

WALLINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

of the

Virtual TEAMS meeting of Full Council on the Monday 29th June 2020 at 7p.m

PRESENT

The Mayor, Councillor Lee Upcraft

Councillors Beatty, Beauchamp, Cattermole, Davies, Dolton, Holford, Hughes, Keats-Rohan, Kidley, Lester, McGregor, Sinkinson, Whelan and Wilder.

The Town Clerk, Mrs Paula Lopez

Responsible Finance Officer, Michelle Taylor

Officers in Attendance: Barbara Atkins (Minute Taker) and Tracey Collins

Approximately 50 people including councillors, staff and public were at the meeting

86. THE MAYOR TO ADVISE THOSE IN ATTENDANCE OF THE PROTOCOL FOR THE MEETING

The Mayor shared the protocol for the meeting.

87. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Rennie

88. ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC

There was no admission of the public.

89. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

A Councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in our Council's Standing Orders Code of Conduct (Item 13) in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under code of conduct and his right to participate and vote on the matter (guidelines are available at the meeting and all Councillors have received a copy prior to the meeting) Information for each Member was available at the meeting.

There were no declarations of interested although it was noted that Councillor Dolton is a director of BunkFest.

90. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – NOTIFIED AND IMPROMPTU (Total 15 Minutes)

The Mayor announced that there were five topics that members of the public wished to speak on:

i) Arts Strategy – Ms .. from Ayres House Studios introduced herself and sated that the Studio had opened in October 2019 with 12 artists and 2 more would be joining them shortly. Ms .. stated that she would like to be part of the Art Working Party and help with the process although she did have concerns about the draft Public Arts Strategy Plan and what was considered to be public art. Ms .. believed that some of the suggested public art such as lighting should be under other budgets. Ms .. explained further and asked that Arts Working Party get in touch with her.

ii) Arts Strategy – Ms .. from Ayres House Studios endorsed Ms ..’s comments above and asked that the Art Working Party get in touch and that she too would like to join the group.

Councillors asked Ms .. to clarify a few points and Councillor Lester stated that she would contact the Studio to arrange a meeting.

iii) Climate Emergency – A resident stated that she welcomed the Town Council’s decision to declare a climate emergency. Ms .. has been resident in the area for over 40 years and had been dismayed by the weak proposals to support cancelling 3 annual events and that the traffic movements needed to be put in context.

iv) Climate Emergency - Mr .. stated that although the 3 events might take place on Town Council property, they were not their events. He urged Councillors to reject the motion on the agenda.

v) Climate Emergency – Ms .. stated that she supported Climate Emergency but to cancel major events was not the right approach and that she found the political suggestions very upsetting to the community particularly at this moment in time. Ms .. stated that the proposals were putting the Town Council’s reputation at risk and she urge Councillors to reject the proposals.

vi) Climate Emergency - Mr .. stated that the proposals/item should be removed from the agenda and he quoted the legality of overturning a resolution. Mr .. stated that the Town Council should be seeking and working towards a carbon neutral environment and should be working with local groups to obtain this. Mr .. also reported that local events contributed to the economy of the town. Furthermore planting 20 trees a year would help climate change and that the scouts are planting 50 trees this year. Mr .. urged the Council to withdraw the proposal or the Town Councillors to reject them.

vii) Climate Emergency – Mr .. stated that he had worked in this industry for 16 years and he was proud that the Town Council had declared a Climate Emergency but now they now needed to plan and implement. He thanked the Councillor for sharing footprints but urged Councillors to compare daily footprints. Mr .. also asked Councillors to look at investing capital, space, energy, etc and to have constructed dialogues and finally to vote against the proposals.

Councillors briefly discussed the comments made by the public asking that they get in touch with the Town Council.

viii) Councillor Cattermole – Ms Sarah Le-Fevre stated that she believed Councillor Cattermole’s actions brought the Town Council into disrepute and that to carry out building work without planning permission was unacceptable, Ms Le-Fevre quoted the seven principles from local government Code of Conduct: selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty and leadership and felt that Councillor Cattermole was in breach of this code. Ms Le-Fevre was pleased that the Town Council has already removed Councillor Cattermole from the planning committee.

ix) Councillor Cattermole – Mr .. endorsed Ms Le-Fevre’s comments above and stated that Councillor Cattermole had a disregard for integrating and should not be representing the public.

x) Councillor Cattermole – Another member of the public wanted to speak but unfortunately, could not be heard.

xi) Councillor Cattermole – Mr .. reported that Mr .. had owned Bridge House and that living in a conservation area meant that sympathetic repairs had to be undertaken because we are guardians of heritage. That the site with the views from across the bridge to the Church are part of the town and how could a Councillor undertake such unauthorised work on his property and even now was not reinstating the unauthorised works. Mr .. stated that Councillor Cattermole should not remain as a Councillor as he brought the Council into disrepute.

Councillor Cattermole responded to the above comments stating that he could not be removed as a Councillor and noted specifically for Cllr Upcraft, ‘a parish council, for all we that is are, is not a gentlemen’s club, where a member may be blackballed for not being quiet’ and said that his position was constituted by an election. When purchasing the property Councillor Cattermole’s property searches had indicated that his property was not in a conservation area nor was it subject to Article 4 Direction. Councillor Cattermole is currently suing the District Council and is awaiting a response from them.

xii) Litter – Mr .. spoke about the increase in litter in the parks and at the riverside and that we should look for potential solutions. Mr .. reported on the increase of litter at Bournemouth Beach and Port Meadow where litter had caused injuries to swans and horses,

and a cow had died. The Bull Croft, Kinecroft and riverside were currently being used mainly by families however it was being let down by a few groups using drugs, excess drinking and use of helium. Bins were overflowing and although the parks team were working hard, 100 pizza boxes had been picked up, it was now time to try to educate. Some suggestions were to have more recycling bins at the riverside, a larger bin under the arch at the bridge, more CCTV cameras around the Pavilion and bring back the Keep Britain Tidy campaign. Mr .. also suggested that the parks team could be supported by volunteers, the pizza outlets could put names and telephone numbers on the boxes which persuade people not to leave their rubbish behind and maybe Police Community Support Officers could help in the campaign to stop litter. Good informative signage could be put up.

Councillors asked that Mr .. attend the next Parks, Gardens, Allotments and Open Spaces Committee so that his ideas could be built upon.

xiii) Doctors Surgery – Doctor Paul stated that 22 years ago the surgery dealt with 12,500 patients but this had grown to 17,000 and they were running out of space. The medical practice also had ambitions to train more health professionals and Public Health wanted them to have more. Plans would require 4 consulting rooms and it was not possible to expand. He asked that the Town Council lobby the National Health Trust to sell them land that could be built upon and that the Town Council's help would be much appreciated.

The Mayor and the District Council's planning department had responded to Doctor Paul's letter and the Mayor stated that the Town Council had been aware of the issue for some time. Councillors asked Doctor Paul if he had a particular site in mind. Doctor Paul stated that extending the current site by building into the car park and then if possible expanding into the adjacent sports field as a car park. Doctor Paul indicated that a conversation with Trust needed to be had and assistance with this would be welcome. Other suggestions from Councillors included expanding the current premises by building up but this was difficult because of ecological issues with the nearby stream.

xiv) Local Website – Ms .. reported that she had set up a website <https://www.barnabybugle.co.uk/> which listed shops and businesses that had opened since lockdown which listed their opening times, etc. Ms .. stated that the site had over 4,400 hits in 6 weeks with people from surrounding villages using the site and she asked Councillors to visit it. Ms .. stated that she hopes that Council would endorse the site and help to encourage people to view it. Ms .. also hopes that Council may take over the responsibility in the future.

The Mayor asked if Ms .. had contacted Richard Prunier which she had, the Mayor indicated that he hoped it could be explored as to whether it could be incorporated in the Town Council's website.

The Mayor thanked all the Members of the public who had spoken.

91. VARIATION OF ORDER OF BUSINESS

It was Proposed by the Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Lester and

RESOLVED: THAT agenda item 18 – Doctors Surgery be discussed after agenda item 11 – Parks, Gardens, Allotments and Open Spaces Committee.

92. MAYORS COMMUNICATIONS

i) Alderman Emeritus Betty Atkins had passed away last week. She had been a Councillor for 25 years and Mayor 3 times and will be very much missed. The Mayor stated that that he wished it be put on record that Betty Atkins had been devoted to Wallingford and worked hard in its interests. The Town Council sent their sincere condolences to her family.

ii) Site D – This outline planning application had been rejected and the developer was appealing.

iii) Coach and Horses, Kinecroft – The Mayor asked Councillors to be mindful when dealing with members of the public, in that not all the incidents/problems on Kinecroft had been connected to the pub.

93. DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

i) **District Councillor George Levy** congratulated the Town Council on submitting their Neighbourhood Plan. District Councillor Levy offered to support and help Doctor Paul and the Wallingford Doctor's surgery. In respect of agenda item 20 - Cancellation of Annual Events to Comply with Wallingford Town Council's Declaration of a Climate Emergency Councillor Levy hoped that the Town Council would not be cancelling these events as they were of great benefit to the community. Councillor Levy gave an overview of the timetable for decriminalisation of parking and stated that it was hoped that the District Council would be able to tender for contracts in October 2021 with start date in 2022.

Councillor Whelan asked if Councillor Levy could assist with the town council's request to have the car park deck in Oxford moved to the Cattle Market car park and Councillor Levy said he would investigate this.

Councillor Cattermole asked Councillor Levy to contact the Environment Agency with the view to having the buoys put back in the river.

ii) County Councillor Dr Pete Sudbury (Full Report Attached to Minutes) reported on District Council's local plan and that developers would be at the hearing. County Councillor Sudbury is collecting further suggestions for improvements in cycle access and safety, and adding them to the initial submission to the County Council. Other work has included looking at temporary pedestrianisation of at least part of the centre of the town Wallingford and

reopening the Wallingford to Cholsey railway line. Councillor Sudbury spoke about the cancellation of events and climate emergency and working to improve matters in Wallingford over the next 10 years.

94. MINUTES

To sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on the 18th May 2020 as set out on pages 1 – 13 of the Minute Book.

Councillors discussed the accuracy of the Minutes and

Councillor Beauchamp asked that the minutes be corrected to note that he had abstained from voting in the resolutions under minutes 9 and 17.

Councillor Keats-Rohan also wished to bring up some corrections but could not recall immediately what these were.

Action: Signing of the Minutes to be deferred to the next meeting.

95. TO ADOPT THE FOLLOWING MINUTES

To adopt the minutes of the following committee meeting held in 2019 -2020, copies previously signed as a correct record and circulated to Councillors:

- Finance and Properties – 16th December 2019, pages 188 to 190
- Tourism and Economic Development – 2nd December 2019, pages 176 to 182
- Planning – 9th March 2020 pages 259 to 263
- Planning – 1st June 2020 pages 20 to 26

It was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Keats-Rohan and

RESOLVED: THAT the minutes of committee meetings held in 2019 -2020, copies previously signed as a correct record and circulated to Councillors, listed above, be adopted by Full Council.

96. PARKS, GARDENS, ALLOTMENTS AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Recommendation from the meeting on the 20th January 2020 to be resolved. Bee Keeping: Minute 525b/01/2020 refers.

Councillor Holford stated that a small amendment should be made in that the Bee Keeping membership number of the allotment holder should be added to the contact details at the bottom of the form.

It was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Lester and

RESOLVED: THAT following the above amendment the Bee Keeping policy be adopted to take immediate effect.

Councillor Lester thanked Officer, Tracey Collins for producing the Bee Keeping Policy.

97. DOCTORS SURGERY

Following Doctor Paul's report in public participation, the Mayor discussed the recent communication from the doctor's surgery asking for assistance to find a new site. (Councillors had received copies of the letter of reply from the Mayor and the Leader of South Oxford District Council). The Mayor stated that the only site the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group could identify would be Site D however they did not recommend that this was included at the moment as if the proposal was not carried out then the site would automatically revert in 3 to 5 years to housing. Once the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted a possible site could be added. The other option would be to ask the District Council if a new site could be incorporated at the District Council's new offices in Crowmarsh. Councillors discussed and it was suggested that residents were asked for their thoughts. The sports field next to the Community Hospital had been identified as such in the Neighbourhood Plan and should not really be considered at this stage. Councillors also considered what Section 106 and CIL money was available. Following further discussion it was concluded that the Mayor will contact Councillors after the meeting with a view to 2 or 3 Councillors working with the Doctor's surgery to assist them with identifying a new site for the expansion of the surgery.

Action: 2 or 3 Councillors to contact Doctor Paul to work with him and other stakeholders to identify a new site for the surgery.

98. HISTORICAL ASSETS WORKING PARTY

Councillor Keats-Rohan (Report attached)

i) Landscape Architect Report – Councillor Keats-Rohan gave an overview of the report and clarified that the only trees to be removed would be saplings as the trees were protected, however the canopies of the mature trees would be reduced.

ii) General Update from Historical Assets Working Party - Councillor Dolton thanked Councillor Keats-Rohan along with the other Councillors that had worked on the report. The group are now looking for grant funding, as it was going to cost millions to put right the ancient monuments. The group are working on improving education and heritage. The working group is waiting on the quantity surveyor's report for the Town Hall repairs after which they will be getting estimates for the work. Things are moving forward.

99. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Mayor gave a brief update in that the draft Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents is open for public consultation until the 11th August with hard copies of the plan available at KP Stationers and Londis. The Mayor asked Councillors to spread the word about the consultation and to note that the end was in sight.

100. SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE'S LOCAL PLAN

The Mayor stated that South Oxfordshire's Local Plan was now with examiner to see if it was fit for purpose. Previously Wallingford Town Council had raised concerns over housing density, site allocation and shopping areas in Wallingford. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had prepared a submission and the Mayor asked if the Council wished him to represent them. The District Councillors along with developers will be at the hearing sessions.

Councillor Keats-Rohan thanked the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and stated that the Mayor was the best person to represent the Town Council.

101. FLAG FLYING

Minute 596/02/2020 refers - Councillor Beatty opened a discussion to request that the Union flag is flown every day from the Town Hall. The Flag Flying Schedule had been sent to Councillors in advance of the meeting. Councillors discussed and had very mixed views regarding keeping to the flag flying schedule, flying the Union flag in between specific flag flying days or alternatively flying the town flag. Wear and tear on the flags was also discussed.

It was Proposed by Councillor Wilder, Seconded by Councillor Beatty and
RESOLVED: THAT a flag should be flown permanently at the Town Hall.

It was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor McGregor and
RESOLVED: THAT the flag flying schedule be followed and when this is not in operation then the Town Flag be flown at the Town Hall.

102. AGATHA CHRISTIE

i) Agatha Christie Miniature – Councillor Beatty showed the miniature bronze statue to those present at the meeting. Councillor Beatty is now working on the art work for the fund raising pages and he has the Just Giving website to investigate. Ownership/property rights for the statue still need to be investigated.

ii) Request to increase S106 application to £40k from the agreed £10k – Councillor Beatty requested that an allocation of the Section 106 monies for Public Art be increased from the agreed £10k to £40K for the commission of the life-size bronze statue. Councillor Lester reported that of the £70,000 Section 106 monies available for Art projects only £25,000 to £31,000 was currently available. Although up to £100,000 was available, 400 houses had to be built and filled at Site B before this money would be released. Therefore if the amount for the statue was increased to £40k this would leave very little for any other projects.

Councillors discussed and although they were very much in support of the life size bronze Agatha Christie statue and its potential to increase tourism, etc they concluded that

they would like to see how the fundraising/crowd funding went before committing any further Section 106 money to the project.

Councillor Beatty was thanked for his work on this.

103. ARTS WORKING PARTY

Public Art Strategy Plan Minute 530a/01/2020 refers. Recommendation from Tourism and Economic Development Committee: **It was Proposed by Councillor Lester, Seconded by Councillor Upcraft and RECOMMENDED: THAT the Public Art Strategy and Plan be approved once Mrs Blacker has made the small changes mentioned.**

The original Arts Strategy was sent to Councillors in advance of the meeting. Councillor Lester gave an update following the departure of Mrs Blacker and asked Council to review the Public Art Strategy.

Councillor Lester stated that she hoped all Councillors had read the policy and she stated that the two public participants who spoke on the policy should be part of the working party. The Town Clerk expressed her concern over some of the items that were included as art and asked if this could be revisited at some point? Where Public Art is physical in nature it must always be publicly accessible and in line with SODC's definition, to be 'made by a professional artist, is bespoke and of high quality. Councillor Lester reported that the working party had received guidance and advice on what could be included and how. Councillor Lester went on to explain that school children could help to design the works of art, such as a water feature in the Castle Gardens. Councillor Lester spoke about a window in the Regal (new) possibly being engraved to pictate Wallingford scenes. It was also suggested that a particular area could be set aside for works of art to be displayed.

Councillors concluded that works of art would enhance the environment and improve the town. It was Proposed by Councillor Lester, Seconded by Councillor Whelan and **RESOLVED: THAT** Wallingford Town Council adopts the Public Art Strategy and Plan.

104. ASSISTING WITH THE TRANSITION FROM LOCKDOWN

Councillor Dolton reported that he and Richard Prunier had met in the Market Place to discuss ways in which Wallingford Town Council could assist with the transition from lockdown. Whilst in the Market Place they had noticed how difficult it was for people to social distance when the buses are parked up and cars are parked illegally.

i) Buses - Councillor Dolton asked Council to approve an approach to the bus companies to re-site bus stops to the Kinecroft on a temporary basis. Councillors discussed noting that this was to be a temporary move and that it should not interfere with the Museum as they had reluctantly decided not to re-open immediately following lockdown.

It was Proposed by Councillor Dolton, Seconded by Councillor Lester and

RESOLVED: THAT Wallingford Town Council approves an approach to the bus companies to re-site bus stops to the Kinecroft on a temporary basis.

ii) Signs – Councillor Dolton outlined the reasoning behind placing signs in narrow streets to advise motorists to be aware of pedestrians in the road. The Councillors discussed various options and concluded that the signs should be friendly, and maybe the art studio could help with the design. A discussion started regarding a possible 20 mile an hour speed limit in the Town but as this was not on the agenda it could not be discussed further. It was Proposed by Councillor Dolton, Seconded by Councillor Lester and

RESOLVED: THAT Wallingford Town Council approves the careful placing of friendly signs that requests motorists to take care as pedestrians may be in the road.

105. CANCELLATION OF ANNUAL EVENTS TO COMPLY WITH WALLINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL'S DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Supporting documents to the proposals had been distributed in advance of the meeting.

i) Councillor Beatty stated that he agreed with the need for Climate Change and although he was in favour of keeping these events which added to the vibrancy of the town he outlined the reasoning behind suggesting that they be cancelled to reduce Wallingford's carbon footprint. Councillor Beatty stated that of the 282 councils that had declared a climate emergency only 24 were actively doing something to improve the climate. Councillor Beatty suggested taking all three proposals together.

Proposal – The Car Rally is a contributor to global warming and air pollution the Council to consider the event be cancelled.

Proposal - Bunkfest is a contributor to global warming and air pollution the Council to consider this event be cancelled in order for this council to reach its zero carbon emissions target and directly contravenes the councils commitment “ *to become a carbon neutral organisation by 2030*”.

Proposal – Bonfire / Fireworks night is a contributor to global warming and air pollution, Council to consider the event be cancelled in order for this council to reach its zero-carbon emissions target by 2030.

Councillor Dolton stated that the event organisers were working at ways to improve the impact of their events on the climate. Last year's BunkFest set up water stations for refilling bottles and they hoped to be diesel free by 2030. Other events were also working to improve their carbon footprint.

Councillor Cattermole suggested that the event organisers propose how they could reduce their carbon footprints however they are working towards this and if the motion to set up a climate change working party is resolved it is hope that they will join the working party.

None of the Councillors would propose to cancel the above events and the motion was dropped.

ii) Resolution in respect of Climate Emergency -

Councillor Beatty proposed that the Council null and void the “Climate Emergency” resolution from 18/05/20 Minute 19/05/20 as this council cannot abide by its first principal by allowing environmentally damaging events such as the car rally, fireworks, Bunkfest etc.

The Town Clerk had advised Council that 4 Councillors would have to give written notice for the above resolution to be overturned.

The Mayor stated that the item should be deferred to give Councillors time to consider if they wished to give written notice.

106. CLIMATE CHANGE

Councillors Keats-Rohan and Beauchamp asked Council to approve a working party for climate change. Councillor Beauchamp outlined that Councillors Keats-Rohan, Sinkinson and himself wished to set up a working party to look at sensible sustainable pragmatic solutions to bring about climate change. Councillors discussed noting that there are plenty of knowledgeable people locally that could be invited to join the working party, however it should be non-political.

It was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Beauchamp and

RESOLVED: THAT Wallingford Town Council approves that a Working Party to look at climate change, to find practical solutions to become carbon neutral by 2030. Councillors Keats-Rohan and Beauchamp to be open minded as to who joins the working party and that it should be non-political.

107. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

See attached table. New requests for agenda items to be emailed to the Town Clerk.

The Mayor and Councillor Sinkinson announced that Councillor Sinkinson’s wife had given birth to a baby boy today, he had been named Orlando.

Meeting Closed at 2205 Hours