



Cricklade Town Council

First Town on the Thames

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FULL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MONDAY, 6th JULY 2009 6.30pm at Ockwells

Councillors present D Tetlow, Chairman
Cllr B Atfield Cllr B Beasley Cllr R Case Cllr G Chapman
Cllr P Colmer Cllr M Dixon Cllr Mrs L Forrester Cllr M Hatton
Cllr Mrs R Szybiak Cllr Mrs A Dentith

Three members of the public were also present.

The fire evacuation procedures were made known to all present before commencement of the meeting.

Public Question Time – There were no questions asked.

MINUTES

09.23 Apologies for absence.

Apologies received from Councillors Mrs D. Avenell, T. Clements, Mrs A. Dentith and Sgt. M Alvis, Wiltshire Police.

09.24 Declarations of Interest

None received.

09.25 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman expressed appreciation of the work done by Anita Barrett and Cricklade Bloomers together with a number of local voluntary groups in planting the Community Garden which was now really taking shape and nearing completion. He also reminded Councillors that Tuesday, 14th July 2009 was judging day for Cricklade's entry in Britain in Bloom.

09.26 Minutes

The Minutes of the Full Town Council meeting held on Monday, 26th May 2009 and the Extra-Ordinary meeting of Monday, 22nd June 2009 were signed by the Chairman and adopted as true records.

09.27 Area Boards

Karen Scott, Community Area Manager (Wootton Bassett and Cricklade) at Wiltshire Council gave an overview of how the new local Area Boards currently being rolled out across the county would operate. These had primarily been set up to counteract the perceived remoteness of the Unitary Authority and ensure local accountability. They would have delegated powers, be tasked with local issues and hold a grant budget. Main points were as follows:

- The first meeting of the Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Area Board would be **Wednesday, 15th July at 6.30pm at Marsh Farm Hotel, Wootton Bassett.** An agenda would be widely distributed prior to the meeting
- **Membership** - The Board comprised of 6 elected Wiltshire Councillors (voting Members), representatives from Town and Parish Councils, executive level

representatives from Wiltshire Police, the Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Wiltshire, Westlea Housing Association, Chambers of Commerce and Business Associations, the local Community Area Partnership (NCAP – the Northern Community Area Partnership) and the local Young People’s Issues Group (CAYPG). A Wiltshire Council Service Director, a Community Area Manager and a Democratic Services Officer would support the Board. A Wiltshire Council Cabinet Member would also attend each meeting as well as relevant officers. **All** members of the local community were welcome and encouraged to attend and speak at meetings.

- **Role of the Community Area Manager** – Karen Scott would co-ordinate and support the local Board liaising with a range of agencies and officers.
- **Format of Meetings** – Meetings would be held throughout the Community Area. (The venue for the meeting scheduled for 30th September was Cricklade Town Hall). The style of meetings would be informal and inclusive. The agendas would deal with local issues and may, in future, be themed (e.g. a meeting centred on flooding issues) to enable full debate. Although only Wiltshire Councillors could vote, the Chair may ask for a show of hands before a decision is made. There would be a Forward Plan of meetings influenced by issues put forward by local communities (including Town and Parish Councils). An opportunity for public questions would be included.
- **Agendas and Minutes** - Dates of meetings were already available and agendas would be circulated several days beforehand. There would be a formal set of minutes and a more informal newsletter available to download.
- **Devolved Powers** - Area Boards would have decision-making powers and local issues could be decided by the Board. For example, this might include prioritising Highways maintenance plans (potholes, etc). Where an issue was county-wide (e.g. Affordable Housing) the Board could influence wider budgetary and strategic planning – a bottom-up approach.
- **Issues** – Local communities were able to submit issues to the Area Board via the Community Area Manager. These issues should be those that affected communities rather than individuals. These would be logged and follow a process whereby an issue may be resolved by the relevant agencies and not need be considered by the Area Board or it would be submitted to the Board. These issues would help to produce a Forward Plan of meetings ensuring that the right officers and agencies were called to attend where an issue was to be discussed. Issues can be submitted online. (*The process chart was circulated to Councillors*). Cricklade Town Council had produced three example Issue Sheets focussing on flooding, call-in procedures for planning applications and the Eastern Roundabout.
- **Grants** – The Board had a budget of £51,795. A proportion of this (up to 20 percent) would be allocated to the Community Area Partnership towards running costs and the production of the Community Area Plan. This left £41,436 for grants for local community projects. Grants of up to a maximum of £5,000 were available and match funding would be expected to be raised (except with awards up to £1,000). Voluntary contributions to projects would also be taken into account. Application forms and guidelines were available to download at www.wiltshire.gov.uk (only a small number of hard copy versions were available.). Applications would be considered at each Area Board meeting and should be received by the Community Area Manager 6 weeks prior to the meeting date. The deadline for receipt of applications for the first Area Board meeting was **Wednesday, 19th August 2009**

COUNCILLOR FORRESTER JOINED THE MEETING AT THIS POINT

Points raised and discussed by Councillors included:

- That Area Boards were still at a transitional stage and more delegation of power from the centre may happen as the Boards mature
- The importance of community engagement in local democracy
- The importance of consultation with towns and parishes prior to decisions being made on the delivery of services
- That Area Boards as a whole may be able to properly influence centrally made decisions (i.e. if 14 of 18 Area Boards offered up a united steer then Wiltshire

Council's Cabinet should take its lead from that)

- Whether there was an appeal procedure should an issue not be considered by the Area Board or if it would be referred to another committee (such as Overview and Scrutiny). *Karen Scott to follow-up with this query*
- The role of the Northern Community Area Partnership
- The value of an organisation-wide chart and contact list. *Karen Scott to follow-up with this query.*

During suspension of Standing Orders members of the public were invited to ask questions. Bob Jones, Chairman of Cricklade Business Association raised the following:

- How money allocated to the Community Area Partnership would be used
- The voting weight of Wootton Bassett compared to the rest of the Community Area (4 of the 6 elected Members were from the south of the Community Area) and how this might influence decision making
- Disappointment that the business community had not been offered seats on the Area Board. In spite of early assurances, neither the Chamber of Commerce in Wootton Bassett nor Cricklade Business Association had been invited to take part. *Karen Scott to follow-up this up liaising with the Wessex Chamber.*

Another member of the public also expressed concern that with only 1 of 6 voting members of the Area Board representing Cricklade and 3 representing Wootton Bassett, future devolved budgets may not be fairly apportioned.

RESOLVED that Cricklade Town Council needs to play a significant role in the Area Board. While the Chair was the nominated representative, all were welcome at meetings and especially encouraged to attend where a local issue was to be discussed. Also, that the Town Clerk should ensure that any publicity about the Area Board meetings and the Grant Scheme should be circulated to Cricklade's community groups and organisations.

09.28 Police Update

Due to prior commitments no Police Officer was able to attend. A report of a meeting on 15th June between Sgt. M. Alvis, Neighbourhood Policing Team and Cricklade Town Council together with an update report were circulated and both noted.

Whilst it was appreciated that this committee was the only Town Council meeting the local Neighbourhood Policing Team regularly attended in the area and that there was positive news in that some categories of crime had been reduced, the following issues remained a concern:

- That there had been no formal response about the possibility of the Thursday surgery being moved to a Saturday morning.
- The poor follow up to a number reported incidents using the 0845 number
- Whether the Police Consultative Group which, under the previous administration had been a good vehicle for influencing local police matters, was still meeting

A better understanding of how crimes were graded and the prescribed follow-up may help the Town Council to better understand how incidents are followed through and how the process might be improved.

During suspension of Standing Orders Bob Jones, Chairman of the Cricklade Business Association highlighted the weakness of tasking issues through the 0845 number and listed recent cases where incidents had not been followed up.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk will

- Again raise with the local policing team the proposal to change the Thursday surgery at the Police Station to Saturday mornings
- Find out from the local Neighbourhood Policing Team about the existence of the Police Consultative Group
- Compile a comprehensive list of recently reported incidents and submit it to Sgt. Alvis

and Inspector Cox for comment. Both will then be invited to a meeting to discuss these and follow-up procedures.

09.29 Wiltshire Council Report

The Wiltshire Councillor reported that he had completed his induction training with the new Unitary Authority and had been impressed by the highly competent officers working at Wiltshire Council. As well as a seat on the Full Council and the local Area Board, he was a member of the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee and the Area Planning Committee as well as a substitute Member on a number of other committees. He was currently working on the following issues:

- Travellers. He was part of a Working Party looking to form an interim policy until a strategic solution is in place. The target is to find 100 pitches across Wiltshire. He continues his regular liaison with Calcutt residents.
- Affordable Housing
- Easter Roundabout. A meeting has been arranged with the relevant agencies to include a site visit
- Swindon Expansion. Any proposal to build additional houses is likely to be suspended for up to 2.5 years due to public response to the proposal and funding issues
- Re-naming of the Area Board. A request will be submitted to the Area Board together with evidence that there is a case and demand for the change.

09.30 Clerk's Action Report

09.15. Chairman's Announcements – Twinning Letter – Thank you letters sent to the Mayor of Suce for the book presented to the Town Council.

09.16. CCTV – A meeting with the Planning Officer has resulted in a compromise on the camera for the Vale Hotel and an amendment to the planning application is about to be made. Problems with the cameras at Tesco and the Leisure Centre are being addressed by the contactors. Camera to be re-positioned on the Fire Station Tower and contractors are looking at ways of combating low light performance. No payments have yet been made to the contractors. A Working Party is to be arranged.

09.21. Correspondence

a) A letter from Bob Jones, Cricklade Business Association requesting improved liaison between the Business Association and the Town Council. A meeting to be arranged by Bob Jones, Councillor Atfield and Councillor Tetlow.

c) Area Board Co-ordinator informed of this Council's decision on a Town Council representative to the Area Board Meetings (Cllr. Tetlow). A request to hold one of the meetings in Cricklade was put forward and was agreed. The Area Board Meeting on 30th September 2009 will be held at Cricklade Town Hall.

09.31 Committee Minutes

The meeting minutes of the Community and Leisure Committee of 2nd June 2009 and the Planning Conservation and Transport Committee of 8th June 2009 were noted.

09.32 Town Council Accounts

The Town Council's Committee Receipts and Payments report for month 2 were noted. It was agreed that some explanation of the figures may be needed at future meetings and improved management accounting.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk should look into the payment paid to the Tourist Information Point (TIP) by Wiltshire Council and if Councillors have any other queries, these should be flagged up to the Town Clerk for explanation.

Meeting closed at 8.11pm