



the less pleasant task of regularly emptying public litter bins and picking up rubbish in the town's open spaces, particularly important during a pandemic.

**563/20**

### **RUGBY CLUB VERTI-DRAINING**

Members considered a request from Marlborough Rugby Club (MRFC) for assistance with 'verti-draining' maintenance work on their pitches:

- The equipment is owned by Marlborough Golf Course but had been made available to the Grounds Team as part of an equipment sharing arrangement: any agreement to use the equipment to help MRFC would therefore be subject to the Golf Club's agreement at a convenient time.
- Verti-draining involves a tractor towing the equipment and takes approximately 2.5 hours to complete one pitch.
- If agreed, the work would have to be fitted in around the existing work schedule: one or two times a year was considered reasonable.

**RESOLVED:** Subject to the agreement with the Golf Club allowing, that the request to assist Marlborough Rugby Club with verti-draining maintenance work on pitches is approved once or twice a year

**564/20**

### **BENCHES**

Members considered a request from a member of the public for more benches in open spaces. Discussion points included:

- The past year had shown a renewed appreciation for open spaces and many more people had been using them.
- There were difficulties about adding more benches to the High Street due to space restrictions and the layout.
- General support for more benches in open spaces managed by the Town Council,
- An additional bench had recently been installed at the Recreation Ground and there were two more due to be installed soon – one at Frees Avenue near the Cemetery and one at Stonebridge Meadow to replace one which had been vandalised and removed.
- The Grounds Manager was already investigating suitable materials for any future benches (types which would be less vulnerable to vandalism)
- There was uncertainty about the status of benches planned for "Bert's Corner" at the junction of George Lane/Salisbury Road where the Marlborough branch of the Royal British Legion had offered to donate two benches with the Town Council purchasing a third to replace the two benches currently situated at the rose garden.
- Potential additional locations were suggested at Stonebridge Meadow, where more benches would be appreciated.
- There was support for the proposal, in principle, to add more benches to public spaces – appropriate locations and the likely amount of use they would get would need to be understood.
- The Town Council receives a steady stream of requests for memorial benches and it would be important to bear in mind locations for future memorial benches. A possible call out to the community offering people the opportunity to donate a memorial bench was suggested.

**RESOLVED:** in principle to support the request for more benches in open spaces and to create a plan of possible locations in consultation with members of the public to identify suitable locations

**565/20**

### **LIONS CLUB**

Members considered a request from Marlborough Lions Club to use Priory Gardens for fundraising activity.

**RESOLVED:** to support the Lions Club by making Priory Gardens available free of charge for fund raising activity, and to delegate to the Town Clerk to agree details directly with the hirer

566/20

### **PRIORY GARDENS**

Members considered the management of Priory Gardens.

In introducing the discussion, the **Chairman** reminded Members that there had been a comprehensive history of discussion about how Priory Gardens should be managed. This had seen differences between Members about access to and use of the gardens, and perhaps a new approach might help, and he invited the Town Clerk to explain further.

The **Town Clerk** reminded Members that whilst the behaviour of some groups of users had an impact on others, the Town Council would not solve it by excluding specific groups and did not have the powers or resources to solve the problem on its own. His background as a youth worker gave him the benefit of previous experience of resolving similar situations in Chippenham where resolutions went beyond the capability or remit of Grounds Staff. An inclusive approach drawing together joint agencies (e.g. council, police, schools) to help engage everyone and manage boundaries had proven effective. A good outcome would be all people using open spaces in a way that was appropriate to each location. A way forward might be for the next Council to set up a working party drawing together schools and other agencies to draw up a youth strategy or open spaces strategy.

Discussion points included:

- **Councillor Barrett-Morton** read out a statement highlighting issues of anti-social behaviour, damage to roses, late night noise and disturbance to near neighbours.
- Frustration that Priory Gardens was being singled out when problems of anti-social behaviour were common across other open spaces in the town such as the Recreation Ground and Stonebridge Meadow – why weren't these being discussed?
- Whether 'children would be children' regardless of any action the Town Council took
- Whether the anti-social behaviour was caused by young adults rather than children
- Whether more police presence or employing a park ranger would help reduce anti-social behaviour
- Whether there was more the police could do even with limited resources
- That the scope of any working party should be broadened to cover all open spaces and play areas

**RESOLVED:** to instruct the Town Clerk to prepare an outline proposal for a working party and its expected objectives for the new Council to take forward

567/20

### **SKATEPARK**

Members noted an update report from the Assistant Town Clerk on the installation of lighting. The **Town Clerk** agreed to advise of a likely opening date.

568/20

### **MARLBOROUGH IN BLOOM**

Members noted an update report from the Assistant Town Clerk. In addition, **Councillor Hillier** advised that Marlborough was one of just two entries into the SWTA cup. The Grounds Manager was working on a route for the judges, to end on a high in Wye House Gardens. Judging day would be some time in July. It was hoped that Tidy Town days could be restarted soon, and the Sparkle team days could also be used to help prepare for judging. The MiB committee had been disbanded due to lack of members: in its absence a local resident, Mrs Compton, had generously offered to oversee the Its Your Neighbourhood entries and provide

advice and the Town Council had picked up the management of the MiB website and social media. The Assistant Town Clerk was working to prepare a 2021 portfolio.

**569/20 COLLEGE FIELDS/BARTON PARK**

Members reviewed and considered the proposal submitted by Mr J Rogers regarding proposals for the management and maintenance of College Fields/Barton Park open spaces, and during a suspension of Standing Orders Mr Rogers outlined the proposal in more detail and answered questions. The proposal included creating a wildflower meadow, maintaining an area for play, strengthening the wildlife corridor along the farmland boundary and adding trees and seating. Full details had been provided in the report accompanying the agenda. Discussion points arising included:

- Whether the landowners (Wiltshire Council) would agree to a Community Asset Transfer of the land
- Whether part of the site would be needed as access to a potential housing site to the north of Barton Park
- Whether it would be included in the final Marlborough Area Neighbourhood Plan as a designated green space
- That there was an overwhelming level of support from nearby residents for the proposals
- Whether the organisers had considered if the space would be used by the wider community, and what impact this would have on nearby residents
- Whether enough information was available for the Town Council to take a decision

Members commended the local community on their proposals.

**RESOLVED:** to forward the proposal to Wiltshire Council as part of the supporting evidence for this area to be included in future negotiations about Community Asset Transfers

**570/20 IMPROVING BIODIVERSITY AT MARLBOROUGH COMMON**

Members considered a request from Transition Marlborough for the creation of a wildlife meadow at Marlborough Common within the Diamond Jubilee Plantation. Discussion points included:

- That the word meadow may be misleading as the proposal appeared to be simply to leave the area of the existing fruit trees unmown
- That the Grounds Team would be saved work from mowing between the trees
- Whether the applicant had provided a clear map
- The exact location and extent of the area proposed
- Whether a forthcoming flora & fauna survey should be completed before taking a decision
- Whether the request should be considered alongside the request for an additional training area for youth football and rugby players
- Whether other activities such as re-enactments would be impacted

**RESOLVED:** that any consideration of this request should be based upon more detail being provided

**571/20 CEMETERIES**

- (i) Members noted grants and exclusive rights of burial that had been issued.
- (ii) Members noted memorials and inscriptions that had been approved.

**572/20 ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION**

Members noted the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Allotment Association.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

Signed: ..... Date: .....  
Chairman

DRAFT