

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held at the Oakwood Centre on  
Tuesday 1 October 2019 at 8 pm**

---

**Present:** Councillors K. Gilder (Chairman); N. Al-Sanjari; J. Anderson; K. Baker; D. Bragg; S. Brindley; A. Chadwick; J. Cheng; M. Doyle; M. Forrer; M. Green; A. Heap; C. Jewell; T. McCann; D. Mills; M. Nagra; S. Rahmouni; B. Rowland; J. Sartorel; R. Skegg; B. Soane; P. Wicks

**Officers present:** D. Mander, Town Clerk; K. Murray, Deputy Town Clerk; L. Matthews, Committee Officer

**Also present:** Helen Masey, HMR  
Cllr Gregor Murray, Wokingham Borough Council  
1 member of the public

*Before the start of the meeting:*

- Helen Masey, HMR, spoke about the Woodley Residents' Survey and answered questions from Councillors, as reported in **Appendix A**.
- Borough Councillor Gregor Murray, Wokingham Borough Council Executive Member for Climate Emergency, gave a presentation on the Borough Council's plans to set up a partnership and engage with town and parish councils, as reported in **Appendix B**.
- A maximum of 30 minutes was set aside for members of the public to pose questions to the Council in the Town Forum. As there were no members of the public wishing to address the Council the Town Forum did not take place.

*Before opening the meeting, the Town Mayor asked for a minute's silence in memory of PC Andrew Harper.*

36. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors J. MacNaught, D. Stares and A. Swaddle.

37. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

38. **MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 25 JUNE 2019**

The Town Mayor presented the minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 June 2019.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 June 2019 and that they be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

39. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

39.1 **Minutes of the Planning and Community Committee: 16 July 2019**

Councillor Wicks presented the minutes of the Planning and Community Committee meeting held on 16 July 2019.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Planning and Community Committee meeting held on 16 July 2019.

39.2 **Minutes of the Planning and Community Committee: 13 August 2019**

Councillor Cheng presented the minutes of the Planning and Community Committee meeting held on 13 August 2019.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Planning and Community Committee meeting held on 13 August 2019

39.3 **Minutes of the Leisure Services Committee: 3 September 2019**

Councillor Gilder presented the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting held on 3 September 2019.

In response to a question, the Deputy Town Clerk said that he would check the advice provided on the Council's website by the Allotment Tenants Association regarding the use of glyphosate.

*[Town Clerk's note: The reference to glyphosate on the Council's website related to a cached document from some time ago which was no longer displayed on the website.]*

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting held on 3 September 2019.

39.4 **Minutes of the Planning and Community Committee: 10 September 2019**

Councillor Cheng presented the minutes of the Planning and Community Committee meeting held on 10 September 2019.

In response to a question, it was agreed that the Committee Officer would circulate consultation documents to the committee as soon as they were received instead of circulating them with the agenda. It was also agreed that Councillors Baker and Jewell would meet to discuss an acceptable method for considering and responding to future consultations.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Planning and Community Committee meeting held on 10 September 2019

39.5 **Minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee: 17 September 2019**

Councillor Brindley presented the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting held on 17 September 2019.

**Minute No. 19: Just Around the Corner Charity**

In response to a question about how to alert the police to occurrences of drug dealing, Councillor Baker informed Members that this should be reported to the police by phoning 101 or by asking a Borough Councillor to report it to the police.

**Minute No. 25: Malone Park**

In response to a question, the Town Clerk informed Members that there was nothing further to report at present.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting held on 17 September 2019.

40. **AUDIT 2018/19**

The Town Clerk presented the audited Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2018/19.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To receive the external auditor's opinion on the audit of the 2018/19 Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- ◆ To adopt the audited Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2018/19.
- ◆ To note that the Notice of Conclusion of Audit had been displayed on public noticeboards at the Oakwood Centre and on the Council's website from 17 September 2019.

41. **REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To grant Councillor Stares' request for leave of absence for six months due to poor health.

Councillor Jewell asked for the Liberal Democrat Group's good wishes to be passed on to Councillor Stares.

42. **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Members noted that Councillor Stares had resigned from the Leisure Services Committee.

Having been duly nominated it was

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That Councillor Baker be appointed to the vacant place on the Leisure Services Committee.

43. **LEADER'S STATEMENT**

The Leader of the Council made the following statement:

"This is the first Full Council Meeting since the summer break, so welcome back. I hope you all had holidays which were relaxing and your batteries are now fully recharged.

As we move forward can I remind all councillors that as a Town Council we have limited resources and all activities need to be quite local and focussed to the town. We are not like the Borough Council who have a large staff who can 'service' numerous working parties and activities. So, can I ask all of you to be very mindful of this when you ask for additional working parties to be created. That is not to say that the issues prompting the request are not important, however in order to fulfil such a request would mean officers being diverted from existing work to take this on.

Today we have had a couple of external speakers, which I hope councillors have appreciated. One of which is a great precursor for a later motion on climate change. Please let the Town Clerk know if there are other individuals or organisations you would like to attend and present to the council.

I have consistently said the Conservative Group wants to work with the Opposition Group to try and leave the political bearpit to the Borough Council. I am very pleased and thankful that the two motions coming up have been the subject of cross-party agreement. As you will see I will be the seconder on both of these important motions.

Interestingly, they are almost exact replicas of motions which were presented at the Borough Council at a recent Full Council. At that meeting they were passed unanimously so I hope the same will occur here.

I am extremely proud that Woodley Town Council is the first of the three Town Councils to make statements on these two important topics. To the best of my knowledge neither Earley nor Wokingham Town Councils have taken such steps."

44. **BULMERSHE SULV JOINT WORKING PARTY**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. FC 5/19 of the Bulmershe SULV Joint Working Party meeting held on 3 July 2019.
- ◆ To approve expenditure of £300, plus expenses, from the Corporate Management budget to provide advice on the best mechanism for protecting the area presently designated as a Site of Urban Landscape Value within the Wokingham Borough Local Plan.

45. **NOTICE OF MOTION (MOTION NO. 65)**

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Jewell and seconded by Councillor Baker:

"This Council notes that:

- a) The impacts of climate breakdown are already causing serious damage around the world.
- b) Limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, October 2018) may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society and the private sector.

This Council therefore:

- a) Commits to a declaration of a 'Climate Emergency' with the aim of becoming a carbon neutral organization by 2030.
- b) Welcomes the declaration by Wokingham Borough Council of a 'Climate Emergency' and will actively participate in the creation of the Borough-wide climate change strategy to ensure Woodley Town Council is fully engaged in its creation for the benefit of its residents.
- c) Will explore, with all parts of the community, the development of a local action plan in support of, and to compliment, the Borough Council's climate change strategy plan for those parts relevant to Woodley Town."

Councillors Jewell, Baker, McCann, Wicks, Soane, Chadwick and Anderson spoke in favour of the motion.

Following a vote, it was

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That the motion be carried.

46. **NOTICE OF MOTION (MOTION NO. 66)**

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Doyle and seconded by Councillor Baker:

"Local Authorities have a statutory requirement to demonstrate their compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Equalities Act 2010. This Act requires Local Authorities to consider how their work affects people of different ages, disability, sex, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs, marital status, pregnancy and maternity and gender identity. Everyone that lives in, works and visits Woodley needs to have confidence that this is being done.

This Council will evidence its compliance with the PSED through undertaking Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA's) when required, and ensure they are included in public reports and are easily accessible on the Council's website. In addition, all newly elected Members will have PSED and EqIA training as part of their induction."

Councillors Doyle, Baker, Al-Sanjari and McCann spoke in favour of the motion.

Following a vote, it was

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That the motion be carried.

47. It was proposed by the Chairman and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That as the business was unlikely to be completed by 10pm, the meeting continue until 10:30pm in order to complete the business set out in the agenda.

48. **OUTSIDE BODIES**

a) Members noted the following written reports, which had been included with the agenda:

- Campaign for Place report by Councillor Wicks
- Readibus report by Councillor MacNaught
- Poor's Land Charity report by Councillor Cheng
- Robert Palmer Almshouses report by Councillor Rahmouni

A report on Citizens Advice Wokingham by Councillor Bragg was tabled at the meeting, as the AGM and visit by Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal, Princess Anne, had occurred after the agenda was issued.

Councillor Wicks drew attention to the section in his report on the Campaign for Place that noted that Twyford had joined the Surfers Against Sewage initiative (SAS) and were targeting single use plastics. He suggested that this might be something that Woodley Town Council should get involved with and agreed to give information about the initiative to the Town Clerk.

Councillor Rowland stated that she did not think two of the reports submitted were of a high enough standard. In response, it was explained that very

often meetings of the bodies in question related to personal information that could not be reported.

Some Members requested information about the outside bodies that the Council was involved with. Councillor Baker replied that information about the outside bodies would be added to the website.

- b) Members noted that a copy of the Poor's Land Charity audited accounts and Annual Report for the year ending 31 December 2018 had been received.

49. **TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**

- a) The Town Mayor began her report on the 12 engagements she had attended since the last meeting, which included being presented to Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal, Princess Anne, at a reception to celebrate the work of Citizens Advice Wokingham, but was interrupted by Councillor Rowland who said this information had been provided in the agenda and did not have to be given verbally, due to the lateness of the hour.
- b) The Deputy Town Mayor reported on the 3 engagements he had attended since the last meeting.

Councillor Baker thanked the Communications Manager for organising the very successful community picnic to celebrate the centenary of the Memorial Ground and said he hoped that similar events would be held in the future.

50. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no suggestions for future agenda items.

Meeting closed at 10:15 pm

---

**Presentation by Helen Masey**

The Town Mayor welcomed Helen Masey to the meeting to talk to Members about the Residents Survey and answer questions.

Helen Masey explained that the Woodley Residents Survey had been carried out every 1 or 2 years for the past 20 years. It usually consisted of a doorstep survey carried out in a random selection of roads, with no road being selected more than once in 5 years, and using a sample size that would give a statistically valid response. Sometimes the survey had been conducted online or on paper forms to be returned by post. The survey was completed by whoever answered the door and was willing to take the survey and questions such as the gender, ethnicity and marital status of respondents were not asked, in order to limit the length of time required to complete the survey. The surveyors were not Woodley residents and students were often used to carry out this work. The survey was carried out over a period of up to 3 weeks, houses were visited from Monday to Saturday, during the day-time and early evening, and surveyors would return to the selected houses up to 3 times if there was no answer.

In response to the observation that very few young people had completed the last survey, Helen Masey admitted that this was an ongoing problem as few young people were likely to answer the door and then complete the survey on the doorstep. She informed Members that on occasions in the past there had been specific questions for young people and respondents had been asked if children were available to answer these questions. Helen Masey suggested that she could investigate ways of reaching more young people. When asked whether it would be possible to weight the responses of young people to take account of the small sample size, Helen Masey agreed to look at this. Members pointed out the need for specific questions to be tailored towards young people, to determine the type of youth services that were required and ensure that they were targeted correctly.

In reply to a question about how the make-up of the population of Woodley could be determined if questions such as gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation etc were not asked in the survey, Helen Masey said that this information was usually found in the data obtained from the national census, and she agreed to see what information was available.

When asked who decided the core survey questions, the Town Clerk replied that a set of core questions were asked each time so that a picture of changes over time could be built up. The survey also usually addressed aspects of the Council's services.

A suggestion was made that questions about the services that were accessed by households would help to determine where there were areas of deprivation and child poverty. It was noted that in the past the Borough Council had collected this information and it was suggested that the Borough Council be contacted to see if they still performed this function.

The Mayor thanked Helen Masey for attending the meeting and answering Members' questions.

**Presentation by Councillor Gregor Murray, Wokingham Borough Council  
Executive Member for Climate Emergency**

The Town Mayor welcomed Councillor Gregor Murray to the meeting.

Cllr Murray informed Members that Wokingham Borough Council had declared a climate emergency in July 2019 and had stated that they were no longer prepared to be net polluters and were aiming for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2030. This would require bold actions.

Cllr Murray outlined the actions proposed, and already in progress, by Wokingham Borough Council under the following headings:

1. Structure and Process
2. Carbon Footprint
3. Actions
4. Communications

Cllr Murray reported a wide range of aims and ideas that had been identified by the Borough Council and stressed that they wanted to engage with town and parish councils and residents to gather, and investigate, ideas from all quarters. Woodley Town Council, along with the two other town councils in the borough, would be represented on a cross party working group. A lengthy discussion followed on many of the initiatives that had already been suggested, and Members made suggestions of their own. The Borough Council planned to publish its Action Plan in January 2020.

The Town Mayor eventually drew the discussion to a close and thanked Gregor Murray for taking the time to attend the meeting and inform Members of the Borough Council's proposals.