

MARLOW TOWN COUNCIL

Court Garden, Pound Lane, Marlow, Bucks, SL7 2AG

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT 7.00pm ON TUESDAY 12TH NOVEMBER 2019 IN THE SEYMOUR ROOM, COURT GARDEN, MARLOW

Present

**Town Mayor
Leader
Deputy Leader**

**Clr R Scott
Clr J Towns
Clr C Funnell**

Councillors

**S Brown
R Cadman
C Keighley
N Marshall
K Thomson
R Wilson**

**Town Clerk
Deputy Clerk**

**Mrs H Martin
Mrs K Joy**

Also present

one member of the press

M.59.19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Clr T Avery, Clr B Johnson and Clr E West.

M.60.19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

M.61.19 COMMUNICATIONS FROM TOWN MAYOR

A list of Mayoral engagements since the last meeting was circulated to all members and duly noted.

M.62.19 TO AGREE AS A TRUE RECORD THE TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES DATED 10.09.19

RESOLVED:

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 10.09.19 WERE AGREED AND SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD

M.63.19 REPORT FROM LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

A report from the Leader of Council outlining all activities since the last meeting was circulated to all members and duly noted. The Leader also recorded her thanks to those members who had successfully raised funds for the Christmas lights this year.

M.64.19 INFORMATION REPORTS

a) Celebrate Marlow Event

Celebrate Marlow was held very successfully on 29.09.19. Guests were very complimentary on the day and a raft of thank you letters / emails were received after the event.

The Events Working Group met on 9th October 2019 to review the event and discuss the format and content for 2020. No major changes were recommended and Celebrate Marlow will run to a very similar format on Sunday 27th September 2020.

b) Free Parking Days in Marlow

In line with previous years, the Planning Environment and Transportation Committee has been asked by Wycombe District Council(WDC) to suggest three dates for free parking in all WDC car parks in Marlow. Free parking in WDC car parks for 2019 will be on December 7th, December 14th and December 21st. Minute P.064 refers.

MEMBERS NOTED THE REPORTS

M.65.19 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR 2020/2021

The Internal Auditor appointed by the Town Council for the past five years has indicated that he would be willing to carry out the audits again this year with no fee increase, the service the Town Council has received has been thorough and professional.

To undertake the interim audit and year-end audit a fee of £770.00 plus VAT will be charged.

Members were asked to approve the Internal Auditors Terms of Reference which were circulated to all members.

RESOLVED:

THAT MEMBERS APPOINTED THE SAME INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR THE YEAR 2020/21 , APPROVED THE CURRENT SCALE OF FEES AND APPROVED THE INTERNAL AUDITORS TERMS OF REFERENCE

M.66.19 EXTERNAL AUDIT 2018/2019

The External Auditor had returned the certificate confirming that Marlow Town Council had completed the audit of the annual return for the year ended 31 March 2019. A copy of the certificate was circulated to all members.

The meeting noted that there were no matters of concern reported.

RESOLVED:

THAT MEMBERS NOTED THE REPORT AND AGREED THAT THE TOWN CLERK POSTS THE REQUIRED 'NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF THE AUDIT AND THE RIGHT TO INSPECT THE ANNUAL RETURN'

M.67.19 PROTOCOL FOR FILMING, REPORTING AND PHOTOGRAPHY AT MEETINGS

It was recommended that members adopt a protocol for managing filming, reporting and photography at meetings. The protocol was circulated to all members.

The protocol had been produced with advice from both District and County Councils.

RESOLVED:

THAT MEMBERS AGREED TO ADOPT THE PROTOCOL FOR MEETINGS WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT

M.68.19 CEMETERY FEE REVIEW

Members had resolved to review the Cemetery fees on an annual basis. Officers have reviewed the Cemetery Fees against neighbouring parishes and taken advice from the institute of Cemetery Management.

Officers would like to recommend to Council that fees for purchase, internment, and memorials are increased by inflation at 2% for 2020.

The Fees for memorials were extensively reviewed in 2018 and were not increased in 2019. In addition, it was recommended that the Town Council cease charging for Children under 18 and claim the costs back from the recently established Children's Funeral Fund. Further information about this fund was circulated to all members.

The current scale of fees was circulated to all members for reference.

RESOLVED:

THAT MEMBERS APPROVED THE CEMETERY FEE INCREASE AS DETAILED ABOVE FROM 01.01.2020 AND THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL CEASE TO CHARGE FOR BURIALS FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18 FROM 01.01.2020

M.69.19 NEW BENCH AT DEDMERE RISE

An area at the top of Dedmere Rise had been identified by Cllr Towns as a suitable location for a bench. The cost of the purchase of the bench and installation is £952. This route has been identified as being very popular in particular with residents frequenting the doctors surgery.

It was noted that in addition to siting the bench, the Town Council should request that a waste bin be installed adjacent to it.

RESOLVED:

THAT MEMBERS RESOLVED TO INSTALL A BENCH AT THE TOP OF DEDMERE RISE AT A COST OF £952 FROM C.I.L. RESERVES

M.70.19 CHRISTMAS LIGHTING SCHEME FROM 2020

The Town Council's hire agreement for the provision of the Christmas lights in the town was in the final year of a five year hire agreement.

The Events Working Group had met on several occasions during the year to discuss what direction the scheme would take from 2020.

In summary the group agreed that the style and design would stay broadly the same in terms of components and colourway. The installation would be expanded slightly to incorporate lighting the town "gateways" in West and Chapel Streets. A summary of the proposed scheme is detailed below:-

- Column motifs in West and Chapel / Spittal Street at 6 locations
- Motifs in 7 of the pavement trees outside The Chequers *, High Street
- Large deciduous tree in Dean Street dressed with motifs (opposite Windsor House)
- 8 icicle / blizzard cross streets in High Street
- Up to #170 3' lit Christmas trees in town centre locations, High St, West St, Spittal St
- Motifs in 4 of the deciduous trees planted on The Causeway grassed area
- 25'-30' specimen Nordman Fir tree opposite War Memorial, garlanded and topped
- Liston Court dressed with icicle lights and dressing for tree
- Pavements trees outside Anglers Court lit with string lights
- Spiral lights on lamps columns – various locations in town centre

*a preliminary tree inspection report suggests that motifs may be too stressful for these trees and an alternative lighting decoration might need to be chosen. The events working group will be consulted if this is the case.

The scheme as outlined above is estimated to cost £33,000 per year for a five year hire agreement and includes

- hire of lighting components
- installation
- take down
- storage
- repairs and maintenance

Please note that prices may vary depending on Brexit arrangements.

All additional elements and locations for the #170 3' trees are dependent on the necessary survey works, permissions being given, including a power source being required for all these trees.

The contract would be subject to the tender process and the preliminaries of tender preparation were underway. It was anticipated that the contract start date would be 01.05.2020 in order to commence infrastructure installation in the summer months. The Town Council would award the contract at the completion of the tender process in Spring 2020.

RESOLVED:

THAT MEMBERS APPROVED THE EVENTS WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A CHRISTMAS LIGHTING SCHEME AS OUTLINED ABOVE AND THAT A FIVE YEAR HIRE AGREEMENT FOR LIGHTING INSTALLATION AT A COST NOT EXCEEDING £33,000 PER YEAR WAS APPROVED AND THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL CONTINUE TO SOURCE SPONSORSHIP FROM THE COMMUNITY TO OFFSET THE COST OF THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL AGREED TO PROCEED WITH THE TENDER PROCESS

M.71.19 BOOK EXCHANGE – NEWFIELD ROAD

Members were reminded that the Town Council gave approval for the decommissioned telephone box in Newfield Road to be used as a book exchange for a trial period of three months.

The trial started in August and is nearing its conclusion. Members were asked to approve the continuation of the book exchange at this location.

There were some concerns from residents in the immediate vicinity before the trial started but reports from Thames Valley Police and from the residents themselves have indicated that the project has not adversely impacted the local community. In fact antisocial behaviour has shown a decrease according to representative data, with no complaints being received by the Town Council.

Social media has been extremely positive with lots of praise for the initiative and many posts of happy parents, grandparents and children, donating and well as taking the books.

The success is due mainly to the small team of volunteers who open and close the box daily, monitor stock and generally make sure the exchange is a welcoming place.

Should members approve the continuation of the scheme, alterations in the opening and closing times, during the darker days, would be implemented. The volunteers also have ideas to improve the exchange's popularity with initiatives engaging local school children to produce posters and a social media page that could include regular activities and book recommendations.

Officers would continue to support the scheme and volunteers as had happened during the trial.

RESOLVED:

THAT MEMBERS APPROVED THE CONTINUATION OF THE BOOK EXCHANGE AT NEWFIELD ROAD AS A COMMUNITY LED PROJECT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE TOWN COUNCIL

M.72.19 FUNDING FOR ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP

Report by: Cllr J Towns, Leader of the Council

Environment has been an important element in our Vision for Marlow launched in 2011 and the backbone of everything we do in the town. With the recent national focus on environment the Planning, Environment and Transportation(PET) committee agreed to establish an Environment working group reporting into the PET committee. This group would look at ways in which we could respond to the many environmental issues affecting our residents and our town.

The working group has already launched a number of initiatives such as establishing an Environmental Performance Index, tackling air pollution (AQMA), Refill, ReLeaf, Eco-Schools, Eco-Business network, with more in the pipeline. With the help of our external volunteers and working closely with other groups in the town, some funding needs have been identified.

- Establish a Wordpress based web site, that would have a link to the TC website
- Set up #sustainablemarlow social media
- print flyers, banners etc.

It is suggested that a sum of £2,500 to be put aside for the rest of this financial year, and that #sustainablemarlow should be included in the Councils budget for future years. The meeting noted its thanks to the unpaid volunteers who sit on this working group.

RESOLVED:

THAT MEMBERS RESOLVE TO APPROVE £2,500 AS DETAILED ABOVE

M.73.19 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDES BODIES

Cllr R Cadman

Reported he had attended a visit to Budavar with 14 other visitors

Cllr J Towns

Reported attending a BidCo meeting

Cllr C Funnell

Reported attending a meeting of the Marlow Town Regatta and Festival Committee

Cllr S Brown

Reported that Brinkhurst had a new Warden starting in November

Cllr N Marshall

Reported attending a meeting of the Marlow Society at which they complimented the Town Council on the Remembrance Day Parade and Service

M.74.19 REPORTS FROM WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cllr S Brown

Reported that the Court Garden swimming pool would be closed for three months and there was currently a vacancy for a Street Warden.

Cllr N Marshall

Referenced the Special Planning Document

M.75.19 REPORTS FROM BUCKS COUNTY COUNCIL

The Town Mayor reported that County Councillor A Collingwood had submitted a report on the day of the meeting. This would be circulated to members. Cllr Collingwood would be asked to submit future reports in time for inclusion in the agenda papers.

M.76.19 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 14th January 2020 at 7.00pm

Meeting closed at 7.35pm

Town Mayor

Date