



comment on whether the motion should be supported or not but, did confirm that few concerns had been raised about the area. Also, that if the motion was agreed, any anti-social behaviour currently taking place in the gardens would be simply moved to another location, not stopped.

- The different approaches taken to violent crimes, e.g. domestic vs street crime

### **QUESTIONS TO AND FROM WILTSHIRE COUNCILLORS**

**Councillor Dobson** asked why the Town Council had changed its policy about locking Priory Gardens overnight, and whether the Staffing Sub Committee would review the decision. The **Town Mayor** confirmed this would be considered by the Staffing Sub-Committee.

**Councillor Fogg** thanked the **Mayor** for taking part in the ceremonial event to mark the traditional opening of the Mop Fairs, which had been greatly appreciated by the Showmen's Guild.

**Councillor Price** appealed to Wiltshire Councillors present to help the Town Council get the process moving and work with the Town Council to prepare a whole town transport strategy, in particular by providing guidance about processes and funding streams at Wiltshire Council that could help. She would welcome an answer or advice at the Planning Committee Meeting on 16 November 2020.

### **PETITION**

In line with the Town Council's Petitions Policy **Hannah Cartwright** presented the reasoning for a petition about the need for safer crossing provision for pedestrians at the top of Port Hill on the A346, between the entrance to The Acres and Marlborough Common.

The petition would be discussed at agenda item 5 (Written Motion), but in answer to a question in addition to the detail set out in the petition she called for flashing lights and/or signs to make drivers aware they were approaching a pedestrian crossing point to make them slow down. Councillors commended her on the work undertaken on behalf of the community to draw the petition together.

**252/20**

### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors **Loosmore** and **Wilson**.

**253/20**

### **DECLARATIONS**

**Town Mayor** – agenda item 6 – Written Motion – pecuniary interest.

**RESOLVED:** that **Councillor Hall** would chair the meeting for agenda item 6 – Written Motion

**254/20**

### **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on Saturday, 31 October, the Town Council had been working towards the new lockdown starting on Thursday, 5 November which would impact England throughout November. In line with government guidance, the Town Council's public buildings would be closed including the Town Hall, Youth and Community Centre and the Council offices. This would mean weddings and other events would need to be cancelled – the Office Manager was contacting each hirer individually.

Services were to be maintained with staff working and contactable over the next 4 weeks answering enquiries by telephone and email. Up to date information would be posted on the website and social media channels. Open spaces and playgrounds would remain open, maintained by the Grounds Team. More guidance was awaited about other facilities and residents would be kept up to date.

The Town Council's volunteer scheme would again operate for those needing help with shopping, collecting prescriptions, etc – thanks were passed to those who had again put themselves forward for this.

Though firm guidance hadn't yet been received, it was clear that original plans for Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day would have to be abandoned and the Civic Secretary was contacting those who had been due to lay wreaths as part of the ceremony at the War Memorial. This was especially sad as it was such an important event for Marlborough. The Mayor encouraged everyone to observe the 2 minutes silence at 11am on their doorsteps instead.

The Mayor reiterated that everyone was kept up to date on changes and appreciated the turmoil and uncertainty that this would put on local businesses, employees and families.

Councillors were reminded that there would be an informal remote meeting to discuss the lockdown in more detail on 3 November.

The Mayor reminded Councillors of the Marlborough Area Board meeting at 7pm on 3 November via Microsoft Teams where there was to be a presentation on air quality.

255/20

#### **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of Full Town Council held on 28 September 2020 were approved as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor

256/20

#### **WRITTEN MOTION**

In accordance with Standing Order 10, **Councillor Farrell** had submitted a written motion for consideration:

***“Members will be aware of a local campaign and petition for a safer way to cross the road at the top of Port Hill on the A346, opposite The Common and the entrance to The Acres. A local young mother is representing many residents highlighting their concerns about how difficult it is to cross particularly for parents with pushchairs and young children, dog walkers and the elderly. The speeding traffic, which includes heavy lorries, makes it unsafe for pedestrians to access The Common, a recreational space for us all to use. There is no signage or other traffic calming measures in place. With the recreational area at Rabley Wood View about to be re-developed for houses, for the moment there is no other green space nearby for those living on the estates.***

***I propose that the Town Council supports this request for a safer crossing point here, whether it's a pedestrian crossing, a reduction in the speed limit or by other means. It needs a full and urgent review through CATG and Highways officers.”***

**The Town Clerk** provided some background: originally the entrance to Portfields was much wider, making it look as though the main road was wide and fast with a small central island to cross to. In 2007/8, Wiltshire Council (WC) officers were involved in designing and installing what is now there. At that time, a pedestrian count showed that there weren't enough individuals to justify departing from protocol and installing a pedestrian crossing. A Zebra Crossing would have been dangerous so close to the speed limit and the costs for a light controlled crossing were prohibitive. It was decided to implement the current layout which reduced the carriageway width, so reducing the time to cross the road, whilst enhancing the central island with visibility for pedestrians being good in both directions.

Discussion points included:

- The petitioner was commended on taking this action for the community

- That the petition had attracted a large number of signatures, including Town Councillors
- That Councillors supported the request for a safer crossing
- That some people chose to cross closer to the bend in the road, which was also hazardous
- Whether to refer the request to the Planning Committee
- Whether to commission a traffic survey to join up a number of disjointed highways improvement requests
- That since 2007 traffic volumes had more than doubled
- That since 2007 there were more houses, with more being built, in the area and so many more people needed to use the crossing
- That since the A419 dual carriageway was opened in 2009 Port Hill was on the main route between the M5 and south coast
- Whether through traffic, particularly HGVs, could be diverted to use M4/A34
- Whether to introduce changes that deliberately slow down/hold up traffic to discourage through traffic from using the A346
- That wide campaigns to have the A346 deprimed had been unsuccessful in the past
- Whether a new pedestrian count could be obtained
- Whether a project proposal to the Community Area Transport Group (CATG) would be likely to succeed, attract the necessary funding, or be progressed in a timely manner
- Whether other funding routes could be explored at Wiltshire Council, e.g. the Sustainable Transport Fund
- That drivers habitually exceeded the speed limit, particularly on the approach up the hill into the town
- Whether the Town Council's Speed Indicator Device (SID) could be located nearby to encourage drivers to slow down
- Whether a 20mph speed limit could be applied

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council supports this request for a safer crossing point, whether a pedestrian crossing, reduction in the speed limit or by other means. It needs a full and urgent review through CATG and Highways officers. Also, to request a pedestrian count and to seek alternative Wiltshire Council funding options to conduct a whole town transport strategy

*The Town Mayor left the videoconference meeting for the following item and Councillor Hall took the chair. Also due to technical difficulties Councillor Castle was unable to remain in the meeting.*

257/20

#### **WRITTEN MOTION**

In accordance with Standing Order 10, **Councillor Barrett-Morton** had submitted a written motion for consideration:

***“Following the last motion regarding Priory Gardens, an understanding was reached between Marlborough Town Council and St Johns limiting the Garden’s use by their students. Unfortunately, despite this agreement, things have returned to ‘normal’, with ever larger numbers (well beyond the recommended 6) with ball games, increased littering and boisterous behaviour. No one expects youngsters to be silent or remain invisible. However, it is not the place of MTC to make up for the deficiencies in recreational space provision at St John’s Academy. That is for St John’s and Wiltshire Council to address. During the current situation, the Gardens should be viewed as a SAFE outdoor space for use by all. This is currently NOT the case as a large number of students are blatantly disregarding the current rules on numbers and social distancing. Evidence has shown that the younger age group have become the major vector in contributing to coronavirus spread. The exclusion of St***

***John's students from Priory Gardens is required for communal infection control and protection of the elderly using these Gardens.***

***I propose that MTC requests that St John's place a ban on their students using Priory Gardens for the next 6 months. Once this period has passed this can be reviewed in the light of the prevailing pandemic situation."***

**Councillor Barrett-Morton** called for a named vote.

**Councillor Fogg** had agreed to second the motion because he felt that the upcoming lockdown would place limits on social mixing and out of concern for the lack of social distancing taking place in the Gardens. Having listened to the Inspector's answer he wasn't sure a six month ban was correct, but still believed the gathering of large groups in the gardens and other public spaces, and who did not observe social distancing, was a danger to the community as well as their parents. He asked whether the school would be able to send a letter to parents to point out that large groups gathering together was not helpful during the current crisis. Also, to find out what measures both St John's and Marlborough College were taking to limit the spread of the virus: students at Marlborough College could potentially be coming to the town from any area of the country. He felt in the current climate, the health considerations of our community should be the priority.

**Councillor Hall** responded that Councillors could only deal with the motion as it was written. Discussion points included:

- Councillors understood the importance of protecting public health
- St John's and Marlborough College operated 'bubble systems' by year groups
- A recognition that children weren't great at maintaining social distance
- Whether there was any evidence of the behaviour described in the motion
- Whether anti-social behaviour was being recorded and reported in order to create evidence to aid a decision
- If St John's did introduce a ban, there were questions about how and if it could be policed and enforced
- A desire to retain a good relationship with the school and work with them
- Any decision to restrict St John's students should be made by St John's Academy not the Town Council
- Whether the gardens should be closed to everyone rather than one particular group
- Whether the Coronavirus risk was a genuine reason to reintroduce a proposal which had failed to gain support in the past
- That groups of older young adults, aged 18-22, had been seen to regularly gather in Priory Gardens and that banning St John's students would not change this
- That schoolchildren tended to leave the gardens between 4-5pm to catch buses and whether it was likely that it was St John's students causing disturbances after dark
- Sympathy with nearby residents that they were sometimes disturbed by boisterous behaviour
- That the gardens provided a good space for young people to socialise in the fresh air
- That Councillors should be mindful of the impact that the ongoing pandemic had had on young people's mental health and general welfare
- Whether complaints had been received from any other residents besides Cromwell Mews
- That there were several areas of the town where anti-social behaviour created a problem, and whether it was right to focus on Priory Gardens
- That there were notices in the gardens advising people to maintain social distance
- Whether signage could be improved

- News reports had suggested that younger people were the source of the spread of the virus, but that tended to be indoor settings and not outdoors where the risk of transmission was much lower
- Whether there was any evidence that students were bringing Coronavirus into the town
- Whether the gardens could or should be locked at night

During a suspension of Standing Orders, **Mr Ian Tucker, Principal, St John's Academy** thanked Councillors for their work for the town and for inviting him to attend and to speak, and responded:

- To acknowledge the passion on both sides of the debate
- That he could not support the motion, and that if successful it would drive a wedge between the school and young people
- That it would be impossible to enforce such a ban
- That the school already did, and would continue to, educate young people in preparation for the upcoming lockdown, including about COVID etiquette and the consequences and anxiety a lack of the right etiquette could cause to other people
- That the school wrote to parents weekly to ask them to take responsibility for student behaviour
- To confirm the anxiety for young people coming back to school after a long lockdown, learning to cope with masks, bubbles, one-way systems as well as catching up with schoolwork
- That years 11-13 in particular were not great at maintaining social distance
- That it was older students generally who tended to struggle with the virus
- Where the school had recently had to close a bubble, it was due to a staff member testing positive for Coronavirus rather than a student
- A desire to work with the Town Council, and if evidence could be provided he would be able to target specific groups
- A plea not to place a blanket ban on students

*Earlier in the meeting during discussions with Acting Inspector Edwards **Councillor Castle** had questioned whether the motion was discriminatory, stating that he would be unable to support it for that reason*

In a named vote, Councillors Barrett-Morton and Fogg voted for the motion. Councillors Dow, Ross, Kirk-Wilson, Farrell, Hall, Cairns, Price, Heath, Hillier and Waltham voted against the motion, therefore the motion failed

*The Town Mayor was brought back into the videoconference and resumed the chair*

**258/20**

### **CLIMATE EMERGENCY DECLARATION**

Following its declaration of a climate emergency on 7 September 2020, Councillors noted the Town Clerk's report and considered how to address the issue of climate breakdown at a local level.

**RESOLVED:** (i) to form a Working Group made up of Councillors and representatives from local environmental groups as well as local experts reporting to the Planning Committee (its title could be extended to the Planning and Environment Committee) which meets every 3 weeks

**RESOLVED:** (ii) that Councillors Cairns, Price, Heath, Hillier and Waltham were nominated to form the Working Group and to consider bringing in other non-Councillor members and to begin to draw up a strategy, policies and an action plan

259/20

### **A COMMUNITY FRIDGE**

Members noted a report by the Assistant Town Clerk about a collaborative project to provide a community fridge and considered the use of the Community Room at Coopers Corner to trial the initiative.

During a suspension of Standing Orders **Milly Carmichael** of Transition Marlborough answered questions on when and how the scheme would be run, food hygiene certifications and management, the benefits of reducing food waste and providing fresh food to anyone who could make use of it, and the voluntary process by which it would be operated.

**RESOLVED:** that Marlborough Town Council supports the project to locate a Community Fridge at the community room at Coopers Corner at no cost, and to review it after one year

260/20

### **DARK SKIES FESTIVAL**

Members noted an update report by the Assistant Town Clerk with feedback from the Dark Skies "At Home" Festival held on Saturday 3 October 2020.

261/20

### **TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE**

Following an agreement made in principle to register an interest in having a tourist information presence at St Peter's Church, Councillors considered whether to make a firm commitment to the proposal. Main points of discussion included:

- That the location provided an exciting opportunity for a tourism presence
- Whether the space represented good value for money
- Whether, during a continuing period of financial and visitor uncertainty due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, the cost could be justified
- Whether the Tourism Strategy could be reviewed to look at alternate ways to promote the town without the need for a physical space
- That the Town Council was grateful for the opportunity to consider the option

**RESOLVED:** that the Town Council was unable to make a financial commitment to proceed with a tourism presence at St Peter's, but wished the Trustees well with their refurbishment and hoped that at some point in the future to be able to resume discussions

262/20

### **MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

**RESOLVED:** that **Councillor Waltham** is elected a member of the Finance & Policy and Property Committees

263/20

### **CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR OPENING HOURS**

Councillors noted a report by the Town Clerk and considered a recommendation about opening hours and holidays over the Christmas and New Year period.

**RESOLVED:** that the timetable for Christmas and New Year opening hours was agreed

264/20

### **GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS (GDPR)**

**RESOLVED:** to adopt GDPR policies as recommended by the Finance & Policy Committee

265/20

### **OUTSIDE BODIES**

**Councillor Price** would be attending a meeting of the Wiltshire Association of Local Councils on 24 November.

**Councillor Cairns** gave a verbal update on the most recent activities of Transition Marlborough, including the potential adoption of the Community Orchard. The Operational

Flood Working Group would soon be resuming meetings which had been suspended since the lockdown earlier in the year.

*Councillor Heath left the meeting*

266/20

**COMMITTEE MINUTES**

In accordance with para 3.1 of the Scheme of Delegation, Councillors noted the approved minutes of the **Planning Committee** held 1 and 29 September and 5 October 2020; the **Property Committee** held 13 January 2020 and the **Finance & Policy Committee** on 16 March 2020

267/20

**MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

No questions had been submitted.

268/20

**COMMON SEAL**

Proposed by **Councillor Dow** and seconded by **Councillor Fogg** 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

269/20

**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 commercially confidential nature of the business to be transacted

*All members of the press and public left the meeting*

270/20

**SKATEPARK LIGHTING**

Members noted a report by the Assistant Town Clerk and considered quotations for the provision of lighting for the Skatepark at the Recreation Ground, Salisbury Road.

**RESOLVED:** that the contract for provision of lighting for the Skatepark at the Recreation Ground be awarded to Luminance Pro Lighting Systems at £13,685

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm

Signed: .....

Town Mayor

Date: .....