

## MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

### PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the **Property Committee** held on the 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2013 in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Marlborough at 7.30 pm.**

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<b>PRESENT</b>	Councillor N. Barrett-Morton	Chairman
	Councillor G. Loosmore	Town Mayor
	Councillor S. Dobson	
	Councillor Mrs E.M. Hannaford-Dobson	
	Councillor R. Allen	
	Councillor B. Lam	
	Councillor A. Light	

<b>ALSO PRESENT</b>	Mrs S. Parker	Town Clerk
	Mrs S. Fry	Office Manager
	Councillor B. Castle	Observing
	Councillor M. Hall	Observing
	Councillor Mrs M. Rose	Observing
	Councillor Mrs P. Dow	Observing

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#### 28013 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. Ross and N. Fogg.

#### 281/13 **DECLARATION(S) OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest or any requests for dispensations.

#### 282/13 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor A. Light to the Committee.

The Chairman and Town Clerk had visited the Town Council at Henley-on-Thames which had been informative especially in respect to what had been achieved by using space in the basement of Henley's Town Hall. However, storage was a problem in much the same way as in Marlborough's hall.

Thanks were passed to those Councillors who had visited the basement and upper floors of the Town Hall in the previous week.

The Court Room had been painted and the Bar Area was currently being painted and flooring would be laid in the coming week or so. General painting work would go ahead over the following weeks.

#### 283/13 **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Property Committee's meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2013 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

284/13

### **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

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

285/13

### **REPORT ON TOWN COUNCIL PROPERTIES AND ANNUAL PROPERTY INSPECTION**

The contents of the report were noted. Main points of discussion included:

- The refurbishment of a kitchen in a Council-owned property
- The timing of a rent review for the shop at 5, High Street (2015)
- Maintenance works to bus shelters by the Grounds Team during the winter months.

**RESOLVED:** that the Town Clerk working with the Chairman be given delegated authority to arrange and authorise the installation of a replacement kitchen at 2, Recreation Ground Cottage within the constraints laid down in Financial Regulations.

286/13

### **TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES**

A report by the Town Clerk was noted. The recommendations were dealt with separately.

i) Town Council Offices

Members discussed possibilities around a refurbishment of the current offices at 5, High Street. Main points of discussion included:

- That the offices were poor and not fit for purpose in the long term
- That Councillors felt that it was important to upgrade office accommodation for staff
- Decoration, carpeting and some sound-proofing of the first floor offices would provide better accommodation in the short term and would allow for a changes in staffing levels following the staff review
- Extensive structural work was not necessary in the short term as the longer term plan involved a move to re-locate the offices.

ii) Basement of Town Hall

Members discussed possibilities around the basement of the Town Hall as a site for offices, public toilets, a reception and heritage area. Main points of discussion included:

- That the basement presented a space that could accommodate facilities providing for the increasing needs of the town
- The space provided an opportunity to look at all possibilities – akin to starting with a blank sheet
- Outline proposals from surveyors/architects were needed at this stage
- Importance of having early discussions with the Conservation Officer
- Whether Wiltshire Council's campus programme would have an impact
- That it was important to include public consultation as part of the project.

**RESOLVED:** (i) unanimously that the current Town Council Offices be redecorated and carpeting laid. Also that advice is sought from the Conservation Officer about sound proofing the wall between the two offices on the first floor. Costs to be submitted to Full Town Council for approval.

**RESOLVED: (ii)** unanimously that a scheme for the basement of the Town Hall is carried out which will include the re-location of the Town Council offices with a reception area, public conveniences and the retention of the cells as a heritage asset. To proceed with this scheme, that drawings are obtained of the whole basement area to show how these objectives can be achieved. Costings for these drawings to be taken from the Town Hall project budget and details of any scheme to be put out to public consultation.

**287/13**

### **TOWN HALL WORKS**

The Town Clerk's report was noted. Discussion points included:

- That during a recent site visit of the upper floors of the Town Hall, Councillors had noticed that large amount of rubbish had accumulated that needed to be removed
- That arrangements would be put in place to ensure that a cherry picker was hired twice yearly to clear out gutters and downpipes
- The need to remove the old gas cooker from the Court Room kitchen
- Whether the best solution for caterers using the Court Room kitchen was an industrial microwave or an electric cooker
- That a proposal for the redecoration of the court Room kitchen would be submitted to the next property committee.

**RESOLVED:** that the Gas Cooker in Court Room be removed by an appropriately registered engineer. That an electric cooker be installed in its place when the refurbishment of the kitchen takes place

**288/13**

### **TOWN HALL HIRE CHARGES 2014/15**

The Town Clerk's report was noted. Discussion points included:

- That the fees structure needed to be simplified
- That terms and conditions for *Not For Profit* organisations were best set aside for local groups
- Promotion of use of the Chamber to local groups
- That one approach might be to offer the hall as a package to some hirers (e.g. hire of Assembly Room for a Wedding Reception with free hire of the Chamber for the Wedding Ceremony)
- That marketing needed to be improved.

**RESOLVED:** that as of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 charges for the hire of the Town Hall be increased by 3%. 'Not for Profit' be replaced by 'Local Organisations' on the weekday hiring form. Councillors R. Allen, G. Loosmore, Mrs E.M. Hannaford-Dobson and Mrs S. Fry form a Working Party to look at hiring charges.

**289/13**

### **THE CELLS**

The Town Clerk's report was noted. Main points of discussion were:

- Appreciation of the work undertaken by David Sherratt on the former cells

- A list of proposals for improvements to the cell area including a leaflet rack, publicity material, carpet, signage, display boards, spot lights, boxing in of heating pipes, etc
- That it was important to note that, in the longer term, part of the cells area may create better office accommodation under the proposed new Basement Scheme.
- The need for more volunteers to run the cells.

**RESOLVED:** that Members delegate to the Town Clerk to work with the Ceremonial Officer to continue the renovation of the cells with expenditure not exceeding £2,500 and that an application for joint funding from the Area Board be made to part fund a promotional leaflet. Also, that more volunteers are encouraged to come forward to help run the cells on open days through a website appeal.

**290/13 PUBLIC TOILET PROVISION**

The update report from the Town Clerk was noted. A verbal update was also given by the Town Clerk and the Town Mayor who had met with the Town Council's solicitor during the previous week. Main points were:

- Legalities of lifting the restrictive covenant to allow the sale of Chantry Lane toilets
- Issues around clauses in the Transfer document for the George Lane toilets
- The funding package from Wiltshire Council for taking on service provision.

**291/13 PROPERTY COMMITTEE – BUDGET SETTING – 2014/15**

The Town Clerk's report was noted and Members considered changes to budget figures as presented by officers. Main discussion points included:

- The need for an increased budget for maintenance of Council owned residential properties
- That an increase in the overall Committee budget was largely due to increases in utility charges
- The need for a marketing budget for the Town Hall to allow for proper promotion.

**RESOLVED:** unanimously that the Property Committee Budget be presented to the Finance and Policy Committee with the following budget lines being added:

£1,500 - Marketing of the Town Hall  
 £1,000 - Cells

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

Signed .....  
 Chairman

Date .....