

**MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL  
FULL TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of **Marlborough Town Council** which was held on  
**Monday, 12 April 2021** at 7pm via videoconference

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<b>PRESENT</b>	Councillor Mark Cooper Councillor Bryan Castle Councillor Mrs Peggy Dow Councillor Nicholas Fogg Councillor Andrew Ross Councillor Alexander Kirk Wilson Councillor Guy Loosmore Councillor Noel Barrett-Morton Councillor Lisa Farrell Councillor Mervyn Hall Councillor Susie Price Councillor Andy Wilson Councillor Donald Heath Councillor Jo Waltham Councillor Vanessa Hillier	Town Mayor
<b>ALSO PRESENT</b>	Richard Spencer-Williams Dawn Whitehall Councillor Stewart Dobson Fr John Blacker PC Grigor Neil Goodwin Plus 30 members of the public	Town Clerk Administrator Wiltshire Councillor – Marlborough East Mayor's Chaplain Wiltshire Police Marlborough.News

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**MINUTE'S SILENCE**

The Mayor asked all present to join in a minute's silence in remembrance of HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh.

**PRAYERS**

Fr. Blacker led the meeting in prayers.

**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

**Neil Goodwin** – asked whether there would be an election for Town Councillors in Marlborough West Ward, and what the costs of an election would be. The **Mayor** confirmed that the official list would be published by Wiltshire Council on 16 April, but it was understood that the proposer for one candidate was not from the West Ward and so the form may be invalid. Whether there would be an election would depend on the confirmed list to be published on 16 April. Any costs would be determined by Wiltshire Council.

**Caroline Thomas** – referred to recent reports about sewage entering the River Kennet and asked for the Town Council's views in light of proposed developments which would put more pressure on the water systems. The **Mayor** welcomed Councillor-elect Thomas and agreed that reports of sewage in the Kennet were not good. It would be important to consider the infrastructure when considering planning applications and it would never be acceptable for sewage to leak into the river.

The **Town Clerk** read out a question received from a member of the public relating to item 5 (proposed training pitch on Marlborough Common): “As an alternative to using public monies for customising land on The Common for an additional rugby training area has the St John’s School sports facilities been considered for this purpose? The **Mayor** declared an interest as an employee of St Johns Academy. The Mayor clarified the proposed training area on The Common had been requested by Marlborough Rugby Football Club. The Town Council was aware of a general requirement for sports facilities across the town and that this had been encompassed in the Marlborough Neighbourhood Plan process.

### **CRIME AND DISORDER**

PC Emily Grigor was attending on behalf of Sergeant Edwards who was unable to attend. With the weather improving the Community Policing Team (CPT) was increasing anti-social behaviour patrols. In response to comments from Members about speeding traffic or anti-social behaviour, PC Grigor agreed that patrols would be varied to include Cherry Orchard, the disused railway path near Priorsfield and St Mary’s churchyard. The CPT would always be happy to follow up reports of anti-social behaviour if they were reported to them.

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

The **Mayor** paid tribute to **Councillors Fogg** and **Dobson** who were both retiring from their Unitary Councillor roles after many years’ service, thanking them for their long service on behalf of the people of Marlborough. **Councillors Fogg** and **Dobson** both thanked the Mayor for his kind words and regarded their long service to the people of Marlborough as a privilege. **Councillor Fogg** would remain as a Town Councillor for the next Council term. Questions arising included:

**Councillor Waltham** referred to **Councillor Dobson’s** update at the Planning Committee meeting on 6 April 2021 where he stated that Wiltshire Council was to transfer part of the disused railway line to the owners of Marlborough Business Park and asked whether the Town Council would have the opportunity to comment before the transfer went ahead?

**Councillor Dobson** believed the transfer had already taken place but would check. He was aware of the Town Council’s long-standing aspiration to join the existing cycle path through to St John’s, but believed reservations expressed by residents presented challenges. Any changes to the area would be subject to normal planning rules and so the Town Council would be consultees; he also believed a condition of the transfer was that a footpath be included.

**Councillor Farrell** asked whether there was any way a housing association could be prevented from selling off flats in Five Stiles Road that were an important part of the town’s social housing stock, and whether the conditions of the remaining social housing could be improved for tenants? **Councillor Dobson** confirmed it was not possible to prevent associations from selling and, although there was a condition to reinvest in newer social housing, this could be anywhere in the group’s area and not necessarily in Marlborough. Wiltshire Council’s Cabinet Member had expressed similar concerns, but a Government Directive allowed the process to continue. He had a list of all the local associations he could send to the Town Clerk if the Town Council were minded to write to each to express their concerns and request reinvestment in replacement social developments in the town. He also understood there were around 80 families waiting for the opportunity to find social housing in Marlborough.

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### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from **Councillor Cairns**.

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### **DECLARATIONS**

There were no declarations of interest.

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## MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor was sure everyone in the town would join him and all Councillors in expressing their condolences to Her Majesty The Queen and the Royal Family on hearing the sad news of the passing of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh.

Today, 12 April, was another step on the path to the easing of the Coronavirus pandemic lockdown and it had been great to see people out and about enjoying the sunshine in the town centre earlier in the day. The Town Council was now cautiously taking bookings for weddings at the Town Hall and group bookings for the Youth Centre.

Other dates to look out for included elections on 6 May and Mayor Making on 17 May, which would have to be held under Covid-safe limitations, with a live stream planned to be available in lieu of the usual invitations to guests to attend in person.

As this was the last Full Council meeting of this Council's 4-year term, the Mayor took the opportunity to thank all Councillors for their support to him over the past year and to the people of Marlborough throughout their term. In his view this had been a very positive Council: progressive, friendly, and non-political: Members should all be proud of what they had achieved. The new Council in May would consist of some very talented Members who he had no doubt would continue the good work. In particular he thanked each of those Councillors who were retiring and paid tribute to them: **Councillors Peggy Dow, Alexander Kirk Wilson, Deputy Mayor Andy Wilson, Susie Price** and **Peter Cairns**. It had been an honour and a privilege to serve with each of them.

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## MINUTES

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2021 were approved as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor

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## PROPOSED TRAINING PITCH ON MARLBOROUGH COMMON

Members noted the outcome of the consultation feedback on the proposed training pitch on The Common and considered next steps.

In introducing the topic the **Mayor** highlighted the consultation report where 1,584 responses had been received with 66% in support of the proposal. Of these 951 of the responses were from people within the parish with 58% in support of the proposal. In asking Members to consider next steps before coming to a final decision he drew their attention to the need for information still awaited including:

- The results of additional surveys (ecology; topology)
- A better understanding of the costs (pitch and legal costs)
- The Council's obligations in terms of protecting the status of The Common
- Safety considerations (traffic, car parking, pedestrian safety)

It would be important to demonstrate good process and justify all decisions made.

The **Town Clerk** confirmed that the Town Council had a legal duty to consider the environmental impact so must wait for the outcome of the ecological survey. The environment had also been a key point raised by many members of the public. Work was ongoing in terms of topological surveys to provide financial information. He drew out key points from both ongoing work and the feedback to the consultation which included:

- Financial quotations
- Expert advice about timing for an ecological survey
- Potential locations
- Addressing concerns raised about highway safety and increased traffic
- The interests of all users of The Common

The Town Clerk recommended Members defer a final decision until they had more

information.

The **Mayor** hoped this could be done before the end of June to help the Rugby and Youth Football teams understand the way forward. Discussion points included:

- Recognition that additional training space was important for the children of Marlborough
- Recognition that the Common was for everyone to enjoy
- Whether the results of the consultation demonstrated there was public support for the proposed pitch to go ahead
- That the number of responses, and the passionate comments received, underlined the importance of The Common to residents
- Some Members expressed a desire to decide as soon as possible
- Some Members expressed caution and advised they should take time to make the right decision
- Whether the flora and fauna survey findings would have an impact on other events (or locations) that took place on The Common
- Whether to expedite the ecological survey as soon as possible
- That there were seasonal limitations on when ecological surveys could take place (May to September)
- The management of the advertising boards
- An appeal to MRFC to address and take more responsibility for highways/car parking concerns
- To clarify what was being requested – i.e. a flat area of grass only
- Whether granting permission for the training area would lead to future requests to include barriers or goalposts
- That the recent consultation was not a referendum and it was for the Town Council to decide on the best location
- To take into consideration the rights of all users of Common land
- In particular to consider the needs of Marlborough Model Flying Club
- That the views of other users of the Common must be taken into consideration
- Whether all Groups using the Common had yet been approached to ask for their plans
- Whether to begin considering possible locations ahead of the survey results
- Whether to call an extraordinary meeting in order to speed up the decision-making process
- That resolutions had already been taken on a way forward (*Min. 395/20, Full Town Council held 18 January 2021*) and whether any proposed change to that resolution would be subject to Standing Orders

There were several attempts to frame a specific proposal to express a desire to carry out as much work in parallel as possible in order to make a decision as soon as sufficient information was available to do so.

**RESOLVED:** that the Town Council supports in principle the request to create an additional training area subject to a satisfactory flora and fauna survey and satisfactory cost/benefit analysis

Members agreed that other issues arising, such as highway safety, could be built into the project plan through discussion with the Rugby Club and Town Council.

The **Mayor** thanked everyone for their contribution and said that he wanted to support the request to provide more facilities for young people as well as make sure that other users'

needs were addressed. The passionate views expressed by all parties showed how much the people of Marlborough cared about the Common and he was confident a solution could be found that would suit everyone.

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**DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR 2021/22**

Following a decision by Deputy Mayor Elect **Councillor Wilson** not to stand for re-election two nominations had been received:

**Councillor Farrell** (proposed by Councillor Hall and seconded by Councillor Cooper)

**Councillor Heath** (proposed by Councillor Barrett-Morton and seconded by Councillor Fogg)

In a show of hands, there were 9 votes for Councillor Farrell and 6 votes for Councillor Heath.

**RESOLVED:** that Councillor Farrell will be Deputy Mayor for 2021/22

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**COMMITTEE MINUTES**

In accordance with para 3.1 of the Scheme of Delegation, Members noted the approved minutes of the **Finance and Policy Committee** held 11 January 2021 and the **Planning Committee** held 22 February 2021.

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**MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

No questions had been submitted.

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**COMMON SEAL**

Proposed by **Councillor Castle** and seconded by **Councillor Dow** 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 8.43pm

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

Town Mayor