

MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the **Property Committee** held on the **11th January 2016** in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Marlborough at 7.58 pm**

PRESENT	Councillor N. Barrett-Morton Councillor Mrs. M. Rose Councillor N. Fogg Councillor R. Allen Councillor B. Lam Councillor M. Hall Councillor A. Light	Chairman Town Mayor
ALSO PRESENT	Mrs S. Parker Mrs D. Whitehall Mrs S. Pryor Councillor A. Ross Plus 2 members of the public	Town Clerk Administrator The Adviser Observing

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Sue Knowles, White Horse Road – were the Property Committee looking with urgency at a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) for the George Lane car park toilets to ensure Marlborough would have public conveniences after March, and a CAT for the Sure Start building to provide a community hub for Marlborough?

Town Clerk – negotiations around a CAT for the George Lane public toilets had begun but more recent budget decisions concerning all Wiltshire Council-owned public conveniences had thrown up questions around proceeding further with it. In November, at the suggestion of Cllr. Dobson, it was agreed that the Town Council lodged an expression of interest in the adjacent building used by Sure Start. With the exception of the transfer of public conveniences, no action on new CATs is being taken forward until work is complete to transfer a large parcel of assets to Salisbury City Council. This is the first time transfers had been made ‘en bloc’ and was being used as a pilot and hopefully, followed by other towns and parishes across the county. It was likely to be more cost effective than transferring small packages which attracted high legal fees. The issue of the transfer of public conveniences was on the agenda.

Sylvia Card, Coldharbour Lane – understood Wiltshire Council had yet to make a decision about the future of the toilets in George Lane and had a contract to provide the service until March 2016. Were Councillors aware that the toilets appeared to be already closed – they were closed at lunchtime that day (*Monday 11th January 2016*)? Also, Mrs Card believed these were the only toilets in the town with disabled access – if correct would Members make representations to Wiltshire Council to keep the facilities open until an alternative was agreed?

Cllr. Barrett Morton – a written response could be provided. The **Town Clerk** thanked Mrs Card for the information as no complaints had been received by the Town Council about the toilets being closed. She confirmed there was a disabled toilet in the Chantry Lane block but would need to check access arrangements.

Cllr. Ross left the meeting

438/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies for absence was received from Cllrs. Dobson and Hannaford-Dobson.

439/15 DECLARATION(S) OF INTEREST
Cllr. Light – agenda item 11 – non-pecuniary.

440/15 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS
Councillors were reminded of an invitation to the Boxing Club on the evening of Thursday, 21st January at 7 pm and were asked to let the office know if they were able to attend.

441/15 MINUTES
RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Property Committee's meeting held on 5th October 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

442/15 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT
The Town Clerk's report was noted.

443/15 REPORT ON TOWN COUNCIL PROPERTIES
The report on Town Council properties was noted.

444/15 RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES
The Town Clerk's report was noted.

Cllr. Allen stated his concerns with the cost of both legal advice and managing properties in-house compared with appointing a managing agent. He was personally uncomfortable with the resolutions for managing residential properties (*Minute 361/15 at Full Town Council on 2nd November 2015*) which he believed put Members in a difficult position as decisions may or may not benefit the immediate family member(s) of a Councillor or Councillors(s). Cllr. Allen tendered his resignation from the Property Committee with immediate effect.

Cllr. Allen left the meeting

RESOLVED (i): that legal advice about each of the Tenancy Agreements is sought, and that new ones are drafted to bring them up to meet current legislation and the relevant legal notice is given to tenants of the rent rise. Also, that this work is a charge to the professional fees budget of the Property Committee.

RESOLVED (ii): that a draft Lettings Policy for residential properties be drawn up for submission to Full Town Council.

445/15 TOWN HALL WORKS
The Town Clerk's report was noted.
RESOLVED: to delegate to the Town Clerk to obtain quotations for a keypad entry system for the Council Chamber which must work in conjunction with key access.

446/15 PUBLIC CONVENIENCES
The Town Clerk's report was noted, which set out a number of options and issues regarding the provision of public conveniences. Main points discussed were:

- The cost of maintaining public conveniences was high, especially if more than one location was preferred

- Marlborough was in a better position than some councils as a revenue budget was available together with an in-house workforce
- A better understanding of the overall financial implications was required
- Toilets created an impression with visitors and residents alike and any provision should be fit for purpose and a pleasant environment, particularly with a view to obtaining 'Coach Friendly' status
- There were opportunities yet to be explored concerning the potential use of the two buildings in George Lane (toilet block and Sure Start building)
- Some members expressed a preference for provision both in the High Street and George Lane, with George Lane being the priority location
- Favourable impressions of the provision in other towns such as Devizes and Woodstock, where a small charge was made
- The potential to make a small charge for use (20p appeared to be the norm)
- No public consultation had been carried out so local views were unknown, and were not separated out in Wiltshire Council's recent consultation
- Although any consultation would exclude visitors, local residents contributed to the cost via the precept and so their views were important
- Wiltshire Council's financing of the service provision would end in March 2016. This was very short notice for all towns and parishes most of which has already set their 2016/17 budgets. Ideally, a further 12 months was needed for councils to put arrangements in place.

RESOLVED: to nominate the Town Clerk, Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor, with Cllr. Hall in reserve, to attend a meeting with Wiltshire Council in Trowbridge on 18th January 2016 and report findings to Full Town Council on 25th January 2016.

Cllr. Ross returned to the meeting

447/15

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS & PUBLIC

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

448/15

KINGSBURY STREET BUILDING

The Town Clerk's update was noted.

RESOLVED: to obtain an up to date valuation for properties and arrange a meeting with Aster Property

449/15

5, HIGH STREET – COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

RESOLVED: to make no change to the current rent at the mid-point rent review.

The meeting closed at 8.43 pm

Signed
Chairman

Date