



**Chipping Norton Town Council**  
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Office Hours: Mon – Fri 9am – 1pm

Minutes of a meeting of the **Community Committee** held online by ZOOM video conferencing system on **Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 7.15pm**

The following members were present:

Cllr Coleman  
Cllr Graves  
Cllr Mazower  
Cllr Tuckwell (from Agenda Item 4)

Also in attendance:

Cllr Butterworth  
Luci Ashbourne, Town Clerk  
Louise Steele Locum Clerk  
Two members of the public

The meeting was preceded by a one minute silence in commemoration of the life of HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

**1. Minutes**

An amendment to Minute 9 (10) was agreed - substituting the words "The Mayor reported on progress on the installation of the lights at Middle Row." for the words "The Mayor reported that everything was now in place to move forward with the installation of lights in Middle Row. The committee noted that indemnity forms were being collected from the premises involved in the project."

**RESOLVED:** that, subject to the amendment agreed above the minutes of the last meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Poole.

**3. Declaration of interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

**4. Public Participation**

Graham Beacham updated the meeting on plans for Sports Awards in 2021. He, and Cllrs Poole and Coleman had met and, in the light of Covid-19 restrictions and implications, had agreed not to hold the Sports Awards in 2021 but there should be awards in 2022. Subject to GDPR requirements it was indicated that the Town Council should help assemble an inclusive contacts list to help promote the Sports Award and perhaps convene a Sports Forum to help plan a larger event.

The Mayor indicated that the new Town Council website would provide an opportunity to gather the relevant information. The Town Clerk was asked to ensure the issue of a Sports Forum was revisited in the autumn.

**5. Annual Town Meeting**

The Committee noted that 24,25 & 26 May were being held as possible dates for the Annual Town

Meeting to be held face to face; though the social distancing restrictions in the Town Hall would make that difficult by limiting numbers. Clarity about whether remote meetings of the Council could continue after the Covid-19 emergency regulations end on 7 May was expected after judgement in a case to be heard in the High Court on 21 April (judgement is expected within seven days of that date). The Town Clerk clarified that the meeting should be held before 1 June but that there were no effective sanctions if the Council failed to hold the Annual Town meeting; also that there could be a Town Meeting called at any time and her recommendation was to delay until the outcome of the High Court case was known.

**RESOLVED:** that the decision as to a date for the Annual Town Meeting (or a Town Meeting) should be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor and the Chair of the Community Committee. The Town Clerk to communicate the date with all interested parties once agreed.

## **6. Letter from WODC - Community Recycling Sites in Chipping Norton**

The committee considered a letter received from West Oxfordshire District Council about the community recycling sites in Chipping Norton – there has been a significant amount of flytipping at both sites which has been slightly, distressing for residents and costly to clear and the District Council wishes to focus on monitoring activity at the New Street site and release resources to do that by closing the Albion Street site. WODC's kerbside collection will pick up most (if not all) of the items that can be taken legitimately to the bring sites

It was agreed that before the letter is drafted the Chair should consult with all other Town Councillors and the District Councillors. The committee agreed that the proposal represented a further nibbling away of the services that the town receives and perhaps represented a false economy in that flytipping would increase. The sites are not working properly because they are overused not underused. It was felt that a whole strategy for recycling in the town should be developed and that effective communication about what residents can do from their kerbside. It was noted that there was no public consultation as part of the proposal. The committee agreed to object.

The Locum Clerk was asked for her experience elsewhere and she reported she was aware in other counties that district councils were also retreating from bring sites in favour of kerbside collection and that bring sites were not the statutory responsibility of district councils.

**RESOLVED:** to object to the closure of the Albion Street community recycling site and for the Committee Chair to draft a letter of objection to be sent to WODC.

## **7. Cemetery**

### **Charges**

The Committee considered a revised schedule of fees and charges (previously circulated). The Locum Clerk clarified that the main audience for the schedule of fees was funeral directors and memorial masons and that, were a grieving family to approach the Town Council directly, they would have the fees explained very carefully. It was agreed that the schedule should have more commentary added to it before it is added to the Town Council's new website.

**RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL** – that the schedule of fees and charges be agreed effective 1 May 2021.

### **Clean-up day and ongoing maintenance of the Cemetery**

The Committee heard that a highly successful cemetery clean-up day had taken place on 10 April with more than 30 volunteers in attendance.

Issues in regard to the ongoing maintenance of the cemetery including work on the appearance of the entrance area of the cemetery (i.e. gates, benches, signage and noticeboards). The Town Clerk will look at the work required, gather the information needed (available budget and competitive quotes) and bring costed proposals back to the committee for decision.

The Committee considered a letter received expressing concern about maintenance of the

cemetery particularly the colonnade. It was agreed that the Town Clerk should draft a sensitive reply to the letter and together with members she would take steps to review what improvements were possible to the maintenance contract.

#### 8. Access to Pool Meadow via the Dog Exercise Area

The Chair reported a member of the public had expressed concern that people were accessing Pool Meadow by climbing over the fence rather than using the gate a little further along.

It was agreed that some research should be done into the scale of the problem and a site visit undertaken in order to look at possible solutions. The Town Clerk to identify the potential cost of installing a stile.

#### 9. Committee Work Programme

The Committee noted the work plan and considered oral updates on the following matters:

- **Play areas** (progress in addressing the work identified by the ROSPA) - the Committee noted photographs showing the repairs and improvements made recently to the New St paly area and asked that thanks be passed to the Grounds Maintenance operative for his excellent work in co-ordinating the contractors to undertake the work. The most urgent items have been addressed and that the areas of concern still left to undertake are further repairs to matting around items of play equipment. Cllr Mazower asked if the reinstatement of football nets in the goal posts could be considered.
- **The Town Hall** – it was agreed that for the term commencing April 2021 the Cotswold Theate School would be charged for hire at charity rates.
- **Litter and Dog Bins** – there has been a lot of correspondence on social media and elsewhere about litter and dog bins filling up. As more people are out and about bins are filling up quickly after being emptied. It was agreed that hanging a “poo” bag in a tree was an incomprehensible alternative to using a bin. The Chair has written an article on the subject for the Chipping Norton News. The Town Clerk to open a discussion with WODC/Ubico about the replacement/maintenance of existing bins in poor state.
- **Bus Shelters** - Walterbush Road shelter consultation 300 copies of the consultation have been sent out and 50 or so have been received back with the consultation closing this Friday (16 April). It was agreed that this was a good rate of response. There would be a further update once the responses had been evaluated.
- **Pool Meadow** - the Committee was reminded that a budget has been set aside to research the development of plans to enhance Pool Meadow. The work needs to commence with the community fully involved. Cllr Mazower to bring forward a discussion paper in due course.
- **Community Noticeboards** - Members considered replacement of the Community noticeboard outside The Fox and considered a quote in addition to those that had been considered at the last meeting. Discussion focused on the aesthetics and functionality of the replacement board and whether it need to be branded as “Chipping Norton Town Council”.  
There was discussion about the state a further notice board in the Market Place adjacent to the pelican crossing and agreed that it should be removed.

**RESOLVED:** that authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, to resolve the issues of aesthetics and practicality and order the noticeboard for the site adjacent to The Fox at a price up to £2,800 (net) plus up to £500 for installing it

At this point the meeting it was noted that two hours had elapsed and the meeting agreed to suspend Standing Orders in order to allow the meeting to continue for a further 30 minutes.

#### 10. Christmas Lights

Cllr Mazower gave an update on the lights agreed for Middle Row and indicated that she had received a quote for £300 plus materials to install the lights. It was noted that at £300 it is with the Town Clerk’s delegated authority to accept the quote and instruct the works to proceed.

The meeting proceeded to consider the provision of Christmas Lights for 2021, noting that the existing lights in the trees and on the wall of the Town Hall are no longer sustainable and that different arrangements need to be made for Christmas 2021. It was accepted that a contractor should be asked to design, supply and install new Christmas Lights and the competitive quotes would need to be taken. It was agreed that the Town Clerk should come back to the committee with a substantive proposal having identified likely costs and available budget.

**11. Date of next Meeting – 12<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.30 pm

Signed as a correct record:

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Chair

Date: