



The Civic Centre  
St Stephen's Place  
TROWBRIDGE  
Wiltshire.  
BA14 8AH  
[info@trowbridge.gov.uk](mailto:info@trowbridge.gov.uk)

15<sup>th</sup> July 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 Meeting of Trowbridge Town Council** to be held on **Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020**, at 19:00 on **Microsoft TEAMS**.

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 [info@trowbridge.gov.uk](mailto:info@trowbridge.gov.uk) General Enquiries: 01225 765072

---

## AGENDA

### 1. **APOLOGIES**

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

### 2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

- a) **To read and approve** as a correct record the Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on **19<sup>th</sup> May 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.

### 3. **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 meetings since the last meeting of Council.

- a) **Museum Committee** DELEGATED 30<sup>th</sup> June.  
**Questions to the Town Clerk.**
- b) **Neighbourhood Services Committee** DELEGATED\_30<sup>th</sup> June.  
**Questions to the Town Clerk.**

- c) **Town Development Committee** DELEGATED 2<sup>nd</sup> June.  
**Questions to the Town Clerk.**  
Formal committee 23<sup>rd</sup> June and 14<sup>th</sup> July.  
**Questions to the Chair.**
- d) **Policy & Resources Committee** 7<sup>th</sup> July.  
**Questions to the Leader.**

#### **4. 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.

#### **5. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE MAYOR**

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

- a) Mayor's Engagements

#### **6. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

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

#### **7. POLICE MATTERS**

**To receive a report** from Sergeant Leighton Williams (copy attached).

#### **8. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP – ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY**

**To consider the following report and recommendation of the Working Group:**

15% of British wildlife is now at risk of extinction largely due to climate change and loss of habitat. It is vital that we reverse this trend and we believe the council should play a leading role in doing so. If the council accepts this recommendation it would mean the council will not only take steps to mitigate its own contribution to the emergency but also highlight the issue and set an example to create mitigation plans in the wider community. The council has already been active in protecting and enhancing the local ecology and this recommendation is designed to complement that by ensuring the council takes into account the impact it has on the climate, wildlife and plants and actively contributes to reversing the effects it has already had where it feasibly can. It will involve building on the steps it has already successfully taken and could for example include the creation and management of new habitats on buildings, in parks and verges, as well as protecting existing habitats. With regards to grass cutting it could also include a default policy of only regularly cutting grass areas that are important recreational locations or where safety is an issue. We believe the council should also simultaneously provide information and education to the public about why such action is being taken as well as extolling the benefits of that action in order to carry public opinion with it. It should also be recognised that there is already considerable public opinion in favour of the council adopting such a pro-ecological stance so long as such areas are formally and properly managed. Trowbridge Environmental Community have been instrumental in bringing the idea of a declaration of an ecological emergency forward and we would like to thank them for their input.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Trowbridge Town Council recognises and declares that there is an ecological emergency and will develop and implement a clear Ecology Strategy as part of its Town Strategy review (2021-2025) and that the council will commit to protecting, enhancing, establishing and managing new wildlife habitats where achievable as well as manage land under its control in as sustainable a way as is feasible and encourage Wiltshire Council and other related key partners to do likewise.

## **9. PUBLICATION OF NOTES OF BOARDS, PANELS & WORKING GROUPS**

**To consider the following report and recommendation:**

The Risk & Audit Panel and Civic Board both report to the Policy & Resources Committee and it would be reasonable to consider that the minutes of these should be published when they are presented to the Policy & Resources Committee. Working groups are more informal and as their title suggests are working on an issue or range of issues and whilst that work is in progress do not make formal reports and recommendations to the reporting committee. Such notes can be misinterpreted by members of the public, the press and quite clearly by some councillors as decisions, which they are not. It would therefore only be appropriate to publish formal reports and recommendations following their presentation to the appropriate committee/Council.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

a) That the minutes of the Civic Board and the Risk & Audit Panel are published on the web-site when presented to the Policy & Resources Committee.

b) That the notes of Working Groups are not published on the web-site but that conclusions and recommendations of Working Groups are published when presented to the relevant committee or the Council.

## **10. BOUNDARY REVIEW & COUNCIL TAX**

**To consider the following report and recommendation:**

When the previous Community Governance review was conducted by Wiltshire Council the Town Council wrote to all households (copy of a typical letter is attached). This included, for example, the houses in Paxcroft Mead which transferred from Hilperton and the houses on Drynham Lane which were not transferred. Included in the letter was information about the change in Council Tax. Currently in North Bradley there are up to 13 households in the proposed Drynham Ward and up to 4 in the proposed Park Ward.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That we write to the residents of North Bradley who would be affected by the proposed boundary change, advising them of the proposal by Wiltshire Council to move them to Trowbridge, including information regarding the Trowbridge Council Tax for 2020/21 in comparison with North Bradley (Trowbridge £1679.98, North Bradley £1537.03 difference 9.3%) and advising them of the town council's investments funded by borrowing and the council's plans for the future.

## **11. TOILETS WORKING GROUP**

**To note the following:**

The Toilets Working Group is a Working Group, it does not and cannot have decision making responsibility other than through officer delegation such as research, consultation and obtaining costings. The notes of the meeting which were released to a member of the public have been interpreted and published as though decisions have already been made. No conclusions have been reached and everything is a work in progress, before the Working Group reaches a conclusion and officially reports to the committee with recommendations it is likely to change the options under consideration and the analysis of each option, so no options have been discounted and the Working Group may consider reconstruction of toilets in the previous location.

## 12. **ANNUAL ACCOUNTS**

In accordance with the *Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014* as amended during the covid-19 pandemic, Trowbridge Town Council, is a smaller authority and as such is required to complete an Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) by the end of August 2020, in relation to the accounts for the previous financial year.

A copy of the AGAR is attached.

A copy of the Internal Audit Report is attached.

For information a copy of the Full Accounts is also attached, although these are not required to be approved as part of the official annual accounts.

a) **To consider for approval, Section 1** - Annual Governance Statement 2019/20, to be signed by the Chair and Town Clerk.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Council approves the Annual Governance Statement 2019/2020.**

b) **To consider for approval, Section 2** - Accounting Statements 2019/20, as signed by the RFO (Town Clerk) and to be signed by the Chair.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Council approves the Accounting Statements 2019/2020.**

The Town Clerk and the Mayor will attend the Civic Centre on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> July to sign the document before sending it to the External Auditor. The 30-days statutory period for the exercise of public rights to review the accounts should be 3rd August to 14th September inclusive.

## 13. **BORROWING APPROVAL – DORIC PARK PROJECT**

**To consider funding for the Doric Park 3G-ATP Project and submission of a borrowing approval application.**

(The background report is attached and the PVWL loan estimates is also attached).

The council has now received confirmation from the Football Foundation that its grant application for £450,000 has been approved. We have already received S106 funding of £555,000 towards the project. Tenders are currently being invited from contractors. The site is allocated in Wiltshire Council's Playing Pitch Strategy, planning has been submitted and we are awaiting approval.

In order to ensure that the project can proceed without further delay, if approvals are forthcoming before the September meeting, the council should consider arrangements for proceeding to the next stage of the project. The following information and recommendation are presented to the committee.

**Equalities:** The proposed facilities meet all of the requirements of the Football Foundation and Sport England to be fully inclusive and will provide a facility which is better suited to meet the needs of a range of abilities compared to existing grass-based facilities and those facilities located further away.

**Climate:** Whilst the facility will use traditional construction materials and plastic in the pitch, it will be to national standards. The facility is located close to current public transport routes and is easily accessible to a large proportion of the Trowbridge and surrounding area population and should result in lower emissions as users will not need to travel to other similar facilities further afield.

**Ecology:** The planning application has been subject to a range of ecology reports and is subject to the approval of Natural England.

**Staff:** The facility will require one full-time and one part-time member of staff and the costs associated with these are included in the business plan.

**Legal:** The development will be subject to planning permission and other statutory permissions and is also subject to a legal agreement with Trowbridge Rugby Football Club.

**Risk:** The risks are associated with reduced levels of demand relative to the business plan. We have held detailed discussions with user groups and believe that the pragmatic middle ground position of the business plan is realistic and limits the level of risk to the council.

**Benefit to Trowbridge:** This type of facility is much in demand in the Trowbridge area and will complement the existing grass pitch facilities and the proposed additional grass pitches. We have received many positive comments from a range of residents regarding the proposal.

**Finance:** Further to the resolution of the Policy & Resources committee on 7<sup>th</sup> July the following three options for financing the project are presented to the Council:

**Option 1** - Funded in full over one year. £2.2million less the net income gives £2,098,498 with 11740 Band D equivalent households would result in an increase of £178.74 on the current Council Tax Charge of £164.98 which would equate to a 108.34% increase. It would generate a positive cumulative contribution from year twenty-one.

**Option 2** - Funded over 4-years. £550,000 per annum plus interest (1.92%) is £574,025 less the net income gives £472,523 with 11740 Band D equivalent households would result in an increase of £40.25 on the current Council Tax Charge of £164.98 which would equate to a 24.40% increase. It would generate a positive cumulative contribution from year twenty-two.

**Option 3** - Funded over 30-years. £104,400 per annum including interest (2.48%) less the net income gives £2,898 with 11740 Band D equivalent households would result in an increase of 25p on the current Council Tax Charge of £164.98 which would equate to a nil increase (as this can be covered by the budget). It would generate a positive contribution from year three.

**NOTES:** Both option 1 and option 2 would mean that the majority of residents in Ashton Park and other areas of new development would make little, if any, contribution to the facility but would benefit from reduced Council Tax Charges in future years when the facility was making a positive financial contribution, whereas existing residents of the town would be making a significant contribution immediately. An alternative for future projects is that the council increases the Council Tax to set aside a Capital Reserve which can be used to fund or contribute to capital projects.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That; subject to confirmation of tenders, planning approval and public consultation; the Town Council submits a borrowing approval application to MHCLG for up to £2.2million for the Doric Park 3G – Artificial Turf Pitch Project.

And That the Council notes the following:

Based on the latest information from HM Treasury this equates to an annual repayment, including interest of £104,398.74 over a 30-year term at an interest rate of 2.48%. This equates to a total of £3,131,962.20 including interest and repayments.

And, the borrowing application, if approved, would not be taken until the financial situation of the town council resulting from the impact of the pandemic and the future financial security of the council is understood.

## 14. COMMITTEE PLACES

**To consider allocation of committee places:**

Following the resignation of Cllr Whiffen from the Conservative group to become independent, the allocation of seats to groups has altered. Cllr Whiffen is a member of three committees including being Chair of the Town Development Committee and as such is an ex-officio member of the Policy & Resources Committee. He is also a member of the Neighbourhood Services Committee. The Conservative Group is entitled to an additional committee place which could be on the Neighbourhood Services Committee vacated by Cllr Whiffen.

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING  
Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020.**

**16. MEDIA RELEASES**

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

- a) Declaration of Environmental Emergency
- b) Publication of notes from Boards, panels and Working groups.
- c) Boundary review and Council Tax
- d) Annual Accounts and public rights to inspect
- e) Doric Park Project

**17. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC & PRESS**

That; in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, it would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted; and therefore the meeting do resolve that the public and press be temporarily excluded and be instructed to withdraw.

## **PART 2**

**18. BORROWING APPROVAL – DORIC PARK PROJECT**

**To consider funding for the Doric Park 3G-ATP Project and submission of a borrowing approval application.**

(The **Commercial in Confidence** Business Plan has been circulated to councillors).