

# MARLOW TOWN COUNCIL

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

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT 7.00pm ON TUESDAY 5<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2023 IN THE SEYMOUR ROOM, COURT GARDEN, POUND LANE, MARLOW

## Present

### Town Mayor Deputy Mayor Councillors

Cllr D Brown  
Cllr C Stapley  
R Cadman  
C Heap  
N Marshall  
R Scott  
J Towns

### Town Clerk Administrator

Mrs H Martin  
Mrs D Abbott

## Also present

4 members of the public

### M.67.23

#### Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs T Avery, C Funnell, C Hoyle, N Mityaeva, C Stapley and R Wilson.

### M.68.23

#### Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### M.69.23

#### Communications from the Town Mayor

The schedule of Mayoral engagements was presented to all members.

### M.70.23

#### Report from Leader of the Council

No report was presented.

### M.71.23

#### Town Council Minutes

##### RESOLVED:

THAT THE MINUTES DATED 03.10.2023 AND 24.10.2023 WERE AGREED AND SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD

### M.72.23

#### Management Accounts

##### RESOLVED:

THAT THE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS DATED 30.09.2023 WERE APPROVED

### M.73.23

#### Cemetery Fee Increase

It was proposed that cemetery and memorial fees to be increased by 6% from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

##### RESOLVED:

THAT MEMBERS APPROVED THE INCREASE OF 6% IN CEMETERY AND MEMORIAL FEES FROM 01.01.2024

### M.74.23

#### Breakthrough Communications Proposal

Officers and BMKALC are recommending a subscription to Council Hive service. Council Hive is a subscription service for town and parish councils, that gives Clerks and Officers unlimited access to professional GDPR and FOI compliance advice, whenever required. This ensures that Officer's have expert advice on decision making on compliance matters and are kept up to date with best practice and legislative changes.

As well as advice on GDPR/FOI matters, the service also provide unlimited advice and support on community engagement and public communications / PR advice to councils - all within the single yearly cost.

Moreover, Council Hive gives you and staff colleagues access to a central Hub, which provides 24/7 access to comms and compliance on-demand training, resource packs, templates and guides.

Council Hive Premium, which includes the unlimited support option, is £1997 for a 12-month subscription.

**RESOLVED:**

THAT MEMBERS AGREED TO A ONE YEAR SUBSCRIPTION TO COUNCIL HIVE, THE COST OF £1997 TO BE TAKEN FROM THE PREDICTED UNDERSPEND IN THE 2023 BUDGET

**M.75.23**

**Riley Park Rope Swing Replacement**

The rope swing at Riley Park playground has frayed significantly. The rope swing is over ten years old. The office requested quotes for repair, but we have been informed by three companies that it is nor repairable and must be fully replaced.

Officers have been advised by our playground inspector that in addition that there is a potential finger entrapment. The rope has been temporarily taped up, but this is not an acceptable long term solution. The swing must be removed or replaced.

Quotations for replacement, including all transport and installation costs.

Contractor 1                    £2,200

Contractor 2                    £2,205

Officers recommend contractor 1, contractor 1 has repaired and replaced play equipment previously to a high standard.

**RESOLVED:**

THAT MEMBERS AGREED TO THE ROPE SWING REPLACEMENT BY CONTRACTOR 1 WITH THE COST OF £2,200 BEING TAKEN FROM RECREATION GROUND RESERVES

**M.76.23**

**Community Speedwatch Funding**

**RESOLVED:**

THAT THIS ISSUE BE DEFERRED TO ALLOW ALL COUNCILLORS TO MEET WITH THE VOLUNTEERS WHO WILL BE RUNNING THE SCHEME AND

THAT AFTER THIS MEETING THE ITEM WILL BE RE-PRESENTED TO COUNCIL

**M.77.23**

**Meetings Timetable 2024-2025**

**RESOLVED:**

THE MEETINGS TIMETABLE WAS APPROVED SUBJECT TO A COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING FOLLOWING EVERY RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

**M.78.23**

**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.

**b) Liston Court**

Members were advised regarding the changes affecting Liston Court and were encouraged to explore the possibilities that Liston Court offers for community involvement and to consider how it can be effectively utilized to meet the needs of the community.

**c) FOI Information**

Details of the two FOI requests received on 20.10.2023 and 09.11.2023 were reported to members.

MEMBERS NOTED THE REPORTS.

**M.79.23 Reports from Outside Bodies**

**Cllr R Scott** attended the Chamber of Trade and Commerce’s AGM on 16<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023.

**Cllr J Towns** attended a board meeting of BidCo.

**Cllr C Heap** attended a volunteer’s forum organised by URC.

**Cllr N Marshall** attended a meeting of the Marlow Society last month.

**M.80.23 Reports from Buckinghamshire Council**

**Cllr J Towns** reported County investigation work on the newt ditch on site continuing, a report would follow. The solar compacting bin trial on the causeway will be starting this week. The winter reading challenge has been launched by Bucks following the success of the summer challenge. Street lamps are being upgraded to LED bulbs.

25<sup>th</sup> Nov to December 3<sup>rd</sup> was National Tree week, Bucks have committed to long term tree painting. Zig zag road markings at Great Marlow school have been repainted. Coach lamps on Bucks side of Marlow bridge are now working.

**Cllr C Heap** reported Bucks are relaunching the helping hands service for the winter period which offers assistance for those in need and a re-launch of warm spaces scheme. Marlow library is the Marlow warm space and all are welcome during library opening hours; URC are also running a warm space. On the advice by the police on ASB ,Bucks have removed the side panels on the shelter by the skate park.

**Cllr N Marshall** reported that Strategic sites planning for MFS has put in for a referral as the report was weak on traffic and National highways have not inputted.

**M.81.23 Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 at 7.00pm

Town Mayor ..... Date.....

**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Marlow Resident

Why have Council ignored elephant in the room? Why is the film studio application not on the agenda, emailed the Clerk to day to be told that Parish meeting has no legal connection to the TC, finds that strange. MTC cannot ignore the views expressed by the residents at that Parish meeting and Cllr Scott must resign. I have not had a response to an email requesting rescinding of that letter that Cllr Scott wrote, which I also mentioned at the parish meeting, still have not had a response, when is it going to be discussed by Council and when will Cllr Scott resign? Gets the impression that this is being swept under the carpet, appreciates that this is a Bucks decision, Cllr Scott is ultra vires and his behaviour is appalling ,and I demand answers.

Response

Cllr Mayor R Scott’s resignation up to him, Marlow TC does not have to vote on the studio. Comment on the portal has been apologised for and Councillors have issued a new comment. The resident asked that this was publicly

stated at a TC meeting that a new comment had been made. A public apology has been issued, Council accepted that they would have further discussion to decide if further statement was necessary.

Marlow Resident

FOI request on emails has drawn attention to the fact that MTC has not acted appropriately. R Scott and C Funnell had a meeting with Dido in Parliament, and have both not engaged with Marlow residents. There is a complete lack of communication between MTC and the public, the public have not been listened to and not engaged with. Meetings with Dido and R Scott and C Funnell show Councillors duties lacking integrity and I personally feel that they have not acted with integrity, and I have lost a lot of respect for those Councillors and that lack of integrity and not engaging with the members of the public must be discussed.

Marlow Resident

When Councillors are elected, they are elected to represent the electorate and I feel that this is plainly not happening here.

Cllr N Marshall commented that he sits on the strategic site Committee, abstained from the MTC comments and the members meeting as must keep an open mind and not pre determine the application.

Marlow Resident

Please place on record my thanks to the officers with the way they have dealt with the FOI that has reached over 1000 pages.

Follows on from last question, the October 24th meeting, minutes state in public question time "we have outlined how the data was assimilated", I cannot see anywhere the answers are or where this methodology was written down, many emails that have been sent they are brushed aside or ignored, would council commit to point me in the direction to where this information can be found?

Clerk answered that she does not have any record of any such data.

Why has this been circulated in minutes if the data is not available, and Councillors don't know, point me where you have engaged with the public to make the decision, answer now or in 24 hours?

Comments made by the Chairman that Cllr Funnell who made the statement was not present to answer.

If that is correct then propose that Council makes a statement that this is not correct, show where the evidence is or rescind the statement, Chairman to speak with Cllr Funnell who is away who made the statement at the meeting on October 24th that the data has been widely circulated, if the data does not exist then rescind the statement. Agreed that the Chairman would speak with Cllr Funnell and provide the information within two weeks,

FOI has some really serious questions to answer and Council must take this seriously.