

MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday 25 June 2012

At 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall

Present

Councillor H B Eaglestone (Chairman)

Councillors:	A K Beames	A D Harvey
	Mrs B J Churchill	J S King
	Ms C Curry	T J Morris
	Mrs S E Davies	D A Snow
	P Dorward	B J Woodruff
	D S Enright	
Officers:	Town Clerk	Democratic Services Officer
	Deputy Town Clerk	

I member of the press

282 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for their absence were received from Councillors Mrs J C Baker, N Buckle, R F N Curry, S M Way and C K Woodward.

283 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

284 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the following meetings be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman:

Ordinary Meeting held on 2 April 2012
Annual Meeting held on 9 May 2012
Extra Ordinary Meeting held on 18 June 2012

A Member wished to congratulate all those involved in the Jubilee celebration, particular the mug packing. He considered that the events had all been good for the town, wished to particularly thank Councillor Ms C Curry.

Cllr Mrs B J Churchill endorsed these sentiments and presented Councillor Curry an embroidered cushion commemorating the Jubilee.

Members had received good feedback and it was noted that Cllr Curry had been thanked publically at the Beacon lighting event.

Cllr Curry thanked everyone for the gift and kind words.

285 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public present.

286 **WITNEY COMMUNITY POLICING ISSUES**

A copy of the Witney Neighbourhood Team newsletter had been circulated with the agenda.

287 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Members received and considered the details of the events attended by the Town Mayor, as circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

288 **MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

a) Planning & Development Committee of 3 & 17 April, 1, 15 & 29 May and 12 June 2012

It was noted that the meeting scheduled for 17 April 2012 had been cancelled.

Minutes 1 May – P186-3. A Member commented that he was pleased to report that this application had been refused.

Minutes 15 May, P210-1 – A Member queried the observation and the Chairman of the Committee agreed to speak to her after the meeting.

Minutes 15 May, P210-3. A Member considered that the last paragraph of the observation was not relevant and did not relate to the remit of the Planning Committee. The Chairman of the Planning Committee took this remark on board. A Member commented that this had now been agreed by the Lowlands Committee at WODC as ancillary to the main dwelling.

Minutes 29 May, P239-1&2 – A Member commented that he considered it was a waste of effort for OCC to pursue the planning permissions for the Cogges Link Road and that these applications should be referred back to OCC as “not our business”.

The Town Clerk explained the process with the Planning Committee, who had delegated authority to comment on the planning applications within timescales and therefore the minutes referred to the Council meeting were essentially for noting only.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Planning Committee as detailed be received and any recommendations approved.

b) Leisure & Recreation Committee of 21 May 2012

Minute L222 – Christmas Lights Working Party – A Member considered that there had been inadequate communication with Mr Mark Churchill regarding his participation in the Switch On evening. She considered that he should have been contacted first hand, the only notification being an e-mail to her. Another Member agreed, and commented that her offer to make the costume for the Winter Princess had also been rejected and this was very hurtful as she had done this for many years. She remarked that following her resignation from the Working Party, she had confirmed her willingness to advise and assist wherever necessary.

Minute L216 – (L104) Queen Elizabeth II Field Challenge – A Member was pleased to note that the nomination of Burwell Recreation Ground had been accepted and was progressing to the next stage.

Members considered correspondence, circulated with the agenda, with regard to minute L220 – Burwell Trees, and had no further comments to make.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Leisure & Recreation Committee as detailed be received and any recommendations approved.

c) Finance & General Purposes Committee of 11 June and verbal report of meeting held on 25 June 2012

Minute F249 – Discretionary Grants – A Member queried whether Cllr H B Eaglestone had declared an interest in the application from High Street Methodist Church, as it was not mentioned in the minutes. (Subsequent to the meeting, Cllr Eaglestone sought clarification and it was confirmed that there was no requirement for him to declare an interest based on his faith).

Minute F246 – A Member commented that it was a shame that the Council needed to spend money to repair vandalism.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee as detailed be received and any recommendations approved.

289 **COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE 2011-12**

Members received and considered the report, as circulated with the agenda.

Members considered that the publication of Members' attendance showed transparency, however, it did not give a clear indication of attendance percentages, especially for the Mayor, who was unable to attend Planning Committee meetings last year due to his membership of the Lowlands Planning at West Oxfordshire District Council.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the report be noted.
- 2) that the report contains a footnote to explain why the Mayor does not attend Planning Committee meetings.

290 **MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

Members received and considered the report of the Town Clerk, as circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the membership of the standing committees be 7 members.
- 2) that Councillor J S King be re-appointed to the Traffic Advisory Committee (1 vacancy remains)
- 3) that no appointment be made to the Oxfordshire Association of Local Council and the Oxfordshire Partnership.
- 4) that the Town Clerk be appointed as the Council's representative on Witney Town Band
- 5) that the Town Clerk be appointed as the Council's representative on Witney & District Twinning Association.
- 6) that Councillor P J Dorward be appointed as the Council representative on Witney Neighbourhood Action Group (Councillor D S Enright to remain as a reserve).
- 7) that no appointment be made to the Cogges Trust.
- 8) that Councillor D A Snow be appointed as a Trustee on Witney Town Charity.
- 9) that the appointment of three Trustees to the Cogges Welfare Trust be deferred to the next Council meeting.

291 **ADOPTION OF CODE OF CONDUCT**

Members received and considered the report of the Town Clerk, together with a copy of the code of conduct, as circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the report be noted.
- 2) that the code of conduct adopted by West Oxfordshire District Council be adopted as the code for members and co-opted members of Witney Town Council with effect from 1 July 2012, to replace the current code of conduct.
- 3) that the Town Clerk be requested to notify the Monitoring Officer at West Oxfordshire District Council of the passing of the above resolution.
- 4) that the adoption of the code should be advertised using the Town Council's free resources such as its own website and noticeboards, but not at the cost of the taxpayers in the local press.

292 **REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS, FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, DELEGATIONS AND COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Town Clerk advised that the Special meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held earlier in the evening had clarified some issues, these would now be incorporated into the draft standing orders for presentation to a future Council meeting.

RESOLVED: noted

293 **ACCOUNTS & AUDIT (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2011 – ANNUAL RETURN 2011/12**

Members received and considered the report of the Town Clerk, as circulated with the agenda.

Members congratulated the Town Clerk on a good job.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the report be noted.
- 2) that the Statement of Accounts at Section 1 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2012 be approved.
- 3) that the Annual Governance Statement at Section 2 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2012, where questions 1 to 8 were answered yes, be approved.
- 4) that the Unaudited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2012 be noted.

294 **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

RESOLVED: that the seal of the Council be affixed to any documents arising from decisions taken by this meeting of the Council.

295 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: that the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting in accordance with Section 1 of the Local Government Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

(The member of the press left the meeting at this point).

296 **MINUTES OF WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND WORKING PARTY**

Members received and considered the minutes of the meeting of the West Witney Sports Ground Working Party held on 14 June 2012.

At the request of a Member, the Town Clerk clarified the position with regard to the two options. A Member commented that this Working Party had been renamed (formerly Enhancing Sporting Facilities), however it was important to remember that there were facilities throughout the town that should be upgraded too. A Member commented that these had been included in the Leisure & Recreation Committee Vision (L218) of the minutes of the last meeting.

Further to the meeting attended by Cllrs P J Dorward and B J Woodruff, a Member queried why Tower Hill Football Club had not been invited. Cllr Woodruff commented that they had been guests at a meeting of the Sports & Social Club Committee.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the West Witney Sports Ground Working Party as detailed be received and any recommendations approved.

The meeting closed at 8pm

Chairman