

MARLOW TOWN COUNCIL

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

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 24TH JANUARY 2023 AT 7.00pm IN THE SEYMOUR ROOM, COURT GARDEN, POUND LANE, MARLOW

Present	Town Mayor	Cllr R Scott
	Deputy Mayor	Cllr J Towns
	Leader	Cllr C Funnell
	Deputy Leader	Cllr C Hoyle
	Councillors	D Brown
		R Cadman
		C Heap
		N Marshall
		N Mityaeva
		Town Clerk
Deputy Clerk	Mrs K Joy	
Also present		4 members of the public

M.75.22 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr T Avery, Cllr C Stapley and Cllr R Wilson.

M.76.22 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

M.77.22 Communications from the Town Mayor

Since our last meeting, I have attended the following –

14 December Opened new store – Fairfax & Favor, Market Square, Marlow

14 December Hosted Carols on the Causeway event

2023

18 January Visited 3rd Marlow Scouts to talk about Local Government

Full details of our Civic and Community events are always on the Town Council website.

M.78.22 Report from Leader of the Council

Firstly, I would like to note sadly the passing of two of Marlow's long-standing residents and supporters in the community. Lance Slater passed at the beginning of January a keen long-standing member and past president of the rotary club and affectionately referred to as Mr Marlow.

Also, the passing of Keith Gordon at the beginning of January a prominent solicitor in town and loyal member of the local rugby club for over 50 years and supporter of the chamber of trade.

Our thoughts and best wishes at this very difficult and sad time go to their families and colleagues.

Since we last met I'm pleased to report that that Marlow enjoyed the traditional Christmas lights switch on supported by local business man Peter Jones as well as our traditional carols on the causeway. Both events achieved a record turnout and set the scene for what was a highly successful

atmosphere over the Christmas period and received many accolades from neighbouring towns as well as residents and business in our high street. We would like to especially thank all our sponsors staff and contractors for the production of these events.

As we enter this new year, we are aware that the pressures on residents continue financially and we will report our budget in this meeting where we are faced with challenges of inflation in just about every budget line. We have worked hard to minimise impacts on setting the precept for funding Marlow and the results of that will be reported in this agenda by our head of resources.

Whilst we are already a long way through January, I would nonetheless like to extend our best wishes to all our Marlow residents that we serve for a successful and prosperous 2023

M.79.22 Town Council Minutes

RESOLVED:

THAT THE MINUTES DATED 06.12.22 WERE AGREED AND SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD

M.80.22 Use of Gossmore by Racing Running Line

Council approved Racing Line running to use a small section of Gossmore for a running event in 2021 and 2022. The event continues to be a success and Council were paid £500 for the use of the area. Racing Line would like to run this event again on September 17th, they have safety advisory group approval and Marlow United Football Club are happy that the event will have no impact on the football games that weekend.

RESOLVED:

THAT MEMBERS APPROVED RACING LINE RUNNING TO USE GOSSMORE ON SEPTEMBER 17TH WITH A DONATION OF £500 TOWARDS TO THE UPKEEP OF THE GOSSMORE RECREATION GROUND

M.81.22 Community Committee Proposal for Causeway Improvements with public consultation

The Community Committee Recommendation:

The Causeway open space is landscaped to provide a more enjoyable area to be used by the residents of and visitors to Marlow. Council has £20,000 in earmarked reserves for enhancements to The Causeway.

1. Executive Summary

This report discusses the opportunity to make The Causeway a more usable space for the public. It has been proposed that The Causeway is not utilised to its maximum potential.

2. Introduction

The Causeway has been the same configuration for many years and is a landmark of the town. However there are not many seating areas, the tree branches use up space and the flagpole guy ropes extend over a large area, making it hazardous and limiting walking space. Recently the local market has been using more of the area and it has become apparent that people do enjoy this space but it is not easy to manoeuvre or to rest. The benches are all situated facing the road, rather than in towards to the memorial.

MTC would like to re purpose the land on The Causeway to make it more inviting to the community. The grass surface is currently uneven so we would like to resurface and level that out but it would remain as grass. The flagpole will also be replaced to allow for greater enjoyment and utility of the grass area. While the final plan is to be confirmed following internal and external consultation, the options for this area are listed below.

3. Health and Safety

The flagpole is secured by four guy ropes spreading out from the pole which consumes a large space and the ropes are a trip hazard. The pole would be replaced with a single, more compact 15 metre pole that will be situated closer to the war memorial with no guy ropes. This would allow a much larger area to be used and remove the possibility of anyone tripping over the ropes.

Members were given 3 costed options to consider from three contractors.

Option 1

Level the ground, trim the trees, rearrange the street furniture and move the flagpole

Flagpole

15m pole to replace existing. It will be fibreglass with two internal halyards to enable 2 flags to fly at different levels

The best purchase price for a new pole as above is £1,500. There are not many suppliers and they are all of similar quality and cost. 3 quotes received.

The costs for removing the old pole and installing the new pole (including purchase) are:

Contractor 1 - £10,332

Contractor 2 - £4,000

Contractor 3 – met them on site and has not since responded.

Electricity

Only one quote received for moving the electricity box at £5,000 from an SSEN approved contractor. SSEN have quoted £3,000 to move the main box but will not move the cables branching out from the box. SSEN will only move the box and the trunk coming from the main supply on the road. It will cost at least another £2,000 to get a contractor to do the remaining works.

Lighting

War memorial lighting is correct and does not need any adjustment work.

Trees

BCC will meet us on site once we have decided on a plan to see what can be done to trim the trees back.

Ground levelling & Street furniture

This is in one category as both can be done by the same grounds maintenance contractor.

No entry sign will be moved, benches to be turned inwards, possibly one left outward facing.

Another suggestion was to have a border around the trees with flowers in the border.

The ground should be cordoned off for 2 weeks for turf and 1 month for grass seed. March would be the best time for grass work to be done. Seed would be £350 cheaper, but more time needed with the area cordoned off. The quotes below are for turf.

Contractor 1 - £13,500

Contractor 2 - £4,000

Contractor 3 – £16,000

Land ownership

BCC have been notified that we will be applying for ownership and we can continue with application to Land Registry after full MTC approval of project.

Artists impression

A computer generated image of The Causeway as we would like it to be will cost £750.

Total current projected cost for option 1

Projected costs for this project will be £15,000. This includes:-

- Flagpole purchase, removal, disposal and installation
- Ground levelling and street furniture moving
- Electricity box move
- Land ownership application and valuation costs
- Preparation costs

Please be aware that in the current economic climate, prices are continually rising and it would be advisable to have a contingency fund. Prices have risen since this project was first suggested.

Option 2

No change

Total current projected cost for option 2 £0

Option 3

Part of the above works listed in Option 1, to be decided by the Council.

Members unanimously approved Option 1.

RESOLVED:

MEMBERS APPROVED OPTION 1 TO MAKE THE AREA AT THE CAUSEWAY AN OPEN SPACE THAT DRAWS THE PUBLIC IN TO ENJOY THE SIGHTS AND GREENERY OF THE CAUSEWAY. THE COST TO BE MET FROM EARMARKED RESERVES FOR THE CAUSEWAY

M.82.22

Management Accounts

RESOLVED:

THAT THE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS DATED 30.11.22, AS APPROVED BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MINUTE RC.28.22, BE APPROVED

Cllr R Cadman left the meeting.

M.83.22

Budget 2023-24

Budget narrative 2023/2024

We are pleased to announce that during this difficult economic environment the Town Council was able to prepare a balanced annual budget for fiscal year 2023/2024 that does not result in an increase in parish tax to our households.

The Town Council is committed to continue to provide much valued services and community events to its residents and has been carefully reviewing income and expenditures to ensure that the residents get good value for money and important services continue to be effectively delivered.

We are not projecting an increase in revenues and must manage our expenses. Unfortunately, due to the inflationary pressures most of our costs are projected to increase. For example, the projected salaries for the office staff that work hard to look after our Town are expected to increase in line with the inflation. The other big item is utilities including business rates, water, electricity and gas that are also projected to increase.

As part of the budgeting process, we have reviewed the viability and value of a number of services that go some years back. For example, our annual cost of £6,300 for the town bus is currently under consideration because of limited use by our residents, the disproportionately high cost per journey, as well as our commitment to the sustainability agenda.

To manage the costs for the benefit of our residents and not to seek an increase in parish tax, some of our community events planned for 2023/2024 will be covered through the existing reserves that either were earmarked for specific purposes or come from the general reserves.

We are committed to review and scrutinise our contract commitments and expenses to find real savings for the town and its residents. Although the town has always been prudent, we understand that securing value for money has become even important in the current situation.

Despite many challenges we hope to have a great year ahead full of exciting community events, valuable services and support to our residents and we expect the current budget to deliver on our promises.



MARLOWTOWNCOUNCIL

	Income and Expenditure Forecast Statement 2022-23 and 2023-24 Proposed Budget	Full Year Budget	Actual/ Forecast	Full Year Budget
		2022/23	2022/23	2023/24
	INCOME			
1	Precept Received	376,798	376,804	381,701
2	Bucks CC Devolved Services	17,376	17,377	17,376
3	WDC Devolved Services	48,119	48,119	48,119
4	Allotment Rents	14,100	14,100	14,100
5	Cemetery Fees	50,000	68,236	58,304
6	Gosmore Recreation Ground	1,200	1,200	1,200
7	Bus Shelter Advertising	600	575	600
8	Banner Administration	850	246	0
9	Markets	2,000	0	0
10	Cash Holding Interest	6,231	7,525	6,231
	Totals	517,274	534,182	527,631

	EXPENDITURE	Full Year Budget	Actual/ Forecast	Full Year Budget
		2022/23	2022/23	2023/24
11	Salaries	211,132	209,253	225,384
12	Subcontractors	18,321	13,000	18,321
13	Administration	30,871	32,095	32,017
14	Waste Management	5,326	5,326	5,626
15	Health and Safety	3,810	5,544	3,950
16	Equipment, Operating and Maintenance	3,188	5,679	4,312
17	Community	128,470	137,284	118,242
18	Devolved	81,888	82,000	82,011
19	Utilities	8,609	11,650	11,359
20	Buildings	18,002	18,250	18,002
21	Insurance	3,787	4,083	3,787
22	Van	3,600	3,978	4,620
	Totals	517,274	528,142	527,631
	Surplus/Deficit		6,040	

RESOLVED:

1. THAT MEMBERS APPROVED THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FORECAST
2. THAT MEMBERS APPROVED THE PROPOSED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE BUDGET FOR 2023-24 AND
3. THAT IN PURSUANCE OF ITS POWERS CONFERRED BY SECTION 137 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED) THE TOWN COUNCIL: -

APPROVED PROPOSED EXPENDITURE FOR 2023-24 ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL ARE IN THE INTERESTS OF THE TOWN OR ITS INHABITANTS

MAYORAL FUNCTIONS AND CIVIC EVENTS; GROUNDS MAINTENANCE; GRANTS; TOWN TWINNING; CHRISTMAS TREE AND DECORATIONS; FLORAL DISPLAYS AND SUMMER BUNTING; ALLOTMENT PRIZES; COMMUNITY, LEISURE AND ENTERTAINMENT; YOUTH PROJECT; SECURITY PATROLS

M.84.22 Precept 2023-24

The tool below will help you set your Council Tax for 2023-24.

Input 1

Select your Organisation using the drop down Box in the Pink Box

Parish

Input 2

Enter either your proposed Precept Demand **D11** or Band D Council Tax for 2023/24 **D13**

Precept

Or

Band D Tax (Estimated)

Table - Summary of Results		Do not enter data below		
Year	2022-23	2023-24	Difference	
Precept	£376,798.00	£381,701.81	£4,903.81	
Income	£376,798.00	£381,701.81	£4,903.81	
Tax Base	6819.4	6908.63	89.23	
Band D Tax (Estimated)	£55.25	£55.25	0.00%	

RESOLVED:

THAT THE MARLOW TOWN COUNCIL PRECEPT FOR THE YEAR 2023-24 BE AGREED IN THE SUM OF £381,701

M.85.22 Information Reports

a) Committee Minutes

Members were reminded that all minutes are posted to the Town Council website and all members are invited to review all Council and Committee minutes regularly.

MEMBERS NOTED THE REPORT

M.86.22 Reports from Outside Bodies

Cllr C Funnell

Reported that arrangements for the Town Regatta and Festival were progressing.

Cllr J Towns

Reported a BidCo Board meeting would be taking place next week.

M.87.22 Reports from Buckinghamshire Council

Cllr N Marshall

Reported the outcome regarding the Country Park was still awaited.

Cllr J Towns

Reported the consultation on the revised plan for the Newt Ditch is online for public comment.

M.88.22 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 7th March 2023 at 7.00pm

Town Mayor _____ Date _____

Meeting closed at 7.30pm

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Three Marlow residents living in Fieldhouse Lane, expressed their grave concerns regarding the recent flooding in this area. They stated that the flooding was the worst they have ever seen, despite drainage works being undertaken in December.

Cllr J Towns, who had been liaising with residents on this issue, had already reported concerns to Buckinghamshire Council.

The residents were asked to write first hand accounts of their flooding experiences and send these to Cllr Towns, who would then ask the Buckinghamshire Council Cabinet Member responsible to review the situation.

Marlow Resident

Raised questions regarding the Management Accounts and asked to have the variances on three cost centres explained. The Town Mayor responded with the answers.