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CHIPPING NORTON TOWN COUNCIL

At the Council Meeting held remotely due to restrictions imposed by government because of the COVID-19 pandemic, pursuant to notice on Monday 18th May 2020 at 7.15pm on line and via video conference, the following members were present: -

Cllr. D. Davidson, Town Mayor

Cllr. M. Walker, Deputy Mayor

Cllr. R. Benfield

Cllr. N. Bradley

Cllr. G. Brown (joined the meeting at 7.23pm)

Cllr. C. Butterworth

Cllr. L. Carter (joined the meeting at 7.17pm)

Cllr. S. Coleman

Cllr. J. Graves

Cllr. D. Heyes

Cllr. M. Jarratt (joined the meeting at 7.32pm)

Cllr. G. Mazower

Cllr. R. Poole

Cllr. L. Tuckwell

Cllr. M. Tysoe

Officers: Mrs J. Sparrowhawk, Town Clerk

Miss K. Linnington, Deputy Town Clerk

Others: 1 Member of the Public

Note: There were a number of technical issues with internet connections at the commencement of the meeting resulting in some Members joining the meeting late.

7444 Mayors Welcome

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the remote formal meeting of the Council.

7445 The minutes of the meeting held on the 27th April 2020 – were approved as a correct record and will be signed by the Mayor at the next face to face meeting.

7446 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. E. Coles.

7447 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest to report at the meeting.

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7448 Oxfordshire County Council

Cllr. H. Biles had provided a brief report for the meeting and reported on the following:

* Briefing updates were being provided to Members during the Covid-19 pandemic.
* Those County Council employees who are able to work from home are doing so still.
* The changes the government have put in place will not change the working arrangements at the County Council
* Waste Recycling Centres opened today with social distancing measures in place.
* OCC have made sure all care homes have PPE.
* The 32,000 signature petition against using the Rollright Stones Rd has signatures from all over the UK, however only 82 from Chipping Norton itself.
* The monitoring done in October confirmed the amount of traffic coming through Chipping Norton. Officers were surprised at the amount of HGV's. Officers are working up proposals and we will have another meeting in June.
* The Councillors Budget Fund is open. Download the application form from the OCC website. Please speak to Cllr. H. Biles to discuss this further.
* OCC Fire Service had been helping out South Central during Covid, however they have now gone back to helping at local shouts as the demand on ambulances has not been as demanding as previously feared.
* Roadworks continue to be undertaken.

Cllr M. Tysoe advised that Church Lane had been re-tarmacked and not Church Street. Cllr. H. Biles has been informed of this error and it is hoped that the Church Street re-tarmacking can be completed soon.

7449 West Oxfordshire District Council

Cllr. G. Saul had provided a brief report for the meeting and reported on the following:

* WODC have been providing briefing updates to Members during the Covid-19 pandemic.
* WODC held their first virtual Full Council meeting and that had worked reasonably well. The Uplands Area Planning Sub-Committee was planned to take place remotely on 1st June and will be open to the public via Face Book Live.
* Discretionary Business Grants – Brief details of the new grant were provided. The scheme is to be launched in June.

Cllr. L. Carter added to Cllr. G. Saul’s report and advised Members that there are no WODC Committee Meetings planned for the near future.

Cllr. S. Coleman enquired if there was a comprehensive list of grants available that the Council could be applying for and a further list of funding opportunities to advise local charities. The Town Clerk to email Keith Butler, WODC requesting funding information. Cllr. G. Mazower requested that the information regarding the WODC Discretionary Business Grants referred to in Cllr. G. Saul’s report is made available on the Council’s website. Cllr. G. Mazower agreed to liaise with the Deputy Town Clerk regarding the Discretionary Grant information article.

7450 Planning

(a) The Council received the list of applications and comments discussed by email due to the Corona virus situation during May 2020.

(b) The Council noted the appeal ref: APP/D3125/W/19/3242055 – Cotswolds Hotel and Spa, Southcombe, Chipping Norton, OX7 5QH for application Ref: 19/00087/FUL. Proposed development of the siting of four mobile homes for temporary staff accommodation. Refused by WODC 28th May 2019. Appeal Dismissed.

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7451 Town Clerk’s Report

The correspondence report was noted. The Town Clerk advised Members that communication had been received from the agents acting on behalf of the applicants for 2 – 4 West Street 20/00724/FUL. The information would be circulated to all Members for consider and comment.

7452 Traffic Advisory Committee

The Council received the minutes of the Traffic Advisory Committee meeting held on 10th March 2020. Due to the current Covid-19 situation, Cllr. J. Graves advised Members that no further communications had been undertaken by the Committee. Cllr. G. Mazower requested that the map supplied and referred to by Mr. J. Grantham at the Traffic Advisory Committee Meeting, be distributed to all Members and attached to the minutes for information. Cllr. M. Mazower requested that the Town Clerk obtains an update from Mr. J. Wright on the HGV signage works that OCC would be undertaking on the A34.

7453 HGV’s

Cllr. M. Tysoe advised that this agenda item had been requested following the successful Motion at OCC by Cllr. H. Biles in November 2019 about investigating the use of the Rollright Stones road for HGV’s and to take them away from the middle of the town. Cllr. M. Tysoe also attended the OCC meeting and spoke on behalf of the Council. This was something that the Council wanted to investigate and is the best route that has been found over the last 25-30 years. A petition of 32,000 signatures was recently put to OCC with 82 signatures being from OX7. If this is a viable route for the future, this needed to be reiterated to OCC, that as a Town Council this is something that needs to be looked into. Cllr. M. Tysoe also referred to an article in Chippy News. Cllr. G. Mazower spoke on Cllr. M. Tysoe’s talk at OCC with an implied agreed position of the Council that predates Cllr. G. Mazower election. Cllr. G. Mazower could not recall any conversation within the Council, that Members thoroughly discussed the Great Rollright option and that this would be a valuable thing to do. Cllr. L. Tuckwell requested clarification if the preferred route was through the Rollright Stones. Cllr. D. Davidson confirmed that this was the preferred route. Cllr. L. Tuckwell expressed personal concerns about this route. The recommendation to widen this road is not the best idea and would add to increased traffic. The route should circumnavigate the stones if a new road is required and include a visitor centre. Cllr. L. Tuckwell had provided these comments to Cllr. H. Biles and the comments would be noted. Cllr. N. Bradley advised Members that this had been talked about by the Council for 20-30 years and agreed that OCC needs to look at the possibilities that Cllr. L. Tuckwell had mentioned. Cllr. N. Bradley discussed the possible other alternatives routes which needed to be investigated. The Council could then make a decision on the information provided. Cllr. G. Mazower discussed the article in Chippy News and advised that she needed to be sensitive to the language used and as a Town Councillor did not want to get into a them and use situation with the Rollright Stones and advised that this is not the way a community works. If this route is considered it should be done with the Rollright Stones and is a joint project. Cllr. G. Mazower requested information on the papers relating to this matter to enable a more informed discussion. Cllr. M. Tysoe spoke further on the Motion at OCC and the removal of HGV’s from the town centre. Cllr. L. Tuckwell felt that all the necessary information was required for discussion. The signage on the A34 that was identified in the Traffic Advisory Committee minutes might have a desired effect on HGV traffic and would need to be monitored.

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Cllr. L. Carter also requested information relating to this matter to understand the issues to enable an informed decision. Cllr. J. Graves advised that the route also crosses into Warwickshire and HGV issues had been flagged at the Town Appraisal 18 years ago. Cllr. D. Heyes commented that we are being advised to support an investigation which should identify costs, respects the importance of the Rollright Stones and the health of the people of the town who are suffering with unsafe levels of pollution. Cllr. D. Heyes requested a report that balances all of the different factors and provides a conclusion to enable everyone to be better informed to enable debate. Cllr. R. Benfield felt that this could be a good opportunity for the Rollright Stones to provide a better car park and a visitor centre and improve health within the town. Cllr. M. Walker advised that when Cllr. I. Hudspeth attended the Council meeting in September, a key issue was the pollution within the town. Measures around signage have been requested and until these have been implemented and the impact of these measures reported, it would be premature to take a position on a route. Cllr. G. Mazower requested a meeting with OCC Officers to better understand the matter. Cllr. M. Jarratt agreed that a report was needed and provided some further history to the issue. Cllr. D. Davidson advised that the matter should be discussed with OCC via Traffic Advisory Committee (to include all Members) to explain all of the issues. Any route which is eventually chosen must be carefully signed to ensure the route is not used as a by-pass and to also talk to the Rollright Stones Trustees and the RHA. The final decision will not be the Town Councils. The Members discussion highlighted that further information is required from OCC and that any documents on the matter should be distributed to ensure that all Members are fully briefed. Cllr. J. Graves was requested to collate any previous documents for distribution.

7454 Covid-19 Support Report

St. Mary’s Church, Community Outreach, had provided Members with a further update on how money was being spent and the response to the Covid-19 crisis that various groups are undertaking within the community. The update also thanked the Council for the recent additional financial support.

Cllr. R. Poole advised Members that Chippy Larder had distributed 3,126 boxes to households. An update and analysis had been provided to Members prior to the meeting. A questionnaire is currently being prepared for distribution to both St. Mary’s Meals and Chippy Larder recipients to establish the future need of the service. This will also enable the groups to update OCC and WODC on the sustainability of the projects. Cllr. M. Tysoe remarked that only 60% of the Chippy Larder packages were delivered to Chipping Norton residents. The extent of the area of distribution was far. Cllr. R. Poole advised the Council’s grant did not fully cover the extent of the costs for supplying the Chipping Norton residents registered with Chippy Larder. Other Parish’s and Councils are paying grants through the SOFEA’s Just Giving page.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.