

MINUTES

At the Annual Meeting of Trowbridge Town Council held in the Council Chamber at The Civic, Trowbridge on Tuesday 21st September 2021 at 19.00hrs.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors: Allsworth, Bates (Chair), Blakemore, Bridges, Bryant, Cave, Cavill, Cooper, Halik, Hill, Hoar, Jacob, Edward Kirk, Emily Kirk, Lincoln, Palmen, Piazza, Trigg and Vigar.

Officers: Mr L. Allan (Town Clerk/RFO), Mrs J Weimar, Mrs A Quick (Minutes), Mrs V Patel-Rickitt

Public: (in person) Rob Wall, Ron Lomas, 1 other.

(on TEAMS) Louise Knox

Police: Sergeant Charlotte Chilton (2446)

Press: None

3512 APOLOGIES

a) **Apologies were received** from Cllrs Beaver and Blackmore.

b) **RESOLVED to accepted apologies with reasons for absence.**

3513 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

a. **RESOLVED to approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 20th July 2021.**

b. There were no matters to be considered.

3514 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

The Council received and considered;

a) **RESOLVED to note the minutes of the Town Development Committee 3rd and 24th August and 14th September 2021.**

Cllr Bryant presented the minutes.

b) **RESOLVED to note the minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee 7th September 2021.** Cllr Palmen presented the minutes.

It was noted that Cllr Vigar also expressed his offer to volunteer for Talking News.

Action – AQ to update Minutes; TC to action Cllr's Vigar's volunteering.

3515 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a) There were no Declarations of Interest declared.

b) There were no Dispensation Requests received by the Town Clerk and not previously considered.

3516 COMMUNICATIONS BY THE MAYOR

The council received communications from Mayor Denise Bates;

Mayor's Engagements were presented, previously circulated with the Agenda.

The Mayor expressed her thanks to the Deputy Mayor, also to Cllrs Blackmore, Cooper & Cavill for attending the Battle of Britain Anniversary Service on Sunday. It was noted that Fairtrade status has been successfully renewed. Thanks were given to Steve Oldrieve for his application and his thanks were passed to Cllrs for their continued support.

Initials.....dated.....

3517 **PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

Questions from the public were received as follows:

Rob Wall expressed comment regarding the access to this meeting. He sent a request for the last meeting but he didn't receive a reply.

2 questions were posed by Ron Lomas (Resident of Park Ward);

1) *Regarding the ASB Working Group, what progress has been made?*

Cllr Palmen responded that the Working Group haven't meet since the last time we spoke. Recent events have shown that CCTV has become a factor in crime going on in the town. They are scheduled to meet shortly.

2) *Failure of PSPO was back on the minutes in March 2021 (3449). Why did this fail & what will be done about it? Drink & drugs in the park is still an issue.*

Cllr Palmen responded that the reason for failure is difficult to specify. Town Clerk clarified that WC didn't do what they needed to. Unfortunately, it is a stale mate situation. Some members of the public will feel disappointed by this.

Action: Karl Buckingham to action the Antisocial Behaviour Task Group meeting.

3518 **POLICE MATTERS**

A Police Report was received from Sergeant 2446 Charly Chilton, previously circulated. The following questions were asked;

Antisocial behaviour over the summer has been very high due to good weather and lifting of Covid restrictions. In Sept which is off peak we would expect this demand to reduce. We are keen to get the PCSOs back into the community and getting to know the people they are working with.

Worsted Close play park – we had received 2 reports over months so we need the community to report this issues. Locations where the threat, harm & risk is, is where officers will be sent. Without reports I don't have any evidence. A male in the Castlemead area has been approaching people asking for money. I would encourage people to report things to us. Spotted In Trowbridge is generally anonymous so we cannot approach individuals making these statements.

Trowbridge response from the Neighbourhood Team has resulted in a man being arrested and released with advice not to return to the area. He hasn't committed a further offence since this situation. Any questions, please follow up with an email as a reminder.

Cllr Trigg expressed thanks for the support in Studley Green and gave thanks for the opportunity to join patrols in the town.

QUESTION: Cllr Hoar – Antisocial behaviour, I am sure we all have emails from our wards. What do you think that TTC could do to assist?

ANSWER: Encourage people to report to the police. We need to know the true extent of what's going on.

QUESTION: Cllr Hill – Speeding along College Rd. People jumping red lights at M&S, some of which have nearly hit people on mobility scooters. Similarly, at Southwick on a Saturday there are many emails regarding people nearly being hit when stretching in the road after exercise.

ANSWER: Parking offences – exactly what it is determines how much we are able to do. Regarding College Rd, I have asked officers to do speed checks at this location.

Cllr Cooper gave thanks for the work regarding Worsted Close. They are aware there is a need for reporting issues but they are concerned with wasting police time. Abuse & intimidation is quite severe.

QUESTION: Cllr Cavill has had a problem in Paxcroft so he wrote to Wiltshire Police but has not received a response regarding vandalism.

Initials.....dated.....

ANSWER: Asked which email was used? Cllr Cavill advised it was the on the website. Trowbridge area's email is checked by Sergeant Chilton or a colleague. If you don't have a direct contact number, please contact me directly and I will follow this up.

QUESTION: Cllr Kirk – 101 system query. If people can't get through who can they contact?

ANSWER: Please use the Trowbridge Area CPC to contact. Please do not give my individual email address.

QUESTION: Cllr Bryant noted that as nights are getting darker no publicity has been seen regarding motorised scooters. Could a gentle reminder be provided to remind parents of this. Cllr Vigar stated he would be happy to write a piece on this for the Wiltshire Times to highlight the issue.

ANSWER: Sergeant Chilton requested that this is emailed to her so she can issue it to the appropriate people. She would be happy to attend patrols on this.

The Mayor gave thanks of behalf of the Council.

Sergeant Chilton left the meeting at 19.38

3519 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

A. QUESTION 210909 2348 GENERAL RESERVES

The Council considered 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 19th January 2021 and therefore the relevant figure is that reported as at 31st March 2020 which was £146,002 (having increased by £46,729 during the year). The General Reserve as at 31st 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.

Initials.....dated.....

A discussion was held between Cllr Kirk and The Town Clerk.

Town Clerk stated the Rail Ticket issue was 1st reported to TC in July 2021. He spoke to Information Services Manager but she wasn't aware either. We need to investigate, following which we need to establish who knew about it regarding the evidence available.

Town Clerk – has regularly reported on CCTV debts at each R&A panel. It might be correct that as a general risk to TTC's general reserves, the council will need to make a decision whether to write this off. Ownership of The Gateway has changed ownership 3 times and they have failed to pass this on to the new owners. We have now given notice to both owners, 1 of which has replied they would like to remove the cameras as soon as possible.

3520 **CREDIT CONTROL**

The Council considered the following recommendation referred from Risk & Audit 17th 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.

Town Clerk stated that regarding CCTV we don't have a case at all. We are able to take forward with the new owners. It would be very complicated to involve solicitors. WC Rail Tickets needs further investigation.

Cllr Kirk suggest we postpone this recommendation until we have the full facts, therefore it was agreed that the RECOMMENDATION was;

DEFERRED to Risk & Audit Meeting on 23rd November 2021.

3521 **MOTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

A. MOTION 210908 13:59 AFGHAN REFUGEES IN WILTSHIRE

The Council considered the following motion submitted by Cllr Cooper;

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.**

Proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Cave.

A discussion was held and the motion was RESOLVED.

All Councillors voted in favour.

Action: Town Clerk to investigate with organisations & write a report.

Initials.....dated.....

B. MOTION 210909 1807 POLICIES ON THE WEBSITE

The Council considered the following motion submitted by Cllr Piazza.

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) That this takes place prior to a comprehensive redesign of the council websites and the potential for an APP or APPS.

Cllr Piazza proposed, seconded by Cllr Palmen.

A discussion was held between the Councillors. Views on the Frome website and the use of the term 'constitution' were debated.

Separate votes were held on all 3 sections and it was;

- a) **RESOLVED** 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;

All voted in favour.

- b) **RESOLVED** that Trowbridge Town Council adopts a constitution and organises the terms and conditions under which it operates as chapters with an introduction section also.

See Appendix.

- c) **RESOLVED** that this takes place prior to a comprehensive redesign of the council websites and the potential for an APP or APPS.

All voted in favour.

Initials.....dated.....

C. MOTION 210909 1807 POLICE COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICERS

The Council considered the following motion submitted by Cllr Piazza;

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.

Proposed by Cllr Piazza, seconded by Cllr Halik.

A lengthy discussion was held between the Councillors.

A recorded vote was taken (see Appendix) and it was RESOLVED;

- 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 discusses with Wiltshire Police the opportunity for them to provide ~~provides a logbook~~ secure facility at the Information Centre so residents can leave comments, alongside their contact details, so that PCSOs may respond to them and action their comments.

3522 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

None.

3523 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 16th November 2021.

3524 MEDIA RELEASES

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the following press/social media releases:

- PCSO Advice Surgeries
- Policies on the website
- Afghan refugees in wiltshire

Meeting Closed at 20.33

Signature

Initials.....dated.....

APPENDIX RECORDED VOTES

Councillor	MOTION A	MOTION B (a)	MOTION B (b)	MOTION B (c)	MOTION C (a)	MOTION C (b)
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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Initials.....dated.....

MINUTES

At the Annual Meeting of Trowbridge Town Council held in the Council Chamber at The Civic, Trowbridge on Tuesday 21st September 2021 at 19.00hrs.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors: Allsworth, Bates (Chair), Blakemore, Bridges, Bryant, Cave, Cavill, Cooper, Halik, Hill, Hoar, Jacob, Edward Kirk, Emily Kirk, Lincoln, Palmen, Piazza, Trigg and Vigar.

Officers: Mr L. Allan (Town Clerk/RFO), Mrs J Weimar, Mrs V Patel-Rickitt

Meeting opened at 20.39 hrs

3525 APOLOGIES

- a. **Apologies were received** from Cllrs Beaver and Blackmore.
- b. **RESOLVED** to accepted apologies with reasons for absence.

3526 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest declared.

3527 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND 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 **resolved** that the public and press be temporarily excluded and be instructed to withdraw.

3528 CIVIC HONOURS

The Town Council considered if it should award the honour of Freedom of the Town.

Three people were nominated and seconded and it was RESOLVED with a two thirds majority to award Freedom of the Town.

It will be appropriate to present the award at the Civic Dinner in 2022.

Meeting ended at 21.05 hrs

Initials.....dated.....