

# Marlborough Town Council



## Finance and Policy Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee held Monday, 22 April 2024 in the Council Chamber, Marlborough Town Hall at 7pm

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<b>PRESENT</b>	Councillor Mervyn Hall	Chair
	Councillor Nicholas Fogg	Town Mayor
	Councillor Kym-Marie Cleasby	
	Councillor Jane Davies	
	Councillor James Sheppard	
	Councillor Kelvin Shantry	
	Richard Spencer-Williams	Town Clerk
	Dawn Whitehall	Corporate Services Officer
<b>ALSO PRESENT</b>	Councillor Caroline Sadler	Observing
	Donna Kirby	2 <sup>nd</sup> Marlborough Scout Group
	Karen Monk	Wiltshire Sight

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### **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions.

**332/23 APOLOGIES**  
Apologies for absence were received from **Councillor Thomas**.

**333/23 DECLARATIONS**  
As Wiltshire Councillors who sit on the Area Board **Councillors Davies** and **Sheppard** would not vote on the small grant application submitted by 2<sup>nd</sup> Marlborough Scout Group (agenda item 6c) as they believed a grant application towards the same project would also be considered at the Area Board.

**334/23 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
The Chair read out a letter of thanks which had been received from Alzheimer's Support following the Town Council's grant award of £736 at the previous meeting (29 January 2024) towards the group's home support service.

**335/23 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held 29 January 2024 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**336/23 ACTION LOG**

Members commended the Town Clerk that there were no outstanding actions on the action log.

**337/23 GRANTS**

Karen Monk summarised the application by Wiltshire Sight seeking £500 to support its work providing sight loss services to around 60 residents, including the provision of a monthly community hub at the Jubilee Centre.

**RESOLVED:** (i) to award £500 to Wiltshire Sight towards its sight loss services and community hub

*Councillors Davies and Sheppard did not vote on the following item*

Donna Kirby presented the application from 2<sup>nd</sup> Marlborough Scout Group, seeking £1,000 to fill the shortfall in funding already raised towards a new roof for the Scout Hut which would be replaced with sustainable and non-polluting materials.

**RESOLVED:** (ii) to award £1,000 to 2<sup>nd</sup> Marlborough Scout Group towards a new roof for the Scout Hut

An application from The Greatwood Charity seeking £1,000 towards a horse box had been withdrawn as full funding had been achieved after submitting the application.

*Karen Monk left the meeting*

**338/23 FINANCE REPORT**

Members noted the finance report for Q4/month 12. Matters arising included:

- The Town Clerk answered questions about mayoral badges, cemetery income, refuse collection costs and income from The Showmen's Guild
- Members noted that the budget for public toilets was overspent as a result of repairing damage caused by vandalism
- Income from bank interest had increased on the previous year

**Councillor Shantry** thanked the **Town Clerk** for the clear presentation of the summary report.

Members witnessed **Councillor Hall** (Vice Chair of the Property Committee) and **Councillor Fogg** (Town Mayor) signing the Bank Reconciliation Statement (31 March 2024)

ACTION: provide a report for a future meeting breaking down the costs associated with robes and civic insignia

### 339/23 RESERVES

Members noted the report by Councillor Thomas (Chair) and the Town Clerk setting out the Council's financial position at year-end and considered proposals for how the reserves and CIL fund could be allocated to support service and project commitments in 2024-25.

It was noted that until the year-end closing of the accounts (early May) the sums discussed were approximate and could be subject to change.

Members considered 8 proposals set out in the report and the general reserve position:

#### Proposals

1. **Agreed:** £24,000 (*a grant from the Wiltshire Towns Programme*) to be allocated from the general reserve to an Ear Marked Reserve (EMR) for the remaining High Street project work
2. **Agreed:** any year-end saving is allocated to the Property Maintenance EMR
3. **RESOLVED:** (i) to split the Devolution Services EMR (£46,000) into two EMRs: Devolution Services and Marlborough Community and Youth Centre (MCYC)  
**RESOLVED:** (ii) to allocate £20,000 to the MCYC EMR and £26,000 to the Devolution Services EMR
4. **Not supported:** To use Museum and Heritage EMR to top up Town Hall maintenance/projects
5. **Agreed in principle:** to recommend an increase in the Property Maintenance precept budget line for 2025-26 from £40,000 to £50,000 at the autumn budget setting round
6. **RESOLVED:** (iii) in principle that S106 funds associated with the redevelopment of York Place be used to improve amenity space at Marlborough Common
7. **RESOLVED:** (iv) in principle, current Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds be used to supplement improved amenity provision at Marlborough Common subject to an Amenities & Open Spaces Committee detailed proposal and plan
8. a) **Not supported:** future CIL fund to be used to supplement Property Maintenance requirements as matters emerge.  
  
b) **Noted:** future CIL funds be allocated towards enhanced facilities at Salisbury Road Recreation Ground

c) **Noted:** future CIL funds to meet future requests via the Town Centre Working Party and Amenities & Open Spaces Committee

### General Reserve

The general reserve fund as of 31 March 2024 was £541,815. The Council is required to retain 3-6 months in this reserve fund, equating to:

- 3 months = £222,732
- 4 months = £296,976
- 6 months = £445,465

As the general reserve was above requirements, the report highlighted that approximately £100,000 could be moved to the Property Maintenance EMR to help replenish funds following the cost of replacing the Town Hall boilers. Discussion points included:

- **Councillor Hall** noted that possible future requirements from reserve funds not mentioned in the report or yet costed/fully budgeted included maintenance of the Community & Youth Centre, especially replacing the flat roof at some point, and the creation of an informal car park adjacent to Marlborough Rugby Club (for which there was an ear marked sum of £10,000).
- The Town Hall boiler replacement would deplete current funds

A proposal to move surplus funds above the minimum 3-month requirement to the Property Maintenance EMR did not receive a seconder.

**RESOLVED:** (v) to transfer £100,000 from the General Reserve to the Property Maintenance Ear Marked Reserve

**340/23**

### **INTERNAL AUDIT**

Members noted and accepted the recommendations in the 2<sup>nd</sup> interim internal audit report.

Bank Reconciliation Statements (see 338/23 above) required two signatures: as Committee meetings took place approximately quarterly, it was suggested that two Councillors should be asked to sign monthly statements in the intervening period.

**341/23**

### **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

Members considered the draft complaints procedure for referral to Full Town Council.

One change was proposed for clarification in point 3 (Definition) to change:

“...There is no difference between a ‘formal’ and an ‘informal’ complaint...”

To

“...For the purposes of this policy there is no difference between a ‘formal’ and an ‘informal’ complaint...”

**RESOLVED:** that the draft Complaints Policy is agreed with one change to be recommended to Full Town Council for ratification

**342/23 COUNCIL AWARDS POLICY**

Members considered civic awards and whether to create three types of award which could be made in any municipal year, with guidance and related policies:

- 1 x Lifetime Recognition Award
- 2 x Mayoral Awards
- 3 x Council Community Awards

There were a number of questions raised, including the level of formality, whether the categories would exclude the ability to recognise certain types of achievement in the community, and whether a limit on the number of awards should be applied. It was agreed that an updated draft was required before the Committee could approve it.

**RESOLVED:** to ask the Civic Working Party to review the draft and recommend an updated version for approval

The meeting closed at 8.27 pm

Signed: ..... Date: .....  
Chair