

# Marlborough Town Council



## Full Town Council

### Minutes of a meeting of Marlborough Town Council held Monday, 15 December 2025 in the Court Room, Marlborough Town Hall at 7pm

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<b>PRESENT</b>	Councillor Emily Trow	Town Mayor
	Councillor Nicholas Fogg	
	Councillor Mervyn Hall	
	Councillor Mark Cooper	
	Councillor Kym-Marie Cleasby	also Wiltshire Councillor – Marlborough East
	Councillor Kelvyn Shantry	
	Councillor Caroline Sadler	
	Councillor Abi Beaumont	
	Councillor Peter Morgan	
	Councillor Kim Wakeham	
	Richard Spencer-Williams	Town Clerk
	Dawn Whitehall	Corporate Services Officer
<b>ALSO</b>		
<b>PRESENT</b>	Neil Goodwin	Marlborough.News
	Mathilde Scheepers	Chair, Marlborough Youth Council

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**The Mayor** introduced **Malthilde Scheepers**, Chair of Marlborough Youth Council, and Councillors welcomed her to the meeting.

#### **MOMENT OF QUIET REFLECTION**

#### **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions.

#### **CRIME AND DISORDER**

PC Steele was unable to attend but had provided a written update report. This was tabled for Councillors: any questions arising should be submitted via the Town Clerk.

#### **QUESTIONS TO AND FROM WILTSHIRE COUNCILLORS**

**Councillor Cooper** asked for confirmation about Wiltshire Council's (WC) plans for the Marlborough Household Recycling Centre: it had been reported that from next year it would be available only by appointment. He didn't believe there had been a public

consultation about it. If the reports were true, he raised a number of concerns for residents, for example:

- Who could not store waste for long periods of time
- Who did not have access to the internet
- Workers who could only attend at weekends and who might have to wait weeks for an appointment. He did not believe appointments were necessary at all: as a regular user at weekends himself, he rarely encountered a queue

He had noticed where similar schemes had been introduced in the past there had been a lot of public anger and negativity towards the change.

Other Councillors added concerns about sanitary waste/nappies, where storing these for 3 weeks may not be practical; concerns about increased traffic and use of Marlborough HRC as the Cherhill site that was closing was close to Marlborough – would the site still close on Tuesdays and Wednesdays? What would this mean for traffic, congestion and air quality due to emissions from queuing vehicles?

Others echoed Cllr Cooper's comments – that the current system worked perfectly well at Marlborough and there was no need to change it. They also challenged the 'one system for all' approach as bureaucratic and questioned whether it was a valid reason to introduce it.

**Councillor Cleasby** welcomed the opportunity to explain:

- Waste arrangements would be changing next year to build towards a more sustainable process. Food waste collections would be introduced; bags would be provided to recycle flexible plastics. As these items are probably currently put into the general waste bin, it was envisioned that general waste volumes would reduce.
- Household Recycling Centre (HRC) closures: two (which were not owned by Wiltshire Council) would be closed in the north of the county because the contracts were due for renewal and the cost would be something like four times greater than the previous contract which was unsustainable to the Council and would result in a rise in council tax. The search for alternative site/s was under way, including potentially at Royal Wootton Bassett.
- HRC online booking system: there will be a consultation; Wiltshire Council was basing the introduction on best practice in other councils. There would be a trial in areas that would most likely be affected by the closure of nearby HRCs. This did not include Marlborough. Councillor Cleasby was pushing to make sure the system includes a 'same day' option built in. People would be able to book a slot by phone as well as online, and there should be some flexibility built into the system. Waste teams operate county-wide, not by town, which is why it makes sense for WC to streamline processes and use one system.
- There would be a consultation about the changes to waste and recycling collections as well.
- Over 58% of local councils operate a booking scheme. Government (DeFRA) investigations showed it did not cause more fly tipping or have an impact on residents. Some areas were delighted with their booking systems. It would be trialled and the results considered, also taking into account public consultation.

- Sanitary waste: Some Councils included ‘purple bags’ for nappy/sanitary waste which were collected more frequently than 3-weekly; this had been raised already as best practice and she would need to confirm whether WC intend do the same.
- Traffic: modelling showed that Marlborough HRC shouldn’t be affected too much by the Cherhill closure. WC needed to do what was evidence based and fair to everyone. It was difficult to do different things in different parts of Wiltshire, would create more work for staff and may even reduce queues, lessening the environmental impact from attending vehicles. Trials would be conducted to test the effect; the outcome might be that booking isn’t found to be appropriate for Wiltshire.
- Councillor Cleasby had produced some Q&A sheets which were available for people to take away from the meeting.

### **301/25 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence had been received from **Councillors Farrell, Sheppard, Luson, O’Brien, Wrench and Awbery.**

### **302/25 DECLARATIONS**

**Councillor Cooper** – agenda item 6 – Kennet Place Community Garden – non-pecuniary interest.

### **303/25 MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

It was very sad news to hear that Jonathan Genton died in a collision with a lorry on the A4 last week. Jonathan had been with Marlborough College for a long time. He was a member of the Dark Skies Working Group representing the Blakett Observatory, and we worked closely on all things Marlborough Dark Skies over the last 3 or 4 years. Jonathan was a genuinely lovely man, incredibly knowledgeable and passionate, and a hugely valued member of our working group who continue to meet regularly to raise awareness and promote the importance of Dark Skies in Marlborough and the wider NWD National Landscape. He will be greatly missed, and Councillors were asked to keep him and his family in their thoughts. When the family is ready, a memorial service will be arranged at the Chapel at Marlborough College to give thanks for his life.

After a delay caused by the late arrival of documents from the Land Registry, the Town Clerk had registered an application to Wiltshire Council to list Postern Hill Camp Site as an asset of community value. He would arrange a meeting with the residents who had originally raised the question (e.g. Milly Carmichael) and others in the new year.

### **304/25 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meetings held 3 November 2025 and 10 November 2025 were confirmed as true records and signed by the Town Mayor

### **305/25 ACTION LOG**

Members noted the updated action log.

*Councillor Cooper did not take part in the discussion and did not vote*

Members noted the Town Clerk's update report and further considered the request for the Town Council to apply to Wiltshire Council for an asset transfer of Kennet Place 'community garden' or to adopt responsibility for part of the verge:

- The Town Clerk's report listed a number of considerations: with the lack of clarity on expectations about the level of maintenance the Town Council could offer, unclear boundaries/shared use arrangements with Krumbz cafe and questions about water supply, although there was support for the proposal in principle, whether any decision should be deferred until more questions had been answered.
- The Town Clerk clarified that Wiltshire Council currently owns the entire strip of former roadside verge – including the community garden and the area used by Krumbz café for outside seating; there was no legal agreement between WC and either party; current use was based on a long-standing shared understanding only
- Whether to clearly define the area and only proceed with a s96 licence for the 'garden' part, leaving maintenance of the riverbank and the area used by Krumbz in the ownership of Wiltshire Council
- No desire to take on the part used by Krumbz, which could result in the Town Council having sitting tenants and potential conflict of interest (e.g. when considering alcohol licence applications)
- A concern not to overburden the grounds team and add more fragmented pockets of land, especially ones that would require high levels of upkeep
- A desire not to compromise Krumbz café's business, and to better understand whether there were any formal arrangements for its use of part of the area
- Acknowledgement of the enormous contribution Mrs Compton had made to create and maintain the garden
- Whether the location was suitable for a SuDS (sustainable drainage) rain garden
- Whether nearby residents would have any interest in contributing to the maintenance of the garden
- Whether the Marlborough Gardening Association would have any interest in contributing to the maintenance of the garden
- Whether to revert the area to mown grass
- Whether to convert the area to create more parking space, which is at a premium for residents in this part of town
- Whether to decline the request
- Whether to canvass the wider community to test interest in forming a committee to self-manage the garden under current ownership arrangements before agreeing for the Town Council to take it on
- A recognition that the area is much loved and admired by the community, had been recognised by South West in Bloom, and general support to ensure its future once all the issues could be addressed

During a suspension of Standing Orders, the Chair of Marlborough Youth Council asked whether there would be any opportunity for the community to have a say in the future of the garden, if changes were to be proposed. The Mayor confirmed that at the moment there were no plans to change it, but that should that change in future she hoped there would be an opportunity for the local community to get involved.

**RESOLVED:** to defer a decision until there was more clarity, especially around arrangements with Krumbz café and water supply

**307/25**

### **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Members considered granting an extended leave of absence for Deputy Mayor Councillor Mark Luson, should it be required beyond the 6 month period permitted in the Local Government Act (LGA) 1972, s85(1):

- In-service demand of his work was the reason Cllr Luson had been unable to attend since September. The 6 month permitted period would end in March: it was possible Cllr Luson would return before that time
- A proposal to make the position vacant and find a new person to fill the gap was not seconded and therefore not carried
- Cllr Luson had proven to be a very effective Councillor and his skills, keen mind and leadership skills were much valued

**RESOLVED:** that Deputy Mayor Cllr Luson is granted an extended period of absence until the end of June 2026 at which point the status of Cllr Luson's office can be reviewed and, if proposed, a further extension agreed

**308/25**

### **BUDGET 2025-26**

Councillors considered the proposed budget for 2026-27. The **Town Clerk** clarified that the proposed ear marked reserve of £25,000 for Christmas Lights infrastructure was related to replacing and updating power sources and switches, which would enable a different lighting scheme to be considered in the next year or so. Without conducting that work, existing lights could fail and there would be little opportunity to update them.

During a suspension of Standing Orders, the Chair of Marlborough Youth Council passed back feedback from the community, including on colour/'warmth' of the current scheme vs those in other towns, for example Hungerford. She also questioned whether shops and businesses could do more to contribute to the Christmas illuminations. Young people want Marlborough to look nice at Christmas.

**RESOLVED:** that Committee budgets are agreed as proposed by the Finance & Policy Committee, and that a net precept requirement to levy to Wiltshire Council for 2026-27 be £980,772

The precept increase is equivalent to 5% for a Band D property (an increase of £12.97)

**309/25 COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS AWARD POLICY**  
**RESOLVED:** that the Community Champions Award policy is adopted

**310/25 LONE WORKING POLICY**  
**RESOLVED:** that the Lone Working Policy is adopted

**311/25 OUTSIDE BODIES**  
**Councillor Shantry** reported that he and **Councillor Wrench** had met with **Matt Powell**, the Town Council's Youth Worker to discuss creating opportunities for young people to gain work experience placements, which could be linked to schools and/or the Duke of Edinburgh scheme. Some businesses had already come forward, and it was hoped that Matt could attend the Marlborough Business Network January meeting to discuss this directly with members.

**Councillor Hall** confirmed that the 3G pitch installed at St John's was now in use, and it was very impressive. There would be a formal opening in January.

**Councillor Beaumont** encouraged everyone to visit The Merchant's House which was currently themed as Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. It is only £20 per year to become a Friend, and she encouraged everyone to join. The retail shop was facing challenges from other similar outlets in the town but was working on it. The incoming Chair was a good addition to the Trust and appeared to bring fresh energy to the group.

**312/25 COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
In accordance with para 3.1 of the Scheme of Delegation, Members noted the approved minutes of the following committee meetings: Planning on 27 October and 17 November 2025, and Finance and Policy on 20 October 2025.

**313/25 COMMON SEAL**  
Proposed by **Cllr Fogg** and seconded by **Cllr 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 8.08 pm

Signed: .....  
Town Mayor

Date: .....