

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held at the Oakwood Centre on
Tuesday 30 September 2014 at 8 pm**

Present: Councillors B. Franklin (Chairman); T. Barker; A. Chadwick;
P.Challis; N. Cox; R. Duncan; K. Gilder; K. Haines; L. Higgs;
M. Holmes; C. Lawley; R. Neall; S. Outen; S. Rahmouni;
E. Rowland; D. Smith; W. Soane; M. Walker

Officers present: D. Mander, Town Clerk; K. Murray, Service Support Manager;
L. Matthews, Committee Officer

Also present: R. Walles, Winner of the Woodley Garden Competition
T. Farrance, Bulmershe Gym Club
4 members of the public

Before the start of the meeting the Town Mayor presented Mrs Rosemary Walles, winner of the Garden Competition, with the Woodley Horticultural Society Memorial Cup.

This was followed by a talk by Trina Farrance of Bulmershe Gym Club about the experiences of the gymnasts who competed in the Aerobic Gymnastics World Championships in Mexico earlier this year.

*A maximum of 30 minutes was then set aside for members of the public to pose questions to the Council in the Town Forum, as reported in **Appendix A**.*

34. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors K. Baker, J. Cheng, A. Downes, D. Mills, M. Storry, and M. Willson.

35. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

36. **MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24 JUNE 2014**

Minute 24.2: Minutes of the Leisure Services Committee: 27 May 2014

Minute 6: Leisure Centres

In response to a question the Town Clerk reported that the Leisure Services Manager was investigating the cost and other implications of providing a defibrillator for Woodford Park Leisure Centre and this would be included in his next report to the Committee.

Minute 29: Council Tax Support Funding

Referring to the report of the meeting with the Chief Executive of Wokingham Borough Council that she and Councillor Haines had attended, Councillor Rowland expressed her disappointment at the reasons for the funding from government not being passed down to town and parish councils. It was noted that the matter of the precept support grant would be an agenda item at the next meeting of the Borough/Parish Working Group.

Appendix A: Town Forum

Members noted that it had been agreed that the production of a neighbourhood plan should be an agenda item for a future meeting and commented that this should not be forgotten.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 June 2014 and that they be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

37. **MINUTES OF THE URGENCY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 AUGUST 2014**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Urgency Committee held on 18 August 2014.

38. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

38.1 **Minutes of the Plans Committee: 15 July 2014**

Councillor Duncan presented the Plans Committee minutes of the meeting of 15 July 2014.

Powers and Duties of the Plans Committee

Concern was expressed that on two occasions the agreed protocol for making representations to the Wokingham Borough Council Planning Committee regarding a planning application in Woodley had not been followed. The Town Clerk confirmed that officers would support the Chairman of the Plans Committee to ensure that the agreed protocol was followed.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Plans Committee held on 15 July 2014.

38.2 **Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee: 5 August 2014**

Councillor Haines presented the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee of 5 August 2014.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 5 August 2014.

38.3 **Minutes of the Plans Committee: 19 August 2014**

Councillor Duncan presented the Plans Committee minutes of the meeting of 19 August 2014.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Plans Committee held on 19 August 2014.

38.4 **Minutes of the Leisure Services Committee: 2 September 2014**

Councillor Barker presented the Leisure Services Committee minutes of the meeting of 2 September 2014.

Minute 21: Bulmershe Park

Councillor Gilder thanked the Strategy and Resources Committee for supporting the recommendation made under this item.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee held on 2 September 2014.

- 38.5 **Minutes of the Community Services Committee: 9 September 2014**
Councillor Smith presented the Community Services Committee minutes of the meeting of 9 September 2014.

Minute 28: Bus Services in Woodley

Members agreed to write to Reading Buses and Wokingham Borough Council seeking information about any review of bus services following the concerns and comments made by residents at the meeting.

Minute 35: Highways

Members asked that the extent of the resurfacing that was to be undertaken in Fairwater Drive be clarified.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Community Services Committee held on 9 September 2014.
- ◆ To write to Reading Buses and Wokingham Borough Council seeking information about any review of bus services following the concerns and comments made by residents at the Community Services Committee meeting.

- 38.6 **Minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee: 16 September 2014**
Councillor Haines presented the Strategy and Resources Committee minutes of the meeting of 16 September 2014.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 16 September 2014.
- ◆ To approve the protocol for members of the public wishing to report on meetings, as attached at **Appendix B**.

- 38.7 **Minutes of the Plans Committee: 23 September 2014**
Councillor Duncan presented the Plans Committee minutes of the meeting of 23 September 2014.

**Minute 50: Current Planning Applications: Application F/2014/0901:
Location: Farriers, Farriers Close, Woodley, RG5 3DD.**

Councillor Lawley informed the meeting that he believed this application should be listed for consideration by the Wokingham Borough Council Planning Committee. Members of the Plans Committee informed the meeting that this application had been discussed at the committee meeting for 45 minutes and that the Plans Committee had concluded that there were no grounds on which to list the application. Councillor Lawley asked for the minutes to show that he did not accept this.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Plans Committee held on 23 September 2014.

39. **AUDIT 2013/14**
The Town Clerk presented the Audited Annual Return and drew the Council's attention to the external auditor's report which stated:

"On the basis of our review, in our opinion the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to our attention

giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.”

Members noted that the trial balance had initially been omitted from the supporting information and Annual Return submitted to the external auditor and that this had been immediately rectified.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To adopt the Audited Annual Return for 2013/14

40. **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. FC 3/14, which informed Members of the change in Council membership, following the disqualification from office of Councillor Hayward, under section 80 (1) d) of the Local Government Act 1972. Members were also informed of the changes to committee membership required in line with standing orders.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note the vacancy on the Council with effect from 29 September 2014.
- ◆ To approve adjustments to the membership of the standing committees as follows:
 - To remove Councillor Cox from the Leisure Services Committee.
 - To appoint Councillor Rahmouni to the Plans Committee.
 - To appoint Councillor Rahmouni to the Leisure Services Committee.
 - To appoint Councillor Willson to the Community Services Committee.
 - To appoint Councillor Chadwick to the Strategy and Resources Committee.

41. **SPECIFIC COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ To note the list of specific Council responsibilities required by law/guidance or the Council’s standing orders, attached at **Appendix C**.

42. **NOTICES OF MOTION**

42.1 **Motion No. 62**

Councillor Gilder requested leave to withdraw this motion following Councillor Hayward’s disqualification from office.

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That Motion No. 62 be withdrawn.

42.2 **Motion No. 63**

The following special motion was proposed by Councillor Lawley and seconded by Councillor Challis:

“At its Full Council meeting on 13th May 2014, Woodley Town Council voted not to appoint representatives to the ‘Site of Urban Landscape Value Joint Working Party’ to continue this Council’s joint working with Earley Town Council. (Council minutes 13th May 2014 16.2).

This motion seeks to overturn that decision. This decision was taken based on information that Earley Town Council no longer wished to proceed with the Joint Working Party. (Council minutes 13th May 16.2). Subsequently this information was shown to be inaccurate as Earley Town Council had not, at that time, decided its intention on this matter.

Woodley Town Council confirms that it will appoint representatives to the 'Site of Urban Landscape Value Joint Working Party' to continue this Council's joint working with Earley Town Council and the Town Clerk is instructed to contact Earley Town Council with the aim of restarting the 'Site of Urban Landscape Value Joint Working Party' as soon as possible."

Councillors Lawley, Smith, Rowland, Gilder and Challis spoke in favour of the motion.

Following a vote it was

RESOLVED:

◆ That the motion be carried.

Voting: For: 17 Against: 0 Abstentions: 1

43. **LEADER'S STATEMENT**

The Leader of the Council was not present at the meeting, and the following statement was tabled at the meeting:

"The summer usually brings a relaxation in activities but if anything there has been the exact reverse. Summer has been hectic for both officers and councillors equally with a lot going on.

Probably the highlight of this period was the visit by the Duke of York to unveil the new war memorial that has now taken pride of place in Woodford Park. Whilst it is not uncommon for such projects to be funded by public contribution it was always going to be difficult in light of the financial situation of the country. But the money was raised. This was a massive achievement and reflected just how strong a community we are. I am also pleased that the Town Council was an integral part of this. My thanks to everyone involved from the committee, our officers through to every donor.

The activities around the First World War have continued with Deborah and some helpers making a huge effort in putting together the display panels for the Heritage Memorial Trail. I was privileged to see all the trail panels for the whole borough and I must admit I thought ours were the best. If you have not read them yet can I urge you to do so as they are great pieces of history. The intention is to make them weather and graffiti proof and place them out in Woodford Park.

The 3Gpitch planning application is now going through the system, which is a very positive sign and shows real progress. In parallel the "One Woodley" project, which aims to combine our 6 individual Woodley football clubs combine into one, is continuing and I would like to thank Cllr Outen for his work on that group. This is certainly exciting times for football in Woodley.

This would not be a Leaders Statement without mentioning Bulmershe Leisure Centre. Things are progressing well. It has been suggested by Cllr McCann, Liberal Democrat Borough Councillor for Loddon and I quote:

there is 'no decision-making' process in regards to drawing up future plans for the Leisure Centre, residents' needs are not considered and they 'can either like it or lump it'

I would reiterate what we have said at least a dozen times, in council meetings, in newsletters and in the press that residents will be fully engaged in the future

of the Bulmershe Leisure Centre. The next phase of the project, after the transfer has been complete, will cover the future building. Plans have already been drawn up for a number of options and funding provisionally identified. They will be updated and a joint exhibition / consultation will be carried out for residents and users of the facility. The responses to this will be used to inform the final decision as to what option is most appropriate.

Finally let me say one thing about former Cllr Hayward and one of the comments in the motion at 10.1 in the Agenda. Let me make it perfectly clear that I totally condemn any illegal act of any councillor and support the motion in principle. Both parties have benefitted from the support of this individual to give them control. The Liberal Democrats used this councillor as a party member to keep control at the beginning of this council for several years and then when she went Independent the Conservatives gained control through her support. Remember the Liberal Democrats brought this individual into politics by selecting her as a candidate even though she was already committing these offences. I hope that their selection process is a little more robust now to make sure their candidates for the elections in May 2015 do not have skeletons in their cupboards."

44. **REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

a) **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note that Councillor Cheng had resigned as the Council's representative to the CAB.

- ◆ To appoint Councillor Challis as the Council's representative to the CAB.

b) **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To appoint Councillor Rowland as a standing deputy to the Borough/Parish Working Group.

c) Members noted the following written reports:

- Report of the re3 Stakeholders Meeting on 10 July 2014 from Councillor Walker.
- ARC report from Mrs Shelagh Flower.

Councillor Franklin read out a report on the Poor's Land Charity, which had been submitted by Mrs Shelagh Flower. The report informed Members that all the flats in the almshouses in Cedar Place were occupied and the trustees met monthly to discuss the business of the charity and to consider applications for the Relief in Need Fund.

Councillor Smith gave a verbal report of a meeting of the Sonning and District Welfare and Education Trust and informed members of two grants given by the trust.

Councillor Rahmouni informed Members that Rory Hunt, a long term resident of the Robert Palmer almshouses, had recently passed away.

d) Members noted the new ARC constitution, which had been requested at the previous meeting of the Council. It was noted that Woodley Town Council was not listed in the Schedule of Membership and the Town Clerk agreed to seek clarification of this.

Members requested that, following the recent experience of Woodley Town Council, a suggestion be made to ARC that item 6 c) of the constitution be

amended to add that the office of a member of the management committee shall be vacated if the member is found guilty of criminal activity.

- e) Members noted receipt of the audited accounts 2013 for the Poor's Land Charity.

The following two items were notified to Members after the agenda had been published and resulted from the disqualification from office of Councillor Hayward.

f) **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To appoint Councillor Mills as the Council's representative on the Woodley Bowling Club Management Committee.

g) **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To appoint Councillor Lawley as the Council's representative on the Woodley Volunteer Centre Management Committee.

Under this item it was noted that Mr Les Green would be leaving Woodley Age Concern after many years of service. The Town Clerk agreed to send a card to Mr Green on behalf of the Council.

45. **TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**

The Town Mayor informed the Council of the 24 engagements he had attended since the last meeting.

The Mayor reported that he had been very busy with his Mayoral engagements over the summer and had frequently been amazed at the amount of time given by volunteers to many of the organisations he had visited.

The Deputy Mayor had attended 2 engagements since the last meeting.

46. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

An item giving an update on matters relating to the provision of a Neighbourhood Plan was requested.

Meeting closed at 9:30pm

TOWN FORUM

30 September 2014

Greg Bello, a member of the Woodley and Whitegates Labour Party, said he spoke on behalf of the 2,000 residents who had signed a petition requesting that a public toilet be provided in the town centre, and asked for the proposed toilet to be installed before the end of this financial year.

Councillor Haines thanked Mr Bello for the question and reported that the Town Council was working to have the new toilet installed as soon as possible, but that other organisations were also involved with the process. She said that the Council could not promise to have the toilet installed by the end of this financial year, but that they would do their best to meet this date.

Woodley Town Council

Protocol for members of the public wishing to report on meetings of Woodley Town Council

Members of the public are entitled to report on meetings of Council, Committees, Sub Committees and Working Parties, except in circumstances where the public have been excluded as permitted by law.

Reporting means:

- Filming, photographing or making an audio recording of the proceedings of the meeting
- Using any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later
- Reporting or providing commentary on proceeding at a meeting, orally or in writing, so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later if persons are not present at the meeting

Anyone present at a meeting as it takes place is not permitted to carry out an oral commentary or report. This is to prevent the business of the meeting being disrupted.

Anyone attending a meeting who wishes to report on the meeting should contact the Town Clerk on 0118 9690356 or email townclerk@woodley.gov.uk. This is so that employees can provide a suitable and defined place from which to anyone intending to report on proceedings can do so effectively.

Members of the public are asked to remain seated throughout the meeting because standing up and walking around could distract the meeting and therefore the business being conducted.

For meetings in the Oakwood Centre members of the public may use the Council's Wi-Fi facilities which can be accessed by selecting 'The Oakwood Centre' on your device. If the meeting is not held in the Oakwood Centre members of the public are asked to check in advance if a Wi-Fi service is available.

In order to avoid accidents the Council is unable to allow the use of electric plug sockets by members of the public for their equipment.

Specific Council responsibilities:

Annual Return:

- approval of the Financial Statements,
- approval of the Corporate Governance statement

Receipt of the external auditor's opinion

Signatories to bank accounts

Setting the precept

Approval of the Council's Annual Budget

Borrowing approval

Raising a loan

Approval of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy

Approval of the capital programme

Members' Code of Conduct

Standing orders

Financial regulations

Council land use matters

Appointment of Town Clerk

Designation of Proper Officer of the Council

Appointment of Responsible Financial Officer

Appointment/dissolution/alteration of membership of standing committees

Appointment of Town Mayor and to receive his/her declaration of office

Appointment of Deputy Town Mayor

Appointment of Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council

Powers and duties of committees and Town Clerk

Dates of the meetings of Council and scheduled standing committees

Appointments to outside bodies

Co-options to the Council

Approval to use the Council seal

Adoption of the General power of competence