



## Marlborough Town Council Finance & Policy Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the **Finance & Policy Committee** which was held on **Monday, 25 October 2021** in the Assembly Room, Marlborough Town Hall at 7.54pm

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<b>PRESENT:</b>	Councillor Andrew Ross	Chairman
	Councillor Mark Cooper	Town Mayor
	Councillor Noel Barrett-Morton	
	Councillor Mervyn Hall	
	Councillor Kymee Cleasby	
<b>ALSO</b>		
<b>PRESENT:</b>	Richard Spencer-Williams	Town Clerk
	Dawn Whitehall	Administrator
	Neil Goodwin	Marlborough.News

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### **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions.

**248/21**

### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from **Councillors Fogg, Loosmore** and the Tourism Officer, Belinda Richardson.

**249/21**

### **DECLARATIONS**

**Councillors Ross** and **Hall** – agenda item 9 – Museum and Heritage Asset Funding – non-pecuniary interest.

**250/21**

### **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

**251/21**

### **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held 14 June 2021 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman

**252/21**

### **QUARTER 2 FINANCIAL REPORTS 2021-22**

The Town Clerk's overview report was noted.

**253/21**

### **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2020-21**

Members noted the External Auditor Report and Certificate which had raised no issues and thanked the Town Clerk and Office Manager for an excellent job on achieving a clean audit.

**254/21**

### **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

Members noted the internal audit report which raised no issues. There was one recommendation related to Risk and Insurance which had already been actioned by

the Town Clerk. It was also noted that since the closure of the local branch of Barclays Bank, the Town Clerk and Office Manager were sharing cash deposit runs to branches in Chippenham and Devizes.

255/21

#### **TOURISM UPDATE REPORT**

The Tourism Officer's report was noted and discussed. Questions or comments included:

- Whether Marlborough was primarily a shopping and/or dining destination
- Whether heritage assets could be more prominent in the tourism offering, for example developing the Town Hall into a destination
- Whether there was enough focus on Marlborough College, and in particular the Mound which was the smaller twin of Silbury Hill and located within its grounds and currently a hidden asset. With its links to the Avebury landscape and being at the heart of the Town Crest, Members felt it should be a crucial element of 'brand Marlborough' and asked whether an offering based on it could be developed for 2022
- Improving access to the Visitor Information Point at Coopers Corner and the lack of a physical Tourist Information Centre
- Whether the Tourism Officer could follow up the desire to reinstate National Express services to the town
- Appreciation for the great strides the Tourism Officer had taken to improve relations with local businesses, particularly since the start of the pandemic

256/21

#### **MUSEUM AND HERITAGE ASSET FUNDING**

a) Members considered a proposal by **Councillor Ross** for £1,000 (Heritage budget code 4317) to be given to the Marlborough Museum under the Local Government Act 1972 s145 (1)(d) in support of asset acquisition of heritage items, including Maton paintings:

- There were several 17<sup>th</sup> century paintings of Marlborough by George Maton in the Council Chamber
- A local antique dealer had emigrated to Canada some years ago, taking some Maton paintings and an early line drawing of the Town Hall with him
- Two Maton paintings were now for sale and had been offered back to the town by the owners initially via an approach to the Town Council, which had involved the Merchants House and Marlborough History Society
- It was proposed that the Museum in the Merchants House was the appropriate place for these paintings as that they would be on view for residents and visitors
- The Museum within the Merchants House had no budget other than that provided by the Town Council
- Offers for the paintings had been accepted at £250 each, with a price yet to be agreed for the line drawing

**RESOLVED:** that £1,000 be provided to Marlborough Museum for the acquisition of heritage items including Maton paintings

*Councillors Ross and Hall did not vote*

b) Members considered the Council's approach to heritage development with a view to informing the Development and Action Plan. Matters arising included:

- That the Town Council owned some significant heritage assets
- An inventory of assets had been compiled some years ago by archaeologist Kim Wakeham
- Assets were stored in various locations with no real register to bring them all together
- Whether there was an opportunity to use the Merchant's House software (MODES) to include records of the Town Council's assets; whether there were cost or resource implications; whether remote access can be obtained by Town Council staff
- Whether a visual record of shops on the High Street could be compiled, perhaps refreshed every 25 years as a record of social history
- Drawings and photos were stored at the Museum but there was no space to display them
- That there were some drawings in the entrance corridor at the Town Council offices recording the High Street in different eras
- Whether social media, e.g. Facebook, could be used to share and promote photos as 'Marlborough Memories'
- Whether the existing Marlborough Pictures Facebook group could be expanded
- Whether there were issues with copyright
- Whether to create a new section on the Town Council's website for history and heritage
- Whether all ideas could be carried forward based on resource capacity
- Whether there were opportunities to involve volunteers/young people
- To create a regular agenda item to discuss heritage ideas, and that non Members should also be invited to consider suggestions

**RESOLVED:** to investigate whether the Merchants House MODES software can be used to record Town Council assets

**257/21**

### **DARK SKIES**

Members noted the budget update report for the Dark Skies Festival. The **Chairman** had spoken to the Assistant Town Clerk who was confident that it would run under budget.

**RESOLVED:** to defer Dark Skies Budget consideration to the next meeting

**258/21**

### **TOWN COUNCIL BRANDING AND CORPORATE IMAGE POLICY**

Members considered the adoption of a policy for Town Council branding and corporate image purposes. Discussion points included:

- **Councillor Cleasby** asked for clarification of scope and definition: was this about having a prominent and consistent brand identity on staff/councillor clothing, lanyard, vehicles, parks and street furniture or did it go beyond to reflect 'Brand Marlborough' for example tourism offerings, town entrance signs etc?

- That it was important that the grounds staff and vehicles in particular were clearly identifiable as Marlborough Town Council to raise awareness with residents about the work they do and the parks/play areas the Town Council was responsible for
- That all vehicles, including tractors and mowers, should carry clear branding
- That in some of the town's open spaces there was no signage to indicate that the space was looked after by the Town Council
- That badges and/or clothing should be adapted to easily identify Town Council personnel taking part in, or managing, events
- Whether to agree to quick wins in the short term and develop a broader strategy for later agreement and the creation of a plan
- That the Tourism Officer was already working on improving signage around the town
- Whether to have a one-off discussion/workshop to define a distinct brand/personality based on answers to the question "what does Marlborough mean?" that could then be reflected in all brand updates, and that the Tourism Officer would be the ideal person to lead it
- That it would be important to gain the input of staff as well as Councillors
- That **Councillor Cleasby** had experience in running branding workshops and would share material that could be helpful
- That funding would need to be identified: two budgets exist for Personal Clothing (£779) and PPE (£781)
- Whether to prepare a draft policy for the next meeting

#### ACTION POINTS:

1. Town Clerk to draw up 'quick wins' actions (e.g. litter bins, clothing, vehicles)
2. Town Clerk to discuss ideas with staff
3. Councillor Cleasby to circulate a document to send on to staff and Councillors (and possibly external organisations)
4. Councillor Cleasby to suggest suppliers for enamel badges
5. Town Clerk to draft a policy for consideration at the next meeting with a view to presenting to Full Town Council
6. Councillor Ross to call an extraordinary meeting if required

**259/21**

**TRACTOR REPAIRS UPDATE**

Significant repairs were ongoing to two tractors with a total expected cost of £9,515 (ex VAT). Earmarked Reserves allocated to Open Spaces Machinery stood at £15,197. A third tractor, a Ford 1920 model, was not used and could be sold, raising an estimated £5,500. Members were asked to agree to the sale in order to offset maintenance costs for the remaining two vehicles.

**RESOLVED:** (i) that the Ford 1920 tractor should be offered for sale

**RESOLVED:** (ii) that the funds raised by the sale of the Ford 1920 tractor should be added to the Earmarked Reserves for Open Spaces Machinery

**260/21**

**ECOMMS POLICY**

The existing Social Media policy was out of date, limited in scope and needed to be replaced. Members were asked to reconsider the draft electronic communications policy first presented in June. A working party had been set up as requested but the meeting had been cancelled due to lack of attendance and no subsequent feedback had been forthcoming. The **Chairman** asked Members to reconsider how this matter could be progressed.

**ACTION POINT:** The Town Clerk to circulate the draft one more time requesting input with an updated document to be agreed at a future meeting

**261/21**

**DEVELOPMENT AND ACTION PLAN**

Members considered which items from recent action plan workshops should be adopted by the Finance and Policy Committee.

**RESOLVED:** that the Finance and Policy Committee should adopt the following items for the next Council term:

- Civic services and program
- Eco-tourism
- Cultural development and events
- Affordable rented accommodation
- Heritage
- Devolution of services
- Business and employment development
- Resourcing and finance

**262/21**

**STANDING ORDERS**

Members considered amendments to Standing Orders for recommendation to Full Town Council.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the amendments to Standing Orders and recommend adoption by Full Town Council

**262/21**

**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE PROTECTION POLICY**

Members agreed that its primary role in relation to the Council's adaptation of services and activities against the Environment and Climate Protection Policy was largely one of scrutiny, and that it should become a regular agenda item.

**263/21**

**GRANT APPLICATION**

**RESOLVED:** to award a grant of £500 to Wiltshire Sight to provide support services to approximately 300 Marlborough residents

The meeting closed at 9.34 pm

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Chairman