

OLNEY TOWN COUNCIL



Olney Town Council, The Olney Centre, High Street, Olney MK46 4EF
Tel: 01234 711679 Email: townclerk@olneytowncouncil.gov.uk Website: www.olneytowncouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of the meeting of **Olney Town Council held** at The Olney Centre on **Monday 5th June 2023 at 7pm**

Present: Cllrs Whitworth (Chair), Bethune, Brock, Prosser, Rodden, Rowland, Stokes, Tennant, Tyler and Varley

In attendance: Jane Brushwood, Town Clerk, Rob Mungham, Deputy Town Clerk and approximately 50 members of the public

Open forum: Jim Cooper spoke about the Roman mosaic recently found at the proposed Aldi site and his concern that this historic find may be buried under the proposed site of the car park. He requested that developers of the site will both preserve the findings, make provisions for the mosaic to be displayed to the public permanently, as well as offering local school pupils the opportunity to view the mosaic before the site is completed.

Ian Mason spoke about his concerns regarding the pedestrian crossing outside One Stop shop. As a resident of the High Street, he recently attended to a lady who had been knocked down on the crossing and having spoken to the driver involved in the incident, believes the issue to mainly be due to how the crossing is marked on the approach. Ian requested that MKCC consider a controlled crossing.

Paul Collins spoke of his concern at the Town Council's recent decision to serve 28day notice to leave to Caveman Conditioning at the rented property at East Street recreation ground (formerly Olney Town Football Club clubhouse). He believes it to have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of its members, as well as why this decision was made and on what basis it was made. He requested that legal action be suspended, the matter become an agenda item for the next full council meeting and that reports that influenced this decision be made public, as well as making public any future plans for the use of the building.

Corina House spoke, as a member of Caveman Conditioning, of her concern at the Town Council's recent decision to serve 28day notice to leave to Caveman Conditioning at the rented property at East Street recreation ground (formerly Olney Town Football Club clubhouse) without proper rationale. She questioned the validity of the council's response to other concerned residents, that this decision was made on the grounds of health and safety. She requested that the decision be re-considered.

Matt Chandler spoke in his role as a committee member of Olney Town Colts Football Club (OTCFC), a not-for-profit community sports club, run by volunteers. He spoke regarding the Town Council's recent decision to serve 28day notice to leave to Caveman Conditioning at the rented property at East Street recreation ground (formerly Olney Town Football Club clubhouse). He stated that this decision had nothing to do with OTCFC, and that a lot of ill-informed speculation on social media had suggested this was the case. He stated that the building currently inhabited by Caveman Conditioning is attached to the OTCFC clubhouse. He stated that, given the current poor state of the building, OTCFC have no current interest in using that section of the building. He requested that enquiries regarding the matter are directed towards the town council and not via social media.

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OTC23/6/01: Apologies for absence

Resolved: Apologies were received from Cllrs D. Hall and R. Hall

OTC23/6/02: Declarations of interests on items on the agenda

Resolved: None

OTC23/6/03: To approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Council on 15th May 2023

Resolved: Cllr Tennant requested an amendment to OTC23/5/11 regarding a declaration of interests. Cllr Rodden requested an amendment to OTC23/5/11 regarding an additional comment providing further detail to the proposal. Cllr Bethune proposed, Cllr Prosser seconded that, subject to amendments, the minutes of 15th May 2023 be approved. All in favour

OTC23/6/04: To receive a Ward Councillors report

Resolved: Ward Councillor Keith McLean reported first on bus services 41 and 21. The 41 bus service has now re-started, for an initial period of 6 months. The 21 bus service is due to begin stopping at Emberton again from July onwards.

An update from Ousedale School had been recently received by Cllr McLean. Successful recruitment for September 2023 now means that Ousedale are able to provide the additional class needed to offer spaces at their school for the 25 students, from within catchment, who were previously not allocated a place for Year 7 intake in September 2023.

Cllr McLean reported that a group of travellers who were recently sited in Sherington have been moved on from the area within the last week. This group have been moved on using a temporary injunction, but MKCC are hoping to serve a permanent injunction banning this particular group from the Milton Keynes area through the appropriate legal process later in June.

Cllr McLean reported that Cllr Whitworth is due to meet with MKCC Head of Highways, Graham Cox, later this week, with reference to the pedestrian crossing outside of the One Stop shop on Olney's High Street. The recent road safety audit of that section of road concluded that there was no significant concern regarding the safety of the pedestrian crossing, but Cllr Whitworth would no doubt be reporting back to Head of Highways regarding the incident spoken about in the open forum by Ian Mason, as well as the request to consider a controlled crossing.

Cllr Brock requested that the road safety audit be made available. Cllr McLean reported that Ward Councillors have not yet seen the report but hopes that Cllr Whitworth's meeting with MKCC Head of Highways may provide further information regarding the findings and potential outcomes of the audit.

Cllr Rodden commented on the issue of vehicles speeding on the approach to the pedestrian crossing and requested that MKCC refer back to the previous data and evidence provided by Olney's Speedwatch Group when considering future plans for the crossing. Cllr McLean stated that more recent data might strengthen any arguments and justification for this.

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OTC23/6/10: To receive an update on the Roman Mosaic site

Tony Williamson, Director of Angle Property, reported in relation to archaeology work undertaken by Angle Property and appointed archaeologists, Oxford Archaeology, at the Warrington Road site, known as Olney Park.

Planning permission granted in December 2018, subject to eight conditions, although none of these related to archaeology. Angle reported this to MKCC and offered a responsible approach in relation to archaeology, in the absence of planning conditions regarding archaeology. This was agreed with MKCC in December 2020. Minor archaeological finds were donated at no cost to MK Museum in June 2022.

The mosaic was discovered in the spring of 2023, upon which Angle Property and Oxford Archaeology sought advice from MKCC and Heritage England regarding how best to preserve in-situ, which was the appropriate approach following strategies of both MKCC, Heritage England, as well as following conditions stipulated in the Olney Neighbourhood Plan for this site. On-site meetings with MKCC and Heritage England confirmed that the advice was to preserve in-situ, meaning that the mosaic should be re-buried in a manner that ensures that further on-site construction does not damage it.

Moving forward, Angle Property has instructed a full recording and documenting of the mosaic, with information about this to be displayed at the proposed Aldi store in the future, including use of technology to recreate the mosaic in digital form. Angle Property is also willing to provide information for the town museum to display, an approach which again conforms to the Olney Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, Angle Property intends to re-expose the mosaic for viewing days, so that local people, schools and other interested parties are able to view the site before preservation in-situ takes place.

Angle Property believe that they have acted responsibly throughout this process, remaining in constant dialogue with MKCC and Heritage England to ensure a responsible approach to archaeological finds. Angle Property have also worked in accordance with all relevant local and national planning policies and strategies.

Cllr Stokes asked why it is necessary for the mosaic to be covered up again. Tony Williamson reported that the advice taken to preserve in-situ has been offered because what has so far been exposed is not in good condition, meaning further works around it may in fact damage it further and that there are also issues relating to dampness and the water table.

Cllr Rodden requested that Angle Property ensure that this archaeological find is given the best opportunity of being preserved and visibly so, as it may help to bring interested visitors into our community, from which businesses can benefit.

Cllr Rowland asked whether any future plans for the site and preservation of the mosaic itself would involve any elements of public consultation. Tony Williamson is of the understanding that this remains publicly available on the MKCC planning portal.

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OTC23/6/05: To receive a PCSOs report

Resolved: No figures had been provided in advance of the meeting

OTC23/6/06: To receive an expenditure report

Resolved: Cllr Stokes queried an expense of £1220 on allotment field sculptures. Jane Brushwood confirmed that this was an allotment association expense, not an Olney Town Council expense. Cllr Rodden queried the two payments of £5000 (£10,000 total). Jane Brushwood and Rob Mungham reported that these relate to consultancy and site survey fees involved with the refurbishment project being undertaken in The Olney Centre, to be reclaimed via S106 funding.

OTC23/6/07: To receive reports from Councillors who represent at external meetings

Resolved: None

OTC23/6/08: To receive updates on S106 spending

Resolved: Clerk reported that a doorway has been created between Room 1 and the pre-school section of the building, as the opening phase of the refurbishment works on The Olney Centre.

Clerk has held discussions with trustees of the Ann Hopkins-Smith Almshouses, who require replacement windows. She advised them to apply for the appropriate S106 funding, saving at least 50% of the necessary expenditure they face.

OTC23/6/09: To receive updates on the recreation ground

Resolved: Cllr Stokes reported that Olney Town Colts had been successful in their application for a pitch maintenance fund, granted by The Football Foundation. This provides for £73,000 over a period of 6 years, to be invested back into the town, in improving, enhancing and maintaining the pitches currently rented by Olney Town Colts Football Club from Olney Town Council. A service level agreement between Olney Town Council and Olney Town Colts Football Club will ensure that works are carried out accordingly, due to commence within the next 3-6 months.

Clerk reported that volunteer marshals at the recreation grounds have begun their informal marshalling duties, but still require further numbers of volunteers here. Clerk reminded councillors that the town council has budgeted for formal security patrols.

Resolved: Cllr Stokes proposed, Cllr Varley seconded that Spartan Protection be appointed to commence weekend evening patrols, with their service and requirement to be reviewed on a monthly basis. All in favour.

OTC23/6/10: To receive an update on the Roman Mosaic site

Resolved: See earlier agenda item, in revised order

OTC23/6/11: To decide locations and types of EV charging points required

Resolved: Olney Town Council to request EV charging points at car parks on Market Place, East Street and at The Olney Centre.

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OTC23/6/12: To receive an update on the Armed Forces Day tea

Clerk reported that Room 2 would be used for this event, although take up to attend is currently quite low, despite it being advertised and individuals invited. Those attending would be asked what differences they might like to see to this event in future years to try and increase attendance.

OTC23/6/13: To receive an update on Speedwatch

Councillors noted a report received from neighbouring parish council Astwood and Hardmead regarding their collated data. Olney's Speedwatch group is currently at 6 volunteers, who have completed initial online training. 8 locations around Olney have now been approved for Speedwatch data collection sessions. Awaiting approval of 2 speed devices from Thames Valley Police PC Lee Turnham before these sessions can commence.

Jane Brushwood reported that 50% funding for two Speed Indicator Devices has been approved through the Community Infrastructure Fund, the balance was budgeted for.

The meeting closed at 8.19pm

Next meeting: Monday 3rd July 2023