

MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

FULL TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the **Full Town Council** held on **Monday 9th March 2015** in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Marlborough** at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs E.M. Hannaford-Dobson	Town Mayor
Councillor S.R. Dobson	
Councillor B. Castle	
Councillor N. Fogg	
Councillor Mrs. P. Dow	
Councillor A. Ross	
Councillor A. Kirk Wilson	
Councillor Mrs M. Rose	
Councillor N. Barrett-Morton	
Councillor L. Farrell	
Councillor J. Cook	
Councillor R. Allen	
Councillor B. Lam	
Councillor M. Hall	
Councillor A. Light	

ALSO PRESENT

Mrs. S. Parker	Town Clerk
Mrs D. Whitehall	Administrator
Mr. R. Beale	Grounds & Estates Manager
Mr. T. Millett	Marlborough News Online
Mrs S. Pryor	The Adviser
Revd. H. Cooper	The Mayor's Chaplain
Plus 17 members of the public	

The Mayor held a minute's silence in memory of Cllr. Loosmore's mother who had recently passed away.

PRAYERS

Revd. H. Cooper opened the meeting with prayers.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Mr R. Pitts – Is the Town Council aware that the Marlborough Arts Association has complied with the regulations pertaining to street closures to the full satisfaction over the years of Wiltshire Council and its predecessor body, Kennet District Council? Such street closures were applied for initially on grounds of public safety and advice of the Wiltshire Constabulary. Is the Town Council aware of any factors that could have altered the pertinence of this advice?

The Mayor – was unable to answer specifically as street closure applications were processed through Wiltshire Council. The Town Council was a consultee in the process. The matter would be followed up with Wiltshire Council.

Mr P. Collis (on behalf of Marlborough High Street Retailers Association (MHSRA)) - asked the Chair of Marlborough Town Council to confirm that she will undertake to determine why various events have been approved by Marlborough and Wiltshire Councils despite the failure by the event organisers to follow procedures that are required by Wiltshire Council as it relates to road closures? They also wished to ask that they be given unequivocal assurances that any future event organisers will be required to fully comply with the stated guidance and that in particular event organisers will be required to consult with the MHSRA when road closures will have an impact on Marlborough High Street?

The Mayor – confirmed that Marlborough Town Council’s Planning Committee was a consultee on road closure applications and its decision and comments sent on to Wiltshire Council as part of that application process. The assurances requested would be sought through Wiltshire Council.

Town Clerk – confirmed that she was not the event organiser for the Mop Fairs or Jazz Festival. Also, that requests made by MHSRA under the Freedom of Information Act had been received and were being followed through.

Mr P. Collis – asked that consultation is carried out prior to the Committee voting on road closure.

Mr G. Findlay – Chair, Action for the River Kennet (ARK) said that ARK looked forward to working in partnership with Marlborough Town Council and community user groups on the future management of Cooper’s Meadow and wondered what progress had been made.

The Town Clerk – a resolution had been made at Full Town Council on 15th December 2014 to start up regular meetings about Cooper’s Meadow with all interested parties. At that time, the thinking was to begin discussions once the Community Asset Transfer had been completed. This was moving ahead and in reality, there was no need to postpone these discussions and meetings could be set up sooner rather than later.

CRIME AND DISORDER

Sgt. C. Wallace was not able to attend the meeting and instead submitted a written report the main points of which included that –

- There had been a 5.4% decrease in overall crime reports in the 12 months to February 2015
- Three people had been arrested following a number of daytime burglaries in the Avebury area
- Burglaries to outbuildings and sheds was an ongoing problem, and night operations had been put in place
- A number of stop searches and street warnings had recently been carried out together with the issue of a fixed penalty notice for possession of cannabis
- A male had been recently convicted following a 30th January drunk and disorderly incident in the High Street
- Three drivers had been dealt with for driving without insurance. Vehicles were seized and drivers reported to court
- Marlborough Neighbourhood Policing Team were continuing to use social media and community messaging with good feedback being received.

TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS TO AND FROM WILTSHIRE COUNCILLORS AND REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

Cllr. Fogg – looked forward to welcoming Alistair Sowman, the Mayor of Marlborough District Council in New Zealand, to Marlborough Jazz Festival.

Cllr Fogg - noted that an outline planning application recently submitted by Crown Estates was to include a hotel, providing much-needed accommodation for the town.

Cllr. Fogg - welcomed the planned upgrade of the Post Office to include longer opening hours but raised concerns about the elderly and vulnerable gaining access to services during the closure. Cllr. Farrell reported that residents were coming together on an informal basis to assist those without transport and Cllr. Kirk Wilson was exploring the possibility of the Kennet Community Minibus providing a service one day a week to take the elderly to Burbage Post Office. Town Council staff were awaiting a response from the Post Office about provision of services during the closure.

Cllr. Barrett-Morton – was concerned that the sign above the Bollywood restaurant at 48 Kingsbury Street was out of keeping with the area and had been erected without planning permission. Cllr. Castle confirmed the matter had been reported to Wiltshire Council's Enforcement Officer.

Cllr. Rose – asked Unitary Councillors whether road sweeping services had been stopped as pavements were looking untidy around the town. Cllr. Dobson confirmed the service was still in operation although had suffered from reductions in resources in recent weeks. A complaint had been received from residents in St Martin's about the road and pavements which had been reported to the appropriate officers. A recent Wiltshire Council Community Clear-Up Day had tidied up Back Lane and cleared drainage channels and he urged people to take advantage of such events.

510/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr. Loosmore.

511/14 DECLARATION(S) OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

512/14 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Earlier that day the Town Councillors and Reverend Cooper had participated in a ceremony at the Town Hall to fly a Commonwealth Flag in celebration of Commonwealth Day 2015. The Mayor and Cllr Dobson had read messages from Her Majesty The Queen and His Excellency Kamalesh Sharma, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth and the Mayor's Chaplain, Rev. Heather Cooper read a specially written Commonwealth Affirmation and prayer for the peoples of the Commonwealth. The Mayor expressed her thanks to those Councillors who had attended.

513/14 MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Full Town Council meeting held on Monday, 26th January 2015 be approved and signed as a correct record.

514/14 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The contents of the Town Clerk's report were noted.

515/14 JAZZ FESTIVAL

Information about the Jazz Festival was noted following meetings between retail representatives, members of the Jazz Festival Committee and Chamber of Commerce.

516/14

MOP FAIRS

Members noted a report by the Town Clerk and considered a request by retailers for the Town Council to obtain legal advice about moving the Mop Fairs from the High Street to the Common. Main points of discussion included –

- Whether closure of the A4, an arterial road, was still really feasible to allow for a mechanized fair to take place and if a move to the Common would now be appropriate
- The legalities around statutory rights for markets and fairs
- The differences between Charter and Statute Fairs
- That there remained enormous local support for the tradition of the High Street Mop Fairs
- The likely high costs of obtaining legal advice

Cllr. Fogg read out a prepared memorandum about the legalities and rights of statute fairs. The document set out the history of the Mop Fair and demonstrated his view that there was no requirement to seek legal advice. It was agreed that this document should be appended to the minutes of the meeting.

Councillors acknowledged that obtaining legal advice would be costly to the Council and expressed a strong desire to retain the Mop Fairs in the High Street.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Showmen's Guild had, at the request of the Chamber of Commerce, agreed to begin the Friday set-up at the later time of 3pm to try to reduce the impact on local traders and residents and minimize traffic disruption. This was currently being discussed with Wiltshire Council

RESOLVED: unanimously to reject the request to seek legal advice and to move the Mop Fairs to The Common.

517/14

CALL-IN – WATER MEADOWS STRATEGY

In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 30, the resolutions set out at Minute No 484/14 of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee meeting held on Monday 23rd February 2015 had been called in by Cllr M. Hall and seconded by Cllr A Ross.

The Grounds & Estates Manager stated that a lack of clarity about responsibility for the management of the water meadows had made it difficult for him to carry out his duties effectively in the past and that he had welcomed the proposal for an overall strategy as a clear and proper way to move forward. As part of this, he looked forward to the Town Council's Grounds Team adding to ARK's conservation work in the future.

The Mayor confirmed that an informal meeting had taken place on 9th March between the Town Mayor, Town Clerk, Grounds & Estates Manager and the Chair and Director of ARK. (The Chair of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee had suffered a recent bereavement and was therefore unable to attend). The meeting was very constructive with all attendees in agreement that there was a will for closer dialogue in future.

During a suspension of Standing Orders Mr. Findlay, the Chair of ARK, thanked the Mayor for a very positive recent meeting at which misunderstandings of the past had

been acknowledged and that all parties would be invited to an inclusive meeting to discuss moving the partnership forward.

A fresh proposal from Cllr Hall and seconded by Cllr Ross was that that Marlborough Town Council recognizes the considerable contribution made by ARK over the last 8 years, to the conservation of our water meadows and that it is a long term project that should continue. Detailed management should be left to the Grounds and Estates Manager working in conjunction with ARK and other community groups, recognizing plans that are already in place. The sheep grazing area should remain the same for 2015 as it was in 2014.

Main discussion points included that:

- Queries were raised around the tone of some points made during the presentation of the proposal.
- ARK's contribution to the water meadows should not be ignored and that the proposed strategy document should address long term conservation issues as well as short term specific ones at the meadows
- The proposal was close to that already decided by the A&OS Committee
- Proper advice around grazing requirements for sheep at Cooper's Meadow was to be sought by the Grounds & Estates Manager including that of ARK before any decision was made about a reduction in the fenced area
- Whilst recognizing the importance of conservation projects, that the meadows were for the enjoyment of all
- The upcoming meeting with ARK about future partnership working
- The important input of the soon to be formed Cooper's Meadow User's Group.

A named vote was requested.

RESOLVED: by 9 votes for with 5 against and 1 abstention that Marlborough Town Council recognizes the considerable contribution made by ARK over the last 8 years, to the conservation of our water meadows and that it is a long term project that should continue. Detailed management should be left to the Grounds and Estates Manager working in conjunction with ARK and other community groups, recognizing plans that are already in place. The sheep grazing area should remain the same for 2015 as it was in 2014.

For: Cllrs. Hall, Dow, Castle, Fogg, Lam, Farrell, Allen, Kirk Wilson and Ross

Against: Town Mayor, Cllrs. Dobson, Rose, Light and Cook

Abstention: Cllr. Barrett-Morton

518/14 ARMED FORCES – COMMUNITY COVENANT

A report by the Town Clerk was noted about a meeting on 10th March 2014 of the signatories to the Community Covenant signed on 27th October 2014.

519/14 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The contents of the Town Clerk's report were noted and Members discussed possible changes to the format of the meeting which included -

- The circulation of an Annual Report
- An overview and presentations by the Town Mayor
- A short presentation by 4MI Battalion (in recognition of the recently signed Community Covenant)
- A debate about a Neighbourhood Planning or other current topic

RESOLVED: unanimously to delegate the format of the 2015 Annual Parish Meeting to the Town Clerk.

520/14

SMALL GRANTS SCHEME

The Town Clerk's report was noted.

RESOLVED: by 14 votes for with 1 abstention that the criteria and guidelines for the Town Council's Small Grants Scheme for 2015/16 be approved.

521/14

POLICY ON CHARGING AND REQUESTS FOR USE OF OPEN SPACE

The Town Clerk's report was noted. Members considered a number issues around charging options for open spaces, a draft policy on the hiring of open spaces and a small number of requests for use of open spaces in 2015.

RESOLVED:

- i. to apply a daily charge for use of all open spaces with a set rate for commercial organisations and a nominal sum for local groups fund-raising for the benefit of the local community not to exceed £10
- ii. to delegate to the Town Clerk to submit a report setting out a possible charging scheme for commercial organisations
- iii. to delegate decision-making on the hiring of open spaces to the Town Clerk
- iv. that the adoption of the draft policy is deferred and re-submitted when a clear policy is identified for commercial hiring.

Outstanding decisions on open space requests were discussed.

RESOLVED: to charge a nominal £10 to the Junior Rugby Festival, Jazz Festival and Preshute Summer Fayre for use of Priory Gardens and the Common. Jennings Fair and the Marlborough Food & Drink Festival to be charged at the same rate as in 2014 for their 2015 events on the Common.

522/14

CIVIC SERVICE

The Town Clerk's report was noted setting out proposed changes to the Civic Service.

RESOLVED: unanimously to go ahead with the new arrangements set out in the Town Clerk's report and that all administration for this and liaison be handled via the Town Clerk and Civic Secretary.

523/14

RUGBY CLUB

The Town Clerk's report was considered it asked Members to agree that a new lease is entered into with the Rugby Club.

RESOLVED: to agree to a Surrender of the Lease and that a new one be granted subject to the inclusion of agreement to a service level agreement (or its equivalent) about use of the Common, with legal costs shared with the Rugby Club.

524/14

LIAISON WITH OUTSIDE BODIES

Local Youth Network Management Committee – Cllrs. Cook and Loosmore had been unable to attend the recent meeting. Cllr. Cook would attend the next one.

Youth Club – Cllr. Farrell reported that with help from the Youth Council and Marlborough College it was hoped to open the Youth Club over the Easter Holidays.

The Merchant's House – Cllr. Ross reported that work was under way in the development of a museum project including expansion into 133 High Street.

525/14 COMMITTEE MINUTES

RESOLVED: that in accordance with para 3.1 of the Scheme of Delegation, the approved minutes of the following Committee meetings were noted: Planning Committee – 12th and 26th January and 9th February, Amenities & Open Spaces – 17th November 2014.

526/14 MEMBER'S QUESTION TIME

Cllr. Mrs. Dow reported that the Mayor had agreed to set up a meeting in order to set out a clear strategy and priorities for the Town Council for the next two years. This would provide guidance to the Town Clerk enabling the setting of clear objectives for staff.

527/14 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

RESOLVED: that the Common Seal of Marlborough Town Council be affixed to all documents necessary to give effect to the decisions of the Council.

528/14 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be now excluded from the remainder of the meeting, in view of the confidential nature of business about to be transacted.

529/14 IT FOR COUNCILLORS

The Town Clerk's report set out quotes for the provision of IT tablet devices for Councillors.

RESOLVED: to acquire 17 Acer tablets for all 16 Councillors plus the Town Clerk under a 4 year leasing arrangement with a monthly payment of £115.96, a capital outlay of £2,704.00 for software licenses as well as associated set up costs and a monthly iCloud subscription charge of £49.60.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm

Signed Date
Town Mayor