

MARLOW TOWN COUNCIL

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

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 21st SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 7.00pm IN THE HIGGINSON ROOM, COURT GARDEN, POUND LANE, MARLOW

Present

Town Mayor Cllr R Scott
Deputy Mayor Cllr J Towns
Councillors D Brown
R Cadman
C Funnell
C Heap
C Hoyle
N Mityaeva
C Stapley
Deputy Clerk Mrs K Joy

M.45.21 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr T Avery, Cllr N Marshall and Cllr R Wilson.

M.46.21 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

M.47.21 Communications from Town Mayor

Now that Covid restrictions have been substantially lifted, the number of events to which the Mayor is invited is slowly increasing and I am looking forward to becoming more involved in the activities of the many organisations in the Town over the next few months. Indeed, my diary is filling up quite quickly.

I have recently attended the following –

- 4th August Attended Lighthouse summer camp at Holy Trinity School
- 10th August With the Leader, recorded a piece for Marlow FM on Town Council activities
- 8th September Attended the High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire's Summer Reception
- 11th September Attended Marlow Carnival and participated in the Round Table Duck Race
- 12th September Attended rededication of the new building, including Ark Cafe and lunch at Marlow Methodist Church
- 16th September Attended opening of Pub in the Park

Civic events

Looking further forward into my year, the Council has confirmed the dates for Remembrance Day and the pre-Christmas civic events of Switch On and Carols on the Causeway, all of which are on the Town Council website.

Mayor's Charity golf day is booked for Tuesday 12 April 2022 at Harleyford.

The Council Events committee is considering how to recognise 50th anniversary of town twinning with Marly le Roi in May 2022 and the Queens Platinum Jubilee in June 2022. Further details as we agree these events.

Cllr R Scott
Town Mayor

M.48.21 Report from Leader of the Council

I would like to present my report by highlighting one of Marlow's key events in town during this period and send a big note of congratulations to everyone that came out and organised the terrific Marlow carnival on the 12th of September, a highlight for the town.

Undoubtedly this was only able to happen by the efforts of many resident volunteers who brought together a great weekend ,demonstrating the true spirit of marlovians as we continue to build back together and re open up our community together .Within that the green village in the carnival I am delighted to say demonstrated that whatever perspective we have as individuals on environment matters it brought residents together in harmony. It has set out a clear message that whatever part residents play in the environment everyone demonstrated a willingness to work together from their own perspectives to educate their fellows on how Marlow can and will tackle important environmental challenges ,congratulations to every group that made that happen.

We have concentrated hard again on organisational matters and a particular focus in general in making sure that we maintain and grow our participation in what matters to our residents during this period ,listening carefully to working groups and individuals that have engaged with us and making sure we continue to harvest collective input from residents and action groups and working to maintain transparency and openness for all residents.

I would also like to send out a message to all key workers that reside in Marlow in whatever capacity they work that your council and residents are grateful for everything that you have contributed to keep pulling us back together into normality for the town and county, we will not forget the valiant work that you all tirelessly continue to do in the background .

Whilst we move forward through the rest of 2021, I would also like to highlight to all residents that we still have some way to go as we rebuild back to normality and to please exercise caution in managing our way through the rest of the pandemic journey and to be respectful ,careful and vigilant exercising caution in gatherings ,social interaction .

Please follow wherever possible guidance to protect yourselves and others from infection by the continued use of PPE wherever possible and distancing to keep the town open and in good health and follow government guidelines which will continue to be updated regularly .

Cllr C Funnell
Leader of the Council

M.49.21 Town Council Minutes dated 27.07.21**RESOLVED:**THAT THE MINUTES DATED 27.07.21 WERE AGREED AND SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD**M.50.21 Management Accounts at 31.05.21****RESOLVED:**THAT THE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS DATED 31.05.21 WERE APPROVED**M.51.21 Office Christmas Closure**

Members were asked to approve the closure of the office from Friday 24th December 2021 to Tuesday 3rd January 2021 inclusive.

As in previous years, it was recommended that the officers be granted two statutory days during the closure period and the remaining two working days would be met by annual leave.

Arrangements will be in place to cover funerals should the need arise and for emergency contact.

Information regarding the closure will be posted on Town council website, office noticeboard, social media and office answerphone.

RESOLVED:THAT COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE CLOSURE OF THE OFFICE AS DETAILED ABOVE**M.52.21 Meetings Timetable****MARLOW TOWN COUNCIL - Meetings Timetable 2021-2022**

Meeting	MAY 2021	JUNE 2021	JULY 2021	AUG 2021	SEPT 2021	OCT 2021	NOV 2021	DEC 2021	JAN 2022	FEB 2022	MAR 2022	APRIL 2022	MAY 2022
Town Council		15	27		21		16		25		29		10
Resources Committee			13		14		9		18		22		3
Planning and Transportation Committee		15				19	10			1			
Plans Only Committee	25		6 27	17	6 28		30	21	11	22	15	5 26	17
Environment and Sustainability Committee			6		14		30			22			
Annual Meeting Parish Meeting	18												
MTC Events			Swan Upping 20				Remembrance 14 Christmas Lights Switch 25	Carols on Causeway 20				Charity Golf Day 12	

Gossmore Trust and Marlow Mayor's Charity Meetings (minimum one annual meeting per Trust / Charity) will be called during the year.
Meetings for working groups and sub committees will be called when necessary.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE AMENDED MEETINGS TIMETABLE FOR 2021-22 AS DETAILED ABOVE

M.53.21 Code of Conduct

The “Councillor Code of Conduct 2020” was circulated to all members prior to the meeting. It was noted that the Code had been ratified by Buckinghamshire Council.

Officers advised that this Code of Conduct should be adopted by Full Council.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO ADOPT THE CODE OF CONDUCT WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT

M.54.21 Election to the Chiltern Conservation Board

The Town Council was invited to vote for one of the nominated persons standing for election to the Chiltern Conservation Board. Candidates supporting statements were circulated to all members. Those present indicated their choice by way of a ballot paper and the following person received the majority vote:

Patricia Owen

RESOLVED:

THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL, BY MAJORITY VOTE, NOMINATED PATRICIA OWEN AS THE TOWN COUNCIL'S CHOICE IN THE ELECTION TO THE CHILTERN CONSERVATION BOARD

M.55.21 Addition to Management Working Group

It was recommended that the Chairman of all Committees are included in the Management Working Group. The Chairman of the Environment and Sustainability Committee is to be added to this working group.

RESOLVED:

THAT COUNCIL AGREED UNANIMOUSLY THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE BE ADDED TO THE MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

M.56.21 Electric Bike Purchase

Council resolved to agree to the Environment Committees recommendation at their July meeting for Officers to proceed with recommendations for the purchase of an electric bike for local use to conduct day to day work in the Town.

Officers have met with a number of electric bike providers to source the most appropriate bike for the Council's needs. The options were detailed for members information.

The recommendation is to proceed with a purchase of a Trek bike from supplier A who is local and offered the Council a significant discount off the list price. Additional costs would include a secure lock and cycle helmets. An additional fund of £350 over the purchase price is recommended to cover the costs of these items. Insurance cost of the bike can be absorbed in the Councils existing contract with Zurich insurance.

The life span of the battery is 8 years, replacement cost is £400, charging cost (usage dependant) 5 to 10 pence per charge. Servicing £45, annually. It is recommended that for the 2022/23 budget a cost line is added of £150 to incorporate these running costs.

RESOLVED:

THAT COUNCIL AGREED UNANIMOUSLY TO THE PURCHASE OF A TREK DISTRICT LOW EU STEP BIKE, SECURE LOCK AND HELMETS FROM SUPPLIER A WITH A TOTAL BUDGET OF £2,600. THE COST TO BE MET FROM CIL (COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY). IN ADDITION TO ESTABLISH A BUDGET LINE IN THE 2022/23 BUDGET OF £150 TO COVER RUNNING COSTS

M.57.21

Allotment Review

Background

The Council is required to give allotment tenants on years notice of any increase in rent. There was no increase in rent for the year 2019/2020, for 2020/21 there was a rent increase of 20 pence per pole and the levy charge for water provision was withdrawn. For 2021/22 there is no rent increase. The allotment rent year commences on November 1st and the current price is £6.70 per pole.

The Council has two allotment sites at Hanging Hill and Foxes Piece with plots of varying sizes, plots are measured in pole size and the minimum size plot offer is 5 poles. The sites are both currently fully tenanted, and a waiting list is operated.

Officers have extensively researched charges at other allotment sites and prices in Buckinghamshire and neighbouring parishes in Berkshire and Oxfordshire range from £5 per pole without running water to £7.60 per pole with water available on tap.

Proposal

In 2020 the allotments working group recommended that a sliding scale of tenancy fees was introduced for tenants that take up allotments between January and October. This was considered a trial tenancy period, if the tenants did not abide by the Rules & Regulations, they were not given an option to take up a full tenancy at the year end. At the request of the allotments association this change has been reviewed 12 months after implementation. The scheme has been a resounding success and will now be implemented permanently.

For 2022/23 officers recommend a rent increase of 30 pence per pole to a fee of £7 per pole. For a five-pole plot this will increase the charge from £33.50 to £35 per annum.

The Allotment Tenancy Regulations will be amended accordingly.

RESOLVED:

THAT COUNCIL AGREED UNANIMOUSLY THAT THE ALLOTMENT RENT BE INCREASED BY 30 PENCE PER POLE FROM 2022/23 TENANCY RENEWALS

M.58.21

External Audit Report 2020-21

The External Auditor has returned the certificate confirming that Marlow Town Council has completed the audit of the annual return for the year ended 31 March 2021.

It was noted that no matters of concern were reported.

RESOLVED:

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

M.59.21 Wildflower Continuation and Additional Sites

In November 2020 Council agreed to establish three wildflower areas of 500m² across three sites Henley Road, Seymour Court Road and Little Marlow Road by the Wiltshire Road roundabout. The planting has been a resounding success.

Working closely with Wild Marlow and Buckinghamshire Highways three further sites have been identified for planting this autumn; Oxford Road at the junction of Barnards Hill; Wycombe Road at the junction of Wiltshire Road (back from the junction so as not to obscure drivers eye line on the road); Gossmore Lane near the railway line and road into the Rugby Club.

The existing areas require minimal maintenance, for the new areas the proposal is as follows

- November/December - stake out and spray off grass
- November- mow grass short and spray off again
- March - spray off grass
- April - cut/clear any leftover grass
- April - dig over ground using small digger or rotovator, rake over soil to a finer tilth, supply and spread seed at 5g per sqm and rake in.
- Following October - cut and drop wildflowers
- Following April - spring cut to reduce any competition with grasses (possible over-seed if needed)
- Signage will be placed at all of the sites to explain the planting and not to walk on the soil.

The total cost for establishing the new areas and maintenance of existing areas is £2,000.

RESOLVED:

THAT COUNCIL AGREED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL FOR THE WILDFLOWER PLANTING AT A COST OF £2000 TO BE TAKEN FROM CIL RESERVES

M.60.21 Marlow Bridge Lighting

Cllr C Funnell reported that Atelier lighting had now completed the concept design phase 1 for the proposed lighting scheme on Marlow bridge presented to Council on July 27th.

The recommendation is to proceed with instructions to complete phase 2 and 3 ,final design and technical design, this will then enable planning applications to be submitted to Buckinghamshire Council and Windsor and Maidenhead Council for approval. The costs are £2,450 for instruction to Atelier consultants and planning application fees of up to £1200 for formal application and supporting fees. It was noted that there was some time sensitivity as permissions sought earlier on in the process had an expiry date.

RESOLVED:

THAT COUNCIL APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY THE ABOVE EXPENDITURE OF £3650 for PHASE 2 AND PHASE 3 FINAL AND TECHNICAL DESIGN AND PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE LIGHTING TO BE TAKEN FROM EARMARKED RESERVES FOR TOWN IMPROVEMENTS BRIDGE LIGHTING

M.61.21 Environment and Sustainability Committee Recommendation

This item was deferred until 2022 as Releaf Marlow had sourced funding for the 2021 project.

M.62.21 Information Reports

a) Committee Minutes

All members of the council are encouraged to read Committee minutes, whether or not they are sitting on that Committee. Town Council and Committee minutes are posted to the Town Council website within four weeks of the meeting taking place.

b) Social Media Summary Report

Facebook

Plans only meeting on Facebook Live May 25th had 263 views.

Plans only meeting August 17th on Facebook Live had 161 views.

Facebook reach August 5th to September 1st 6.3k up 48% on previous month.

Most engaging post had 544 likes and 76 shares, shared post from Thames Valley Police on keyless vehicle theft on August 27th

Instagram

Instagram reach August 5th to September 1st 430 up 1.1K% on previous month.

Most engaging post was the Circus Comes to Town with 406 people reached.

Twitter

In 28 days prior to September 2nd

Impressions 1,657 up 28% on previous month.

Profile visits 133 up 66% on previous month.

Mentions 7 down 12.5 % on previous month.

Top Tweet earning 287 impressions was the release on promoting a summer of cycling and walking.

MEMBERS NOTED THE REPORTS

M.63.21 Reports from Outsides Bodies

Cllr C Funnell

Reported that the Marlow Town Regatta and Festival Committee intend to hold an event in June 2022.

Cllr C Stapley

Reported attending a community liaison group regarding Marlow Film Studio.

Cllr N Marshall

Attended a virtual meeting regarding the Newt Ditch proposal in Marlow.

Cllr R Cadman

Reported the Budavar Town Twinning association had had a stand at the Marlow Carnival and tickets were available for luncheon event on the forthcoming Sunday.

Cllr D Brown

Attended a meeting of the Marlow Museum.

Cllr J Towns

Attended a meeting of BidCo and was due to attend another on Thursday.

Cllr R Scott

Attended a meeting of the Marlow Society in place of Cllr Marshall.

M.64.21 Reports from Buckinghamshire Council

Cllr C Heap

Reported that the capstones had been replaced on the bridge width restriction bollards. Electronic warning signs and width restrictions signage had also been installed.

M.65.21 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 16th November 2021 at 7.00pm

The meeting closed at 7.55pm

Town Mayor Date.....