

**TOWN CLERK’S REPORT**

**FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE – MONDAY, 17 JUNE 2019**

<b>Summary</b>	
<p>This is a report of follow-up to resolutions made at the Finance &amp; Policy Committee. This is a Standing Item on agendas to update Members. Once follow-up is completed, items will be marked as closed. Ongoing items will be brought back to Committee when a new decision is required or when a fuller update is needed.</p>	
<b>Min. 262/16</b>	<p><b>Trusts and Charities</b> – These have remained dormant for more than 15 years. These do not form part of the Council’s accounting system and are in a standalone bank account. The Town Clerk has approached specialist solicitors and the Charity Commission to clarify the status of the charities. This appears on the list of priority projects in the Council’s Plan 2017-2021. The aim is to bring proposals to committee on 23 September 2019. <b>Ongoing</b></p>
<b>Min. 576/18</b>	<p><b>Ear Marked Reserves</b> – At the meeting of 18 March it was resolved that following closedown of the accounts, the list of ear mark reserves will be submitted to Full Council. This will be on Monday, 24 June 2019. <b>Closed</b></p>
<b>Min.577/18</b>	<p><b>Annual Risk Assessment</b> – As agreed at the meeting of 18 March, this was submitted to and ratified by Full Council on 25 March 2019. <b>Closed</b></p>
<b>Min.579/18</b>	<p><b>Retention Policy</b> – As agreed at the meeting of 18 March, this was submitted to and ratified by full council on 25 March 2019. <b>Closed</b></p>

**Town Clerk – June 2019**

## Town Council Grant Scheme

**Summary** - In this report, Members are asked to consider 4 grant applications under the Town Council's Small Grant Scheme.

### 1. Town Council Grant Scheme – Review

The Town Council's Grant Scheme is run to a set of criteria/guidelines. Information and guidelines and dates when applications will be considered by the F&P Committee are at:

<http://www.marlborough-tc.gov.uk/marlborough-town-council/grants> A hard copy leaflet is also available

### 2. Grants in 2018/19

In 2018/19 grants were awarded to Revitalize Respite Holidays, Marlborough parkrun, Marlborough District Rangers, Greatwood Charity, Marlborough Development Trust, Jackdaws Music Education Trust, Marlborough Tennis, Arts Together and The Merchant's Trust. All budget monies were allocated.

### 3. Grant Applications 2019/20

During the precept setting round, it was agreed that a budget of £6,600 would be allocated for grants in 2019/20. This is the first meeting where applications will be decided.

The applications for consideration are:

#### a) Marlborough in Bloom (MiB)

**Grant sought: £1,000**

**Previous Grant(s): No grants awarded from this scheme**

The application form is at **Appendix 1** (for Councillors). Whilst it is not clear what the award would be used for, the application form confirms that the grant would be used to enhance Marlborough and encourage more visitors. Marlborough in Bloom works with the Town Council to prepare for the South West in Bloom competition and Members will recall that the town was awarded Gold status in 2018 and featured in a BBC series about its entry into the competition. Members may like to be aware that there is a dedicated budget line of £600 for the In Bloom competition. More information about MiB is at:

<http://www.marlboroughinbloom.org.uk/> A bank statement is attached (for Councillors).

#### b) Savernake Explorer Scouts

**Grant sought: £800.00**

**Previous Grant(s): None**

An application form, accounts and annual report is at **Appendix 2** (for Councillors). Savernake Explorers are part of the wider Savernake Scouts group (a registered charity) and offer a range of activities for young people aged between 14-17. Over 30 Explorer Scouts belong to the local branch with more than 50% of these living in the town itself. The grant would be towards secure storage for camping equipment and games and activity resources at their regular meeting place – Marlborough Cricket Club. Fundraising has already taken place and applications made to other local parish councils for help. More information about Savernake Scouts is at: <https://scouts.org.uk/get-involved/groups/savernake-forest#&panel1-1>

**c) Marlborough St Mary's Primary School**

**Grant Sought: £600**

**Previous Grants: £2,244 (IT equipment for the new school building) (2017/18)**

An application form and accounts are at **Appendix 3**. This application is towards outdoor play equipment which can be used daily by pupils year-round. It will be for use by children in other groups too (Cubs, Scouts, Marlborough Youth Football Club and more) and it is likely to be used by future holiday clubs. Total project expenditure is £32,400. Fundraising has taken place and continues, and the Marlborough Area Board has awarded £2,500 towards the project. More information about the school is at:

<http://marlboroughstmarys.wilts.sch.uk/>

**d) Marlborough poverty Action Group (MAPAG)**

**Grant Sought: £500**

**Previous Grants: £500 (2017/18)**

An application form and accounts are at **Appendix 4**. MAPAG is a local and independent charitable organisation raising concerns about the lack of provision for the homeless and young children. Its overall aim is to help relieve and prevent poverty in the Marlborough area. In 2019, other plans include working with the Foodbank to provide lunches on specific days during the summer holidays for those families with children qualifying for free school meals as well as supporting families so that children can participate in the CampActiv8 programme during the summer holidays at Marlborough Leisure Centre. This application is for funding towards a day trip for selected families (about 35 children and their families) to Marwell Zoo near Winchester.

**4. Budget Implications**

If Members agree to award the above 4 grants (£2,900), this would total leave a balance of £3,700.

**Town Clerk's Recommendation**

The Town Clerk recommends that Members consider whether to award grants to Marlborough in Bloom, Savernake Explorer Scouts, Marlborough St Mary's and Marlborough Poverty Action Group.

**Town Clerk**

**13 June 2019**

## **Internal Audits 2018/19**

**Summary** – This report asks Members to note the second interim and final internal audit reports for 2018/19 and that the Annual Internal Audit Report (AGAR) has been signed off by our Internal Auditors giving positive assurances on our internal controls.

### **1. Background**

The second interim and final internal audit reports are at **Appendix 1**. The Annual Internal Audit Report (AGAR) has been signed off by our internal auditors giving positive assurances on our internal controls. Recommendations on the second internal audit report have been followed up and confirmed to our internal auditors (**Appendix 2**).

### **Town Clerk's Recommendations**

The Town Clerk recommends that Members note both internal audit reports for 2018/19 and note that any recommendations in the final report will be followed through ahead of the next internal audit visit in November 2019.

**Town Clerk**

**13 June 2019**

## Urgent Expenditure

**Summary** – This report asks Members to note urgent expenditure made under para. 3.2 of the Scheme of Delegation

### 1. Background

Under para. 3 of the Scheme of Delegation, the Town Clerk should consult the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor and Chair of the relevant committee(s) about any matter arising which requires an urgent decision including if the matter involves expenditure not provided for in the annual budget and not covered by Financial Regulations. The following urgent expenditure has been made since the last meeting and with the agreement of the relevant Councillors.

#### **Removal of Play Equipment at Rabley Wood**

Under a licence agreement with Wiltshire Council, the Town Council was obliged to remove play equipment from Rabley Wood before 1 May. Cllrs decided that this should be left as late as possible to ensure that young people had maximum use from it before the deadline date. Quotes were sought from 3 companies and it was agreed by the Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairs of the A&OS and F&P Committees that the Council commission Brennans to remove the equipment immediately after the Easter break at a cost of £5,500. This happened between 23–26 April 2019. Fencing and swing seats were salvaged for other uses

*A&OS Committee – Budget Cost Centre 210 – Budget Line – A&OS Projects (4225 – an accrual)*

#### **Town Hall Basement – Additional Works**

Following an inspection of the agreed works in the basement, it was clear that some additional work was needed by the contractors (Bentley's Builders) to ensure it was finished off properly. This involved removing tiles, plaster boarding the doorway section of the corridor and removal of a door frame. The additional cost was £3,042.14. This was agreed by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairs of the Property and Finance Committees. Since that time, additional electrical work (related to a H&S issue) and works connected to a request from the WC Building Regulations Officer at a total cost of £1,358 has been paid and was within the Town Clerk's delegated authority.

*Property Committee – Budget Cost Centre 201 Budget Line – Town Hall Maintenance (4038)*

### 2. Financial Implications

Costs will be a charge to the relevant budget lines referred to above.

#### **Town Clerk's Recommendation**

The Town Clerk recommends that Members note this report.

**Town Clerk**

**11 June 2019**

**Public Toilets**

**Summary** – This report asks Members to consider the maintenance and cleaning costs of the new toilet cubicle at the Town Hall and what budget this will fall to.

**1. Background**

The new toilet cubicle in the Town Hall Basement is almost completed and ready for use. This new cubicle is for ambient disabled use and offers baby changing facilities too. As we have no benchmark to match this 1 toilet cubicle against in this location, it has been difficult to assess the costs. However, following negotiations with Healthmatic (the company contracted to the Town Council which maintains and cleans the George Lane Toilet block) the annual cost for maintaining and cleaning this new toilet will be £6,360 pa. (This will cover maintenance, daily cleaning and all consumables.) Healthmatic will also cover call outs.

**2. Point to Note**

As with the George Lane toilets (4 cubicles), there will be an income stream as there is a 20p usage charge. (The overall income from the George Lane toilets in 2018/19 was £3,671).

**3. Financial Implications**

Aside from the set costs of the maintenance/cleaning contract charge (£6,360), it is difficult to judge other costs associated with the new cubicle (i.e. utilities). There is a dedicated budget line for expenditure for public toilets at George Lane (£18,000) to cover the annual maintenance charge, utilities and Business Rates (NDR) (though the government has agreed that public toilets will not attract NDR but, legislation has not yet been passed).

Members may consider that running costs should fall to the Town Hall budgets or, more sensibly, sit with those of the Council's other public toilets. Councillors should be aware that the latter may not be enough to cover the new toilet in its first year of operation and the budget may be slightly overdrawn. That said it would be a cost that will not start until the new cubicle is open June/July, already 3 months into the financial year.

**Town Clerk's Recommendation**

The Town Clerk recommends that Members agree the annual contract cleaning and maintenance charge of £6,360 for the new public toilet at the Town Hall and consider to which budget ongoing costs should be charged.

**Town Clerk**

**13 June 2019**

## Online Banking

**Summary** – This report asks Members to consider recommending to Full Council a move to online banking rather than the current and outdated system of payments by cheque and that relevant changes to the Financial Regulations/Standing Orders are made to accommodate this.

### 1. Background

All Members were invited to attend a presentation about a move to online banking by the Business Manager at Barclays. At this session, a full explanation will be given about the practicalities of moving to the online system and how to ensure that payments are made securely and an audit trail for authorisation of payments is retained.

Members may like to be reminded of the following resolution (Min39/19) made on 20 May 2019 at Full Council which shows the signatories of cheques and this will be transferred to the authority for payments online:

**RESOLVED:** that the Bank Mandate is amended to record the changes of Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Finance and Policy Committee all of whom together with the Town Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer or Office Manager (as Authorised Officer) will be signatories and always requiring that 2 Councillors and one officer sign all cheques and other orders for payment

*For 2019/20, this refers to Cllr Mervyn Hall, Cllr Mark Cooper, Cllr Andrew Ross and Cllr Guy Loosmore, Mrs Shelley Parker (Town Clerk) and Mrs Sue Fry (Office Manager/finance Officer).*

An amendment will be needed to Financial Regulations to allow this change to take place.

### 2. Points to Note

- Most Town Councils now operate with online banking
- Cheques can still be used for payments where required

### Town Clerk's Recommendation

The Town Clerk recommends that Members recommend to Full Town Council on 24 June 2019 that the Council moves to online banking and also that the necessary amendments are made to Financial Regulations.

**Town Clerk**

**13 June 2019**

## ITEM 16

### Timetable for the Budget and Precept Planning Process for 2019/20

The timing of the autumn precept setting round is as follows:

Date	Committee	Action
Tuesday, 3 September 2019	Amenities & Open Spaces	An opportunity to discuss spending plans and budgets for 2020/21 with particular attention to increased costs due to devolution of services. <i>(This committee is likely to have most impact from this)</i>
Monday, 7 October 2019	Property	To agree spending plans and budgets for 2020/21 and make recommendation to F&P
Monday, 28 October 2019	Planning	To agree spending plans and budgets for 2020/21 and make recommendation to F&P
Monday, 18 November 2019	Amenities & Open Spaces	To agree final spending plans and budgets for 2020/21 and make recommendation to F&P
Monday, 2 December 2019	Finance & Policy	To agree F&P spending plans for 2020/21 and review recommendations from budget holding committees and any recommendations from non-budget holding committees. Prepare recommendation for FTC on 9 December
Monday, 9 December 2019	Full Town Council	Recommendation to FTC for agreement for 2020/21 budgets and precept figure to levy to Wiltshire Council
Monday, 20 January 2020	Full Town Council	Reserve date should there be delays in setting precept (this still leaves time to confirm figure to WC)

All budget holding committees will be given the 2019/20 budget figures for the end of September. At this six-monthly point in the financial year, Members will have a better idea of overall expenditure on which to base estimates for 2020/21. The Staffing-Sub Committee (non-budget holding) will arrange to meet ahead of 2 December to make a recommendation about salary budgets to F&P.