

**MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL
FULL TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of a Meeting of the **Full Town Council** which was held on **Monday, 20 January 2020** in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Marlborough** at 7.00 pm

PRESENT	Councillor M. Hall	Town Mayor
	Councillor B. Castle	
	Councillor Mrs P. Dow	
	Councillor N. Fogg	
	Councillor A. Ross	
	Councillor G. Loosmore	
	Councillor N. Barrett-Morton	
	Councillor S. Price	
	Councillor A. Wilson	
	Councillor D. Heath	
	Councillor V. Hillier	
ALSO PRESENT	Mrs S. Parker	Town Clerk
	Mrs D. Whitehall	Administrator
	Fr. J. Blacker	Mayor's Chaplain
	Councillor S. Dobson	Wiltshire Councillor – Marlborough East
	Mr N. Goodwin	Marlborough.News
	Plus 41 members of the public	

PRAYERS

Fr. Blacker opened the meeting with prayers.

PETITION

Doreen Davies presented a petition signed by 29 people against a proposal to reopen an access to Stonebridge Meadow from Stonebridge Close. **The Mayor** thanked her for the petition, which would be submitted to the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee Meeting on Monday, 3 February and also drew attention to the Stonebridge Management Plan Annual Review Meeting in the Town Hall at 7pm on Wednesday, 22 January. Both meetings were open to members of the public.

Several members of the public left the meeting

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Richard Pitts – had been disappointed to read **Minute 351/19** from the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee of 18 November about mowing of the Common. He understood that The Common was mown on 12 December: not an Autumn mow. Seeds would be long gone and the impact was open to question. His perception was that the Council wanted to mow open spaces of the town to within an inch of the ground and life. In these days of Climate Emergency, open spaces - the Common, Stonebridge and Coopers Meadow - need to be encouraged to increase biodiversity and support as wide as possible a range of bees and bugs. Get the insects right and environment with flourish: from there, nesting birds, mammals etc. He was, however, heartened by the resolution of the Minute "the mowing regime on The Common should continue as in previous years." He had two questions arising:

1) Did that mean the Council would go back to the mowing regime put in place when he had been Chair of Open Spaces? He began his working career as an environmental biologist

and because of that the Management Plan was based on management best practice of the time and a "hay mow" in the late summer, post breeding birds, was the order of the day.

2) In order to properly involve interested members of the community, his committee formed a Common User Group. He had recently met with a considerable number of concerned residents and subsequently with a leading expert on Downland management who confirmed his analysis of **Minute 351/19** was correct. Was it time to bring the Common User Group back?

The Mayor thanked him – the question would be passed to the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee for its meeting on 3 February.

Jo Waltham – asked whether there was any update on signage for the school in George Lane? **The Mayor** confirmed that a 'school' warning sign had already been erected, and that Wiltshire Council had conducted a survey with regards to a zebra crossing near the old Police Station – it was expected that a full study would be carried out during 2020/21 and, if all was well, the crossing being implemented in 2021/22.

Val Compton – referred to the many members of the community, young and old, who used and loved Priory Gardens and asked whether the Town Council would consider ways to create areas that would support more biodiversity (bugs, bats, birds) with an updated, less formal design. Students from St John's Academy used the park regularly – perhaps they could be asked to input to the design with the hope that if they felt included in the design, it might lessen some of the problems that had been caused there in the past. **The Mayor** thanked Mrs Compton for the question, which would also be passed to the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee.

Gordon Wherrall – asked why ARK (Action for the River Kennet) had blocked the drain that removed storm water from Stonebridge Close? It had taken many years to put the drain in, but water no longer drained away and was causing flooding for local homeowners. **The Town Clerk** would follow up directly and the matter would also be passed to Wiltshire Council's discretionary gulley clearing service. **The Mayor** also reminded Mr Wherrall about the opportunity to ask the question directly at the Stonebridge Management Plan Annual Review meeting on 22 January.

Several members of the public left the meeting

CRIME AND DISORDER

No officers were available to attend the meeting. **Cllr. Ross** asked whether there had been any response to his question at the previous meeting about criminal damage to vehicles at Salisbury Road Recreation Ground car park. **The Town Clerk** would follow up the question on his behalf.

QUESTIONS TO AND FROM WILTSHIRE COUNCILLORS

Cllr. Fogg had drawn the attention of the Planning Committee to the removal of a plaque commemorating Billy Whitelegg which had previously been on the wall of the Conservative Club/White Harte at 116 High Street, sadly believing it had been disposed of. He had written to the Showman's Guild to express his and others' sense of outrage at this action.

Cllr. Dobson referred to two change of use planning applications relating to a new dental surgery (42 and 116 High Street). The Town Council had objected to the change of use from the White Harte to a dental surgery and the application had been called in by **Cllr. Fogg** to be considered at the Eastern Area Planning Committee. Members would therefore be interested to learn that the application for 42 High Street had been approved. It was not known at this stage whether the applicant intended to continue with the application for 116 High Street.

Cllr. Castle referred to the Post Office being closed unexpectedly on several occasions before Christmas and had noticed this had also happened once or twice since then and asked whether any response had been received to the Town Council's enquiries about the situation. The **Town Clerk** had spoken to a representative in December who had said it was being dealt with internally. A formal letter was being sent to the Post Office and/or One Stop.

421/19

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs. Kirk Wilson, Farrell and Cairns.

421/19

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations.

422/19

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor wished everyone a happy new year and drew Members attention to a few dates to add to their diaries:

- A Civic Dinner on 20 March with 4MI Battalion as Guest of Honour
- Stonebridge Management Plan Annual Review on 22 January in the Town Hall at 7pm
- A Tidy Town litter pick event on Sunday 26 January at 10am meeting at Coopers Corner in the George Lane car park
- A Community Resilience Evening in the Town Hall on 29 January at 6.30 pm

423/19

MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held Monday, 9 December 2019 were approved as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor

424/19

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

Members noted the Town Clerk's report. **Cllr. Cooper** was disappointed that Councillor involvement in a meeting of the Marlborough Patients Participation Group (**Min. 315/19**) planned for January had been cancelled and urged that the suggestion for a separate liaison forum be arranged as soon as possible.

425/19

PLAY AREA AT JUBILEE FIELD, MANTON

The Town Clerk's report was noted which set out the outcome of a recent on-site meeting to discuss a final design for the play area.

During a suspension of Standing Orders, the Mayor invited comments.

Dr. Nick Ridley spoke on behalf of residents. He thanked the Town Council for organising a very collaborative site meeting which had been greatly appreciated. There was widespread support for the current equipment to be updated in natural materials and the changes made to proposals were appreciated which took account of residents' desire for equipment to be placed so not to impede dog walkers or encroach towards the river. He also congratulated Manton Community Outdoors (MCO) on raising the funds for the project.

Emma Tilney (MCO) expressed disappointment that the proposed zip wire had been excluded due to the inability to find a suitable location but was hopeful that the compromise reached meant there was a workable solution to suit everyone. Some grants were due to expire very soon so it was important to move forward. Emma thanked Lindsay Long and the Manton Residents Association (MRA). It was exciting to be able to bring a new lease of life to the area for all users.

Lindsay Long (MRA) thanked everyone for their co-operation and appreciated the site meeting which had allowed consensus to be reached.

Cllr. Cooper paid tribute to all who had attended the site meeting and felt proud of the Manton community for approaching the meeting constructively, prepared to make compromises and with a desire from all to find a solution. He named Clare Russell, Dr. Nick Ridley and Lydia Bauer in particular for their input. It was a shame that the zip wire had to be excluded because the original design was felt too big and no other location could be found. The revised plan also moved the adult equipment and basketball hoops to a more suitable location. Revised solutions for seating had also been agreed. It was important that the Town Council made sure the plans suited everyone, providing improved equipment without impinging on dog walkers or other users of the open space and without encroaching on nearby properties.

It was hoped that installation would take approximately 4 weeks, starting mid-April, after the Easter school holidays with an opening event during the May half term break.

The **Mayor** noted that a saving of £7,000 had been achieved from the original design, with the final plan totalling £66,422 excluding VAT.

RESOLVED: that the final design from Dragon Play for the Jubilee Field, Manton play area was approved. An order should be placed for the equipment and installation at a cost of £66,422 should go ahead after Easter with an opening event to take place in May 2020

Several members of the public left the meeting

426/19

TOWN MAYOR – 2020/2021

Cllr. Castle proposed **Cllr. Mark Cooper** for Town Mayor for 2020/2021 and **Cllr. Ross** seconded the nomination.

RESOLVED: that **Councillor Mark Cooper** will be Marlborough Town Mayor for 2020/2021

427/19

DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR – 2020/2021

Cllr. Barrett-Morton proposed **Cllr. Andy Wilson** for Deputy Town Mayor for 2020/2021 and **Cllr. Fogg** seconded the nomination.

RESOLVED: that **Councillor Andy Wilson** will be Deputy Town Mayor for 2020/2021

428/19

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

RESOLVED: to appoint **Cllr. Hillier** to the **Amenities & Open Spaces Committee**

429/19

WRITTEN MOTION – RESCINDING OF A PREVIOUS DECISION

In accordance with Standing Orders, para. 8, a special motion had been raised and signed by 6 Councillors (**Cllrs. Wilson, Cooper, Farrell, Fogg, Heath and Price**):

“All previous decisions to install CCTV at Priory Gardens should be rescinded as this project is becoming increasingly expensive, involving not only installation of the cameras themselves, but also associated costs including sourcing power through a wall we share with a third party, incurring legal and licensing fees and it is likely that a condition survey of the wall will be needed too. Furthermore, at a recent Full Council meeting the local police representative confirmed that the area is no longer a policing priority.

A substantial saving can be made by revoking decisions (initially made on 10 December 2018 with the most recent one for additional costs on 2 September 2019) to install CCTV in Priory Gardens. This saving will help fund other projects and ultimately help to keep down the costs to the local taxpayer.”

Cllr. Wilson introduced the motion, also referring to **Sgt. Holloway’s** update at the Full Town Council meeting on 9 December 2019 that “Priory Gardens patrols had been removed from the priority list due to a decrease in anti-social behaviour”.

Cllr. Barrett-Morton responded to the motion, urging that it should not be supported. His reasons included:

- He could see no justification for the proposal
- Monies were already allocated to the project
- 64% of residents were in favour of CCTV in Priory Gardens
- He believed the planned installation was almost ready to proceed and the delay was only related to the volume of work of the adjacent car park owners of the land and its managing agents
- The recent lull in anti-social behaviour had been short lived and had recently restarted
- Due to the gate being left unlocked from Figgins Lane people had been using the park after dark, disturbing the sleep of nearby residents in Cromwell Mews and resulting in vandalism and criminal behaviour, with alleged drug dealing taking place there too
- The Town Council had recently incurred costs repairing the wall where a large quantity of bricks had been deliberately removed
- Signs had been damaged – either being reversed or left hanging on the posts
- That St John’s Academy had been supportive of the installation of CCTV
- That he believed the police were supportive of the installation of CCTV going ahead.

In supporting the motion, **Cllr. Price** referred to the next agenda item (budget and precept for 2020/21). A budget working party held on 6 January had recommended figures to the Finance & Policy Committee on 13 January. They had been obliged to make some hard choices in reviewing budget proposals for 2020/21, making some difficult decisions in order to find cost savings to keep the final proposals down. The project had been excluded because it was felt that it did not yet have confirmed final costs and so had been included in the approximately £120,000 of savings from the original budget proposals. Members had felt it was important to be careful that the Town Council spend money where it would be effective.

The Mayor highlighted that money had been allocated in the current year’s budget (2019/20) and if it was not spent that money would roll over into reserves for 2020/21 – which could be ear marked for this project. The **Town Clerk** confirmed £4,500 was already available for CCTV cameras in Priory Gardens within the 2019/20 budgets with just under £2,000 in ear marked reserves also set aside for it. There were though considerable associated costs including a licence fee of around £1,500 and contractors’ costs which may be as much as £4,000. A survey of the party wall could be an additional, as yet unknown, cost. (An informal survey did though indicate that the wall was in good condition and there should be no problem in cabling being passed through it). Alternatives to powering the cameras discussed with the Council’s CCTV providers, such as underground cabling across the Priory Gardens, would be prohibitively expensive.

Cllr. Fogg suggested that a compromise might be to ear mark the funds until issues relating the party wall could be resolved, detailed costs and timings were known and more information on anti-social behaviour could be considered. **Cllr. Loosmore** agreed that ear marked funds might be prudent, but it would be difficult to carry the project forward without full costs being understood.

Cllr. Ross reminded Members that the Budget Working Party had discussed that the priority for Ear Marked Reserves for 2020/21 should be the new Workshop.

The **Mayor** then read the Motion in full prior to a vote.

RESOLVED: that all previous decisions to install CCTV at Priory Gardens should be rescinded as this project is becoming increasingly expensive, involving not only installation of the cameras themselves, but also associated costs including sourcing power through a wall shared with a third party, incurring legal and licensing fees and it is likely that a condition survey of the wall will be needed too. Furthermore, at a recent Full Council meeting the local police representative confirmed that the area is no longer a policing priority. A substantial saving can be made by revoking decisions (initially made on 10 December 2018 with the most recent one for additional costs on 2 September 2019) to install CCTV in Priory Gardens. This saving will help fund other projects and ultimately help to keep down the costs to the local taxpayer.

Cllr. Dobson left the meeting

430/19

BUDGETS/PRECEPT 2020/2021

Members considered a recommendation from the Finance & Policy Committee (F&P) for budget and precept requirements for 2020/21.

Cllr. Ross thanked F&P Members for all their hard work and, in particular, the **Town Clerk** for her work and detailed report. Main points were:

- The budgets being presented represented significant savings over the ones originally put forward and agreed by Committees – a total saving of £120,537 – resulting in a net budget requirement of £723,257 and a precept rise of 5.76%
- Members had made some hard decisions, with costs being carefully examined, some safety nets eliminated, maintenance budgets reduced and cherished projects shelved while taking account of increased staff costs
- Devolution of services from Wiltshire Council was still a year away, although the Town Council had already taken on the costs of services that would otherwise have been lost: the Marlborough Community & Youth Centre, and the provision of public toilets at George Lane and the Town Hall with associated maintenance costs
- This was a busy council – it organised or facilitated events and projects for the community such as Christmas Lights Switch-on, Civil War Re-enactment, Tourism, CCTV with more events to come
- It was important to be as prudent as possible with costs while still providing the services that would be expected by the people of the town.

Cllr. Fogg questioned whether the Town Council should continue to fund events such as Christmas Lights Switch-on or projects such as CCTV. In other towns traders benefited from similar schemes and provided a regular contribution – as an example, he understood this was around 25% in Devizes.

Cllr. Loosmore reminded Members that it had taken several years to recover from poor financial management in the past. Having reached a point where the Town Council had a good and proper level of reserves, it was important to move forward without depleting them.

RESOLVED: that Committee Budgets were agreed, and that the total net budget and precept requirement to levy to Wiltshire Council for 2020/21 is £723,257 representing a 5.76% precept rise equating to a Band D figure of £206.37 pa

431/19

TOURISM

Members noted a report by the Tourism Officer and considered comments made by VisitWiltshire on Marlborough's Tourism Strategy as well as the findings of a recently commissioned Signage and Wayfinding Review.

Tourism Strategy

Members congratulated the Tourism Officer on the Tourism Strategy.

RESOLVED: (i) that revisions made by VisitWiltshire to the Tourism Strategy were agreed and that the Strategy should be taken forward to wider consultation which will include local tourism related businesses, Chamber of Commerce etc

Signage Review

Discussions included:

- It was good to have a review conducted by people who were not already familiar with the town
- That the blue Borough signs, while being outdated, were an important part of the town's heritage and should be preserved as iconic signs, perhaps at the Museum
- The charter date of 1204 was important and Cllr. Cooper asked that it be retained on any replacement signage – the historical aspect would also contribute towards the town's story in its position and historical importance on the Great West Way
- Whether to signpost Marlborough College as an attraction
- There were some low-cost items recommended in the review such as cleaning which would be easy to implement

RESOLVED: that the Signage Review be carried on to the next level incorporating feedback from the meeting and the Tourist Working Party

432/19

WILTSHIRE INFORMATION SHARING CHARTER (WiSC)

Members considered the Town Clerk's report concerning a Personal Information Sharing Agreement to enable Wiltshire Police to remotely access the Town Council's CCTV system while meeting data protection requirements and ensuring the security of all aspects of the arrangement.

It was noted that this would be part of a suite of documents including a Policy, Code of Practice and Data Protection Impact Assessment for future agreement and annual review.

RESOLVED: that the Personal Information Sharing Agreement between Marlborough Town Council and Wiltshire Police is approved

433/19

CIVIC AWARDS 2020

Members considered a report by the Town Clerk and a new civic award process. Main points were:

- A change from the current Citizen of the Year format was long overdue

- The awards would be announced as part of the Annual Town Council (Mayor Making)
- Anyone could put forward nominations at any time of the year and final decisions would be made by Full Council

RESOLVED: to adopt the Mayor’s Community Awards Policy

434/19

REPRESENTATION AT THE EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members were asked to nominate a representative to speak at the Wiltshire Council meeting on Thursday, 30 January 2020 alongside **Cllr. Nick Fogg** who would be attending in his capacity as Wiltshire Councillor, Marlborough West, having ‘called-in’ a planning application (19/11025/LBC) to change the use of 116 High Street from a members’ club to a dental clinic and surgery. Unfortunately, the **Mayor** was unable to attend due to a Marlborough Area Neighbourhood Plan (MANP) commitment.

Cllrs. Dow and **Loosmore** offered to attend the meeting (if available). As the **Town Clerk** was attending a MANP meeting, she was unavailable but, the **Assistant Town Clerk** could be approached to take her place.

RESOLVED: Members to liaise directly with the Town Clerk about attendance

435/19

OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr. Cairns had provided an update about work to clear the leat in Coopers Meadow as well as liaison with the Estate Manager for Town Mill in actions taken to raise sluices to alleviate flooding during heavy rains in December. River levels had peaked on 22 December and no further intervention had been required.

436/19

COMMITTEE MINUTES

In accordance with para. 3.1 of the Scheme of Delegation, Members noted the approved minutes of the following committee meetings: **Planning** – 2 December 2019, **Finance & Policy** – 2 December 2019 and **Property** – 11 November 2019.

437/19

MEMBERS’ QUESTION TIME

There were no questions.

438/19

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

The meeting closed at 8.35 pm

Signed: Date:
Town Mayor