

The Civic Centre
St Stephen's Place
TROWBRIDGE
Wiltshire.
BA14 8AH
info@trowbridge.gov.uk

13th May 2020

SUMMONS

To all members of Trowbridge Town Council: Councillors: Bates, Bazan, Beaver, Blackmore, Blakemore, Brice, Bridges, Bryant, Cavill, Cooper, Drewett, Fuller, Halik, Hill, Hoar, King, Kirk, Oldrieve, Palmen, Piazza and Whiffen.

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to **The Annual Meeting of Trowbridge Town Council** to be held on **Tuesday, 19th May 2020**, at 19:00 on Microsoft TEAMS. **(Not in the Council Chamber, The Civic, St Stephen's Place, Trowbridge, BA14 8AH.)**

Yours faithfully,



Lance Allan
Town Clerk

Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Council and Committees, unless specifically excluded due to the confidential nature of business. If you want to join this meeting please e-mail the Town Clerk on lance.allan@trowbridge.gov.uk General Enquiries: 01225 765072 or info@trowbridge.gov.uk

AGENDA

Green highlighted are those things which are considered normally required to be done at the annual parish council meeting, including decisions on finance in preparation for completion of the 2019/2020 annual accounts.

All other items (highlighted in pink) can be deferred to a later meeting.

0. **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

To consider the suspension of Standing Orders for the duration of this meeting, only in respect of the following:

- a) to dis-allow any nominations being made during the meeting which have not been given to the Town Clerk by midnight on Monday 11th May 2020; and
- b) to allow those councillors not able to connect to Microsoft TEAMS to give a vote on any matter by telephone, text message or email; and
- c) to postpone all items not highlighted in green to a later meeting of the Council.

1. **ELECTION OF MAYOR**

a) **To consider nominations** from members and **to elect** a councillor to the role of Chairman of the Council and Mayor of Trowbridge for the Civic Year 2020/21. As at midnight on 11th May the Town Clerk had received one nomination for Mayor; **Cllr Peter Fuller**.

b) **To receive the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office** of the Chairman of Trowbridge Town Council and Mayor of Trowbridge.

RECOMMENDATION: that the following (c to e) are deferred to a later date

- c) **To receive** a statement from Councillor David Cavill, regarding his year as Mayor.
- d) **To receive** the retiring Mayor's Engagement List 18th March – 19th May 2020 (copy attached).
- e) **To give a vote of thanks.**

2. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR**

a) **To consider nominations** from members and **to elect** a councillor to the role of Deputy Mayor of Trowbridge for the Civic Year 2020/21. As at midnight on 11th May the Town Clerk had received two nominations for Deputy Mayor; **Cllr Steve Oldrieve** and **Cllr Geoff Whiffen**.

RECOMMENDATION: that the following (b) is deferred to a later date

b) **To receive a Declaration of Acceptance of Office** of the Deputy Mayor.

3. **MEMBER OFFICER PROTOCOL & CODE OF CONDUCT**

a) **To consider** for re-adoption the Member Officer Protocol & Code of Conduct of the council.

RECOMMENDATION: That the council re-adopts the Member Officer Protocol & Code of Conduct of the council. (Copy attached).

4. **STANDING ORDERS**

To consider for adoption the Standing Orders & Financial Regulations of the council either as previously circulated or as amended in consequence of Item 5 above.

RECOMMENDATION: That the council adopts the Standing Orders & Financial Regulations of the Council. (Copies attached).

5. **ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

To consider nominations from members and **to elect** a councillor to the role of Leader of the Council for the Civic Year 2020/21 (The Leader will be Chair of the Policy & Resources Committee and ex-officio a member of each committee of the council.) As at midnight on 11th May the Town Clerk had received two nominations for Leader; **Cllr David Cavill** and **Cllr Stewart Palmen**.

6. **COMMITTEES, BOARDS & PANELS**

a) **To approve that the following structure of standing committees be established for 2020/21** (as per SO15.1), including the number of members on each committee, with the remit of committees as contained in SO Part 3 'Powers and Duties of the Council and its Committees and sub-Committees':

b) **To elect** members of committees and to appoint chairs of each committee as per prior nominations and en-bloc, unless otherwise determined. (Copy attached).

i) **Museum Committee**, Leader of the Council and 9 others. As at midnight on 11th May the Town Clerk had received two nominations for Vice-Chair of the Committee; **Cllr Nick Blakemore** and **Cllr David Cavill**. Members of the committee will be asked to vote.

ii) **Leisure & Information Services Committee**, Leader of the Council and 9 others

iii) **Town Development Committee**, Leader of the Council and 9 others. As at midnight on 11th May the Town Clerk had received two nominations for Vice-Chair of the Committee; **Cllr Andrew Bryant** and **Cllr Graham Hill**. Members of the committee will be asked to vote.

iv) **Neighbourhood Services Committee** Leader of the Council and 9 others. As at midnight on 11th May the Town Clerk had received two nominations for Chair of the Committee; **Cllr Bob Brice** and **Cllr Dennis Drewett** and two nominations for Vice-Chair; **Cllr Tom Bazan** and **Cllr Chris Hoar**. Members of the committee will be asked to vote for both roles.

v) **Policy & Resources Committee**, Leader of the Council, Chair of each of the other four committees and 5 others. As at midnight on 11th May the Town Clerk had received two nominations for Vice-Chair of the Committee; **Cllr Bob Brice** and **Cllr David Cavill** (subject to the result of the election of Leader). Members of the committee will be asked to vote.

c) **To elect members of the Town Clerk's Review Panel**

i) **Membership** (Leader of the Council, Vice Chair of Policy & Resources Committee and 2 others)

- ii) To confirm the date of the Town Clerk's Annual Review
- d) **To elect members of the Risk & Audit Panel**
- i) Membership (Leader of the Council and 5 others)
- ii) To confirm the date of the Risk & Audit Panel

7. **REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES AND TRUSTEE APPOINTMENTS**

- a) **To appoint** representatives on outside bodies and trustees to charities. The Town Council is required to appoint members of the council or members of the public to be trustees of a number of local charities as determined by the Trust Deed of the appropriate charity. (Copy attached).
RECOMMENDATION: that the representatives remain in place until May 2021.
- b) **To consider reports** from representatives on outside bodies.

8. **GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE**

To consider re-adoption of the General Power of Competence

RECOMMENDATION: That; in accordance with The Parish Council (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012; Trowbridge Town Council confirms that it meets the criteria necessary for it to adopt the General Power of Competence:

- i) The number of members of the council that have been declared to be elected, whether at ordinary elections or at a by-election, is equal to or greater than two-thirds of the total number of members of the council;
 - ii) The clerk to the council holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration; and
 - iii) The clerk to the council has completed the relevant training;
- And therefore, the council re-adopts the **General Power of Competence.**

9. **APOLOGIES**

- a) **To receive** apologies from those unable to attend.
- b) **To consider for acceptance** apologies received with reasons for absence.

10. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

a) **To read and approve** as a correct record the Minutes of the Council meeting held on **17th March 2020**. (Copy attached). Copies of these Minutes have been circulated and Standing Order A6.5.2 provides that they may therefore be taken as read.

b) **To consider any questions** relating to those minutes.

Question: At the previous meeting Councillor Kirk stated that 'he has registered a complaint to the Wiltshire Council Monitoring Officer but has received no response.' Can he now confirm if he has received a response and is he therefore now prepared to apologise to those he has made false claims about?

Question: At the previous meeting Councillor Kirk stated that; 'He felt it would be inappropriate to comment as to whether the development is lawful as this is subject to an investigation by Wiltshire Council planning enforcement.' Can he now confirm if he has received a response regarding this investigation and if so, what was the response?

11. **MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

To receive and consider reports, minutes and recommendations of Committees already circulated, enclosed herewith or to be circulated. There have been the following committee meetings since the last meeting of Council.

a) **Museum Committee** DELEGATED 24th March

Questions to the Town Clerk

b) **Neighbourhood Services Committee** DELEGATED 24th March

Questions to the Town Clerk

c) **Town Development Committee** DELEGATED 31st March, 21st April & 12th May.

Questions to the Town Clerk

d) **Policy & Resources Committee** DELEGATED 5th May.

Questions to the Town Clerk

Question: At a recent weekly briefing Councillor Kirk informed those participating in the meeting that he had instructed a solicitor to sue the council over the Park Storage Unit. Can he confirm this and suggest how much the council should set aside to protect the Council and the Council Tax Payers of the town from his threat to sue?

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a) To receive **Declarations of Interest** from members and officers (as per the agenda) as appropriate in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers and the Local Government Act 2000 and the Trowbridge Town Council Code of Conduct in respect of members.

b) To consider any **Dispensation Requests** received by the Town Clerk and not previously considered.

13. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE MAYOR

To receive such communications as the Mayor may wish to lay before the Council.

- Mayor's Charity/Charities for 2020/21?

14. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

To allow questions from the public which may be answered but not debated.

RECOMMENDATION: that the following (15) is deferred to a later date

15. POLICE MATTERS

To receive a report from Inspector Andy Fee.

RECOMMENDATION: That all the following **QUESTIONS & MOTIONS** are deferred to a later date, although members may consider that in order to allow for a more extensive debate on the matter of public toilets that the Motion at agenda item 23 is considered but is considered alongside the **RECOMMENDATION** at agenda item 21.

16. QUESTION

Councillor Kirk: Question in relation to the proposed use of the Park Storage Unit.

The description of the development approved is - Erection of store (ancillary to the Town Park) and Associated Landscaping Works, planning reference 19/06606/FUL. Part of the planning design and access statement confirms the following: *Store is necessary for 'secure storage of park maintenance equipment, street cleaning equipment, including the street sweeper and storage for street furniture, road safety and event equipment that is provided to community groups for putting on events in the park. This new storage unit replaces a number of dilapidated sheds and unsafe lean-to's not fit for purpose which have now been demolished. The Town Council's fleet of 5 No. LGVs will also be parked in the secure compound when not in use.'*

My view remains that the Park Storage Unit's actual use is 'incidental' rather than 'ancillary' to the Town Park and I would therefore like clarification. Please may I therefore have an explanation in detail (with vehicle usage levels and items stored), whether the Park Storage Unit will be used mainly for operations and activities inside or outside of the actual Town Park (The People Park)?

TOWN CLERK'S RESPONSE: The proposed use of the Store will be as approved by the planning permission detailed in the question, unless the council decide to do something different once it is completed. The difference between 'ancillary' and 'incidental' in the Google dictionary is not clear, what is clear is that in using 'incidental', there is a familiarity with Cllr Kirk's argument and his persistence with this discussion, which others have suggested is wasting a lot of time: *secondary, subsidiary, subordinate, ancillary, auxiliary, minor, peripheral, background, by-the-way, by-the-by,*

non-essential, inessential, unimportant, insignificant, inconsequential, unnecessary, trivial, trifling, negligible, petty, tangential, extrinsic, extraneous, dispensable, expendable.

17. **MOTION 2003091235: PARK STORAGE UNIT**

To consider a motion from Councillor Kirk, seconded by Councillor Cooper. (recorded vote).

Preamble: Our new Park Storage Unit at a total cost to the Trowbridge Council Tax Payer of in excess of £500,000, will be used to a considerable extent for the 'Commercial Activities' of the Town Council. This includes Town Council vehicles used in commercial operations outside of the Trowbridge boundary (Minibus, Active Sports Vehicles and Road Sweeper). It is also fact that events held by Trowbridge Active both in and outside of the Park are mainly commercial in nature. As this building and site will NOT be accessible to the public or made available to community/charity groups, including the use of the new toilet facilities. It is my understanding that this falls well outside of what can be considered 'Community use' and what is permitted within the realms of 'Public Open Space'.

Furthermore, in making the Park a hub for our operations, we will be introducing a significant level of pollution (environmental, noise and vehicle pollution etc.) into what is legally classified as 'Public Open Space'

MOTION: That as a Town Council we recognise that with our current proposals, we are NOT operating within the legal definition of 'Community use and Public Open Space' and that we therefore either change the Park Storage development to meet the criteria or apply for a change of use.

TOWN CLERK'S RESPONSE: Firstly, the Park Storage unit will not 'cost' in excess of £500,000. It should 'cost' less than £400,000. The allocated revenue budget including current temporary storage and all preliminary costs is £382,293. This also includes the cost of the landscaping works to return parts of the Park previously used for storage to public open space. The total cost is covered from S106 developer contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy and otherwise will cost no more than the ongoing cost of rent and rates for our former leased storage facilities. In some senses Councillor Kirk is correct to state that the total 'cost' to the Council Tax will be in excess of £500,000, but this is only part of the story and does not reflect the full facts, that this is spread over a period of thirty years through a loan. If the town council had continued to pay the rent and business rates for storage at St George's Works

Secondly the Park Storage unit will not be used to a considerable extent for 'commercial activities'.

- It will be used to store the street sweeper which costs the council a significant sum of money to provide a much valued service to the whole community. The town council is in discussion with neighbouring parish and town councils about the possibility of sharing this community service and we will of course cover our costs in full if this happens. It will be used to store the Neighbourhood Services pick-up truck which supports all of our grounds maintenance activities, keeping our streets clean and tidy as well as recreations grounds and more than 25 play areas.
- It will be used to store the mini-bus which provides a valuable service to our range of sports and social groups in the community.
- It will be used to store the Active Trowbridge vans and equipment which provide valuable services to our local schools and young people throughout the year. These are not mainly commercial in nature, they are charged for services which cover their costs outside Trowbridge and are subsidised in the town.

Thirdly, the area behind the bandstand has been inaccessible to the public for all of the time that anyone can remember and was always used for storage of vehicles, machinery and equipment. In fact, the area which is accessible to the public will be increased as a result of the changes. Prior to the changes all vehicles had to access the storage area through the main public park areas. Once the storage facility is complete access will be from the highway adjacent to the Royal Mail yard and will not require access through the park, thereby in fact reducing pollution. A reasonable storage area is incidental to the use of and maintenance of the Park as a public space and nothing that the

town council is doing is illegal or contrary to the agreements in place. The storage unit has planning permission to be used as a storage facility for the parking of vehicles, machinery and equipment.

18. **MOTION 2003091837: RECORDED VOTES**

To consider a motion from Councillor Kirk, seconded by Councillor Cooper (recorded vote).

Preamble: To ensure that individual Councillors are fully accountable to their electorate for the voting decisions they make in Full Council.

MOTION: That as a Town Council we amend 'Standing Orders' to stipulate that a recorded vote is required for all decisions at Full Council.

TOWN CLERK'S RESPONSE: Councillors will need to take into account, the time which will be spent on recorded votes, particularly on such matters as approval of the previous minutes, acceptance of apologies etc. Also councillors should consider if the current opportunity for councillors to call for a recorded vote prior to a vote being taken on any matter is adequate.

19. **MOTION 2003092243: EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

To consider a motion from Councillor Piazza, seconded by Councillor Kirk (recorded vote).

Preamble: Through the demolition of the public toilets in Trowbridge Park last year, I have met with groups of residents who have been impacted directly by the removal of these toilets as they were the only accessible toilets in the nearby location. These residents range from individuals in need of wheel-chair access, with the Market Place toilets not being accessible by this means, and those with conditions who need to urgently use a toilet in close proximity at short notice. The Civic Centre toilets are also not accessible throughout most of the weekend and a notice is also at the front of The Civic Centre which restricts individuals from using the toilets at time, stating: 'Toilets may be used by the public unless we have a private function'.

Despite being a public authority, I accept the town clerk's advice on the matter that it is not necessary from a legal standpoint for Trowbridge Town Council to complete an Equalities Impact Assessment; however, I think it is our moral duty to complete one so we are inclusive to all members of our community in Trowbridge. As a councillor who represents every resident in my ward, I would be greatly disappointed in myself if I could not represent those most vulnerable also. Wiltshire Council currently complete an Equality Impact Analysis and define it as 'a systematic and thorough way of finding out whether a policy or service affects different groups of people in different ways. It is part of the normal policy making / policy review and political decision making process. Carrying out equality analysis helps us to identify and reduce the potential for discrimination of all kinds and provide services that are accessible to the residents of Wiltshire.'

I hope this can be used as a style model for our own Equalities Impact Assessment.

MOTION: That as a Town Council, we recognise that we have a responsibility to include the most vulnerable in our society in everything that we do and complete an Equalities Impact Assessment to ascertain whether we are including **EVERYONE** in **EVERYTHING** that we do as Trowbridge Town Council.

TOWN CLERK'S RESPONSE: It is estimated that to undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment for everything that the town council does would generate sufficient work for one additional member of trained and qualified full-time staff at an annual cost of around £26,000. Notwithstanding the additional unknown impact of coronavirus on the Town Council finances it would be imprudent to commit to any expenditure, particularly that which is not included in the budget.

20. **MOTION 2003100827: BORROWING**

To consider a motion from Councillor Kirk, seconded by Councillor Cooper (recorded vote).

Preamble: The term of Office for a Trowbridge Town Councillor elected or co-opted is four years. As I have mentioned on numerous occasions I remain very concerned about the level of debt Trowbridge Town Council has accumulated. We have the most borrowing of any Town or Parish Council in England and the value of our debt on the Public Works Loan Board is £9,207,671.98. Furthermore, on current projections, we will not be debt free until March 2062. I believe, it should NOT be permitted for Councillors (many of whom are over seventy years of age) serving only a four-year term, to lock Trowbridge residents in to substantial debt for up to 50 years in the future.

MOTION: That as a Town Council we restrict and stipulate, that any further borrowing must be repaid with the term of the Council.

TOWN CLERK'S RESPONSE: The Town Council has already made a commitment that it will seek borrowing approval for the 3G Artificial Turf Pitch at Doric Park. This commitment has allowed us to make a bid to the Football Foundation for a grant of £500,000 and has resulted in Wiltshire Council releasing over £550,000 of S106 funds to the town council. The amount that the council will be required to borrow would be around £2million. If this was borrowed over a four-year period, the annual repayments would be £525,643 per annum. This would require an increase in the Town Council's Council Tax Charge in 2021 of 26.55% in addition to the 6.67% increase already predicted, making the total increase 33.22%

21. **TOWN COUNCIL STRATEGY – 2021-2025**

To consider preparations for issues which should be included in the new Town Council Strategy which will be considered for approval following the 2021 election.

TOWN DEVELOPMENT. Town Centre – The council hopes that the town has been successful in obtaining a grant from the Future High Streets fund and will be focussing on delivering that with our partners, including improved connectivity to the suburbs and neighbouring villages.

Sustainable Future Growth – The council hopes that development of Ashton Park will have commenced as well as WHSAP sites and therefore focus will be on the updated Wiltshire Core Strategy and how that relates to sustainable development at neighbouring villages and in the Greenbelt. The council will need to consider if it is appropriate to continue the Neighbourhood Plan.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES – The council will have taken over and improved or consolidated all of the town's play areas and invested in new street-cleaning services. We will enter into negotiations with Wiltshire Council for the transfer of remaining assets and services and seek to ensure that the town obtains the best possible deal. A number of councillors have been considering a constructive way forward with regards to the provision of public toilets and it may be appropriate to consider preparations for this in the short term to enable delivery early in the new term of office.

FACILITIES – During the latter part of the existing term of office the council has strengthened its response to climate change, including renewable only energy tariffs and the next four years are likely to include further improvements and carbon reduction measures in conjunction with partners. We will need to complete investment in heating and cooling at the civic centre. We will have a new storage facility in the Park.

VENUE SERVICES – The Civic Centre was moving towards covering operational expenditure at the end of the 2019/2020 financial year and will need to re-establish its position as Wiltshire's premier venue for conferencing and entertainment. Whilst we invest in Longfield as a community venue for the south-east of the town.

MUSEUM - One of the Council's long term projects will have been completed by the end of this council term of office, and the new expanded Museum will be open and providing a range of services.

INFORMATION SERVICES – The Council will continue to coordinate community communication, building relationships with business and others providing services across the town.

ACTIVE TROWBRIDGE – The council will consolidate our services to those schools in the town and close to the town which provide for pupils from the town and will ensure that we are not subsidising those outside the town.

SPORTS FACILITIES - Our main project will be ready to be delivered; the provision of a 3G-ATP at Doric Park and we have already secured the S106 funding from Wiltshire Council and should have completed our funding application to the Football Foundation. The Strategy should commit to completion of this project. The council will also need to consider a response if Wiltshire Council seek to transfer any other sports facilities to the town council including the recreation grounds at Stallards, Seymour and Elm Grove, including proposed improvements at Elm Grove. The Council will also be ready to take on additional facilities at Ashton Park.

POLICY & RESOURCES – The council will continue to seek to ensure that there is a single council covering the whole of the town so that service delivery can be fully coordinated. Financial pressures will increase due to the transfer of services from Wiltshire Council.

Councillor Bryant (2004140933) has requested that the Town Council convenes a cross-party working group of councillors and council officers to explore options for reinstating public toilet facilities within the environs of Trowbridge Park. These should include, but not be exclusive to, the possible redevelopment opportunities afforded within sites at which plumbing currently exists.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Council establishes a cross-party working group of councillors, with council officers, to consider options for reinstating public toilet facilities within the environs of Trowbridge Park. These should include but not be exclusive to, opportunities afforded within sites at which water supply and sewerage disposal currently exist. Such that during the 2021-2025 term of office such a development could be implemented.

22. **MOTION 2004201226: PARK STORAGE**

To consider a motion from Councillor Kirk, seconded by Councillor Cooper (recorded vote).

MOTION: That, for the avoidance of doubt in relation to the debated cost of the 'Park Storage Unit' the Council accepts the following figures and information being correct and true:

- **Loan Amount: £300,000 (from Public Works Loan Board with a 30-year term)**
- **Loan Interest for the Full Term: £124,260.60**
- **Community Infrastructure Levy 2018/19: £24,258**
- **Community Infrastructure Levy 2019/20: £14,283**
- **Section 106 Payment: £46,000**

Additional text submitted with the motion: As a Council we appear to consider the loan interest irrelevant, whereas I consider the £124,260.60 relevant as a cost. It would also be consistent to include interest within the cost, as our annual budget costings include the loan interest, hence the figure of £14,142.02 per annum. From these figures an individual can now make a judgement whether they consider interest or CIL/S106 payments, relevant or irrelevant as a cost. It has now been accepted that as a Council we made an error in the Wiltshire Times online when we stated: 'The loan repayments include both capital and interest. As the loan has now been taken I can confirm that the annual repayments are £14,142.02 which makes the full-term repayment

£353,550.50.' This figure should be £424,260.60 and when taken together with the CIL/S106 payments the amount is £508,801.60.

TOWN CLERK'S RESPONSE: The above figures are generally correct, although the S106 figure may be slightly less or slightly more than £46,000 and the Community Infrastructure Levy allocation has been changed and may change again during 2020/2021. I would advise councillors to please note that whilst the total amount paid by the town council to deliver this project may be in excess of £0.5million it would not be correct to claim that the 'cost' of the Storage facility is over £0.5million as the project costs also cover other elements. The project includes opening up parts of the Park which were previously closed to the public for many decades and this is covered by the S106 funding which pays for the landscaping of this area. The project has also facilitated redevelopment of a significant brown-field site adjacent to the Park and therefore contributed to the regeneration of the town centre.

23. **MOTION 2004291546: PUBLIC TOILETS**

To consider a motion from Councillor Piazza, seconded by Councillor Kirk (recorded vote).

Preamble: There is now a healthy consensus from all councillors on Trowbridge Town Council to bring back the public toilets in Trowbridge's "People's Park". With this in mind, we must now commit to rebuilding these toilets as the most vulnerable in our society deserve to be included in everything we do as a town. Elderly veterans attending Armed Forces deserve to be included. Children going to the Carnival and playing in our parks deserve to be included. Those who are most vulnerable. Everyone. I recall the late Dr Veronica Burden, a tireless campaigner for disabled people and local Conservative, who made this her special cause. Access matters and toilets are especially important to the elderly, those with illnesses and disability. I would take a dim view of a local authority purporting to serve the whole community that set this aside. I would also add that toilets are indicative of a town that welcomes visitors, important if Trowbridge is to attract shoppers and tourists.

MOTION: That as Trowbridge Town Council, we recognise public toilets are a necessity for any town and that we begin to look through financial means at possible locations of placing these toilets.

TOWN CLERK'S RESPONSE: Whilst there may now be a consensus to reconsider the matter of public toilets provided by the town council, this has yet to transpire into a majority vote to bring them back. As councillors have been reminded on a number of occasions, public toilet facilities are available in a number of locations including: The Shires shopping centre, Castle Place shopping centre, County Hall, Sainsbury's, Tesco and Marks & Spencer's. I have recognised the consensus and hence brought forward the **agenda item 26a** in a spirit of cooperative progression and therefore consider a motion to be unnecessary.

24. **MOTION 2005011823: PARK STORAGE UNIT**

To consider a motion from Councillor Kirk, seconded by Councillor Cooper (recorded vote).

MOTION: That the Park Storage Unit development is suspended, pending further investigation into its suitability as one potential site for a Public Toilet provision in the Park.

TOWN CLERK'S RESPONSE: The town council has approved the construction of the Storage facility which will improve the Park, save costs in the long term and will provide a permanent location for the council's new street-sweeper. The council has obtained planning permission, is party to a legal agreement to undertake associated landscaping works and has secured the loan finance and other funding to complete the work and the construction contract has commenced, any suspension would cost a significant amount to the council under the contract.

25. **MOTION 2005041349: AXE THE MAYOR'S TAX**

To consider a motion from Councillor Piazza, seconded by Councillor Kirk (recorded vote).

Preamble: According to our financial records, which the Trowbridge Town Clerk has drawn up himself on a spreadsheet, the Mayor's department spends £16,300 a year:

- The budget sets £300 for a Mayor's Allowance;
- £2,000 for Town Crier and Civil Regalia;
- £2,000 on Civic Events;
- £2,000 for Twinning;
- £2,500 for Mayor's Expenses;
- £7,500 on a Mayor's Dinner.

Every year the Mayor hosts the Mayor's Dinner in March where Trowbridge Town Council spends £7,500. Most other councils have a sponsored dinner or no annual dinner at the cost of the taxpayer, and they still raise thousands of pounds for charity despite it. Our 'Civic Events' income comes from approximately 124 tickets sold at this event last month funds a portion of this dinner (it's also worth noting that the tickets are expensive and discriminate against the poorest in our society who may wish to attend the dinner). **However, the dinner is also partly funded by the Trowbridge taxpayer.** This means that the Mayor's Dinner costs the Trowbridge taxpayer £3,000 a year. However, it is worth noting, during the 18/19 year, the Mayor's Dinner overspent by £1,429 and £8,429 was spent.

I would also like to note our spreadsheet records this £4,500 income as income sourced from 'Income - Civic Events', not the Mayor's Dinner. The spreadsheet has misrepresented the figures. There is indication that the 'Mayor's Civic Dinner' and income from 'Civic Events' are linked. This misrepresentation alludes to the £4,500 coming from other sources and is incredibly misleading. Our financial spreadsheets must be more accurate and detailed. If an auditor were to analyse this spreadsheet there would be no way of linking the two together. There is no way for an ordinary resident in Trowbridge to decipher that there is a connection. **We must be more transparent with our residents. They must know where their taxes go.**

It's worth reminding residents that they contribute £164.98 a year in council tax to Trowbridge Town Council. This dinner is equivalent of 18 Band D families. It's quite honestly a disgrace that 18 families in Trowbridge have to pay for a fancy dinner made for the elite few.

On that note, it is shocking that the taxpayer is funding a portion of the Mayor's Dinner which only a select few benefit from. The councillor who adopts the role of Mayor is simply the Chairman of Trowbridge Town Council. Their role is to represent Trowbridge – and in my opinion, Trowbridge should be showing a modest or low estimate of one's importance. The Mayor should be down-to-earth with its residents. If we are overspending and using taxpayer's money to fund our Mayor's Dinner, then that is not of a respectful and humble nature.

MOTION: That this Council instructs the councillor who is elected to serve as Mayor that the Civic Dinner will only be organised if it can be done at no net cost to the Town Council (and therefore is not subsidised by the Council Tax paying residents of the town).

Additional text submitted with the motion: I hope whoever is the future Mayor of Trowbridge agrees to this spending restraint during a time of crisis. Whoever is elected, I wish them the very best in the role regardless of whether this motion passes.

I would also ask that our figures are more transparent and available on our website. Currently the website lacks the 2020/21 proposal spreadsheet. The labelling of figures must also be more accurate, as it not possible for an outsider to determine that the income received from the Mayor's Dinner is from the Mayor's Dinner due to being labelled as 'Income – Civic Events'. This also implies that the income is gained from multiple sources. To the ordinary resident of Trowbridge, it is impossible to determine that this income is from the tickets sold at the Mayor's Dinner.

TOWN CLERK'S RESPONSE: Firstly, accounts never tell anyone the true cost of anything. In fact, our official annual accounts (the AGAR) which we are the only accounts we are required by law to publish, contains only 10 numbers and therefore requires no detail with regards to the Mayor's budget or the Civic Dinner. Any councillor or member of the public can always contact the Town Clerk to ask about the detail.

Let's take the opportunity to clarify the financial position of this year's Civic Dinner in March 2020; The Total Cost was £5,958 and the sale of tickets raised £3,471 so the net cost was £2,487. The event raised £1,650 for the Mayor's Charity and so if the council had instead given a grant to the charity it could be argued that the net cost was £837. We should then consider the contribution that the event made to the running of the Civic Centre, including the net bar costs and catering charges this comes to £1,940. So in some senses it could be suggested that the Civic Dinner made profit for the Council Tax paying residents of the town some £1,103. In addition to the financial return some would also factor in the promotional element of the evening, raising the profile of the town, the charity, the improvements made to the town and the work of the recipient of the Civic Award as well as presenting a fantastic building and council that the town can be proud of to the many visitors from across the local area and our neighbouring towns.

Secondly, it might be considered valuable by some councillors in considering this matter as well as the public in assessing the value, to provide some actual comparisons of large towns and how much they spend on their Mayor's department or on their Mayor's expenses, so here is a list.

TOTAL MAYORAL DEPARTMENT

Bournemouth	£63,673
Poole	£57,555
Lewes	£55,315
Salisbury	£38,500
Chippenham	£33,940
Chichester	£31,560
Durham	£25,891
Christchurch	£24,210
High Wycombe	£23,209
Grimsby	£21,406
Chester	£20,662
Ellesmere Port	£20,116
Devizes	£18,837
Weymouth	£17,830
Bexhill	£16,610
Trowbridge	£16,300
Scunthorpe	£16,039
Calne	£15,250
Mansfield	£14,946
Margate	£12,850
Worksop	£11,950
Truro	£11,145
Grantham	£10,971
Cleethorpes	£9,199
East Retford	£6,997

MAYOR'S EXPENSES ELEMENT

Stratford upon Avon	£11,500
Sevenoaks	£7,987
Devizes	£7,027
Falmouth	£7,000
Folkestone	£5,490
Bishop's Stortford	£5,000
Shrewsbury	£5,000
Calne	£4,300
Huntingdon	£4,000
Petersfield	£3,000
Didcot	£3,000
Witney	£3,000
Knutsford	£2,825
Trowbridge	£2,800
Lewes	£2,700
Peterlee	£2,500
Schildon	£2,000

26. **MOTION 2005062222: PARK AIR QUALITY**

To consider a motion from Councillor Kirk, seconded by Councillor Piazza (recorded vote).

Preamble: Apparently, as a Council (through claims made in the press and during the Full Council Meeting of 17th March 2020) we have claimed that there will be less pollution (air pollution and noise pollution) from the development of the Park Storage Unit within the Town Park (The People's Park). I hereby remind Councillors that the Park Storage Unit is within the Park Boundary 'Public Open Space' and that we will be introducing an operating base for the five Active Trowbridge Vans and the Mini-Bus (confirmed by the Council in the press). The Active Trowbridge Vans are currently stored and operate from Longfield and the Mini-Bus is stored by the St Stephens development (photographic evidence can be supplied if required). Therefore, all these vehicles are currently stored outside of the Town Park.

MOTION: That by building a permanent operating base (Park Storage Unit) and bringing all these vehicles into the Park, from outside locations. That as a Council (which has declared a Climate Emergency) we accept that this will unquestionably result in an increase in pollution (air pollution and noise pollution) in the Town Park?

TOWN CLERK'S RESPONSE: The Town Park includes the Civic centre and the road to the side of the Civic Centre where vehicles turn around. The Vans and the Minibus all currently operate in this part of the Park. The grounds maintenance contractors and our own staff operate their vehicles in the Park to access the old storage area to the rear of the bandstand. The new storage area will be accessed directly from the highway and whilst the storage area is in the Park it is not accessible to the public and never has been, so without a professional scientific assessment it is not possible for the Council to claim that there will be an increase. If the Council wishes to spend more money on a scientific assessment, then I will arrange this.

27. **BANK MANDATE**

To approve that the Bank Mandate is amended if required to record any changes of Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairs of the Committees all of whom together with the Town Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer and the Head of Resources will be signatories but always requiring that 2 Councillors and one officer sign all cheques and other orders for payment except in exceptional circumstances where subsequent signatures may be necessary. Current signatories are: Cllrs: Blackmore, Brice, Bridges, Cavill, Drewett, Fuller, Halik and Whiffen.

28. **ANNUAL ACCOUNTS**

a) **To consider the TOWN CLERK & RFO's RECOMMENDATION: That, Subject to finalisation of the accounts and in accordance with Financial Regulation B2.2.6, 'that any underspent revenue should be allocated to appropriate earmarked reserves and to review the other reserves prior to completion of the Annual Return'; the following earmarked reserves are allocated at 31st March 2020:**

Doric Park 3G-ATP project balance of S106 funds	£452,229
Woodmarsh balance of S106 funds for improvement	£11,853
Play Areas balance of S106 from tennis courts and additional funds	£12,273
Longfield maintenance reserve	£8,000
Civic Centre maintenance and planned improvements reserve	£64,645

b) **To note** that unspent loans for the Museum project and the Bandstand Storage Unit Project are also carried forward as required by accounting convention.

RECOMMENDATION: that the following (29) is deferred to a later date

29. **POLICIES**

To consider the following:
Annual Investment Strategy

30. ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

To note that there has been no Annual Town Meeting in 2020.

31. LIST OF ATTENDANCES

To consider and note the list of attendances for the past year (copy attached).

32. COMPLAINT

The Town Clerk received the following complaint on Tuesday 12th May:

I am afraid I would like to make a complaint against Councillor Antonio Piazza who, despite a warning has continued to break the Member/Officer code of conduct 190521. Specifically:

2.5 A Member should not raise matters relating to the conduct or capability of an Officer in a manner that is incompatible with this Protocol. An Officer has no means of responding to criticisms in public.

5.4 Members and Officers should be mutually supportive in order to minimise any potential embarrassment to the Council. Criticism of officers should be dealt with in private

This complaint relates to a Facebook discussion in which Antonio yesterday publicly reprimands an officer and is a long way from supportive. The complete thread is screen captured in a word document. He was yesterday sent a private message explaining the protocol and the two areas he had broken and thought that would be an end to it as he appeared to understand the situation. But today he continued and added a screen capture of the original post including the officers name (as of yesterday all reference to the officer involved had been removed).

I also apologise for sharing the officers post and potentially causing him some issues. He made his original post out of a sense of frustration and has since modified it to be less specifically political. He does realise he should not have done this and I really do not want to get him in any trouble over this as I think he is well aware now of the protocol.

I really do not want this to take up a lot of time but I do want this to be an official complaint as I would really like to see an end to this type of behaviour from councillors aimed at hard working officers and polite chats do not seem to get anywhere. I think it may also be useful to remind Councillors at the beginning of each Full Council meeting about the content of this code of conduct and councillors, who during the meetings, go against it are brought into line by the Chair.

The relevant Standing Orders are:

A25.2 If the council receives a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct the matter will be considered, subject to standing order A18 above, at the first available full council meeting. At such meeting of the council when the complaint is considered the council will refer the complaint to the Monitoring Officer of Wiltshire Council.

A25.5 At meetings of the Council when a complaint is considered, referred to in A25.2 and A25.4 above, the council may impose limitations on the councillor such as removal from committees and restrictions on attending the council offices, pending further investigation by the Monitoring Officer of Wiltshire Council.

RECOMMENDATION: That the council notifies the Monitoring Officer at Wiltshire Council of this complaint and considers if it should impose any limitations on Cllr Piazza.

33. DATES OF MEETINGS 2020/21

To consider and note the revised dates of meetings of Council and committees for 2020/21 (copy attached).

34. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To consider: Arrangements for future meetings. The Council MUST meet to approve the Annual Accounts and it is recommended therefore that the Council meets on July 21st as scheduled either in person or on-line as appropriate.

35. MEDIA RELEASES

To consider if the Council should make a press/social media release regarding any of the issues considered by this meeting.

a) Appointment of Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Leader

Town Council 19th May 2020

Informal Poll of councillors regarding the holding of this meeting of the Council:

Bates	FOR		
Bazan	AGAINST		
Beaver	FOR		
(Blackmore)	FOR		
(Blakemore)	FOR		
Brice	FOR		
(Bridges)	FOR		
Bryant	FOR	FOR	13
Cavill	AGAINST	AGAINST	7
(Cooper)			
Drewett	FOR		
Fuller	AGAINST		
Hill	FOR		
(Halik)	AGAINST		
(Hoar)	FOR		
King	FOR		
(Kirk)	AGAINST		
Palmen	FOR		
Piazza	AGAINST		
Oldrieve	FOR		
(Whiffen)	AGAINST		