

## MINUTES

### At a meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, St Stephen's Place, Trowbridge on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020

Present: Councillors: Blackmore (substitute for Oldrieve), Blakemore, Brice, Cavill, Fuller (Chair), Halik, Palmen (substitute for Hoar) and Whiffen.

In attendance: Cllr Kirk.

Officers: Mr L Allan (Town Clerk/RFO), Mrs A Quick (Minutes), Mrs J Weimar (Head of Resources & Venues)

Public: Simon Watkins (WC Regional School Improvement & Excellence Lead) and 1 other

Press: 0

#### 3139 **APOLOGIES**

**RESOLVED to approve apologies with reasons from Cllrs; Hoar and Oldrieve. Cllr Blakemore abstained.**

#### 3140 **MINUTES**

a) **RESOLVED to approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020.**

b) There were no questions.

c) **RESOLVED to note the Minutes of the Civic Board meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020.**

#### 3141 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest not already included on the Register.

#### 3142 **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

Item No. 8 (Indices of Multiple Deprivation) to be brought forward to follow the Open Forum to give Simon Watkins the opportunity to speak immediately prior. Open Forum a & b to be switched round.

#### 3143 **OPEN FORUM**

a) To receive questions from the public.

Brian Mitchell asked if the council believes the Open Forum is worthwhile. He stated that the Council should look at this format to allow issues to be debated for a short period of time. It was highlighted that important issues can't always put across using successfully in the current format where debating is not permitted. Cllr Fuller responded by explaining that in order to amend the open forum, standing orders would need to be changed. At the next review of P&R standing orders could be looked at to potentially address this query.

**ACTION: Add to May P&R Agenda.**

b) The Chair invited Mr Simon Watkins (WC Regional School Improvement and Excellence Lead) to receive questions on Agenda Item 8.

Mr Watkins thanked the committee for the invitation to attend and welcomed the question regarding Studley Green. Mr Watkins introduced himself & explained his role focusses on school effectiveness to ensure children are getting the best possible education. He recognised there are many acronyms used in education which might need explanation. He stated there is a range of support available at Studley Green, as follows; "The School Improvement Advisor, an ex-head teacher, provided by WC for 3 days per year. They work with the school's head teacher looking at development plans; An English Advisor focusses on reading & writing; Special Educational Needs training to ensure teachers are adequately skilled in this area; National Leader of Education, an experienced head teacher to provide support; Support from the family community team who work with parents who require basic skills (reading, writing, computer and maths work); Support from the Early Years team; Active Trowbridge ensure a range of sports activities & exercise are available."

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

Cllr Fuller asked what is special about Studley Green? Mr Watkins stated, *“That it is an organisation which is particularly well set up with smaller classes and specialist teachers to achieve successful integration of students. Studley Green provides a specialist resource base enabling children to join mainstream classes eventually.”*

Cllr Cavill asked what is the difference between Studley Green & a special needs unit? Mr Watkins explained that, *“Initially children are assessed and graded on a sliding scale in order to establish suitable options for them. Larkrise is set up for disabilities & special needs which gives parents choice if Studley Green is not adequate for the children’s needs.”*

Cllr Cavill asked what happens to vulnerable children? Mr Watkins stated, *“There is a study underway to examine the alignment between resource based primary schools and secondary schools with Extra Learning Provision (ELP). It is becoming apparent that more Year 6 children are taking the special needs route rather than going to a mainstream school which is an area which needs improvement.”*

Cllr Cavill agreed that this needs significant work. It was asked if the Local Education Authority has linked with academies to ensure responsibility is taken for all Wiltshire children. Mr Watkins reported that, *“Initially it was difficult for the Council to link with academies but this relationship is improving following discussions, reading projects etc. All schools have been keen to get involved in these initiatives.”*

Members asked if there is still support for the Children’s Centre. Mr Watkins didn’t know but offered to get back to the committee on this.

Cllr Whiffen asked if there is a timescale for ELP entering into secondary schools? Mr Watkins explained, *“This is already happening but a review is underway with the intention of it being in place for the new academic year.”*

Cllr Whiffen asked if it is possible that some children might get missed? Mr Watkins stated that the Council would be doing everything in its power to avoid this. Previously not all children have had the full range of options after Primary School so this being looked at.

Cllr Kirk asked how much weighting is given to the schools based on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation? For example, if children bringing the scale down are being sent to Studley Green instead of alternative schools this could be bringing schools such as Seymour off the list. Mr Watkins explained that, *“School choices for parents are available. Trowbridge schools are all inclusive, accommodating children & working closely together. No head teacher would be looking to send children to Studley Green, they would try to accommodate where possible.”*

Cllr Fuller asked if Studley Green caters for specific needs e.g. Deafness. Mr Watkins agreed that Studley Green does have facilities for both complex and specific needs.

The Town Clerk explained why the question was specifically aimed at education because this is the poorest performer within the Indices of Deprivation. It was also stated that boundaries are not always clear when defining the more deprived areas. Cllr Kirk asked if the numbers of children going to specific schools could be provided going back 5 years to assess if changes have occurred. Mr Watkins explained that data for disadvantaged Pupil Premium (PP) children can be provided. Cllr Halik stated that figures for all Trowbridge schools would be useful as some schools might not be inclusive in all children attending their school. Mr Watkins stated that PP children receive additional funding so might be an incentive for schools to include them on role. Cllr Fuller stated that potentially schools which are less favoured by parents might receive less money due to places not being filled. Mr Watkins can provide information on the number of children on role & capacity of the school giving an indication of parental choice. Cllr Brice highlighted that many villages have children from Trowbridge attending them. Cllr Fuller requested figures covering schools from the area board if not too difficult to provide. He thanked Mr Watkins for the time taken to attend the meeting.

**ACTION: Simon Watkins to provide data for the number of children on role and capacity of schools from the area board over last 5 years.**

Simon Watkins left the meeting.

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

**1.1 Community Governance Review (CGR)** - The Town Clerk informed the Committee that there is a Public Meeting in County Hall on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May at 7pm. All are welcome to attend with members of the public to discuss the Community Governance Review.

**2.2 Budget 2020-2021** – The Town Clerk highlighted that the average ‘Band-D’ Council Tax for all parish and town councils in Wiltshire is £127.17 for 2020 which is an increase of 9% from 2019. Final figures for all the Town Councils are in the report. Mean average for Town Councils in Wiltshire is £179.34, a 10.7% increase this year.

**3.1.2 Neighbourhoods** – The Town Clerk stated that Neighbourhood Services activities are visible on Facebook. They are operating early morning at least 2 days a week working on areas needing attention. Cllr Palmen mentioned that he had questioned services required in Newtown and the Neighbourhood Team had informed him it was already scheduled so the service was working successfully. Cllr Blakemore asked if someone is not on Facebook how would they know what’s going on? Cllr Halik responded that the Neighbourhood Meeting and Report states this information. The Town Clerk stated that the next Neighbourhood Report will be issued on 18<sup>th</sup> March and he will ask HOS to add some of this information to Facebook. Cllr Blakemore stated that he hasn’t seen Neighbourhood Services in his ward. The Town Clerk confirmed that every street in Trowbridge has been swept since having the new sweeper but there have been mechanical difficulties in very wet weather. The team of 3 people are now getting out early morning to concentrate efforts in more visible areas. Cllr Whiffen has noticed that street cleaning is being done excellently and noted that they are the poorest paid in the council. Town Clerk confirmed that today these council staff have received Chapter 8 certificates. This provides them with an identity card which can be shown to any highway officer to demonstrate they have been trained on highway safety and this can be used as a qualification as part of a review. It was confirmed that they will be wearing high visibility clothing. Cllr Palmen asked if they would be able to conduct traffic at the Weavers Market but the answer is unknown.

**ACTION: NSO to discuss with Cllr Palmen.**

**4.1 Museum Project** – Cllr Palmen stated that a fantastic job has been done on the museum, excellent flooring, layout and windows. The Town Clerk is pleased to report that after potential risks of being over budget, the borrowing is £342.98 per annum better than the budget of £50k.

**4.2.2 Doric Park** – The Town Clerk stated that he is in discussion with WC regarding the impact of the bat mitigation strategy on the proposals. If a report is compiled it might be sufficient to go forward to the April Planning committee. Cllr Fuller stated that TTFC would like to have floodlights. The Town Clerk mentioned that TTFC can play at Doric Park once complete.

**4.3 Park Storage Unit Project** – Cllr Kirk asked if the council need to apply for a change of use in order to develop this area as it is public open space. Once development takes place we are removing access to the public. Cllr Fuller stated that there was no public access anyway as it was always storage. The Town Clerk confirmed that the Planning Application is approved. The facility we are providing is incidental to the use of the park, providing appropriate maintenance & storage space for the park. The land available to the public will increase once the development is complete.

**5.2 Dates for your diary: Weavers market** – Cllr Palmen stated that they are looking for partnership on 8<sup>th</sup> August, maybe bands in the bandstand. On Saturday June 13<sup>th</sup> Jo Fish is working in partnership to promote enterprise with various schools. Cllr Whiffen 27/28<sup>th</sup> June for Armed Forces Weekend, could this be added to the report? Cllr Fuller agreed this can be done for next report.

**ACTION: Armed Forces Weekend to be added to the next P&R Report.**

**6.2 Housing Sites** – Cllr Blackmore asked if there is any news on housing developments? Town Clerk stated that until Ashton Park is given permission Wain Homes can’t go ahead with their proposals as they need access from Ashton Park. Cllr Fuller explained that the only council member able to call it in will only do so if his parish council has asked him to.

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

**Ashton Street Centre** – Cllr Fuller explained this site has been handed over to Wiltshire Council’s property company. This is due to come down this month or next month.

**Spring Meadows** – The Town Clerk stated that he is expecting a request for a pre-meeting with local members in the next few weeks. Cllr Kirk stated that a clear chart would be useful to show how many properties were on the plan and how many there are at the end. Cllr Halik explained this is National Government Policy, not Councillors' decisions. The Town Clerk clarified there is a presentation from Barratt Homes at Hilperton Village Hall on 5<sup>th</sup> March.

**6.4 Wiltshire Core Strategy Review** – The Town Clerk stated that the potential to review greenbelt is practically nil. It needs to be demonstrated there are no other options in Trowbridge or surrounding areas, followed by asking Mendip or BANES if they have potential sites. As part of the Neighbourhood Plan the greenbelt can be reviewed within the Trowbridge boundary. Wiltshire Council is expecting the number of houses required up to 2036 to be significant and will not all be accommodated by Ashton Park.

**6.5 Neighbourhood Plans** – The Town Clerk confirmed that the Trowbridge plan is paused.

**6.8 Major Road Network** – Cllr Cavill had received information from the Town Clerk, acknowledging the issues around investment in a Melksham by-pass with no plans for Westbury. The Town Clerk explained that following the construction of Batheaston bypass the inspector turned down BOA & Trowbridge bypass. The Regional Assembly then decided that the A350 would be the route to be improved but it was not a strategic plan for improvement along its whole length and a Westbury by-pass has also been turned down. Cllr Cavill stated there is no strategy but it relieved pressure on that route making it easier to get to the M4. Cllr Brice explained that the plan for the bypass was turned down because it went in front of the white horse. Cllr Fuller has received a letter from Westbury requesting their town is looked at. The Town Clerk will bring this up at Town Development meeting next week.

**ACTION: Westbury congestion to be considered at Town Development on 10<sup>th</sup> March.**

**6.9 Longfield Gyratory** – Town Clerk states that £6 million is to be spent on Longfield roundabout, cycling & pedestrian issues but Wiltshire Council have not provided details. He will ask Allan Creedy for information on their plans. Cllr Kirk requested mention of issues at Bythesea Road and Stallard St. Town Clerk will include this.

**ACTION: Town Clerk to write to A.Creedy requesting information on Trowbridge plans and advising on issues at Bythesea Rd. and Stallard St.**

**7.6 Trowbridge Town Trust** – Cllr Fuller highlighted the 2<sup>nd</sup> line of the report should be attached to 7.12 (Trowbridge Town Hall Trust).

**8.1 Trowbridge Area Board** – Next meeting 5<sup>th</sup> March. Cllr Brice asked if town councillors can vote on town council bids. Cllr Fuller said they need to declare if they have a non-pecuniary interest.

**8.1.8 Service Delegation & Asset Transfer (SDAT)** - Cllr Fuller queried Highway maintenance and trees along highway at Newtown and areas where there's grass between pavement and the highway. Do we want to get involved in highway maintenance? The Town Clerk stated that most can be gleaned from the map. There will be a lot which could be transferred to TTC. Cllr Fuller highlighted that there are many areas which do not belong to Wiltshire Council e.g. Broadmead Estate is not owned by Wiltshire Council but they are obliged to maintain it. The Town Clerk asked if any Cllrs object to any of the listed transfers? It is anticipated that the Cricket Ground lease would be transferred. Trowbridge Cemetery, are we happy to leave the Town Clerk to negotiate? Cllr Whiffen states all the transfers will cost us money. The Town Clerk believes we have a good negotiating position as Wiltshire Council will need to make a deal with TTC. Cllr Kirk and Cllr Cavill stated that we don't need to penalise ourselves until an agreement is made. Cllr Brice commented that if maintenance isn't done then TTC will get blamed. Town Clerk has been informed that markets will be closed. Cllr Halik suggests that the Town Clerk could assess other town councils in terms of impact & costs involved. This could result in ideas of what we could turn facilities into with a potential income stream.

Cllr Whiffen explained that Southwick Allotments all have waiting lists. These could be an income for TTC if we take them on. Town Clerk explained that Chippenham took on another allotment which hadn't been charged rent since 2009.

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

**RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk is delegated responsibility for negotiations in consultation with councillors.**

**8.2 Health Services** – CCG Meeting is arranged for 2<sup>nd</sup> April. Time to be confirmed.

**ACTION: Time for CCG Meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> April to be confirmed.**

**3145 CARBON REDUCTION STRATEGY (Report Item 1.2)**

The Town Clerk provided an update; “Since Leisure Services meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> February we have gone back to companies who had quoted. If we don’t go green there would be a price increase of approx. £1200. It was reported that there would be an increase of £18-£20k across the whole council. A new deal has been negotiated which is an increase of £1800, only £600 more than the standard increase. This has been signed tonight with Opus Energy & Utility Aid Broker.” Cllr Palmen suggested this warrants a press release. Cllr Kirk asked if it was made clear that we would be paying £1800 more when we decided we were going renewable. Cllr Brice stated that nobody knew the cost when the vote was taken. Cllr Palmen stated that Stroud Council had run a carbon audit costing £3000k. It showed that carbon reduction could be achieved with some staff training. The Town Clerk mentioned that Somerset County Council have put £1million aside to fund environmental strategies. He will attend a meeting in Frome on Thursday with Somerset council intending to discuss if this could be suggested to Wiltshire Council.

**3146 INDICES OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION (Report Item 1.4)**

Refer to Open Forum (b).

**3147 FREE PARKING DAYS (Report Item 8.1.3)**

Free parking day is corrected to Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June. It was suggested that free parking must be advertised at The Weavers Market. Town Clerk highlighted that the multi storey car park will remain as current, i.e. 2 hour free spaces will NOT be all day free.

**ACTION: Free Parking to be advertised at Weavers Market on 27<sup>th</sup> June.**

**RESOLVED: That free parking days are awarded for 2020 as follows.**

|                           | Sat 9 May | Sat 13 June | Sat 27 June | Sat 11 July | Sat 8 August | Sat 12 Sept | Sat 10 Oct | Carnival | Carnival | TOTAL |
|---------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|------------|----------|----------|-------|
| <b>Bradford Road</b>      | 24        |             | 24          |             |              |             |            |          | 24       |       |
| <b>Broad Street</b>       | 33        |             | 33          |             |              |             |            |          |          |       |
| <b>Church Street</b>      | 36        |             | 36          |             |              |             |            |          | 36       |       |
| <b>Court Street</b>       | 78        |             | 78          |             |              |             |            | 78       | 78       |       |
| <b>Lovemead</b>           | 165       | 165         | 165         | 165         | 165          | 165         | 165        |          |          |       |
| <b>St Stephen's Place</b> | 438       |             |             |             |              |             |            |          |          |       |
| <b>Total</b>              | 774       |             |             |             |              |             |            |          |          |       |
| <b>Total x 2</b>          | 1548      | 165         | 336         | 165         | 165          | 165         | 165        | 78       | 138      | 1542  |

**3148 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE & OPEN SPACE STUDY (Report Item 6.4.1)**

The Town Clerk requested that all councillors are to be involved to get this ready for submission by March 31<sup>st</sup>. It will involve looking at maps and survey forms in order to decide what should be protected. The lower priority green spaces might not have recreational value. Cllr Halik is concerned that if we miss a green space Wiltshire Council will claim TTC don’t want it. The Town Clerk advised that this will include other areas such as Tennis Courts and South View Park.

**RESOLVED: That councillors provide input to the Town Clerk by Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March and delegate compilation of the Green Infrastructure and Open Space Study data to the Town Clerk, for submission ncil by 31<sup>st</sup> March.**

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

**3149 RISK & AUDIT PANEL (Report Item 2.4)**

Cllr Fuller stated there has been a great improvement to Credit Control with the outstanding debts greatly reduced from 12 months ago.

**RESOLVED to note.**

**RESOLVED to confirm the review of corporate risks, that appropriate insurance was in place and there had been no major changes.**

**3150 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS (Report Item 2.3)**

The Town Clerk commented that £1 million received in January included the second half of the museum loan.

**RESOLVED: Approval of Payment of Accounts.**

**3151 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS (Report Item 2.3)**

Cllr Fuller noted that Democratic is green. Hall hire was queried and Town Clerk explained that an internal cross charge was added to show the committee then removed. Cllr Kirk asked if Active Trowbridge make payments for use of the park, particularly when it is on a commercial basis? The Town Clerk responded no they do not. Cllr Kirk requested reasoning behind this. Cllr Halik stated that residents might not be able to afford the activities if an additional cost is charge. New costings are coming in for the park in April so this might be able to be factored in. Cllr Fuller suggested this is referred to the Leisure Services committee.

The Town Clerk provided a summary of the figures presented, as follows;

- Museum project – Money from reserves at the beginning of the year has been spent so now there is none left. This explains why 2<sup>nd</sup> half of loan has been taken out.
- £11,349 was excess of allocation of Section 106 money for sports and play. This will be used for another sports and play project next year.
- Contribution to general reserves of £30k made at the end of the Q3 towards budget of £40k
- Community Infrastructure Levy £62,000 allocated to a reserve and £14,283 the park storage project.
- Longfield £8,000 allocated for maintenance.
- £35,000 has gone into Civic Centre Building reserves to fund air source heat pump.
- £14,283 from CIL to Facilities General for the park storage project. £29,000 has been spent out of this but the majority of the money for this project has not yet been spent as contractors will be starting at the end of this month.
- Money left at the end of Q2 has been allocated to various reserves and we are still £4,552 better than budget.

**RESOLVED: Approval of Management Accounts.**

**3152 POLICIES**

There are currently no policies due for review.

**3153 MEDIA RELEASES**

Free Parking Days.

Green energy.

**3154 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**NOTED** Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at The Civic, St Stephen's Place, Trowbridge.

The Meeting closed at 20.40.

Signature.....Dated.....

**POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING 3<sup>rd</sup> MARCH 2020  
ACTION LIST**



# Trowbridge Town Council

Policy & Resources Committee 3<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Working with the Community

|   |                                |                        |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>ACTION: Simon Watkins to provide data for the number of children on role and capacity of schools from the area board over last 5 years.</b>  | <b>SW/LA</b>                   |                        |
| <b>ACTION: Armed Forces Weekend to be added to the next P&amp;R Report.</b>   | <b>LA/MQ</b>                   | <b>Complete 9/3/20</b> |
| <b>ACTION: Westbury road network to be brought up at Town Development Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March.</b>   | <b>LA</b>                      |                        |
| <b>ACTION: Town Clerk to write to A.Creedy requesting information on Trowbridge plans and advising on issues at Bythesea Rd. and Stallard St.</b>   | <b>LA</b>                      |                        |
| <b>ACTION: Assessment to be made on other Town Councils regarding asset transfer to determine impact, costs and potential income streams for TTC.</b>   | <b>LA</b>                      |                        |
| <b>ACTION: Time for CCG Meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> April to be confirmed.</b>  | <b>MQ</b>                      |                        |
| <b>ACTION: The Town Clerk is to attend a meeting with Somerset Council on 5<sup>th</sup> March to discuss whether investment could be made towards environmental strategies at TTC.</b>   | <b>LA</b>                      |                        |
| <b>ACTION: Free Parking to be advertised at Weavers Market on 27<sup>th</sup> June.</b>   | <b>SP</b>                      |                        |
| <b>RESOLVED: That free parking days are awarded for 2020 in accordance with the Wiltshire Council Policy (Agenda Item 9).</b>   | <b>LA</b>                      |                        |
| <b>RESOLVED: That councillors provide input to the Town Clerk by Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March and delegate compilation of the Green Infrastructure and Open Space Study data to the Town Clerk, for submission to Wiltshire Council by 31<sup>st</sup> March.</b> | <b>All Councillors/<br/>LA</b> |                        |
| <b>RESOLVED: Approval of Management Accounts for 2019/20.</b>   | <b>LA</b>                      |                        |
| <b>RESOLVED: Approval of Payment of Accounts.</b>   | <b>LA</b>                      |                        |
| <b>RESOLVED: Approval of Management Accounts.</b>   | <b>LA</b>                      |                        |
| <b>Free Parking Days to be issued as a Media Release.</b>   | <b>LA/AC</b>                   |                        |