

Marlborough Town Council



Full Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of Marlborough Town Council held Monday, 20 January 2025 in the Court Room, Marlborough Town Hall at 7pm

PRESENT	Councillor Kym-Marie Cleasby	Town Mayor
	Councillor Emily Trow	Deputy Mayor
	Councillor Nicholas Fogg	
	Councillor Andrew Ross	
	Councillor Lisa Farrell	
	Councillor Mervyn Hall	
	Councillor Mark Cooper	
	Councillor Caroline Thomas	
	Councillor Susannah O'Brien	
	Councillor Caroline Sadler	
	Councillor Abi Beaumont	
	Rev. Chris Smith	Mayor's Chaplain
	Richard Spencer-Williams	Town Clerk
	Dawn Whitehall	Corporate Services Officer
	Matthew Powell	Youth Development Worker
	Emma Cook	Information Officer
ALSO PRESENT	Neil Goodwin	Marlborough.News

PRAYERS

Rev. Chris Smith opened the meeting with prayers.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present, but two questions had been submitted via the Town Mayor:

Elizabeth Cooper asked "The A346 continues to hold substantial risks for anyone attempting to cross over to and from the Common. The speed limit is very frequently exceeded, posing danger for pedestrians, particularly children and older residents. I am very concerned that the recent Marlborough survey did not take account of the issues with the A346. Please could you reassure me - and residents - that the Town Council is looking closely at the concerns so many of us have."

The **Town Mayor** replied yes: Councillors agreed with residents' concerns and the matter had been brought before the Council many times. Improving safety at this location was a topic discussed at the Planning Committee Meetings and the question would be passed on to that Committee. Comments about current areas of focus included:

- Liaising with Police to get statistics from speed checks in the area
- Currently working with Wiltshire Council Highways to ask for a slowing down buffer zone on the approach to the 30MPH limit. To support this, **Councillor Thomas** would contact other parishes to understand how many other parishes had made use of buffer zones
- The Town Council's speed indicator device in Herd Street had recorded in and outgoing speeds at over 90MPH; whether the Police could be asked to conduct speed checks at this location as well as Port Hill
- Although not related to this question, the issue of noise pollution from traffic was also mentioned
- Home Bargains HGV movements appeared to be increasing; it was hoped that a new depot at Warrington due to open in the spring to serve areas between Warrington and the M4 would reduce the number of movements of these lorries
- Although the Town Council has no legal powers over highways it does have a voice and influence and would continue to pursue improvements to safety on behalf of residents

ACTION: question to be passed to the Planning Committee

The **Town Mayor** had been contacted by a school raising concern about the wellbeing of children of a family of four who were currently living in a one-bedroom flat, highlighting the negative impact this was having on the children and expressing frustration that the family was in this situation when there were empty 3-bed properties at Rabley Wood View – could the Town Council do anything about this? The **Mayor** was going to write to the Housing Association (Stonewater) in support of this family, and invited other Members to contact her for more details so they could also write in support of them. **Councillor Farrell** had a list of empty properties and would provide the addresses to the Mayor. It was also suggested that the Mayor should ask Danny Kruger MP to write to the Chair of the housing association to reinforce the housing emergency and the need for 3-bedroom family homes.

ACTION: **Councillor Farrell** to circulate details of empty properties; Members who wished to write in support should contact the Mayor for details; contact MP and ask him to also write a letter of support

CRIME AND DISORDER

No officer was able to attend, but a report had been provided in advance and circulated to Members.

Councillor Thomas had been contacted by a resident about people parking on the junction of Poulton Hill and Tin Pit, and she had agreed to raise it with the police at this meeting. As no-one was present, the **Town Clerk** agreed to ask the Police

whether they could investigate illegal parking here, an area that was prohibited by the Highway Code.

QUESTIONS TO AND FROM WILTSHIRE COUNCILLORS

Councillor Hall referred to a recent article in Marlborough.News reporting on the spend across the county to repair potholes on C-roads and unclassified roads (of which there were many in the Marlborough area), where it appeared that Marlborough received only 44% of the average spend compared to the rest of the county. He asked what was being done by Wiltshire Council to rectify this and repair the roads in and around Marlborough and surrounding villages.

Councillor Thomas would be happy to write to the Director of Highways if the details could be supplied to her, and reminded Members that they could also do this.

Councillor Cooper asked for an update about recent news that Wiltshire, Dorset and Somerset Councils were to apply to create a Heart of Wessex combined authority with accompanying Mayor: what would this mean, and what were the implications for Marlborough?

Councillor Thomas urged people to watch a YouTube video of an extraordinary meeting of Wiltshire Council on 9 January where this was discussed. She summarised:

- The UK Government Devolution Priority Programme requires the removal of district councils to make unitary councils (as Wiltshire has already done)
- Wiltshire, Dorset and Somerset have expressed an interest to create a strategic authority because these areas have contiguous boundaries and similar demographics – a population of more than 1,500,000, largely rural with market towns and villages
- The Heart of Wessex strategic authority would be an additional layer, sitting above the County and Unitary councils
- Powers were not yet known, but it was likely that UK Government would devolve strategic regional matters such as transport (rail matters, major initiatives e.g. A303 tunnel, bus routes) as well as aligning emergency services
- There would be a precept charge to residents
- None of the three councils want to do this, but believe if this is the route that must be followed, the merger of these three councils was the best option

ACTION: Town Clerk to circulate a link to the YouTube video

352/24

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from **Councillors Davies, Sheppard, Luson, Shantry and Kohrt**.

353/24

DECLARATIONS

Councillors Farrell, Hall and Thomas – agenda item 9 – non-pecuniary (all are Trustees of Marlborough Youth Forum)

354/24

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor expressed a warm welcome to the meeting to Emma Cook, Information Officer Apprentice.

The Mayor was hosting a charity gala dinner at the Town Hall on Friday, 14 February to raise funds for her Mayoral charity, Love Marlborough Kids Meals. She would appreciate as much support as possible and asked Members to encourage others to attend this event which would include a dinner, entertainment and dancing. Tickets were £60 each or £500 for a table of 10.

It was great news that the Town Council had been successful in obtaining a grant from the Scottish and Southern Electricity Network's Net Zero Fund, being awarded £8,720 to be used to provide the town's flood wardens with resilience equipment. The Mayor applauded all involved, and in particular thanked the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk.

355/24 MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held 9 December 2024 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor

356/24 ACTION LOG

Members noted the updated action log. Verbal updates included:

#268 – High Street lighting faults – the Town Clerk had followed up with Atkins but not received a reply. **Cllr Thomas** suggested raising a question via the Area Highway Engineer

357/24 STANDING ORDERS

Members considered a proposed amendment to Standing Order 12 setting out how Members may raise questions at Council meetings

RESOLVED: to amend Standing Order 12 as proposed

358/24 YOUTH DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Members welcomed **Matthew Powell**, the Town Council's Youth Development Worker to the meeting and noted his report.

Matt gave some background details and a summary of his activities since joining in September, which included working closely with the Marlborough Youth Forum, social media and networking. He accepted that policies relating to safeguarding young people online will be required.

He had also supported the **Mayor** to promote Marlborough Community Support Forum organisations at the Saturday market on 18 January.

As part of his degree course, together with **Councillor Farrell** he hoped to lead and develop a youth session to explore the perspectives, priorities and views of young people to help them develop skills such as leadership and teamworking.

Councillor Farrell thanked Matt for his energy, enthusiasm and general support, fitting in so well with and relating to the young people of the town.

359/24 YOUTH COUNCIL

Members noted the report by **Councillor Farrell** and the **Youth Development Worker** providing an update on progress to re-establish a Youth Council.

Councillor Thomas suggested that the age range of 10-17 years could be extended to 18 to include all school-age students, and to consider up to 25 years for those with special educational needs or disability (SEND).

Meetings had been arranged with all local schools to promote the Council and recruit potential members. Any **Councillors** who would be interested in assisting with the Youth Council were asked to make themselves known to either Councillor Farrell or Matt Powell.

360/24 COMMUNITY AND YOUTH CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Members noted the Town Clerk and Youth Development Worker's report and considered the establishment of a Community and Youth Centre Management Committee (CYCMC) and associated draft terms of reference. Discussion points included:

- The CYCMC would be a subcommittee of the Property Committee
- The CYCMC role would be to assess, prioritise and recommend actions regarding the maintenance, development and optimisation of the Centre and skate park ensuring they meet the needs of the whole community, and in particular the young people it serves
- Whether there would be a need to DBS check adult members of the Committee
- Whether youth representatives should sit on the committee, and how many, and where they should be drawn from
- That it would be important to include some young people: membership would offer a valuable opportunity to not only contribute to proposals, but to experience how groups such as this work and gain valuable skills for later life and to give them a voice
- Young people: whether to include 2 representatives from the Youth Council and 2 or 3 representatives from other areas
- Whether groups that use the centre could be encouraged to send representatives to some meetings without necessarily being regular members of the committee
- Whether the committee should include representation for the older population to ensure accessibility and mobility needs were considered
- The committee would likely meet four times each year
- That the first meeting of the committee should have the opportunity to review the draft terms of reference, rather than to confirm them at this meeting

Councillor Trow said she would be happy to help in any way – she was DBS checked.

RESOLVED: that the establishment of a Community and Youth Centre Management Committee reporting to the Property Committee is approved, and that amendments to the membership be made in line with Members' comments

Councillors who had declared an interest abstained from voting

361/24 CIVIC WORKING PARTY

Members noted the key points from the most recent meeting of the Civic Working Party.

Councillor Thomas drew Members’ attention to a past tradition of annual Ale Tasting and suggested this be included on the annual calendar.

ACTION: Civic Working Party to consider reinstating annual Ale Tasting event

362/24 MEMBERS’ QUESTION TIME

No questions had been submitted.

363/24 OUTSIDE BODIES

Marlborough Community Support Forum was going well, bringing together organisations that provide help and support for the wellbeing of residents. The **Mayor** had joined others to raise awareness about the many services available at the market on Saturday, with 300 leaflets given out to residents. A Facebook page had also been set up.

The next **Marlborough Area Board** meeting was on 11 February: there were still grants available. **Councillor Thomas** encouraged Town Councillors to attend.

364/24 COMMITTEE MINUTES

In accordance with para 3.1 of the Scheme of Delegation, Members noted the approved minutes of the following Committee meetings: **Planning** – 19 August and 30 September 2024; **Amenities & Open Spaces** – 7 October 2024; **Finance & Policy** – 28 October 2024

365/24 COMMON SEAL

Proposed by **Councillor Fogg** and seconded by **Councillor Ross** 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

The meeting closed at 8.27 pm

Signed:
Town Mayor

Date: