

**MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL
FULL TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the **Full Town Council** which was held **Monday, 9 September 2019** in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Marlborough** at 7pm

PRESENT: Councillor M. Hall Town Mayor
Councillor B. Castle
Councillor Mrs P. Dow
Councillor N. Fogg
Councillor A. Ross
Councillor A. Kirk Wilson
Councillor N. Barrett-Morton
Councillor P. Cairns
Councillor M. Cooper
Councillor A. Wilson
Councillor D. Heath

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs S. Parker Town Clerk
Mrs D. Whitehall Administrator
Councillor S. Dobson Wiltshire Councillor – Marlborough East
Mr N. Goodwin Marlborough.News
Sgt. T. Holloway and PC E. Grigor Wiltshire Police
Plus 6 members of the public

PRAYERS

Cllr. Cooper opened the meeting with prayers.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions.

CRIME AND DISORDER

Sgt. Tracey Holloway and PC. Emily Grigor attended and gave a verbal report, highlighting statistics, activities and priorities detailed in a monthly report that would be issued to the Town Council soon. Priority areas had been regularly patrolled and there had been little to report in terms of anti-social behaviour (ASB). Surveys about ASB incidents had also been circulated to local residents, but none had been returned.

Cllr. Farrell was unable to attend the meeting but, had submitted a question via the Town Clerk to ask for an update on Marlborough's open spaces as the local feeling was that there had been an increase in drug related incidents in some areas. Sgt Holloway said that patrols had been increased in Priory Gardens and the Skate Park and took place at various times of day. There had been nothing to report as a result of this additional monitoring.

QUESTIONS TO AND FROM WILTSHIRE COUNCILLORS

Via the Town Clerk, **Cllr. Farrell** asked Wiltshire Councillors to find out from Homes 4Wiltshire why people in need, but in work were penalised when it came to applying for social housing when the rent charged by their private landlords was unaffordable (sometimes 3 times the amount charged for social housing). She would welcome a

meeting with the relevant officers about this. **Cllr. Dobson** would make enquiries and supported the suggestion of a face to face meeting.

Cllr. Dobson asked for the latest progress with the Leaf Bequest. This was a generous bequest left to the town in order to provide help and financial grants, but which had been in limbo for many years. He believed it should be reinstated as soon as possible. The **Town Clerk** replied that the bequest was ringfenced in a separate account. The money was linked to charities and trusts which involved trustees who were no longer contactable. The appointment of a specialist solicitor was required to reinstate the Trust. It was a priority for the Finance & Policy Committee.

Cllr. Fogg was pleased to report that work was progressing to create a cinema in the former chapel, as well as to re-open the Crown Hotel, both in The Parade. However, he was sad to see the Queens Head public house had once again closed its doors. This was a Grade II listed building, the landlords of which could be traced back to 1782 and if it remained closed would leave only one pub in the east of Marlborough. **Cllr. Fogg** suggested that perhaps this and other buildings could be added to a list of Community Assets in order to preserve them and their community use.

224/19

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from **Cllrs. Loosmore, Farrell and Price**.

225/19

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Town Mayor and **Cllr. Ross** – agenda item 17(i) – Town Council-owned properties – non-pecuniary interest.

226/19

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A letter had been received from Rev. Heather Cooper, the former Methodist Minister and two times Mayor's Chaplain from Christchurch who taken up a new post in The Wirral. Members would remember that a framed print was presented to her of the Town Hall as a special gift.

Another letter of thanks, this time from The English Civil War Society, about the enormously successful Civil War Re-enactment which took place during the weekend of 27/28 July. Mayors and dignitaries attending the Sunday Civic Service had been especially impressed by the Battle of Marlborough fought on The Common. Particular thanks were passed to the Assistant Town Clerk, Clare Harris, who had worked hard towards this event.

Councillors were reminded that they had been challenged to a skittles match by the Bowls Club on Saturday, 28 September at 7pm. This is for all Councillors and their partners. All were asked to let the Town Clerk or Civic Secretary know whether they would be attending.

227/19

MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of Full Town Council held Monday, 22 July 2019 were approved as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor

228/19

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk's report was noted. In answer to a question about Min. 154/19 – Open Space at Barton Park – the **Town Clerk** confirmed that a response had not yet been received from Wiltshire Council about amenities at the site.

229/19

OPEN SPACE AT BARTON PARK

Members considered whether to support a petition being organised by local resident **Charmaine Bartlett** to be submitted to Wiltshire Council asking it to pass the open space at Barton Park/College Fields to Marlborough Town Council as an asset transfer. Discussion points included:

- The request was related to a written motion raised by **Cllr. Cairns (154/19)** and a subsequent resolution by the Town Council to request the provision of benches and litter bins at the public open space, as well as to engage with local residents about community needs at the location
- Whether the Town Council could commit to an asset transfer prior to discussions with Wiltshire Council, but that it could support the petition, in principle, prior to negotiations taking place
- Whether the Town Council's Grounds Team had the capacity to take on the management of additional space at this time
- Whether there would be financial implications to precept payers of taking on the management of more open space
- A recognition that this piece of open space provided an important outdoor amenity to residents in the west of Marlborough and Manton and had been designated as Open Space following a request for Village Green status being denied
- An acknowledgement of the hard work of the organiser and other residents in moving the request forward

RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council supports the petition, in principle, and that any asset transfer would be dependent upon negotiations with Wiltshire Council around devolution of services and asset transfers beginning in May 2020, as well as any financial implications

Several members of the public left the meeting

230/19

PROJECT PLAN 2017-2021

Members considered the updated Project Plan following a review workshop held 31 July. The discussion included:

- Suggested rewording of FTC24 – Town Museum Collaboration
- It would be helpful to add a column to show the likely source of funding, e.g. Community Infrastructure Levy, External Grants, Town Council precept, etc
- That a proposal about moving commemorative stones on the Common was a low priority for consideration by the next council
- That the plan should be made available for public comment
- That a Vision and Strategic Plan would be a helpful tool to explain and draw together the Town Council's activities and priorities and would help to steer the next council term in 2021-2025
- That any Vision, Strategy and Project Plan could be amended once the outcome of discussions with Wiltshire Council about devolution of services were known

RESOLVED: (i) that the Project Plan was agreed with suggested amendments

RESOLVED: (ii) to delegate to the Town Clerk to arrange an online public consultation asking for comments on the 2017-2021 Project Plan

RESOLVED: (iii) to draw up a Vision and Strategy

231/19

WILTSHIRE POLICE – WORKING WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Members noted a report by the Town Clerk and considered co-hosting an open meeting with Wiltshire Police for the benefit of the business community. During a suspension of Standing Orders, **Sgt Holloway** explained the benefits of similar schemes already tested in other places, including ideas such as 'Shop Watch' groups and the use of websites/social media channels. Three retail businesses had already given their support to the proposal.

RESOLVED: to hold an informal open meeting co-hosted by Wiltshire Police and the Town Council on Tuesday, 15 October (or another date if this date was not possible)

The Police Officers left the meeting

232/19

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The **Town Mayor** introduced this rare opportunity to express an interest in changes to governance arrangements as detailed in the Town Clerk's report and guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (now known as The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. The type of changes might include:

- Moving parish boundaries and combining parishes
- Changing the wards within a parish or creating new ones
- Changing the names of parishes and wards
- Dissolving parish councils
- Changes to the number of Councillors

Councillors recognised that the demographics in the area would continue to change over the next few years so were supportive of a review of the existing parish boundaries and wards. Discussion points included:

- That residents of surrounding villages enjoyed the amenities in the Marlborough parish
- The ability of very small parish councils to provide services to their communities
- That Savernake Hospital and the nearby housing estate (Maurice Way) were currently within Savernake parish, although the perception was that they were more closely linked to the town of Marlborough
- That smaller parishes might not be able to make the required 25% contribution to improvements to highways via the Community Area Transport Group and other contributory schemes
- Whether new wards should be created (e.g. Manton) giving them dedicated Councillors
- The financial implications to precept payments for smaller parishes if combined with other parishes
- That any proposed changes must be subject to public consultation
- That, at this stage, the opportunity was merely to express an interest in a review, and could be withdrawn at any point with no binding obligations on the Town Council

RESOLVED: to express an interest in a review of governance arrangements to include a possible combination of Marlborough with the parishes of Preshute and Savernake and to review the current ward structure especially if parish boundary changes take place

233/19

ADOPTION OF BT KIOSK

Members revisited a decision to adopt a BT Kiosk in the High Street made on 23 April 2019 (Min. 635/18):

- To rescind the decision, in line with para. 8a) of Standing Orders - six Councillors' signatures had been obtained
- Since making the decision to adopt a kiosk, BT had removed one kiosk from the High Street
- If the Town Council continued to adopt the kiosk there would be no public telephone available on the High Street
- A public telephone box was also situated at The Green/St Martins
- The remaining kiosk at the Library was listed at Historic England – Red kiosk type K6 designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott to commemorate the silver jubilee of King George V and was noted as one of the 10 most iconic items in Britain

RESOLVED: to withdraw the request to adopt the only remaining BT kiosk in the High Street

234/19

WORLD OF PUPPETS FESTIVAL

Members noted the Town Clerk's report and progress towards a Puppet Festival scheduled for 25 July 2020 and considered making financial provision in the autumn precept setting round, the free use of the Town Hall and to nominate a Town Councillor to join the committee.

The very successful event held in 2017 had been well attended and Members supported the proposed event.

RESOLVED: (i) to support the 2020 Puppet Festival and the request for free use of the Town Hall, and that **Cllr. Dow** be appointed to the Committee

RESOLVED: (ii) to make provision for up to £5,000 in the 2020/21 budget

235/19

OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports.

236/19

COMMITTEE MINUTES

In accordance with para. 3.1 of the Scheme of Delegation, Members noted the approved minutes of the following committee meetings: **Planning** – 8 July, 29 July and 19 August; **Amenities & Open Spaces** – 1 July, **Finance & Policy** – 7 June and **Staffing Sub Committee** – 7 May.

237/19

MEMBER'S QUESTION TIME

No questions had been submitted.

238/19

COMMON SEAL

Proposed by **Cllr. Castle** and seconded by **Cllr. Dow** and

RESOLVED: that the Common Seal of Marlborough Town Council be affixed to all documents necessary to give effect to the decisions of the meeting

239/19

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would

be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

Members of the press and public and Mrs Whitehall left the meeting

240/19

TOWN COUNCIL-OWNED PROPERTIES

*The **Town Mayor** and **Cllr. Ross** left the room for the following item and **Cllr. Cooper** took the Chair*

- i) The Merchant's House. Members discussed a rental valuation and

RESOLVED: i) that the Town Council is satisfied that the extent of the undervalue of rent for The Merchant's House is justified by the economic, social and environmental wellbeing it brings to Marlborough, in particular that it provides a heritage asset to the town and its residents, improves tourism opportunities and so benefits economic vibrancy

*The **Town Mayor** and **Cllr. Ross** returned to the meeting and the **Town Mayor** resumed the Chair*

- ii) Former Police Station at George Lane. Members discussed the possibility of this publicly owned building being used as a future Doctor's Surgery. It was

RESOLVED: ii) that following confirmation by the Clinical Commissioning Group of its suitability, that Marlborough Town Council would support, in principle, the use of the site of the former Police Station in George Lane as a much-needed Doctor's Surgery and would look at ways of financially supporting its purchase.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Signed: Date:

Town Mayor