



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

15<sup>th</sup> September 2021

## SUMMONS

To all members of the Council: Councillors: Allsworth, Bates, Beaver, Blackmore, Blakemore, Bridges, Bryant, Cave, Cavill, Cooper, Halik, Hill, Hoar, Jacob, Edward Kirk, Emily Kirk, Lincoln, Palmen, Piazza, Trigg and Vigar.

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to **The Meeting of Trowbridge Town Council** to be held on **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021**, at 19:00 in **The Council Chamber, The Civic, Trowbridge**.

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

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## AGENDA

**This meeting will be recorded.**

### 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 Council meeting held on **20<sup>th</sup> July 2021** (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 matters** 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. **Town Development Committee** 3<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Aug and 14<sup>th</sup> September.  
**Questions to the Chair – Cllr Bryant.**
- b. **Policy & Resources Committee** 7<sup>th</sup> September  
**Questions to the Leader – Cllr Palmen.**

## **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 (copy attached)

## **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 Charlotte Chilton (copy attached).

## **8. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

**To consider questions received from councillors by the deadline: Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> September.**

### **A. QUESTION 210909 2348 GENERAL RESERVES**

**To consider the following question submitted by Councillor Edward Kirk.**

Trowbridge Town Council's General Reserves were well below the expected minimum level of 3 month's revenue expenditure when the annual budget was set. They have now been impacted by the repayment of £9210.42 (money which did not belong to Trowbridge Town Council) and now potentially there will be a write-off of an additional £48,584.77 in bad/aged debt. It appears that ALL of these potential charges on General Reserves were foreseeable, but not reported at the time of setting the budget.

Please can the Town Clerk/Chief Executive advise whether he believes there has been a failing in reporting to the Council by either the RFO or the Auditors in respect of our General Reserve position? Please can the Town Clerk/Chief Executive advise how the additional shortfall of £57,795.19 on our General Reserves position will be recovered?

#### **Town Clerk's Response:**

**Trowbridge Town Council's General Reserves are officially calculated and reported every year as part of the production of annual accounts. The current year budget was approved on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and therefore the relevant figure is that reported as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 which was £146,002 (having increased by £46,729 during the year). The General Reserve as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 was £197,233 (an increase of £51,231 during the year and this also took account of the £9,210.42 which was repaid to Wiltshire Council when they requested it.) The £48,584.77 is a potential allocation from General Reserves for aged debt write off which the council has been fully appraised of as the Responsible Finance Officer has become aware of the issues through the Risk & Audit Panel.**

**The Council has a long term financial plan included in the budget which continues the prudent budget that has been adopted by the council for many years which minimises the requirement for large increases in the Council Tax, continues to invest in services and facilities for the town and when necessary includes increases in General Reserves whilst keeping the Council Tax below the average for towns in Wiltshire.**

**The Town Clerk/RFO does not believe that there has been any failing in reporting. Part of the shortfall suggested has already been accounted for as indicated above. The remaining allocation from General Reserves will be for the Council to decide.**

## **9. CREDIT CONTROL**

To consider the following recommendation referred from Risk & Audit 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Trowbridge Town Council investigates referral of CCTV and Rail Ticket debts to a debt collection agency or whether the debts can be sold.

## **10. MOTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

To consider motions received from councillors by the deadline: Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> September.

### **A. MOTION 210908 13:59 AFGHAN REFUGEES IN WILTSHIRE**

To consider the following motion submitted by Cllr Cooper.

#### **Preamble:**

We have all witnessed the highly distressing scenes of desperate refugees attempting to flee from Kabul in the wake of the UK's and USA's withdrawal from Afghanistan. Whilst not intended to imply criticism of that withdrawal, this motion is aimed at helping alleviate the plight of Afghan refugees arriving in the UK. These refugees, including families with young children, have in many cases had to flee their homes, their extended families and their country with little or nothing in their possession. There will be a desperate need for not only accommodation and basic sustenance for these Afghan refugees (a need that Wiltshire Council has indicated that it will attempt to fulfil) but also for the day to day items that any family needs..... clothes, bedding, toys etc. This motion is tabled so that that Trowbridge Town Council can publicly affirm its intent to offer practical assistance and support to those organisations already working hard in the local area to collect and distribute such aid.

#### **MOTION:**

Trowbridge Town Council resolves that:

1. The Town Clerk should investigate ways by which the Town Council can offer assistance to bodies engaged in the collection and distribution of aid for Afghan refugees in Wiltshire.
2. The Town Clerk should present the results of his investigation, along with recommendations for action(s), in his report to the Policy & Resources Committee on 2nd November 2021.
3. The Policy & Resources Committee meeting on 2nd November 2021 should be empowered to implement any measures identified in the Town Clerk's report that they agree are achievable and beneficial.

### **B. MOTION 210909 1807 POLICIES ON THE WEBSITE**

To consider the following motion submitted by Cllr Piazza.

#### **Preamble:**

Trowbridge Town Council's website is both informative and friendly in design. The staff and councillor section of the website is particularly useful for visitors. The meeting section is also useful for looking back at previous and upcoming meetings. The interface is easy to use and the website itself is relatively straightforward to navigate. However, I found the 'Policies' section disappointing in contrast to the rest of the website. You may view this section using this link:

<https://www.trowbridge.gov.uk/your-council/policies-and-procedures/>

As you can see, the grid table does not appear to be in any order and unless a viewer uses the find option on a browser, then it can be relatively difficult to locate a document. The 'Finance' section is much neater in comparison and it is easier to locate files. Frome Town Council's 'Publications and Strategic Documents' section is organised and simple to navigate. I also found the 'constitution', set out in chapters, extremely useful. You may view Frome Town Council's 'Publications and Strategic Documents' section here:

<https://www.frometowncouncil.gov.uk/council/frome-town-council/publications-strategic-documents/>

In the long term, strong website design for our 'Policies' section may reduce the time it takes to complete an FOI request and also increase transparency with residents.

## **MOTION:**

- a) That Trowbridge Town Council redesigns the 'Policies' section of the website and uses Frome Town Council's 'Publications and Strategic Documents' section as a style model;
- b) That Trowbridge Town Council adopts a constitution and organises the terms and conditions under which it operates as chapters with an introduction section also.

## **C. MOTION 210909 1807 POLICE COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICERS**

To consider the following motion submitted by Cllr Piazza.

### **Preamble:**

Since becoming a councillor in 2020, I have witnessed the positive work that PCSOs contribute to our local community, acting as key liaison points between neighbourhoods and policing. PCSOs also further healthy visible policing that is accessible and approachable with their uniformed presence in our local communities. I would like to thank our PCSOs for the vital role they play in keeping the communities in Trowbridge safe from harm.

In order to build on the successes of PCSOs in Trowbridge, I think Trowbridge Town Council should assist in providing a voice for the community to directly contact our PCSOs. Whilst we have a collection of councillors acting as catalysts between residents and PCSOs, I think cutting out the middle man and allowing residents to meet and contact PCSOs directly would be beneficial also.

Having already contacted PC Charlotte Chilton, who confirmed that this is something that the Trowbridge Neighbourhood Team would be interested in, I am hoping that councillors tonight will support this motion to allow our Trowbridge PCSOs to provide advice surgeries at the Civic Centre (potentially, more specifically, the Information Centre) at least once a month. This would be advertised through the press and the council's network and platforms. If a resident could not attend the advice surgery, then a log book would also be provided in the Information Centre so residents could leave comments, along with their contact information, for our PCSOs, who could then contact them back and communicate with them about the particular issue, proving an explanation or actioning the comment.

## **MOTION:**

- a) That Trowbridge Town Council offers the Trowbridge Neighbourhood Team a space at the Civic Centre for use for advice surgeries;
- b) That Trowbridge Town Council provides a logbook at the Information Centre so residents can leave comments, alongside their contact details, so that PCSOs may respond to them and action their comments.

## **11. SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

To approve the sealing of the following: **NONE.**

## **12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021.**

## **13. MEDIA RELEASES**

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

## RECORDED VOTES

Councillor			
Allsworth			
Bates			
Beaver			
Blackmore			
Blakemore			
Bridges			
Bryant			
Cave			
Cavill			
Cooper			
Halik			
Hill			
Hoar			
Jacob			
Edward Kirk			
Emily Kirk			
Lincoln			
Palmen			
Piazza			
Trigg			
Vigar			

	For	Against	Abstain
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