

Marlborough Town Council



Full Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of Marlborough Town Council held Monday, 12 December 2022 in the Court Room, Marlborough Town Hall at 7pm

PRESENT	Councillor Nicholas Fogg Councillor Andrew Ross Councillor Mervyn Hall Councillor Mark Cooper Councillor Richard Allen Councillor Kymee Cleasby Councillor Jane Davies Councillor James Sheppard Councillor Caroline Thomas Councillor Mark Luson Councillor Kelvyn Shantry	Chair
ALSO PRESENT	Richard Spencer-Williams Dawn Whitehall Two officers Neil Goodwin	Town Clerk Corporate Services Officer Wiltshire Police Marlborough.News

As neither the **Town Mayor** nor the **Deputy Mayor** was able to attend Members **RESOLVED:** that **Councillor Fogg** would chair the meeting

PRAYERS

Councillor Fogg opened the meeting with prayers.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

CRIME AND DISORDER

PC Rideout explained current and recent focus for the community team and answered questions:

- Multiple patrols had been carried out at a makeshift 'den' near the salt depot/old railway line and officers had spoken with schools about antisocial

behaviour. Wiltshire Council's environmental enforcement team would remove the structures within the next few weeks.

- Operation 'Elf' would see increased high visibility street patrols to deter and combat shoplifting
- Arrests had been made in Waitrose leading to charges at court
- Regular patrols following reports of drug use and alleged dealing at Plume of Feathers garden
- Operation 'Scrambling' would see stops on vehicles with trailers in rural areas to check for farm machinery thefts
- Following a road traffic accident fatality linked to alcohol, licence checks at pubs as well as checks on drivers were being conducted
- **Councillor Lusson** asked for details about a recent incident where it was believed an elderly lady had been hit by a vehicle in the High Street; if true, this reinforced the need for a safe crossing point
- **Councillor Allen** drew officers' attention to an increase in cyclists using the pavement in George Lane, creating hazards for pedestrians. Signage had been erected in Devizes in response to a similar issue
- The team was still short of resource. More officers would be recruited in January and April 2023

ACTION: provide details of recent incident in High Street

The officers left the meeting

QUESTIONS TO AND FROM WILTSHIRE COUNCILLORS

Cycle path: Wiltshire Councillors provided updates on the planned extension:

- Work at Marlborough Business Park should progress in 2023/24 following resolution of legal matters with the landowner
- Sustrans was considering two routes (the old railway line or Blenheim Road)
- An application for funding had been made to the Department of Transport
- Development plans for the former Resource Centre at Cherry Orchard, to include a confirmed location for a wider path, were still at the planning stage
- A proposed Toucan crossing at Salisbury Road was dependent upon other works being completed

Traffic survey and modelling:

- Whether, to share information about potential Atkins surveys, contact could be made with Bradford on Avon Town Council/Wiltshire Councillors
- Whether details were available about a different approach taken at Corsham

ACTION: Wiltshire Councillors to confirm the appropriate Wiltshire Councillor to contact for Bradford on Avon to allow information to be shared

South coast to M4 strategic study:

- The National Highways report had not yet been published but was expected very soon

- Wiltshire Council would start a highways review in 2023 as part of the local plan which would include freight movements
- Whether outcomes and actions following a summer 2022 meeting in the Collingbournes were available
- An ‘all things road’ meeting for Marlborough on 23 February was being planned and would be publicised in January

298/22 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from **Rev. Novis**, the **Town Mayor** and **Councillors Loosmore, Barrett-Morton, Heath and Waltham**

299/22 DECLARATIONS

There were no declarations.

230/22 TOWN MAYOR/CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor had not provided any announcements.

It was good news that two vehicles had been purchased for the on-demand community bus scheme. The principles of how it would operate had been agreed, with the route requested by the first person to call the scheme taking priority, with others collected if the route allowed. It was hoped that the service would commence in March 2023. **Councillor Fogg** asked whether a representative could be invited to present at a future meeting, and for help publicising the scheme.

ACTION: arrange a presentation about on-demand bus services at a future meeting

231/22 MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held 7 November 2022 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair

232/22 ACTION LOG

Members noted the updated action log. Verbal updates/comments included:

#114: a meeting date with Kennet and Avon Medical Partnership had been agreed for 9 January 2023.

#121: a meeting had taken place between Homes4Wiltshire, Aster, the Town Mayor, Councillors Davies and Thomas and the Town Clerk to discuss Marlborough’s housing needs. Discussion points included:

- Properties were assessed when they became vacant and if they did not meet the SAP rating were offered for sale if considered too expensive to repair
- The need for housing, especially for families, outlined in the draft Marlborough Area Neighbourhood Plan had been noted and would be a key tool to help progress the conversation about the need for more homes in Marlborough
- Housing associations invested in homes in Wiltshire when unsuitable properties were sold: to meet the county-wide need, more homes could be provided elsewhere for the cost of buying/building one in Marlborough, where housing was expensive. This was not helpful where families, the vulnerable or elderly wished to remain in Marlborough

- The wellbeing or health impacts of moving people away from familiar surroundings and/or support networks
- Whether numbers of social homes in Marlborough now and 10 years ago could be obtained
- Housing needs were assessed by Homes4Wiltshire; the role of housing associations was to provide as many homes as possible in Wiltshire
- The meeting had been positive and had opened a conversation which should be continued. It was hoped a future Town Council meeting could include a presentation/discussion with an officer from Homes4Wiltshire

233/22 COMMITTEE PRIORITIES

Members noted the agreed priorities and financial implications for 2023-24.

Councillor Thomas thanked the Town Clerk for the clear presentation of the information and flagged to Members that the Finance & Policy Committee had added a fourth priority: to support the Town Council in terms of making financial information as straightforward as possible to aid decision making.

Members also noted that consideration of climate change and environmental impact had already been agreed as being integral to all services and new projects (*Environment and Climate Protection Policy Statement Adopted: 28.06.21*). To reinforce this, it would be stated as a separate priority on future years' priority lists.

234/22 CIVIC WORKING PARTY AND CORONATION OF KING CHARLES III

Members noted the Town Clerk's report and a progress update from the Civic Working Party (CvWP). They also considered the CvWP terms of reference and an approach to the Coronation of King Charles III. Discussion points included:

- It was disappointing that only one Councillor had been able to attend the most recent CvWP meeting
- Whether the onus for progressing the civic programme should be on the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor with support from the Town Clerk and Civic Secretary
- Whether to encourage community activity to help plan events for the Coronation

RESOLVED: (i) that the Civic Working Party takes a lead role in the King's coronation event, adopting a similar approach to the Platinum Jubilee, with planning starting in January 2023

RESOLVED: (ii) that the Terms of Reference of the Civic Working Party were agreed, with particular emphasis on the role of the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor to be actively engaged in leading the civic programme

RESOLVED: (iii) that the preferred date for a planned event to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III would be the Bank Holiday Monday, 8 May 2023

235/22 TOWN CENTRE WORKING PARTY

RESOLVED: to delegate authority to progress the tender process for the Town Signage Plan to the Town Centre Working Party in conjunction with the Town Clerk

236/22 HERBERT LEAF TRUST

Members noted the update report on progress made by the Herbert Leaf Working Party, and considered a proposal to move the Trust to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), proposed objects, outcomes and constitutional recommendations.

RESOLVED: that the Working Party was thanked for making a good start to defining an approach to managing the Herbert Leaf bequest; proposals would be considered by Full Council after the HLWP meeting on 10 January 2023 when next steps and 'the objects' would be clarified

237/22 MAKE SOMEONE WELCOME

Members noted the Town Clerk's report about the Centre for Independent Living 'Make Someone Welcome' campaign.

RESOLVED: (i) to support the Make Someone Welcome Campaign, and to make a pledge to make the doorbell at the Town Council's 5 High Street office more accessible to wheelchair users

RESOLVED: (ii) to ask the Town Centre Working Party to embrace the Make Someone Welcome Campaign and identify opportunities to make further pledges

238/22 BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2023/24

Members considered the annual budget and precept for the year 2023/24. The Chair of the Finance and Policy Committee, **Councillor Thomas**, recommended a proposed precept increase of 3.21% in the light of maintaining services to residents and progressing projects against a background of high inflation, a cost-of-living crisis causing difficulties for residents, and rising energy and other running costs for the Town Council. Discussion points and questions arising included:

- Whether the proposed increase would be too low to maintain services and/or support people in need
- Three scenarios had been considered with the main difference in the recommended option being a reduction in budget for bedding plants and bringing the Town Hall maintenance budget down in line with the 2020/21 figures
- How staff costs had been calculated, and how actual spend would be managed (e.g. staff costs associated with the Coronation of King Charles III)
- How projected income figures had been calculated
- Whether there would be any impact on the Town Council's reserves
- Heritage budget, and a more general discussion about heritage assets. A proposal to increase the heritage budget line to £3,000 failed, attracting 2 votes for with 6 against and 3 abstentions

RESOLVED: that the total net budget and precept requirement to levy to Wiltshire Council for 2023/24 is £827,301 representing a 3.21% precept rise equating to a Band D figure of £231.11 pa

The **Chair** asked whether a discussion could be arranged at a future meeting to consider how best to manage heritage assets owned by the Town Council.

Thanks were conveyed to the Town Clerk, Office Manager and all involved in drawing up the budgets.

239/22 **OUTSIDE BODIES**

Marlborough Kids Meals: Councillor Cleasby reported that more referrals were coming in all the time. Numbers had increased by 75% since the summer, rising from 9-10 families to 40 families now in need of hot food and food support on a weekly basis.

Marlborough Area Poverty Action Group (MAPAG): Councillor Thomas reported that, alongside Marlborough Kids Meals, 77 x £40 Tesco vouchers were being distributed to households in need. The **Town Mayor** was organising food parcels, working with Marlborough College, the Jubilee Centre and Marlborough Youth Football Club.

Councillor Thomas let Members know about a new Marlborough Area Youth Forum, with **Councillors Hall, Thomas** and the **Town Mayor** as trustees. It was recruiting for a youth worker.

Allotment Association: Councillor Luson reported on recent team tidy days at St Johns Close and Stonebridge allotments, a manure delivery from a local farmer for Elcot Lane allotments and that a new Facebook Admin had been found. He believed there were currently 26 people on the waiting list for allotments. The next meeting would take place in February.

240/22 **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

In accordance with para 3.1 of the Scheme of Delegation, members noted the approved minutes of the following committee meetings: **Planning** – 17 October and 14 November, and **Finance & Policy** – 24 October 2022.

241/22 **MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME**

No questions had been submitted.

242/22 **COMMON SEAL**

Proposed by **Councillor Ross** and seconded by **Councillor Hall** 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 8.51 pm

Signed:
Town Mayor

Date: