



WISBECH TOWN COUNCIL

25 July 2016 – 7.30 pm

MINUTES OF MEETING

Present: Councillor Tibbs, Chairman (and Town Mayor); Councillors Balsevics, Bucknor, Mrs Bucknor, Hill, Hodgson, Miss Hoy, Human, Lay, Mrs MacRae, Oliver, Miss Oliver and Tierney (Deputy Mayor).

Apologies: Councillors Brunton, Mrs Cox, Mrs Lay and Schooling.

Public participation: None requested.

35/16 Support for young people in Wisbech

Members received a presentation from Tricia Magee, Rural Projects Mental Health and Counselling Worker at Centre 33, on a new (“Someone to talk to”) counselling service (which is available to young people (between the ages of 13 and 25 years) in Wisbech. The service is operated from the Queen Mary Centre, with drop-in sessions between 3.30 pm and 6.30 pm on Thursdays and Fridays. The counselling sessions are free-of-charge and undertaken on a confidential basis. Circle 33 had been operating in Wisbech for approximately one year.

Mrs Magee ran a short quiz, asking five questions, to make members think about issues related to mental health. She explained that Centre 33, which is based in Cambridge, works to ensure that all young people have easy access, in a safe environment, to the support that they need to be able to fulfil their potential.

Mrs Magee informed the council of some of the problems faced by the young people who self-refer themselves to this counselling service; these include: anxiety, depression, family relationships anger management, general relationship issues. The counselling service is delivered by a mixture of paid Project Workers and appropriately-trained volunteers; there are currently four volunteers in Wisbech and Centre 33 is working on increasing that number, over the forthcoming months, to eight.

The council was also informed by Mrs Magee that Centre 33 has, since December 2015, operated a Young Carers project; she explained the definition of a Young Carer and commented that, according to the 2011 Census data, there are more than 4,200 such youngsters in Cambridgeshire. Centre 33 is developing a Sexual Health Clinic, to supplement its current support services to young people.

Mrs Magee explained that the reason for making a presentation to Wisbech Town Council is to help “spread the word” that these services are available in the town.

Mrs Magee responded to members’ questions.

In response to a question from Councillor Hodgson, Mrs Magee explained the manner in which volunteers are recruited and the training with which they are provided to be able to deliver counselling services to young people.

Councillor Mrs Bucknor suggested to Mrs Magee that a further method by which Centre 33 could “spread the word” with regard to its counselling services for young people would be for her to deliver a presentation to the next meeting of the Waterlees Community Forum (scheduled for 19 October 2016) and to attend at least one of the “event” days which are provided at Community House. In response to a question from Councillor Mrs Bucknor, Mrs Magee undertook to provide to details of the number of young carers in Wisbech.



Councillor Lay expressed the opinion that the situation described by Mrs Magee did not exist 65 years ago; or was it, he questioned, simply that the problems experienced by young people now had been “hidden” many years ago. In response, Mrs Magee expressed the opinion that young people had always suffered the types of problems that they do currently but probably not to the same extent.

Members decided that the information presented be noted and that the council would assist in “spreading the word” about the services being delivered in Wisbech by Centre 33.

36/16 Cambridgeshire Constabulary

Further to minute 21/16, the Clerk informed members that he had forwarded to Inspector Will Davis the comments made, at that minute, by members in relation to policing within Wisbech and that he had invited the new Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire to give a presentation to a future meeting of Wisbech Town Council.

The Clerk read to members the response that he had received from Inspector Davis.

In response to the comment of Councillor Lay at minute 21/16 that there are too few Police officers in Wisbech to be able to deal with all of the issues, Inspector Davis comments that the Constabulary is able to prioritise and address most issues that occur in Fenland. There are five response teams to cover the District and they respond appropriately to incidents based on an assessment of threat, risk and harm. Although the officers are incredibly busy, the opinion of the Inspector is that they do a very good job in keeping the most vulnerable safe and continue to target priority offenders. When the need dictates, the local policing team is able to call upon force-wide resources to assist. Although it is not possible to do everything all of the time, the Inspector is confident that the local policing team is delivering against priority incidents.

The Inspector states his awareness of a feeling within the community that the local policing team is not addressing parking in the town. However, this had been identified as a key community concern and the local team is issuing an average of 200 tickets per month in Wisbech.

In response to the question of Councillor Tierney at minute 21/16 as to what would happen in terms of Police officer visibility when Operation Padshaw finishes, the Inspector states that the resources patrolling Wisbech currently under Operation Padshaw would no longer be in place. The Constabulary would continue to work with partners and be sensitive to the needs of the wider community but the patrols were not introduced as a long-term measure. A limited amount of funding was secured and this had been utilised to allow the patrols to take place. If the need arises, the Constabulary would look to reinstate the patrols as needed and justified.

With regard to the invitation to the new Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Cambridgeshire to give a presentation to a future meeting of Wisbech Town Council, the Clerk reported that the PCC had stated that he would attend 24 October 2016 meeting of Wisbech Town Council.

Although no officer of Cambridgeshire Constabulary attended the meeting, Sergeant Alan Boughen had provided to the Clerk, via e-mail, a report on recent incidents of crime and disorder in Wisbech. The Clerk undertook to forward to members a copy of that e-mail/report.

In his report, Sergeant Boughen makes the point that the Constabulary’s patrols to combat illegal/inconsiderate parking continue. He comments that on some occasions the impression is that things had improved but then on another day it is clear that the message is not getting across. However, community feedback continues to be very positive and, through posts on social media by members of the public, the Constabulary is being made aware of other locations where it is felt there are issues. When the opportunity presents itself, the local policing team will continue to commit time and effort to dealing with the parking situation.



Sergeant Boughen makes the point, in his report, that the Constabulary would be focussing upon youth-related anti-social behaviour during the summer holiday period. He mentions that there would be some staffing structure changes within the Fenland policing team, which are aimed at delivering improvements in tackling crime and response performance.

In addition, Sergeant Boughen's report mentions that the town community forums had been arranged for dates (as reported to members by the Clerk) during August and that from these events the 'Key Community Concern' would be determined for the following six months; the Town Council would be notified of the 'Key Community Concern' during the week following the last event (which takes place on 22 August). Sergeant Boughen expresses the hope that local councillors would attend at least one of the any events, to speak with the PCSOs and also be available to address concerns of the community.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted.

37/16 Fenland District Council

The Clerk reported that he had been sent, by e-mail, information in respect of CCTV performance, Section 106 Planning Obligations details and the council's Environment newsletter and that he had forwarded, last week, the e-mail and attachments to all members of the council.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

38/16 Cambridgeshire County Council

Councillor Mrs Cox had requested the Clerk to bring to Wisbech Town Council's attention the parking issues along Little Church Street, which had, because of inconsiderate parking, resulted in at least one premises being damaged. Councillor Mrs Cox comments that the situation had, in the past, been no parking except for loading/unloading; she would like that situation to be re-introduced.

As a result of investigations by the Clerk with officers of the Local Highway Authority and the Constabulary, the situation seems to be that Little Church Street was not included in the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) which was put in place in the town centre early in 2015. At the time, the Local Highway Authority had decided that the parking was not an issue along Little Church Street, and, therefore, did not include this particular road within the CPZ. The view was that it 'worked' as it was and a CPZ would mean very little parking/loading due to the restrictions about bay sizes and positions.

In the absence of parking restrictions along Little Church Street, the Constabulary has no power to issue parking tickets for illegal parking but is able to issue tickets if an unnecessary obstruction is being caused by a vehicle. The Constabulary states that PCSOs would continue to issue tickets throughout the town for illegally/inconsiderately parked vehicles, provided that the necessary road markings and signage are clear.

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) has stated that there is no reason why the LHA could not look to include Little Church Street within the CPZ but this would need funding. The LHA does not have discretionary funding available for changes/improvement schemes on the highway, so this would need to be a Local Highway Improvement or bid through the Market Town funding mechanism. The only way to guarantee the funding would be for a third party to fund the works.

Councillor Tierney mentioned that a number of concerns had been raised with him by members of the public regarding the parking situation along Little Church Street and he expressed the opinion that there would be little or no objection from the public to any proposal by the Local Highway



Authority (LHI) to introduce of parking restrictions along Little Church Street. He suggested that the County Councillors for Wisbech should pursue this matter with officers of the LHA.

In response to Councillor Tierney's comments, Councillor Miss Hoy stated that she would be happy to discuss this matter with the relevant officer of the LHA but suggests that Wisbech Town Council or the community considers submitting a Local Highway Improvements bid.

Councillor Oliver expressed the opinion that there is no need for the introduction of parking restrictions (denoted by double yellow lines) along Little Church Street, as any vehicle parked on that road would be causing an obstruction and, consequently, a parking ticket could be issued by the Constabulary.

Councillor Lay commented that there would be no point in introducing parking restrictions anywhere, given the insufficient number of Police officers in Wisbech to address parking offences.

In response to the comments of Councillor Lay, Councillor Tierney commented that it is not realistic to expect the Constabulary to be able to have a presence everywhere at all times; parking enforcement is receiving the Constabulary's attention but it is not able to be a priority.

Councillor Human echoed Councillor Tierney's comments and mentioned that he had witnessed local officers undertaking parking enforcement activities earlier today. He expressed the view that Wisbech Town Councillors should be supportive of the efforts being made by the Constabulary.

Members decided that the situation be noted and that the introduction of parking restrictions along Little Church Street be "flagged up" as a potential Local Highway Improvements bid for 2017/18.

39/16 Minutes of 27 June 2016

Members decided, on a proposal by Councillor Oliver, seconded by Councillor Hodgson, that the minutes of the meeting of Wisbech Town Council held on 27 June 2016 be confirmed and signed.

40/16 Minutes of committees

Members received, for information, the minutes of committee meetings held since the last meeting of the Town Council, as follows:

- (1) Planning and Community Infrastructure Committee of 27 June 2016
- (2) Assets Management Committee of 4 July 2016
- (3) Policy and Resources Committee of 11 July 2016
- (4) Planning and Community Infrastructure Committee of 11 July 2016.

Members decided

- (1) that the contents of the minutes reported, including the decisions made by those committees, be noted;
- (2) unanimously, on a proposal by Councillor Mrs Bucknor, seconded by Councillor Mrs MacRae, to approve the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee (at minute R5/16) that the Wisbech Town Council Equality Policy be adopted.

41/16 Mayor's Report

The Mayor informed members of the civic events that he had attended and activities in which he had participated since the last meeting of Wisbech Town Council.



The Mayor informed members that it had attended a number of events since the last meeting of the council, including:

- Wisbech Rose Fair; during the period of this event he had judged the Parade and the shop window displays and had visited all of the stalls and the displays within the churches; he expressed the opinion that the whole event had been wonderful and had shown the town in a “positive light”
- Independence Day celebration at RAF Alconbury
- Installation of the Mayor of Peterborough
- Tom Hickathrift event at Wisbech Grammar School
- Speech Day at Wisbech Grammar School
- Wisbech Reads Festival, at which, among other Mayoral duties, he had launched the Reading Tree (installed at Wisbech Market Place)
- Open Day and Fete at Rose Lodge
- The Chairman of Fenland District Council’s Reception.

Members decided that the information reported by the Mayor be noted.

42/16 Leader of the Council’s report

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Oliver, informed members that he had only one matter which he wished to draw to the attention of the council; that being the Wisbech 2020 Vision Summit which took place on 22 July 2016.

The Leader of the Council informed members that the summit had discussed the achievements during the last four years and that attendees had received a presentation on the Wisbech Garden Town proposal; he enquired as to whether members felt it would be beneficial for that presentation to be delivered to a future meeting of Wisbech Town Council.

Councillor Mrs Bucknor expressed the opinion that the event had been well worth attending and that it is very important that Wisbech Town Council supports the Leader of the Council, who is now a member of the Wisbech 2020 Core Vision Group (along with the Leaders of Fenland District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council and the Member of Parliament), in this project. She feels it is essential that members of this council attend events which deliver the “messages” about the Wisbech 2020 Vision project; the members of Wisbech Town Council need to be at the “heart” of such events/presentations. She added that the Government had indicated that it wishes to see growth in this area and the local Member of Parliament is supportive of investment in Wisbech.

Councillor Tierney mentioned that the Garden Town proposal is a relatively new initiative; however, many of the goals of the Wisbech 2020 Vision had already been achieved. He supports the comments of Councillor Mrs Bucknor that the members of Wisbech Town Council should participate in discussions etc regarding this project. He commented that the Garden Town proposal would bring about significant change for Wisbech but he is of the opinion that it would be a “non-starter” if it did not prove possible to deliver a rail service for Wisbech.

Councillor Oliver commented that all of the members of the Core Vision Group are fully supportive of the introduction of a rail service for Wisbech; such a service is the “key ingredient” for delivery of growth for the town as well as assisting with the delivery of economic benefits for the wider area.

Councillor Bucknor commented that the original Wisbech 2020 Vision had not included a Garden Town proposal; the “flavour” of the “offer” for Wisbech had changed in recent months. He expressed the opinion that if it were to prove impossible to achieve a direct rail service between Wisbech and Cambridge, it may be necessary to look at a “Plan B”; e.g. a link between Wisbech and March. He



made the point that, because of the high property prices in Cambridge, Wisbech could become a commuter town for that city.

Councillor Hodgson expressed the opinion that all of the members of Wisbech Town Council need to “get up to speed” in relation to the Wisbech 2020 Vision and the Garden Town proposal.

Councillor Mrs MacRae stated that she supports fully the comments made by the Leader of the Council; every effort should be made to secure a rail service for Wisbech.

Councillor Miss Hoy commented that it would be inappropriate to support significant housing growth in Wisbech without associated improvements in infrastructure; most importantly, the provision of a rail service.

In response to a question from Councillor Tierney as to whether it would be possible for filming to be undertaken of future Wisbech 2020 Vision Summits – so that they could be viewed subsequently by councillors who had been unable to attend the summit – Councillor Oliver undertook to investigate the matter.

Members decided that the situation be noted and that the Clerk would seek to arrange delivery of a presentation to a future meeting of Wisbech Town Council on the Wisbech Garden Town proposal.

43/15 Reports from representatives on outside bodies

Councillor Hodgson informed members that the Arles Festival, which is receiving funding from Wisbech Town Council and would be opened by the Mayor, takes place on Sunday 21 August 2016 (operating between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm) at Wisbech Market Place. The festival includes a programme of entertainment and other activities.

Councillor Hodgson mentioned that he is currently in the process ensuring publicity for the event, which includes providing details on the websites of both Wisbech Town Council and Fenland District Council. He expressed the hope that members of Wisbech Town Council would attend this event.

Members decided that the information reported by Councillor Hodgson be noted.

44/16 Correspondence

(1) Picnic in the Park

The Clerk read to members a letter from the Chairman of the Wisbech Branch of the Royal British Legion, expressing appreciation of the financial support awarded to the Picnic in the Park event held at Wisbech Park on 26 June 2016 (minute R13/15 refers) and of the loan of the council's gazebos.

The Wisbech Branch of the Royal British Legion states that it had received a considerable amount of positive feedback and considers that the event had portrayed Wisbech in a very positive light.

Members decided that the content of the letter be noted.

(2) Bus service

The Clerk read to members an e-mail from a resident of March, who travelled regularly on the Service 46 bus between March and Wisbech on Sundays, regarding the fact that the bus company, Stagecoach, would be ceasing the service after the journeys on 24 July 2016.



The resident makes the point that the action of Stagecoach means that there would be no public transport between March and Wisbech on Sundays after 24 July; he makes the additional comment that the Service 46 also linked Wisbech and King's Lynn.

The resident mentions, in his e-mail, that he had drawn his concerns to the attention of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC), as the authority responsible for public transport within Cambridgeshire, and the response from CCC was that any operator could cease to run a bus service if/when it wished. He had also referred the matter to the local MP and to his local Fenland District Councillor and is awaiting responses.

Members decided that the content of the e-mail be noted and that the Clerk would write to Stagecoach, seeking an explanation of the company's rationale for withdrawal of Service 46 on Sundays, and suggest to the resident of March that he examines the possibility of using community transport for his regular journeys on a Sunday between March and Wisbech.

45/16 Noticeboard/Information update

Wisbech Rock Festival

The Clerk reminded members of the Wisbech Rock Festival, which, this year, would take place in Wisbech Park, between 11.00 and 8.00 pm, on Sunday 7 August 2016.

The event, which has been organised by Wisbech Town Council's Community Events and Festivals Committee, would include

- 9 live bands performing on the main stage
- DJ dance music stage
- Acoustic stage
- fairground rides
- face painting and body art
- various stalls and activities
- food and drink vendors.

Posters for the event had been circulated widely around Wisbech and publicity for the event had also been given via social media, as well as through articles in the Fenland Citizen newspaper.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted.

46/16 Date of next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of Wisbech Town Council is scheduled for 22 August 2016, to commence at 7.30 pm, at the Town Hall in Wisbech.

Meeting finished at 8.40 pm.

Signed

Date