

WOOTTON BASSETT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Wootton Bassett Town Council held on Thursday the 7th April 2011 at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Station Road, Wootton Bassett.

PRESENT: Councillors Steve Bucknell, Mary Champion, Linda Frost, Owen Gibbs, Paul Heaphy, Mike Leighfield, Peter Roberts, William Roberts, Jenny Stratton, Steve Walls, Audrey Wannell, Chris Wannell

Officers in Attendance: Johnathan Bourne, Town Clerk, Michelle Temple, Administrative Team Leader, Emily Maiden, Administrative Assistant.

74. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ernie Taylor and Susan Doyle.

75. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with The Local Authorities[Model Code of Conduct] Order 2007.

RESOLVED to note that no declarations of interest were made.

76. LINK SCHEME FOR WOOTTON BASSETT

The Council received a brief presentation from Helen Lines, Rural Networks Manager, Community First, about the possible creation of a LINK scheme in Wootton Bassett.

Helen Lines was due to speak at the last meeting of the Council on 17th February 2011. Due to confusion over the date of the meeting however, Helen was unable to attend.

Helen Lines explained to the Council what the purpose, function and daily activities of a Link scheme are. As local volunteer run groups, Link schemes:-

- Offer help with transport,
- Carry out small tasks such as collecting prescriptions or shopping for those with mobility issues,
- Provide volunteers who undertake home visits to alleviate loneliness and help with household tasks,

98% of rural Wiltshire is covered by Link schemes, and over 1600 people volunteer.

Community First has tried to set up a Link scheme here in Wootton Bassett twice before, yet they were unable to generate enough volunteers. It is hoped that this attempt will prove more successful. The Council were advised that summer is generally the best time for recruiting volunteers, therefore Community First are holding a meeting in the next few weeks for those who express an interest.

The following questions were put to Helen Lines by the Council:-

- A question was asked about the funding available to take the scheme forward. Wiltshire Council are committed to Link schemes across the county, and provide funding for the initial start up. 80% of Link schemes then become self funding, as those who use the service are often willing to contribute. Small top up grants are also provided. The cost of running a Link scheme varies, and the Wootton Bassett project is expected to cost between six and seven thousand pounds per year. That money goes towards public liability insurance, CRB checks, publicity and volunteer expenses.
- The Council asked about vehicle ownership and insurance. Helen advised that volunteers use their own vehicles, at no extra cost to themselves. Insurance cover is provided by the scheme's own personal liability insurance; volunteer drivers do not need to take out extra cover on their own policies. Drivers are reimbursed at 45p per mile.

Helen Lines asked if Community First could utilise the networks available to the Council, to pass on information about the possibility of a Link scheme in Wootton Bassett.

RESOLVED for Helen to pass leaflets and posters to the Office for display in the town notice boards and at 117 High Street. Interested parties to contact the Town Clerk.
The Mayor thanked Helen Lines for her presentation.

77. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED to confirm and sign Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on Thursday 17th February 2011 [WBTC/06/2010-2011]. Copy previously circulated.

78. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor spoke of the honour and privilege bestowed upon the Town by the Queen, with the granting of the Royal warrant. Later this year, Wootton Bassett will receive Letters Patent signed and sealed by the Monarch, and with it the right for the town to be known as 'Royal Wootton Bassett'.

The Mayor noted that she has attended a number of functions since the last Council meeting of 17th February 2011.

The Mayor spoke of the particular poignancy of a recent repatriation through Wootton Bassett. She and the Town Clerk had previously met the family of one of the repatriated servicemen on their visit to SHAPE Headquarters, NATO, in Brussels. The Mayor spoke of her sadness in meeting with them again in such tragic circumstances. The family have said that they will visit the Mayor for her 1960s and 70s fundraiser.

RESOLVED that the Mayor's communications be noted.

79. WRITTEN REPORTS

Wootton Bassett Police - Inspector Chris Martin was in attendance to present a report from Wootton Bassett Police. The report covered the following points:-

a) Neighbourhood Policing Priority

The Neighbourhood team have decided to continue their work on targeting shoplifters, which has been their priority for the past 3 months. The team feel that this should remain a Policing priority, as they are gaining successful results. There have been several arrests and charges brought against offenders. Officers are finding that shoplifters are coming over from Swindon, and as such they are liaising with the intelligence unit in Swindon, and working closely with the local shops.

b) Ride of Respect

The Ride of Respect passed off without incident, and raised approximately £100,000 for Afghan Heroes. It was estimated that over 10,00 bikers rode the route from Hullavington to Wootton Bassett.

If there were ever a similar event in the future, Inspector Chris Martin explained that lessons had been learnt regarding the road closure. There was congestion around Coped Hall on occasion; however this was quickly cleared between waves of bikes.

Some residents were not notified of the event in advance, and complained to Inspector Chris Martin and his team about the lack of communication from the organisers. On the whole however, the event was a success.

A similar but smaller event, DubAid on the 20th March 2011, also passed off successfully.

The Council extended their thanks to Inspector Chris Martin and his team for their excellent policing of the Ride of Respect.

c) Increase in Non-dwelling burglaries

An area of concern for Inspector Martin and his team is the rise in thefts of scrap metal, farm equipment, quad bikes etc, in the Wootton Bassett area. This is a countrywide problem, caused by an increase in the price of metal in the current economic climate. Arrests have been made and operations are continuing. Inspector Martin has asked the community to be vigilant on this issue, and report any suspicious activity.

Inspector Martin drew the Council's attention to the decline in incidents of Criminal Damage in the Wootton Bassett Sector, down from 297 reported incidents in 2009/10 to 220 in 2010/11. Overall, reported crimes are down by -2.8%.

Finally, the work of the Wootton Bassett CCTV team was highly praised by the Inspector. An incident occurred on 5th April 2011 involving a youth who committed a number of offences in and around Church Street, including starting a fire in St Bartholomew and All

Saints Church. CCTV operators assisted Police with locating the youth in question, who has been charged with seven separate offences.

It was RESOLVED for the Council to write to the Reverend Canon Woodhouse, expressing regret regarding the incident described above.

The Mayor thanked Inspector Martin for his attendance at the meeting.

Member of Parliament - James Gray MP submitted a written report to the Council, congratulating the town on receiving Royal status, and expressing a hope that the RAF Lyneham site can continue to bring capital to the area after the withdrawal of the Air Force, either as a military base or through a commercial venture.

Wiltshire Councillors - Wiltshire Councillor Bill Roberts gave a verbal report to the Council. Councillor Roberts had attended a meeting on a proposed new council-wide street trading scheme. It is proposed that in future, traders will need to apply for Street Trading Consent from the Council, which would include a fee and be subject to terms and conditions. Councillor Roberts was keen to express that this would not apply to events in Wootton Bassett such as the Carnival, the Wednesday market and the Christmas Lights switch on. This proposal is subject to further consultation with the public before it is brought before the Cabinet at Wiltshire Council.

Councillor Bill Roberts also updated the Council on the work of the Health Committee, which includes the successful application of three consortia within Wiltshire to gain 'Pathfinder' status. Wootton Bassett would come under the remit of Kennet and North Wiltshire in this respect. Councillor Roberts passed the latest edition of Great Western Hospital's 'Horizon' publication to the Office, where it is available to view.

Wiltshire Councillor Peter Doyle presented a written report to the Council, in which the following issues were discussed:-

- Councillor Doyle attended an Area Board meeting on the 4th April 2011 linked to the planning application for 50 additional homes at the Brynards Hill development. A ministerial statement on this matter was due on Friday April 8th 2011.
- An update was given from Wiltshire Council on the proposal by Bradies Taxis to extend their service to cover the Lime Kiln area, following the removal of the 54 bus service by Stagecoach. Wiltshire Council have permitted Bradies to

undertake this proposal. There has also been an indication by the Passenger Transport Unit that it may be possible to re-route a bus service operated by AD Rains that currently serves the Aston Keynes/Minety area to include Lime Kiln on its route. There are practical issues with this suggestion however, as the vehicle available has no low rise entry, and is therefore unsuitable for those with limited mobility. Councillor Peter Doyle explained that he is awaiting further details on this matter.

Wiltshire Councillor Mollie Groom submitted a written report, which was circulated at the meeting. In it she covered three points, as outlined below:-

- a) The resolution from the Rural Buffer Task Group,
- b) An extract from NCAP and
- c) James Gray's press release of April 6th 2011.

Area Board Representatives - Councillor Mike Leighfield delivered a verbal report, updating the Council following a meeting of the Area Board on March 23rd 2011. The meeting was well attended, with the main issues being a) the Lime Kiln Leisure Centre and b) the Campus Delivery Programme.

- a) A direct question asked at the Area Board meeting involved the issue of insurance at the Lime Kiln Leisure Centre – was the building adequately insured? It was felt that there had been no full answer to that question, and as such it was proposed that the Town Clerk write to Wiltshire Council and discover the answer to clarify.

RESOLVED to adopt the above proposal.

- b) The announcement of who has been appointed to the Shadow Board is due imminently. The campus proposal has been amended to total 20 campuses across Wiltshire, including one in Cricklade.

80. PLANNING COMMITTEE

Report on a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Thursday February 17th 2011 [P/12/2010-2011]. Copy previously circulated.

RESOLVED to adopt the report.

81. AMENITIES COMMITTEE

Report on a meeting of the Amenities Committee held on Thursday March 10th 2011[A/6/2010-2011]. Copy previously circulated.

RESOLVED to adopt the report.

82. REVENUE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Report on a meeting of the Revenue and Resources Committee held on Thursday March 31st 2011 [R&R/6/2010-2011]. Copy previously circulated.

RESOLVED to adopt the report.

83. CASUAL VACANCIES

a) The Council was advised that Councillor Sanjay Soni has resigned from his position on the Town Council. The position has been advertised in accordance with The Representation of the People Act 1985 s21. No election has been sought; therefore the Electoral Services Officer has advised that the position be filled by co-option.

The Council was asked to fill the Casual Vacancy by co-option.

Proposed by Councillor Chris Wannell, seconded by Councillor Steve Walls, that Susan Hughes be nominated to fill the Casual Vacancy. No further nominations received, therefore it was RESOLVED that Mrs Susan Hughes be co-opted on to the Council.

b) The Council was also advised that Councillor Peter Doyle has resigned his seat, and that this vacancy is currently being advertised by the Electoral Services Department. This vacancy will either be filled by election or by co-option at the next Council meeting.

RESOLVED to note the above.

The Council extend their gratitude to Councillor Peter Doyle for all his hard work over the years, and wish him well in his continued work for Wiltshire Council. A letter of thanks has been sent to Sanjay Soni by the Mayor.

84. CAMPUS DELIVERY PROGRAMME

Expressions of interest are being sought by the Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Area Board for a Parish and Town Council Representative to sit on the Shadow Board. These were to be submitted by April 1st 2011.

The Council is advised that the Representative is to come from either the Town Council or one of the surrounding Parish Councils. The Representative put forward should expect to attend very frequent meetings in the early stages of the Campus Delivery Programme, and it is likely that these will be held during daytime working hours.

Two names were suggested at the meeting of the Amenities Committee on March 10th 2011, originally to focus the Council's aspirations on a Community Hall project. The names chosen were Councillor Mike Leighfield and Councillor Susan Doyle, who are Chairs of the two Standing Committees. This approach was tested at the meeting of the Revenue and Resources Committee on March 31st 2011, in order for the names to be submitted in time for the deadline.

RESOLVED to confirm this representation.

85. THE FUTURE OF RAF LYNEHAM

Members were invited by email to a 'Presentation by the Local Business Community on the Commercial Options for the RAF Lyneham site'. This event, held by the Wessex Association of Chambers of Commerce, looked at a commercial option for the future of the RAF Lyneham site, should the MoD decide to release the site.

The Town Council's position on this matter is to support future military use of the airbase by the MoD and a letter to this effect was sent to them before Christmas 2010.

Wiltshire Council are writing to the MoD, encouraging them to make a decision regarding their future interest in the Lyneham site by July 2011. They have suggested that the Town Council may wish to also write to the MoD along the same lines.

It is recommended that the Town Council continue to support its original position and write to the MoD as suggested by Wiltshire Council.

RESOLVED to adopt this recommendation.

The Town Clerk gave an update on the meeting to discuss the commercial options for RAF Lyneham. At the meeting it was decided that there would be a broadly representative steering group for this project, and that the Town Council needed to put forward a representative for a position on that steering group. Meetings would take place between 4 and 6pm, meaning that it would be easier if the representative didn't have heavy work commitments.

It was proposed by Councillor Steve Bucknell, seconded by Councillor Mike Leighfield that Councillor Chris Wannell be nominated to represent the Town Council on the steering group.

RESOLVED that Councillor Chris Wannell represent the Town Council on the Lyneham Steering Group.

86. ADDENDUM – MOTION

Notice of Motion in the name of Councillor Chris Wannell, seconded by Councillor Peter Roberts.

Wootton Bassett Town Council notes the decision by Stagecoach to withdraw its Service No. 54.

“Wootton Bassett Town Council requests that Stagecoach review Route 55 to include Lime Kiln, Showfield and Maple Drive. Excluding these areas will cause hardship to elderly residents in those areas.”

A discussion on the decision to withdraw the 54 bus followed. It was felt that, in light of the fact that the campus will be situated in the Lime Kiln area, not providing a bus to Lime Kiln was short sighted and unsatisfactory. Added to this, the Lime Kiln housing estate was specifically designed for the elderly, therefore the lack of a transport link to the area is of cause for concern.

RESOLVED for the Town Clerk to write to the Traffic Commissioner, local MP and Stagecoach, expressing the concerns raised over the alterations to the Stagecoach service.

87. PRESS RELEASES

The Committee was asked to consider whether it would like any Press Releases to be issued in respect of the Committee Agenda items.

RESOLVED to issue Press Releases on the following:-

- The future of RAF Lyneham and the Lyneham Steering Group,
- The motion on the withdrawal of the 54 bus service and amended route of the 55.

Before the closure of the meeting, the Mayor expressed her thanks to the Council for their support as her term in Office comes to a close.

The meeting closed at 8.44pm