

**MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL
FULL TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of **Full Town Council** which was held on **Monday, 2 March 2020** in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Marlborough** at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor M. Hall
Councillor B. Castle
Councillor Mrs P. Dow
Councillor N. Fogg
Councillor A. Kirk Wilson
Councillor M. Cooper
Councillor S. Price
Councillor A. Wilson
Councillor D. Heath
Councillor V. Hillier

Town Mayor

ALSO

PRESENT: Mrs S. Parker
Mrs D. Whitehall
Fr. Blacker
Sgt. P. Foster
Mr N. Goodwin
Ms N. Hinman
Plus 5 members of the public

Town Clerk
Administrator
Mayor's Chaplain
Wiltshire Police
Marlborough.News
Gazette & Herald/Wiltshire Times

The meeting was preceded by a presentation from Sally Bere on behalf of Prospect Hospice about a proposal for a Snow Dogs Trail in Marlborough.

PRAYERS

Fr. Blacker opened the meeting with prayers.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public asked whether there was any provision in Marlborough for homeless people, or whether they were guided to better funded services elsewhere? Also, whether there were 'hidden homeless' sofa surfers? **The Mayor** confirmed that two local people were known who had alternative lifestyle choices and that there were rarely other homeless people in the town. There was no provision in Marlborough, but services were available in Swindon. He was not aware of sofa surfers but, confirmed there was a food bank in the town.

CRIME AND DISORDER

Sgt. Foster apologised that he had been unable to attend a meeting since before Christmas. It was good news that Neighbourhood Police Teams had been reintroduced, allowing a team consisting of himself, 3 PCs plus PCSOs, although staffing levels were still below what he would prefer: training and ongoing recruitment should help improve that situation in the future. He highlighted some crime statistics and it was noted there had been no burglaries since December, only one theft from a vehicle and pro-active work had resulted in drug arrests. The police now had remote access to the town's CCTV system, allowing them to access it at any time.

Questions included whether Marlborough would benefit from ongoing recruitment (not known) and whether Marlborough was highlighted as having a significant drugs problem.

Sgt. Foster replied that drugs were common in most areas. There was a prevalence of cocaine use in the town, but there was no 'County Lines' type problem. Out of town dealers had been taken off the streets due to targeted policing – Sgt. Foster had a good team who pick up on new dealers quickly (a recent example had resulted in a dealer being jailed for 28 months).

Fr. Blacker left the meeting

QUESTIONS TO AND FROM WILTSHIRE COUNCILLORS

Cllr. Fogg had received a letter from a season ticket holder about car parking issues. The letter included that holding a season ticket didn't guarantee a space, as well as raising concerns that offering free parking days in the town didn't help season ticket holders. Separately, he referred to Salisbury's initiative to hold a 'traffic free' day and wondered whether this might work for Marlborough.

Cllr. Cooper asked whether any guidance was available about Wiltshire Council's recent changes to its recycling policy. He was concerned that the changes to what people should now put in the blue bin might result in lack of capacity and mean that recyclable materials were then disposed of in general waste due to lack of space. Some people present had received communication about the changes, but many had not. The **Town Mayor** believed that residents could apply for a second blue bin, if required. **Cllr. Fogg** agreed to look into it.

484/19

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Ross, Loosmore, Barrett-Morton and Cairns.

485/19

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations.

486/19

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor paid tribute to Mrs Sue Bailey who had sadly passed away recently. The Mayor and many others knew of her tireless work helping those less fortunate than herself particularly those with learning disabilities at both Mencap and the Inside Out Club. She also worked hard for Mildenhall Parish Council. She would be very much missed and the Town Council's condolences were passed to her family.

The Mayor had been delighted to welcome visitors from Scouting USA on 20 February. He gave them a tour of the Town Hall which included a with a history lesson about the building and Council. He was returning the hospitality of the Mayor of Marlborough Massachusetts when, in 2018 and with help of a grant from the Town Council, a group of Marlborough Rangers visited him in his City Hall offices.

As confirmed last week, there was currently a Notice of Vacancy letting people know of a vacancy due to Ed Northeast stepping down as a Councillor. If 10 members of the electorate came forward by 12 March, there would be a by-election: otherwise a co-option process would begin. Anyone interested in becoming a Councillor should contact the Town Clerk.

The Mayor reminded everyone about the Great British Spring Clean and hoped that Councillors and lots of others would volunteer at one of the four Spring Clean Days – Wednesday, 25 March, Thursday, 2 April, Sunday, 5 April and Tuesday, 7 April. More details were online and with the Assistant Town Clerk.

There were still tickets available for the Civic Dinner on Friday, 20 March being held in honour of the 4th Military Intelligence Battalion. Interested attendees should contact the Civic Secretary by 6 March.

There were some structural changes being made at The Merchant's House Trust, including the establishment of a committee dedicated to managing and promoting the museum. The Trust was looking for two Councillors to join this Committee – those interested in helping to run the museum were asked to let the Mayor know.

Finally, the Mayor was disappointed to hear that one of our excellent local journalists, Tony Millett, was retiring and stepping down from Marlborough News. Tony, who had an impressive CV with stints at ITN News and Chanel 4 News plus plenty more, was a founding member of Marlborough News and all would remember him attending meetings and his thorough and balanced reporting. On behalf of all, the Mayor thanked him and looked forward to seeing him at various events around the town.

497/19

MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Extraordinary Full Town Council meeting held 24 February 2020 were approved as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor

498/19

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk's report was noted.

499/19

RABLEY WOOD VIEW

Members noted a report by the Town Clerk and considered a proposal that the Town Council take on the ownership and management of the play area, multi-use games area (MUGA) and public open space at the proposed GreenSquare development at Rabley Wood View. The discussion included:

- There would be a nominal transfer fee to the Town Council of £1
- Long term maintenance costs were not yet known although the Grounds Manager had put forward some preliminary estimates
- That a commuted sum from the developers should be part of any handover for maintenance and capital replacement costs
- Whether future drainage costs would be incurred – amended plans were expected to be released soon incorporating advice from Wiltshire Council's drainage engineer, which, it was understood, Thames Water, was willing to adopt
- That the proposed access would need to be widened to allow a tractor into the area set aside for public open space
- Whether there would be liability and risk related to any future contamination of the River Og
- That the land did not extend as far as the riverbank of the Og as this was owned by another landowner
- Whether residents would prefer the Town Council to manage this land rather than a management company appointed by the developers
- That it was too early to understand all the details at this stage but a decision in principle would allow discussions to continue

RESOLVED: (i) to agree, in principle, to the transfer from GreenSquare Homes to the Town Council of the play area, MUGA, public open space and landscaped area with trees at Rabley Wood View

RESOLVED: (ii) that negotiations and discussions continue about a commuted sum for the transfer, legal implications and any other associated issues ahead of a final decision being made by the Town Council

500/19

DARK SKIES FEST 2020

Members noted a report by the Assistant Town Clerk about progress made towards the October 2020 event.

Cllr. Heath noted that that 2020 marked 200 years since the inauguration of the Royal Astronomical Society. The Working Party had put in a great deal of time and effort to this 3-day event and a long list of supporters and contributors were on board, including an officer at the North Wessex Downs AONB. Highlights included Professor Chris Lintott (BBC's The Sky at Night) who would be a headline speaker and the Arts Council-funded Museum of the Moon at the Chapel at Marlborough College. Charles Barclay from the College had been very supportive and the Blakett Observatory would be opened up allowing the public to see the oldest electronic telescope still in use. Other fringe events included The Oddfellows pub which was to stage a combined meal, talk and outdoor telescope event. It was confirmed that a funding grant had been obtained via the AONB plus other contributions.

Cllr. Price explained that promotion of the event had already begun and pointed members to a dedicated micro-website which had gone live the previous week (www.marlborough-tc.gov.uk/darkskiesfest) as well as a new social media page and event : there would be regular updates via a dedicated Facebook page ([@marlboroughdarkskiesfest](https://www.facebook.com/marlboroughdarkskiesfest)), as well as the general tourism page on Instagram ([@VisitMarlborough](https://www.instagram.com/VisitMarlborough)). One press release had already been issued and another would be released soon about the Museum of the Moon, to be stage at the Chapel at Marlborough College.

501/19

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS – 2020/2021

Members noted the dates of scheduled meetings for the next municipal year (2020/2021).

502/19

CIVIC DIARY – 2020/2021

Members noted the calendar of civic events for the next municipal year (2020/2021).

503/19

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Members noted a report by the Town Clerk and considered a format for the meeting to be held on Monday, 23 March 2020. Comments included:

- The interactive surgeries with Committee Chairs had worked well the previous year
- Current legislation obliged all Town and Parish Councils to hold annual meetings, although it was recognised nationwide that these were not always well attended and this legislation might be relaxed in the future

RESOLVED: to structure the meeting along the lines of the 2019 format – with informal drop-in surgeries taking place prior to a formal presentation to be delivered by the Town Mayor followed by a Q&A session.

504/19

ADDITIONAL FULL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Members noted that an additional meeting would take place on 6 April 2020. This was primarily to enable the Town Council, which was the Qualifying Body for the Marlborough Area Neighbourhood Plan, to debate the draft plan prior to formal Regulation 14 consultation. Other items would include the awarding of community awards during Mayor Making on 11 May.

505/19

OUTSIDE BODIES

The Town Mayor referred to restructuring at the Merchants House Trust so that more could be done to expand and promote the museum.

Cllr. Wilson had attended a very productive Marlborough in Bloom meeting where all attendees had been very positive about the new way of working for the 2020 entries into the regional and national competitions.

506/19 COMMITTEE MINUTES

In accordance with para 3.1 of the Scheme of Delegation, Members noted the approved minutes of the following committees: **Planning** - 13 January and 3 February 2020 and **Amenities & Open Spaces** – 18 November 2019.

507/19 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

No questions had been submitted.

508/19 COMMON SEAL

Proposed by **Cllr. Castle** and seconded by **Cllr. 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

509/19 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

All members of the press and public left the meeting

510/19 CIVIC AWARD

RESOLVED: that a special civic award be made to a person who had made a significant contribution to Marlborough over a long period of time

The meeting closed at 8 pm

Signed:

Town Mayor

Date: