

## Climate Emergency Declaration

**Summary** – Following its declaration of a climate emergency on 7 September 2020, this report asks Members to consider how the Town Council can address the issue of climate breakdown at a local level

### 1. Background

At the Full Council meeting on 7 September 2020, the following important resolution was made:

**RESOLVED:** that Marlborough Town Council will declare a climate emergency and follow up to create an action plan via either a standing agenda item or a working party, taking guidance from the approach of similar town councils such as Bradford-on-Avon

The covering informative report submitted at that meeting is at **Appendix 1**

### 2. Governance and Decision Making

This declaration will have an impact on the running of the Town Council and any decision taken will need to take into account how it will impact on climate change. This will include decisions around ethical investments, procurement of goods, the energy efficiency of council-owned buildings, etc. Full Council and all its Standing Committees will have a role to play. Councillors now need to consider governance arrangements for climate change. Initial work to draw together a strategy or policies and an Action Plan might be dealt with as follows:

- i) The formation of a Working Group made up of Councillors and representatives from local environmental groups as well as local experts reporting to Full Town Council which meets every 6 weeks
- ii) The formation of a Working Group made up of Councillors and representatives from local environmental groups as well as local experts reporting to the Planning Committee (its title could be extended to the Planning & Environment Committee\*) which meets every 3 weeks
- iii) The formation of a new Standing Committee – Climate Change Committee. This would require additional administrative resource and as a standalone committee may not fulfil the need for climate change to impact all areas of the council's work. Non-Councillors would not be able to form part of this committee.

*\*This is the route that Bradford-on-Avon Town Council has taken*

### 3. Next Steps

There are changes being implemented at national level, Wiltshire Council too is leading the way with a number of initiatives (<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/green-economy-climate-change>) and towns and parishes will follow. As has been seen at other town councils (Bradford-on-Avon, Stroud, Frome, etc – **See Appendix 1**), work is done in collaboration with others. Key to this will be to engage with local communities so everyone has a better understanding of why local action will benefit the wider climate emergency. Whilst it cannot resolve all climate issues, the Town Council is in a unique position to work with other partners to convene and facilitate changes.

The Town Clerk has drawn up a draft Action Plan as a starting point. This is at **Appendix 2**

**4. Points to Note**

In line with other councils, Members should consider taking on a professional part time officer to work on climate change projects.

**5. Financial Implications**

Work has already begun in terms of looking at budgets for 2021/2022. If resources are needed for this then funding will need to be factored in during the current budget setting round.

**Town Clerk's Recommendation**

Following the declaration of a climate emergency made on 7 September, the Town Clerk recommends that Members:

- i) Consider how this work should now be taken forward in terms of the options listed at i) – iii) at para. 2 and
- ii) If a Working Party is to be formed, nominate Members to be part of this to consider bringing in other non-Councillor members and begin to draw up a strategy, policies and an action plan

**Town Clerk**

**29 October 2020**



**3. Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications to the Town Council other than a potential loss of hire income for the community space at Cooper's Corner. It is hoped that the community benefit will far outweigh any financial loss.

**4. Point to Note**

This project fits well with work around climate change following the Town Council's declaration of a climate emergency on 7 September.

**Recommendation**

Members are requested to note the update and confirm the Town Council's support for this project to include the use of the community room at Cooper's Corner at no cost.

**Assistant Town Clerk**

**25 October 2020**

## Marlborough Dark Skies Fest 'At Home' Virtual Festival 2020

**Summary** - To note an update report with feedback from the recent Dark Skies 'At Home' virtual festival held on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2020



### 1. Background

Due to the ongoing uncertainty surrounding Covid-19, Marlborough's first Dark Skies Fest scheduled for 2-4 October 2020 had to be postponed and will now take place from Monday 25 to Sunday 31 October 2021.

### 2. Current Situation

There was a will within the working party to celebrate, in some way, the weekend of the original festival and following discussions it was agreed to co-ordinate a mini virtual festival on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2020.

Contact was made with contributors to the 'real' festival which brought a lot of interest and offers of support to work with us on a virtual format. Time was tight, but a programme slowly started to emerge which focussed on Children, Wildlife, Space, Dark Skies/Light Pollution, Stargazing and the Arts. The working party are very fortunate to have Charles Barclay, Director of the Blakett Observatory as a member. Charles and his colleague, local astronomer and astrophotographer, Gavin Williams, recorded three fantastic and very informative short talks which formed the basis of the programme, setting a very high benchmark. 11 videos were created in total, all of which were pre-recorded and ran as scheduled posts on social media, linking to a newly created 'Marlborough Dark Skies Fest' YouTube channel. Whilst the viewing figures were not 'through the roof', the videos on YouTube have, to date, had 598 views and there has been consistent, positive engagement on our dedicated Facebook page. We will continue to promote and share these videos for future viewing. Marlborough Dark Skies Fest 'At Home' would not have been possible without the support and generosity of all the contributors, all of whom are committed to attending next years' festival in person. The virtual festival was a new concept to many of us and at times a steep learning curve, but it all came together and we now have a platform to build on going forward. Please see the final programme at **Appendix 1**.

### 3. Financial Implications

All the talks and presentations were put together at no cost to the Town Council.

### Recommendation

Members are requested to note the feedback and, if they haven't already, are encouraged to watch the videos on Marlborough Dark Skies Fest YouTube channel.

**Assistant Town Clerk**

**27 October 2020**

## Tourist Information Centre

**Summary** – Following an agreement made in principle to register an interest in having a tourist information presence at St Peter's, this report asks Members to consider whether to make a firm commitment to the proposal

### 1. Background

An extract of the minutes of the Full Council meeting on 7 September 2020 is as follows:

#### 175/20 TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

The **Mayor** welcomed **Belinda Richardson, Tourism Officer** and **David Du Croz, Chairman of St Peter's Trust** to the meeting. Councillors considered a proposal received from St Peter's Trust to create a Tourist Information Centre (TIC) in the church vestry/baptistry, looking ahead to a launch date in the spring of 2021. Councillors also noted that St Peter's next Trustee meeting would take place in October 2020 and by then they intended to have clear proposals in place for consideration so were seeking a decision, in principle, from the Town Council at this stage. Discussion points included:

- Generally a good level of support for the proposal as St Peter's was a prestigious building and would attract tourists
- Whether St Peter's would catch passing trade
- Whether a location more central to the High Street would be preferable
- Whether other sites had been considered and how they compared, for example costs and location
- Whether research into other similar towns' TICs had been conducted
- Whether 5 High Street could accommodate a 'shop front' for the Town Council combined with a TIC
- Whether it represented best value for money compared to other locations
- Whether equipment and technology had yet been considered – it would be preferable to identify what a TIC should contain and then specify the required floor space rather than to find a space then fit the contents to it
- How it would be used considering the small tourist information point already owned by the Town Council at Cooper's Corner adjacent to the coach park, intended to be supplied with maps and leaflets
- How it would be resourced, whether by volunteers, staff, or both and what the additional costs would be
- That it was often hard to find volunteers for local ventures (The Merchant's House was quoted as an example) and the ongoing pandemic would add to that difficulty
- That a lot of progress had been made to improve Marlborough's tourism offering since appointing the Tourism Officer and it was important to see it through
- Whether Great West Way would want to partner with the TIC
- That detailed negotiations had not yet taken place to determine annual costs
- Whether an agreement in principle at this stage would allow some sort of tourism presence at St Peter's even if this proposal was not pursued
- That no budget existed on the Action Plan for a TIC beyond the Coopers Corner building (a small room aimed at those visitors parking in George Lane car park and those travelling by coach)
- That additional costs should be considered for future years, where precepts were likely to be affected by additional devolution of services from Wiltshire Council
- Whether there was enough information available at this point to take a decision

**RESOLVED:** that Marlborough Town Council agrees, in principle, to register an interest in having a tourist information presence at St Peter's, but that more information is required before a firm financial commitment can be made

Update – It has become clear during initial budget discussions for 2020/21, that whilst St Peter’s Church offers an ideal position for a tourism presence, at this time and in the midst of a continuing pandemic, a long term commitment to it would be difficult to make. Whilst a Tourism Information Centre remains a long term ambition, funds will not allow for it in the short term. Additionally, the Tourism Officer has also enquired about the possibility of external funds from VisitWiltshire and Great West Way - neither is able to offer support for this initiative at the moment.

### **2. Financial Implications**

The current tourism budget allocation is £5,000 which would not allow for the cost of a lease/licence, staffing and other associated costs for this project.

### **Town Clerk’s Recommendation**

The Town Clerk recommends that Members consider whether the Town Council can make a firm commitment to having a tourism presence at St Peter’s Church in the short term.

**Town Clerk**

**29 October 2020**

## Membership of Standing Committees

**Summary** – This report asks Members to consider committee membership for newly co-opted Councillor Jo Waltham.

### 1. Background

Councillor Waltham was co-opted to the Town Council on 7 September 2020. All Councillors have seats with voting rights on Full Town Council and the Planning Committee (with the exception of the Town Mayor who has an ex-officio role on Planning). Vacancies left following the resignation of Cllr Ed Northeast are on the Finance & Policy and Property Committees. Councillor Waltham has expressed an interest in sitting on both of these committees.

### 2. Point to Note

Committee memberships are normally changed at the first meeting of the Town Council in May 2020. However, due to the pandemic, it was agreed that membership of committees and any associated working parties would remain as agreed for 2019/2020.

### Town Clerk's Recommendation

The Town Clerk recommends that Members nominate Councillor Waltham to the Finance & Policy and Property Committees.

**Town Clerk**

**28 October 2020**



## Christmas and New Year Opening Hours

**Summary** - To note a report by the Town Clerk and consider a recommendation about opening hours and holidays over the Christmas and New Year period

### 1. Background

It is suggested that the office opening hours are as follows over the festive period:

<b>Monday, 21 December</b>	<b>Normal Working Hours</b>
<b>Tuesday, 22 December</b>	<b>Normal Working Hours</b>
<b>Wednesday, 23 December</b>	<b>Normal Working Hours</b>
<b>Thursday, 24 December</b>	<b>Office Closed - PM</b>
<b>Friday, 25 December – Christmas Day</b>	<b>Office Closed</b>
<b>Monday, 28 December</b>	<b>Office Closed (in lieu of Boxing Day)</b>
<b>Tuesday, 29 December</b>	<b>Office Closed**</b>
<b>Wednesday, 30 December</b>	<b>Office Closed**</b>
<b>Thursday, 31 December</b>	<b>Office Closed*</b>
<b>Friday, 1 January - News Years Day</b>	<b>Office Closed</b>
<b>Monday, 4 January</b>	<b>Office Re-opens – Normal Office Hours</b>

\*It is suggested that, as in previous years and in line with other local authorities, staff are given an additional privilege day's holiday and that this could be Thursday, 31 December 2020

\*\*As in previous years, staff are expected to take annual leave for these days.

Arrangements will be made for cover from the Grounds Team over the holiday period and the on-call call arrangements via the emergency phone will also be in place.

The first meetings of 2021 are scheduled for **Monday, 11 January 2021**.

### Town Clerk's Recommendation

The Town Clerk recommends that Members agree the timetable for Christmas and New Year opening hours.

**Town Clerk**

**28 October 2020**

## General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

**Summary** - To adopt new and revised GDPR policies as recommended by the Finance & Policy Committee

### 1. Background

One West, the Town Council's appointed Data Protection Officer (DPO), is responsible for advising on the implementation of policies, monitoring compliance with data protection law, providing support and developing related policies and guidelines where applicable, in amongst other data protection related functions. They provide an annual report on compliance directly to the Council and, where relevant, provide the Town Council with advice and recommendations on data protection issues.

Compliance reports, usually following an onsite visit, however due to the pandemic this was not possible this year. The 2020 compliance assessment was therefore conducted remotely, based on information supplied, content on the town council website and the previous years' report.

The Executive Summary within the report concludes that the Town Council has made 'outstanding progress with their compliance position'.

The Assistant Town Clerk has been working closely with the DPO to address areas of weakness and has subsequently revised existing and drafted new policies based on templates supplied by the DPO. The following decision was made by the Finance & Policy Committee on 21 September 2020:

**RESOLVED:** to recommend the following policies (new and revised) (with one change) for adoption by Full Town Council on 2 November 2020: Data Protection; Data Retention; Data Breach and Special Categories of Personal Data and Criminal Offences Data

These policies are attached as follows:

- Data Protection – **Appendix 1**
- Data Retention – **Appendix 2**
- Data Breach – **Appendix 3**
- Special Categories of Personal Data and Criminal Offences Data – **Appendix 4**

### 2. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications.

### Recommendation

The Finance & Policy Committee recommends that the GDPR policies are adopted.

**Assistant Town Clerk**

**28 October 2020**