



## Cricklade Town Council First Town on the Thames

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### FULL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING Monday, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2009 7pm at Ockwells

Councillors present D. Tetlow, Chairman

Cllr B. Atfield

Cllr Mrs. D. Avenell

Cllr B. Beasley

Cllr Mrs. M. Boulton

Cllr R. Case

Cllr Mrs. G. Chapman

Cllr A. Clements

Cllr P. Colmer

Cllr Mrs. L. Forrester

Cllr M. Hatton

Cllr Mrs. T. Robertson

Cllr Mrs. R. Szybiak

2 members of the public and a member of the press were also present

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

#### Public Question Time

The Chairman of the Business Association requested an update of progress on the town centre car park. The Chairman responded by confirming that the Assistant Town Clerk and Groundsmen had undertaken a risk assessment of the new car park area, appropriate signage was being arranged and that public liability insurance had been confirmed. No formal announcement had yet been made encouraging use of the area as a public car park facility. Further updates would be given by the Planning, Conservation and Transport Committee.

### MINUTES

#### 09.62 Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Councillors Mrs A. Dentith and M. Dixon.

#### 09.63 Declarations of Interest

| Name           | Item  | Type of Interest | Nature of Interest  | Action        |
|----------------|---|------------------|---|---------------|
| Cllr B Atfield | 8b–<br>Correspondence<br>– Cotswold Water<br>Park Society | Personal         | 8b–<br>Correspondence –<br>Cotswold Water<br>Park Society | Did not speak |
| Cllr M. Hatton | 8b–<br>Correspondence<br>– Cotswold Water<br>Park Society | Personal         | 8b–<br>Correspondence –<br>Cotswold Water<br>Park Society | Spoke         |

#### 09.64 Chairman's Announcements

- a) The Chairman congratulated all those involved with the performance of Handel's Messiah on Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> November at St Sampson's. The event, held in support of Children in Need, featured artists of international stature conducted by Brian Kay. Cricklade was mentioned on Radio 2 when the event was heralded by well-known presenter, Terry Wogan. It was also good too to see a number of people from surrounding towns and villages enjoying the evening.

- b) The Chairman encouraged Members and Cricklade residents to attend the exhibition around *'Planning for Wiltshire's Future -2026.'* This was being held in the Committee Room on Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December between 1pm-7pm.
- c) The Cricklade Christmas lights were to be switched on on Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> December. The festivities would start at 6.30pm including a community choir singing Handel's Hallelujah Chorus.
- d) During the weekend of 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> December there would be a Christmas Tree Festival at St Sampson's Church in which the Town Council will be taking part with its own entry.
- e) As it was the last Full Town Council meeting before 25<sup>th</sup> December, the Chairman wished a Happy Christmas to all Cricklade's residents.

#### 09.65 **Presentation by Community First – Parish Planning**

Marion Raynor, Community Development Manager at Community First, outlined the thinking behind and benefits of producing a Parish Plan. (This was at the recommendation of the Planning, Conservation and Transport Committee). A copy of the presentation is at **Appendix A**.

The main points were that a Parish Plan:

- Provides a detailed strategy report and Action Plan for a parish
- Reflects the views of the *whole* community
- Covers a range of issues of concern to local people
- Influences wider strategies including development issues (though does not yet have formal status)
- Provides evidence of need (particularly for funding bids)
- Gives an opportunity for a Steering Group of parishioners (with 1-2 elected members) to lead public consultation
- Involves local agencies so that only realistic and achievable actions are followed up (i.e. not simply aspirational)
- Costs up to £3,000 to produce (though this is much lower if more modest printing options are chosen and the report is available electronically)
- To qualify for external funding, Town and Parish Councils must contribute at least 5% towards overall costs
- Funding may be available from Community First and the Area Board
- Community First is available to help arrange a preliminary public meeting, establish a Steering Group and offer ongoing advice.

Discussion included:

- Possible difficulties in recruiting volunteers
- Likely duplication of effort alongside the Community Area Plan
- Importance of liaising with other agencies about changes to infrastructure, realistic aims and delivery
- That it was vital to ensure that resources could meet need

It was **AGREED** that a debate and a decision about whether the Town Council should support the production of a Parish Plan should be scheduled for the next meeting of the Full Town Council on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2010. In the meantime, Members were encouraged to talk to local residents about the merits of this sort of community-led forward plan.

*Administrative Note - Councillor Colmer joined the meeting at this point.*

#### 09.66 **Policing Issues**

Sgt Martin Alvis gave a verbal update on current policing issues affecting the area. These included:

- The reduction in reported crimes and that most were traffic and domestic incidents
- The continued and successful deployment of plain clothes working
- That the priorities for the Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) were the Youth Centre, Bath Road and Culverhay
- That the firework display to celebrate Bonfire Night had been well-managed and without problems

- A recent burglary in Culverhay had resulted in arrests and that the specialist team based in Melksham was dealing with this
- The newly appointed PCSO for Cricklade & Purton was currently undertaking training

Members expressed their appreciation of the time given over by the NPT to Councillors who shadowed Police Officers and PCSOs on the beat. All 4 Councillors involved with this had found it a useful and enlightening experience. It was clear that the NPT was doing all it could to cover a wide geographical area on limited resources and that PCSOs could perhaps achieve even more with increased enforcement responsibilities. (Sgt Alvis agreed reminding Members that community-based policing was intended to reduce costs and that further training for PCSOs bringing them up to Police Officer level carried with it increased funding commitments).

During a Suspension of Standing Orders, the Chairman of the Business Association commended the NPT for its support during Remembrance Sunday.

#### 09.67 Minutes

The Minutes of the Full Town Council meeting held on Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2009 were signed by the Chairman and adopted as a true record.

#### 09.68 Clerks Action Report

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|-----------------|--|
| 09.40/<br>52/57 | <p><b>Area Board Update</b> – An update was given on Issue Sheets as follows:</p> <p><b>Flooding</b> – Awaiting confirmation of the name of new portfolio holder to head up the Flood Working Group (currently Cllr Greenman). Flooding likely to be an agenda item at the Area Board meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup> 2010 at Purton Village Hall</p> <p><b>Naming of Community Area</b> – Consultation has taken place across Community Area. <u>(Cricklade Town Council submitted its response following 19<sup>th</sup> October Full Town Council meeting)</u>. Outcome to be discussed at NCAP meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> November.</p> <p><b>Eastern Roundabout</b> – Area Board Coordinating Group agreed at its meeting in early September that this was an issue for the local Wiltshire Councillor to resolve. Cllr Colmer dealing direct with agencies.</p> <p><b>Split in Community Area</b> – Community Area Manager has reviewed minutes of relevant pilot Area Board meetings and subsequent paper to Implementation Executive where a split was proposed. This will be discussed by NCAP alongside issue of Changing of Community Area Name.</p> <p><b>Ongoing</b></p> |
| 09.44           | <p><b>Precept Planning</b> – It was resolved that the Town Clerk obtains a table of precept payments for Wiltshire. This had been compiled and was presented as a reference document at the Policy and Resources meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> November. (Also included in the background for other budget discussions).</p> <p><b>Closed</b></p>  |

It was **AGREED** that the Town Clerk liaise with the Community Area Manager about progress on the Issue Sheet submitted about a proposed split in the Community Area.

#### 09.69 Correspondence

Members considered the following items of correspondence

##### a) Wiltshire Council Town/Parish Precepts 2010/11.

It was **AGREED** that the Town Clerk should confirm to Wiltshire Council that Cricklade Town Council should be included in the overarching Council Tax leaflet. This meant that the Town Council's legal obligations were met to inform local residents about the setting of the precept. It was also **AGREED** that there was, therefore, no requirement for a separate printed leaflet and that instead a short article should be placed in the Chronicle and also posted on the Town Council website.

**b) The Cotswold Water Park Society Ltd**

It was **AGREED** that the Town Clerk should invite Denis Grant, Chief Executive of the Cotswold Water Park Society, to a future meeting of the Full Town Council to talk to Members which may, if required, be followed up with a further meeting with volunteers.

**09.70 Wiltshire Council Report**

Councillor Colmer confirmed the following:

- That the new Chief Executive for Wiltshire Council had been announced as Andrew Kerr (currently chief Executive at North Tyneside Council). The current incumbent, Dr Keith Robinson, was likely to leave the Authority in February 2010. Also that Mr Kerr's pay was not performance related.
- That assurances had been made that Wiltshire's new Core Strategy would involve consultation with Cricklade on smaller settlements
- That Wiltshire Council Cabinet portfolio holders would receive increased allowances
- That there would also be public consultation on Waste Management Harmonisation

Councillor Colmer also informed the meeting that the importance of resurfacing of the A419 would be included in all prospective parliamentary candidates manifestos. (*Re-surfacing of this road was currently not scheduled until 2015*)

He also expressed his concerns about the long term security of the grants for the Cricklade Leisure Centre. And the direction in which the new Area Boards were heading with the only decision-making seemingly being the allocation of grant monies.

**09.71 Area Board Update**

As there had been no meeting of the Area Board since the Full Town Council meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> October, Councillor Tetlow encouraged Cricklade residents to attend the next Area Board on 2<sup>nd</sup> December at Lyneham Primary School. And that flooding was likely to be an item on the agenda for the 27<sup>th</sup> January meeting at Purton Village Hall.

**09.72 Information Point**

Members **NOTED** a report by the Town Clerk on the future of a Service Level Agreement and grant to provide services through the Town Council's Information Point on behalf of the former North Wiltshire District Council and the now Wiltshire Council. (*This grant contributes a large part of the staffing costs of manning the Front Office*). This informed the agenda item dealing with the setting of the 2010/11 parish precept. (**See Minute 09.74**). The report recommended that Members looked at 80% of the grant being awarded for the next Financial Year and that the longer term security of this grant was in doubt.

The Operations Manager for Customer Services at Wiltshire Council was currently auditing those towns in receipt of the grant (only towns in North Wiltshire) and a review was currently underway, the result of which was expected in the next few weeks. The Town Clerk had followed up the visit with a robust justification of the services provided urging Wiltshire Council to be mindful of the cost effectiveness and value for money around the current arrangement. The outcome of the review was now awaited.

**09.73 Ockwells - Rates and Rent**

Members **NOTED** a report by the Town Clerk about Wiltshire Council's rent review following confirmation of the rateable value of the offices by the Valuation Office Agency. This informed the agenda item dealing with the setting of the 2010/11 parish precept. (**See Minute 09.74**).

The Rent Review had been scheduled for 2007 but had been delayed pending the outcome of the valuation. There will be an increase of 26% and the annual rent will rise from £5,750 to £7,250. However, the following had been negotiated:

- No retrospective rent payments
- A respite period so that payments will not start until 1 April 2010
- That this rent will be fixed until the lease expires in 2012

Under the terms of an underlease for the subletting of the Wiltshire Council Office, the Town

Council will raise rent by a corresponding 26% increase and the annual rent will rise from £750 to £950.

Members also **NOTED** that the current lease is due to expire in May 2012 and that the Town Clerk had asked to be kept informed of the process for its renewal to allow for forward planning.

It was **AGREED** that the Town Council must be proactive with regard to its renewal as its expiry could have significant consequences and it should not be assumed that any renewal would be automatic or cost effective. And that the Town Clerk should look into the history of the original lease with particular attention to payments made by Cricklade Town Council when the building was renovated and the lease drawn-up.

#### **09.74 Budget 2009/2010**

Members considered recommendations from the Policy and Resources, Community and Leisure and Planning, Conservation and Transport Committees. The Policy and Resources Committee had recommended savings totaling £11,545 and capital payments to be made from Reserves of £14,650. Members of the Policy and Resources Committee had agreed at its meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> November that an increase of 2.5% was agreed as a figure that Councillors would feel appropriate. However, in the light of additional non-discretionary charges around the Information Point and Town Council offices rent review (*Minutes 09.73 and 09.73 above*), this would force an increase of 3.1%.

Although options for further savings were considered, it was **AGREED** that the budgets has already been significantly reduced and that reserves should not be further decreased. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that a figure of £216,778 should be set as the parish precept to levy to Wiltshire Council for 2010/11. This represented an increase of 3.1% on the 2009/10 precept figure.

#### **09.75 Staff Christmas Leave**

Members considered a proposal that Town Council staff be awarded an additional holiday entitlement during the Christmas and New Year period. As Wiltshire Council was offering this special entitlement to its staff and the Town Council had already followed this precedent in past years, it was **RESOLVED** that Town Council staff could take the 31<sup>st</sup> December (a day when the office would be closed) as an additional days leave without it impacting on their holiday entitlement.

#### **09.76 Committee Minutes**

The minutes of the Planning Conservation and Transport Committee meetings of 12<sup>th</sup> October and 2<sup>nd</sup> November, the Community and Leisure meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> October and the Policy & Resources meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> September were all noted.

Councillor Hatton raised an issue around flooding in Brier Close. It was **AGREED** that this should be dealt with by the Planning, Conservation and Transport Committee and that Cllr Hatton liaise with officers to try to resolve this.

#### **09.77 Town Council Accounts**

Members **NOTED** and approved the Committee Receipts and Payments Report for Months 6 and 7. Members expressed concern about the format of these reports. It was **RESOLVED** that a recommendation be submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee that reports are put before Committee quarterly and that an amendment is made to Standing Orders to reflect this.

**Meeting closed at 8.45pm**