB asked if the PCSO's take down the name of people who they warn about parking. IK said that there is no requirement to note the name but the reality is that most officers do note it in their books (if possible) as they can refer to this if the offender persistently repeats the transgression. RBr asked if he knew when tickets were given out if they were repeat offenders or not. IK stated that it is random.

BA thanked IK for attending the meeting.

**Reduction in Beat Officers in the Thame Sector** – This was discussed and it was:

**Resolved:** To write a letter to the Chief Superintendent on our concerns regarding

not replacing beat officers and effects on communities by this.

#### 99/12 Outstanding Issues

1. **BT leylandiis and hedge** – BT have put in an order for these works and which should be done shortly. BA will meet the contractor on site prior to works being done.

2. **Recycling Bins in Car Park**- awaiting a response from our District Councillors on this.

3. **War Memorial Works** – Grant application has been sent and we are awaiting a reply.

4. **Pyrton Lane** – Awaiting reply from OCC on this issue.

#### 100/12 Property

##### 1. Car Park

a) **Survey update** – IH will organise a rota for this and it will be done during the week commencing 5<sup>th</sup> November 2012. IH had circulated a note on this. Volunteers will be needed. It was noted that there is a value in taking photographs although analysing them is time consuming. However these could be done at later point. IH was thanked for his work on this.

b) **Possible Adoption of Watcombe Road** – OCC have replied (8/10/2012) to our request for them to consider adoption of this road. They have stated that this section falls short on many triggers required for them to consider adoption and that it would not be suitable for them to adopt.  
It was noted that we are still awaiting a response from the Co-op.

c) **Car Park Noticeboard** – Quote received from Classic Joinery  
This was discussed and it was

**Resolved:** To see a quote for the Alan Keen option of putting dummy lead on top of this noticeboard.

##### 2. Public Conveniences – Future Improvements

This was discussed and it was:

**Resolved:** To seek quotes for using porcelain instead of stainless steel.

It was noted that this should make the quote a lot cheaper. Periodically we may need to replace the porcelain units. It was agreed that we also seek quotes for a total refurbishment of the toilets including new floor, tiles etc on the porcelain option. It may be that it would be best to completely refurbish the men's and then the ladies as another time.

It was noted that any existing stainless steel units will have a re-sale value.

The colour for the windows and doors to be repainted was

**Resolved:** to be Dulux Green Glade.

## 101/12 Open Spaces

1. **Play Area Inspections** – To note that the Inspection has been carried out by Rospa and that we are still awaiting the report.  
BA reported that bolts etc are disappearing and play equipment is being checked on a daily basis. It was noted that if the I-play cannot be repaired by remote access then there is a change for them to come out and repair.
2. **Barrier to the Entrance to the Recreation Ground** (Love Lane side) – BA reported that this is not feasible due to lack of lighting
3. **Ash Tree at Rec** – report received from Heritage Tree Services – (this was Attached to the agenda and referred from Full Council)  
Heritage Tree Services have been to look at this tree and have recommended two courses of action, that of either felling or a heavy crown reduction pollard. This was discussed and it was agreed that we need to take a photo of the tree as it looks now. There was a discussion and a vote taken, 5 in favour and 3 against - **CARRIED Resolved:** That we do a heavy crown reduction pollard on this tree and obtain a quote for this from Heritage Tree Services.
4. **Dog Sign Wording for Recreation Ground needed** – This was discussed and the following was:  
**Resolved:** That we put up 3 signs with the following wording:

Please respect our recreational areas  
by picking up your dog waste.  
Free dog waste bags are available by the Pavilion

5. **Willow Hedge at Paddock** – It was noticed that this has been cut for the third time this year. There was discussion on this. It was noted that this has previously been attended to by John Brannan  
**Resolved:** That we ask John Brannan for advice on this hedge.

## 102/12 General Issues

1. **Emergency Plan** – LN is attending a meeting on this next week and will report back to the November meeting.
2. **Purchase of Hedge Cutter-** Discussion took place on the benefits of a battery or petrol hedge cutter.  
**Resolved:** That we check with our Insurance Company regarding and H&S restrictions/implications for a petrol cutter.
3. **TOE Energy Audit** – Grants are available for this for Public Building from January 2013  
**RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:** That we apply for an Energy Audit in January 2013 for our public buildings.
4. **Request from Watlington Business Association that we allow them to put a Christmas Tree outside the Town Hall as per last year.**

**Resolved:** That we allow the Christmas Tree to be put in this location

103/12 Budget 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 – A 6 month update with provisional End of Year figures was sent out prior to the meeting.

There was much discussion and it was agreed to **recommend** to the Strategy Committee the following:

1. That the Operations Contingency be increased by £1,000 for 2013/14 to £2000.
2. That any unspent money under the Asset section be put into earmarked funds.

It was also agreed that the Clerk write to the Charity Trustees asking if a grant could be given towards the grass cutting costs on the recreation ground for this financial year.

104/12 Action List

The list was gone through and the outstanding actions were noted.

105/12 Correspondence

1. **SODC – Christmas Tree recycling scheme** - this was attached to the agenda. This was discussed and it was thought it was a good idea. The best location for this would be at the recreation ground.

**Resolved:** That we contact SODC and suggest this location as possible for putting Christmas trees for recycling.

106/12 Future Issues for Discussion

**Mansle Gardens Entrance** - when proposal received from WIB – It is hoped that this will be on the November agenda.

107/12 Any Other Business

**Watlington in Bloom** – TH reported that they have had 5 new committee members. They are now meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month from now until the judging day in 2013. He said that with the receiving the gold award this year and going forward to the Nationals in 2013 this town may receive some economic payback following this as it will promote Watlington. There is therefore a lot of ambition to improve things in the town for next years competition.

**Triathlon 2013** – A letter has been received from OCC on this with 3 suggested routes, one of which just comes to Watlington. This issue will be put onto the next Strategy agenda.

**Signs on Gates** - It was noted that we have previously been in discussion with OCC regarding putting the Watlington and Twinning signs onto the gates. The Clerk to see where we are with this.

**THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 12.20PM**