

Woodley Town Council

**Minutes of a meeting of the Strategy & Resources Committee held at the Oakwood Centre on Tuesday 11 September 2012 at 8.00 pm**

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**Present:** *Councillors E. Rowland (Chairman); K. Baker; A. Chadwick; P. Challis; K. Gilder; C. Lawley; S. Outen*

**Also present:** *Councillor M. Holmes and Brian Harris, Arts Development Consultant*

**Officers present:** *D. Mander, Town Clerk; K. Murray, Service Support Manager*

**Apologies:** *Councillor K. Haines*

22. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

D. Mander, Town Clerk	Agenda Item 18 Oakwood Centre Catering Service	Prejudicial Interest Daughter is employed part time by JAC Youth Opportunities CIC.
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The Town Clerk withdrew from the meeting during the consideration of this item.

23. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 JULY 2012**

Under this item Councillor Baker expressed dissatisfaction at minutes of the meeting on 27 July 2012 and the Council's minutes in general which he believed should include a record of the views expressed during discussions on items. In response the Town Clerk referred to a previous discussion by Council on this matter where it had been accepted that more reference to discussions on items would generally be included in committee minutes in order to give sense to a decision and that Full Council minutes, particularly in the case of debates on motions, would record that a discussion had taken place but not the detail of the discussion. The Chairman suggested that the Standing Orders Working Party could consider this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting of 27 July 2012 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

24. **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted in relation to another party's financial and business affairs, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are temporarily excluded and they are asked to withdraw for the following agenda item.

25. **WOODFORD PARK LEISURE CENTRE STUDY**

Brian Harris was welcomed to the meeting and invited to present the report commissioned by the Council. After discussion on the report and the options therein it was

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That with regard to any future developments at Woodford Park Leisure Centre the Council would not agree to a freehold or leasehold arrangement with a third party on land owned by the Council.

- ◆ That the Town Council seek discussions with Wokingham Borough Council about the future development of Woodford Park Leisure Centre and that, where possible and appropriate, third party organisations be included in any proposals that may be considered.

The Chairman reminded Members of the confidential nature of the report, particularly in relation to the organisation named in the report.

The Chairman thanked Brian Harris for his work on this matter.

## 26. **FINANCE**

### a) **Budgetary Control**

#### **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. SR 33/12.

### b) **Payments**

#### **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To approve the following payments:

	Current account	Imprest account
May 2012	£139,269.38	£56,321.24
June 2012	£171,048.47	£57,109.07
July 2012	£82,673.09	£54,993.90

### c) **Payments Consultation**

Members noted the legislation reform proposal to removing the requirement for council cheques to be signed by two Councillors so that councils could use electronic payment methods. It was also noted that a move to electronic payments had been discussed at a recent meeting with representatives of the Council's bankers, Lloyds TSB, and that any proposals would come before the committee.

## 27. **AUDIT**

#### **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the appointment of Mazars LLP as the Council's external auditor from 2012/13 for five years.
- ◆ To note that the draft Local Audit Bill included provision for a parish council sector-led body to procure and appoint audit services on behalf of town and parish councils and that this was in line with an earlier consultation response from the Council.

## 28. **OAKWOOD CENTRE**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. SR 34/12.

Members were particularly pleased that an approach by Councillor Lawley during his Mayorship had led to the arrangements for artwork from Waingels College and Bulmershe School being displayed at the Oakwood Centre.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. 34/12.

29. **SECTION 106 DEVELOPERS CONTRIBUTIONS**

The Service Support Manager presented Report No. SR 35/12. Members noted that play equipment at Woodford Park, purchased with developers contributions, was complete. It was reported that good feedback had been received about the new equipment. The Mayor would be asked to help publicise this. A balance of £3,739 remained and proposals for more play equipment at Woodford Park would be presented to the Leisure Services Committee.

Members discussed the suggestion to include the repair and resurface of the Western Avenue entrance to Woodford Park to the project list. During the discussion on this item the Service Support Manager confirmed that he was in discussion with Southern Gas Networks about repairs to this access way and would use the suggested contact at Wokingham Borough Council if necessary. It was noted that ownership of the land was not registered with the Land Registry and that the Council and nearby homeowners had a right of way over the land. It was also noted that further work would be required to establish whether or not the work proposed could be undertaken.

Under this item and with reference to the Woodley Community Forum Councillor Baker was thanked for his help in providing information about the level of funds available from the forthcoming developments in the town and he confirmed that these funds would be spent in Woodley, where appropriate.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. 35/12.
- ◆ To add the repair and resurfacing of the Western Avenue entrance to Woodford Park to the project list.

30. **RESIDENTS SURVEY 2012**

It was noted that the survey was a draft at this stage. Members discussed various items in the survey and noted that the Town Clerk had sought further information from HMR on some aspects of the report. It was agreed that year on year comparisons on responses, where possible, would be useful and these would be provided.

31. **LOCALISING COUNCIL TAX**

- a) Members noted the information provided by Wokingham Borough Council on the indicative allocation of the government grant in respect of town and parish councils to offset the impact of the localisation of council tax on the tax base.
- b) Members considered the consultation document from the Department of Communities and Local Government Localising Support for Council tax – council tax base and funding for local precepting authorities and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To respond to the following questions as provided:

Do you agree that the council tax base for local precepting authorities should be calculated excluding council tax support reductions in order to provide certainty for local taxpayers and for the funding of local precepting authorities?

**Yes**

Do you agree that the Secretary of State should also direct billing authorities to transfer an amount they estimate to be necessary to offset the cost of reductions attributable to local precepting authorities from their general fund to the collection fund?

**Yes**

- c) Members discussed the consultation from Wokingham Borough Council on the draft Council Tax Support Scheme and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To respond to the consultation as follows:

That Woodley Town Council believes that the new scheme should protect vulnerable people and agrees in general with the proposals in respect of empty/vacant and second homes.

Furthermore, Woodley Town Council suggests that Wokingham Borough Council consider the use of funds from the Business Rates Retention Scheme to offset the reduction of Council tax benefit funding from Government.

32. **2012 WOKINGHAM BOROUGH TOWN AND PARISH CONFERENCE**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That the following items be proposed for discussion/update at the Wokingham Borough Town and Parish Conference:

Public toilets v local loo scheme

One stop shop in Woodley

An update on Section 106 and Community infrastructure Levy

Planning law changes in respect of extensions and the lifting requirements for affordable housing in developments.

33. **PUBLICITY AND WEBSITE**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To publicise the following:
  - Wokingham Borough Council Council tax consultation – to add a link from the Town Council's website
  - To add a link from the Town Council's website to Wokingham Borough Council's Consultation page.

34. **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted in relation to legal and commercial matters, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are temporarily excluded and they are asked to withdraw for the following four agenda items.

35. **BAR MANAGEMENT WORKING PARTY**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. SR 36/12. Members discussed the proposals and the parameters to be set and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That the Bar Management Working Party be delegated to conduct negotiations and agree the revised fee for services at the Inn on the Park with LT Pub Leasing according to the agreed parameters.

[Town Clerk's note: Members of the Bar Management Working Party will be provided with the agreed parameters].

36. **OAKWOOD CENTRE FLOORING**

The Service Support Manager presented Report No. SR 37/12.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the contents of the report.

37. **URGENCY COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the minutes of the Urgency Committee of 3 September 2012 and the confidential minute provided to Members.

38. **OAKWOOD CENTRE CATERING SERVICE**

The Service Support Manager presented Report No. SR 38/12. During the discussion on this matter it was confirmed that the Catering Partnership Management Panel would report back on its meetings to the committee and the first meeting would take place shortly. The contract document would be reviewed by Shared Legal Solutions based at Wokingham Borough Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. SR 38/12.

The meeting closed at 10.03 pm

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