

Town Clerk's Report to Policy & Resources Committee

1st November 2022

Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Committee, unless specifically excluded due to the confidential nature of business. Public access may be limited. Please contact info@trowbridge.gov.uk by 16:00 Monday; the day before the meeting, if you wish to attend this meeting in person. If you prefer, or where it is not possible for you to attend due to reaching the capacity limit, access will be available online via Microsoft TEAMS; please go to the Town Council Website – Your Council – Meetings to find the link. Only those attending in person will be able to ask questions and make statements at the meeting during the public period. Questions and statements can be submitted in advance by 16:00 on the Monday.

The Town Clerk reports every two months to the Committee with an edited version presented to the Area Board. Agenda items are highlighted and normally include an officer's recommendation. Other matters are provided as report items only but may still be the subject of a resolution.

Chair of the committee: Cllr Stewart Palmen (Leader of the Council)

Deputy Chair: Cllr Andrew Bryant (Chair Town Development Committee)

Other Members:

Cllr David Cavill (Chair Neighbourhood Services Committee),

Cllr Glyn Bridges (Chair Museum Committee),

Cllr Denise Bates (Chair Leisure & Information Services Committee),

Cllr Jo Trigg,

Cllr Chris Hoar,

Cllr Graham Hill (Mayor),

Cllr Antonio Piazza,

Cllr Daniel Cave.

If you receive this report electronically, the links in each section will take you to the relevant web page for more information about that organisation or project. If you want to be added to the e-mail circulation list, please contact the Town Clerk. The report is published six times per year prior to meetings of the Policy & Resources committee held in January, March, May, July, September and November.

I. KEY DECISIONS

I.1 AGENDA ITEM 8. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2021/22

RECOMMENDATION: That the Committee notes the following report regarding the completion of the External Audit and restatement of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR).

The 2021/22 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) was signed off by the External Auditor (PKF Littlejohn) on 1st October (1 day late) and has been published on the web-site. The delay was due to difficulties in answering the questions from the External Auditors, specifically the variance between the Total other receipts (BOX 3) 2020/21 and 2021/22 and Total other payments (BOX 6) 2020/21 and 2021/22. DCK Accounting Solutions (DCKAS), the council's consultant accountants are contracted each year to undertake quarter closedown of the accounts, Fixed Assets Register and VAT returns and also prepare the non-statutory Full Accounting Statements and the figures to include in the AGAR. DCKAS identified an error in their calculations on 28th September and as a result then provided correct figures for the AGAR and correct explanations of the variances. DCKAS has apologised for the errors and has offered to produce the 2023 Financial Statements and AGAR free of charge. As a result the AGAR for 2020/21 and for 2021/22 has had to be restated and the restated documents will be presented to Council on 15th November for approval and signing. No changes to the bottom line impact on General Reserves resulted from these changes.

I.2 AGENDA ITEM 9. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS 2022/23 Q2

RECOMMENDATION: That the Committee notes the Q2 management accounts.

The overall quarter two position is negative by more than £56,000 which is reflective of capital purchases including the accounting for the purchase of the tractor and additional investment in heating and ventilation at the Museum and Civic Centre in excess of budget and reserves.

Management Accounts 2022-2023							2nd Quarter April-Sept				Trowbridge Town Council		
												Working with the Community	
							Reserves, Unspent Loans and Unspent Grants						
			Q1 Actuals	Q2 Actuals	YTD budget	variance	Yr budget	01/04/2022	to	from	balance	Notes	
Museum	101	exp	69,258	140,069	135,629	-	4,440	273,384				(Check trial balances)	
		inc	5,704	11,513	24,246	✓	12,733	47,540					
		net	63,554	128,556	111,383	✓	17,173	225,844					
Grants	104	exp	10,750	11,500	11,500	✓	-	13,000					
PROJECT		inc	0			✓	-						
		net	10,750	11,500	11,500	✓	-	13,000					
MUSEUM			74,304	140,056	122,883	✓	17,173	238,844				Income below budget	
Leisure	203	exp	10,000	10,000	10,000	✓	-	10,000					
GRANTS		inc				✓	-	-					
		net	10,000	10,000	10,000	✓	-	10,000					
Leisure	265	exp	114,594	243,644	251,074	✓	7,430	494,133					
		inc	74,963	201,408	179,265	✓	22,143	315,805					
		net	39,631	42,236	71,809	✓	29,573	178,328					
Tennis	267	exp	2,327	2,923	2,948	✓	25	5,900	-	1,500	1,500		
		inc	2,062	3,979	2,953	✓	1,026	4,900					
		net	265	(1,056)	(5)	✓	1,051	1,000					
Doric Park	270	exp	205	0	(16,460)	✓	16,460	3,746,157	370,495	-	81,836	288,659	Unspent S106 Grant
		inc	0	0	0	✓	-	3,766,155					
		net	205	0	(16,460)	✓	16,460	19,998					
Woodmarsh	271	exp	1,043	5,003	5,002	✓	1	9,964	10,553	-	75	10,478	Reserve (was S106 Grant)
		inc	2,427	4,853	4,854	✓	1	9,706					
		net	(1,384)	150	148	✓	2	258					
LEISURE			48,717	51,330	65,492	✓	14,162	169,588					

The Museum has had a busy Summer season but income levels are below budget. The annual salary increase due on 1st April 2022 remains unresolved between the Green Book employers and union representatives. I have estimated the likely cost of implementation of the salary increase retrospectively. The Green Book employers have offered an increase of £1,925 for all scale points. The NALC/SLCC agreement on salaries for clerks and council staff is based on the Green Book and will be implemented in line with an agreement. The impact of this in Q1 & Q2 has already been applied as an accrual.

							Reserves, Unspent Loans and Unspent Grants				Notes
		Q1 Actuals	Q2 Actuals	YTD budget	variance	Yr budget	01/04/2022	to	from	balance	
Mayor	202 exp	1,653	2,410	5,046	2,636	16,300					
	inc	(174)	(174)	0 -	174	4,500					
	net	1,827	2,584	5,046	2,462	11,800					
Information Services	269 exp	37,416	85,267	82,666 -	2,601	161,137					
	inc	3,113	5,662	5,852 -	190	11,500					
	net	34,303	79,605	76,814 -	2,791	149,637					
Trowbridge Events	274 exp	973	21,646	22,598	952	42,600	16,000	-	-	16,000	Events Reserve approved 18/5/21
	inc	4,124	6,708	1,000	5,708	12,000					
	net	(3,151)	14,938	21,598	6,660	30,600					
LEISURE		32,979	97,127	103,458	6,331	192,037					
Democratic	401 exp	69,970	173,139	169,253 -	3,886	327,516					
	inc	0	0	0	-	-					
	net	69,970	173,139	169,253	3,886	327,516					
Grants	403 exp	9,000	21,000	21,000	-	20,000					
	inc	0			-	-					
	net	9,000	21,000	21,000	-	21,000					
Resources	410 exp	35,328	74,593	106,864	32,271	214,760	203,053				
	inc	142	436	546 -	110	1,100				146,804	General Reserves
	net	35,186	74,157	106,318	32,161	213,660					
P&R		114,156	268,296	296,571	28,275	562,176					
CIL	420 exp	7,865	7,865	10,002	2,137	20,000	-	7,865	-	7,865	
	inc	7,865	9,178	10,002 -	824	20,000					
	net	0	(1,313)	0	1,313	-					
P&R		0	(1,313)	0	1,313	-					

Earmarked Reserves are indicated on the right of the sheet as well as General Reserves. It should be noted, that when the budget is set it includes estimates of the anticipated position for Earmarked Reserves at 31st March. This is only an estimate and not therefore always reflective of the actual position at 31st March, given that the annual accounts are not completed until June. The advice is that from 2023/24 the council should establish a Capital Reserve rather than allocate specific amounts to individual projects, which may or may not proceed during the year. The Capital Reserve would be a total lump sum available to be drawn from during the year.

		Q1 Actuals	Q2 Actuals	YTD budget	variance	Yr budget	Reserves, Unspent Loans and Unspent Grants				Notes
							01/04/2022	to	from	balance	
CATG Project	504	exp	2,510	5,000	5,000	-	15,000				
		inc	0			-	-				
		net	2,510	5,000	5,000	-	15,000				
Neighbourhoods	509	exp	28,637	42,918	55,944	13,026	111,877		-		
Recreational		inc	0			-	29,168	-	-	29,168	SI106 from Elmhurst for Hulbert/Painters Mead
		net	28,637	42,918	55,944	13,026	111,877				
Neighbourhoods	518	exp	137,147	233,335	195,360	- 37,975	373,480				
General		inc	0	160	2,000	- 1,840	6,000				
		net	137,147	233,175	193,360	- 39,815	367,480				HP for tractor accounted for in Q1 2022/23
Closed	521	exp	781	911	0	- 911	-				
Churchyards		inc				-	-				
		net	781	911	0	- 911	-				
Town Park	524	exp	12,407	77,962	72,631	- 5,331	83,413				
		inc	1,884	3,767	3,768	- 1	7,535				
		net	10,523	74,195	68,863	- 5,332	75,878				
Allotments	525	exp	54	683	914	231	1,328				
		inc	1,415	2,857	3,078	- 221	6,164				
		net	(1,361)	(2,174)	(2,164)	10	4,836				
NEIGHBOURHOODS			178,237	354,025	321,003	- 33,022	565,399				
Civic Venue	602	exp	102,666	201,208	204,163	2,955	487,734				
		inc	76,402	135,706	150,370	- 14,664	437,500				
		net	26,264	65,502	53,793	- 11,709	50,234				
Longfield	612	exp	7,608	15,118	16,474	1,356	33,928	-	-	-	
		inc	11,099	22,960	25,998	- 3,038	52,000				
		net	(3,491)	(7,842)	(9,524)	- 1,682	18,072				
CIVIC BOARD			22,773	57,660	44,269	- 13,391	32,162				Lower hire income than budget

Hire income in the Civic has been lower than budget. For the 2023/24 budget there will remain significant pressure due to the anticipated pay increase this year and a likely similar position in 2023. In addition major increases in insurance and utility costs will put pressure on the budget.

		Q1 Actuals	Q2 Actuals	YTD budget	variance	Yr budget	Reserves, Unspent Loans and Unspent Grants				Notes		
							01/04/2022	to	from	balance			
Civic Centre Building	701 exp	96,264	255,989	218,036	-	37,953	433,823	40,350	-	-	30,332	10,018	Reserve - Civic Centre heating
	inc					-	-						
	net	96,264	255,989	218,036	-	37,953	433,823						Additional expenditure on heating/ventilation
Museum Building	705 exp	34,406	51,717	30,040	-	21,677	61,279						
	inc					-	-						
	net	34,406	51,717	30,040	-	21,677	61,279						Additional expenditure on heating and repairs
Longfield Facilities	712 exp	5,813	12,050	7,310	-	4,740	13,538	3,000	-	-	3,000	-	
	inc					-	-						
	net	5,813	12,050	7,310	-	4,740	13,538						
Facilities General	718 exp	37,413	20,174	46,442		26,268	71,188						
	inc	0	4,500	4,500		-	9,000						
	net	37,413	15,674	41,942		26,268	62,188						
Active Trow Facilities	765 exp	5,505	10,164	12,000		1,836	21,000	-	-	-	-	-	
	inc					-	-						
	net	5,505	10,164	12,000		1,836	21,000						
Studley Green	772 exp	123	7,519	1,041	-	6,478	2,000	3,000				3,000	
	inc	1,047	2,094	2,094		-	4,191						
	net	(924)	5,425	(1,053)		6,478	2,191						
FACILITIES		178,477	351,019	308,275	-	42,744	589,637						
TOTAL		649,643	1,318,200	1,261,951	-	56,249	2,349,843						

The overall position is negative, reflecting the additional costs of repairs and maintenance at the Museum, Civic Centre and the accounting for the hire purchase of the tractor. It is anticipated that this situation will improve in the second half of the year.

I.3 AGENDA ITEM 10. WORKING GROUPS

RECOMMENDATION: That the revised Protocol for Consultation Meetings be adopted as set out in the report.

The Council has a number of Boards, Panels and Working Groups, some of which have been established for many years and others that have been established in more recent years to deal with more time-limited issues or projects. There has been confusion with regards to their purpose and how they fit into the workings and decision-making processes of the council.

None of the Panels, Boards and Working Groups are committees of the Council and they are not open to the public. It is opportune to remind all members that decisions can only be taken by one of the following;

- the Council at a meeting;
- a committee of the council at a meeting, or;
- an officer under delegated authority.

This means that individual councillors or councillors meeting at any other sort of meeting cannot make decisions. Such meetings, whether they are Working Group meetings established by the council or a committee, or a meeting arranged with an officer on a less formal basis are opportunities for those officers who have delegated decision making authority to consult with members prior to reaching a decision. Obviously if those officers are uncomfortable with making a decision following consultation, they can take the matter to a meeting of the council or a committee.

On 15th March 2022 the following was

RESOLVED: That Trowbridge Town Council creates a protocol that all Working Parties must adhere to at all times to ensure they are accountable to the Council and function well. Each Working Group should prepare clear terms of reference to be approved by P&R on 3rd May 2022. The protocol should also be implemented by this date.

Working Groups are not covered in the Standing Orders of the Council.

All of the Boards, Panels and Working Groups were confirmed for the 2022/23 council year at the Annual Council Meeting on 17th May. Unfortunately, the Doric Park Working Group has not met. Following the release of confidential information, officers advised that it would be inappropriate to continue the meetings, as officers would not be able to provide certain information without it compromising the council. Informal consultative meetings have taken place on an ad-hoc basis between officers and councillors.

On 27th September, the membership of three of these groups was amended and the current membership is included below. It is also now appropriate to review the Protocol and extend its application to Boards and Panels. The proposed revised Protocol is as set out below:

PROTOCOL FOR CONSULTATION MEETINGS

- 1. The Council or a committee can establish a Working Group, Board or Panel (Consultation Meeting) with clear terms of reference including the name of the Committee to which it reports. Consultation Meetings may be tasked to oversee delivery of projects. Once its work has been completed, it will be disbanded.**
- 2. The number of Councillors appointed must be at least three and will be decided at the time of its establishment, is subject to confirmation or change at each Annual Council Meeting and subject to change at any other Full Council meeting. A quorum for any Consultation Meeting will be three people, at least one of whom must be a councillor.**
- 3. Consultation Meetings may meet in person or online and will be attended by:**
 - a. Officers appropriate to the remit of the Consultation Meeting.**
 - b. Those councillors who have been appointed to the Consultation Meeting by the Council/Committee.**
 - c. Other councillors who have been invited by the appointed members to attend specific meetings or for specific agenda items.**
 - d. Members of the public who have been invited by the appointed members to attend specific meetings or for specific agenda items.**
- 4. Consultation Meetings enable officers with delegated decision-making authority to consult with councillors prior to reaching a decision. If officers are uncomfortable with making a decision following consultation, they can take a report and recommendation to Council/Committee.**
- 5. The Consultation Meeting will notify the Council/Committee of the name of the Chair once they have been appointed following the first meeting.**
- 6. The role of the Council/Committee is to consider and question the recommendations accompanied by the necessary information put to it before a decision is taken and, in the case of a Committee, to be satisfied with them before making any recommendations to the full Council.**
- 7. Each Consultation Meeting will be accountable to its sponsoring Committee unless, due to expediency, recommendations may be made to the Policy & Resources Committee or to Full Council.**
- 8. Consultation Meetings do not have a budget. The budget remains with the Council/Committee.**
- 9. Consultation Meetings do not meet in public, therefore the Council's Standing Orders are not applicable and political balance does NOT apply to working groups. However, the Code of Conduct still applies and declarations of pecuniary and other interests will be required.**
- 10. All Consultation Meetings will follow all relevant Council policies.**
- 11. An officer of the Council will take notes, recording delegated decisions and recommendations, which will be published on the website following consideration by the Council/Committee, with commercially-sensitive information redacted when appropriate. The notes are not a record of decisions taken other than officer delegated decision at that meeting and should not be taken as or presented as a record of decisions.**

Panels and Boards

Town Clerk's Review	Mel Jacob	David Cavill	Stewart Palmen
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Typically meets once a year to undertake the Town Clerk's annual appraisal, to agree objectives and to consider (if appropriate) the salary. If any decisions are required, these will be taken to the Full Council as a report and recommendations for the Full Council to reach a decision.

Civic Board	Edward Kirk	Denise Bates	Andrew Bryant	Stephen Cooper	David Vigar	Stewart Palmen
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The Civic Board reports to the Policy & Resources Committee and provides an opportunity for the Civic Manager and their line manager; the Head of Services (Venues) to consult with members on those matters which are delegated by the Council to those officers.

Risk & Audit Panel	Edward Kirk	Caroline Lincoln	David Cavill	Andrew Bryant	Stephen Cooper	Stewart Palmen
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The Risk & Audit Panel reports to the Policy & Resources Committee and provides an opportunity for councillors to consider more detailed matters relating to risk, including financial risk and insurance and internal and external audit.

Working Groups

Reporting to Neighbourhood Services

Anti-Social Behaviour & Street-crime Working Group	Daniel Cave	Stephen Cooper	David Vigar	Stewart Palmen
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This group has only been fully established since May 2022 with the first meeting being held on 16th May. This working group will make recommendations to the council to deter & combat anti-social behaviour & street crime in the town. It will work in collaboration with Wiltshire Police, Wiltshire Council and other relevant public bodies to achieve this aim and ensuring a robust response to ASB&SC across the town.

Public Toilet Working Group	Antonio Piazza	Andrew Bryant	Stephen Cooper	Graham Hill
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This working group has been established for a couple of years and its main focus is the development of new toilet facilities with in the town park. The last meeting was held on 2nd August.

ECO Working Group	Mel Jacob	Chris Hoar	Stewart Palmen
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This group was established to work with partners and the public on improving the ecology and environmental quality of the town.

Tender Review Working Group	Daniel Cave	Andrew Bryant	Stephen Cooper
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This group has only met once to review the play area tenders.

Service Delegation Working Group	Jo Trigg	Stephen Cooper	David Cavill
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TERMS OF REFERENCE (27th May 2022)

The Working Group is established by Trowbridge Town Council.

It reports to the Neighbourhood Services Committee to which it will make recommendations.

It does not have a budget.

It does not have decision making responsibility.

Officers may have delegated decision making authority to make decisions resulting from consultation with members through the Working Group.

Recommendations may be made to the Policy & Resources committee or directly to the Full Council for expediency or where there are budgetary implications beyond the funds available to the NS committee.

It will consider the following:

Arrangements for agreeing and then implementing a package of Service Delegation from Wiltshire Council to Trowbridge Town Council due to commence on 1st December 2022; including equipment, staffing and TUPE, extent of service delegation.

Discussions with Persimmon regarding the potential adoption of public amenities and areas on the Ashton Park development.

Discussions with Redrow regarding the potential adoption of public amenities and areas on the Ashton Park development.

MEMBERSHIP

The Facilities Manager (Karl Buckingham) is the lead officer for Neighbourhood Services

The Town Clerk (Lance Allan) will attend if required.

The Council Secretary (Natasha Patterson from 20.06.22) will attend to take minutes and actions.

Reporting to Leisure & Information Services

Doric Park Working Group	Stewart Palmen	David Vigar	Mel Jacob	Stephen Cooper	Denise Bates
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The Working Group was established by the Council on 18th January 2022:

RESOLVED: That Trowbridge Town Council sets up a working group of 4 Councillors to help oversee the Doric Park project and issues detailed monthly updates through its newsletter, social media channels, and the town council website, also providing press releases to The Wiltshire Times

I.4 AGENDA ITEM 11. ENERGY COSTS

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee notes the report relating to the anticipated budget impact of energy cost increases.

Our consultants (Utility Aid) have provided us with a quotation from October 2023, when the current fixed tariff contract ends:

Meter	First half 2023/24	Second half 2023/24	Total
Civic Centre GAS	£2,780.77	£9,004.64	£11,785.41
Studley Green GAS	£547.41	£1,772.61	£2,320.02
Longfield GAS	£547.91	£1,774.22	£2,322.13
Civic Centre ELEC	£14,766.44	£37,797.64	£52,564.08
Church Clock ELEC	£94.26	£253.20	£347.46
Longfield ELEC	£1,022.22	£2,745.97	£3,768.19
Fore Street Market ELEC	£207.18	£556.53	£763.71
Museum ELEC	£823.29	£2,211.59	£3,034.88
Tennis Courts ELEC	£97.61	£262.20	£359.80
Studley Green ELEC	£968.42	£2,601.43	£3,569.85
Park Kiosk ELEC	£461.15	£1,238.78	£1,699.92
Bandstand ELEC	£106.15	£285.16	£391.31
Seymour Cabin ELEC	£240.05	£644.85	£884.90

The Museum is supplied GAS through the Shires meter and we do not have estimates yet of the likely increases for this supply. Including an assumption in respect of the Museum GAS supply this represents an increase of £40,000 from 2022-23 to 2023-24 and an estimate increase if these prices were for a full year (2024-25) of £80,000. None of these estimates include any discounting through the current six-month government scheme (which does not apply to the town council as our tariff was fixed before April 2022) and which is unlikely to apply to local councils in the medium to long term.

I.5 AGENDA ITEM 12. FHSF – PUBLIC REALM PROJECT

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee notes the presentation regarding the Future High Streets Fund - Public Realm Project proposals and approves the current programme for; further development, consultation in November and implementation following a decision at the Neighbourhood Services Committee meeting on 20th December.

The Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) includes a range of projects to improve the town centre (see 7.3 below). One of these is the public realm project to improve street furniture including signage, perches, planters, lighting and litter bins.

1.5 AGENDA ITEM 13. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee approves the following payments and receipts for August & September.

	<u>Payments</u>	<u>Receipts</u>
August	£ 309,714.17	£ 128,857.39
September	£ 474,391.50	£ 1,226,393.64

The committee is asked to consider for approval payments and receipts made since the last meeting of the council recorded on the Cash Receipts and Payments Records by the Finance Officer and to confirm the actions of Councillors Clive Blackmore & Glyn Bridges who have reviewed the bank reconciliations on 01/11/22 and found no errors. These were duly signed.

1.6 AGENDA ITEM 14 COMPLAINTS POLICY

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee approves the updated Complaints Policy.

2. AGENDA ITEM 15. GRANTS

2.1 AGENDA ITEM 15A. GENERAL GRANTS

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee awards General Grants to successful applicants.

The Council has a General Grant Fund budget for 2022/23 of £12,000. £7,198 was allocated earlier in the year and there is £4,802 available to be allocated, the deadline for new applications closed on 5th October.

Applicants already awarded a General Grant are

Wiltshire sight	£800
Friends of Broadmead Pond	£800
Families Out Loud	£1068
Friends of Downs Cemetery	£280
Trowbridge Street Pastures	£500
Back on Track	£1000
Group five	£1000
Wiltshire digital drive	£750
The Big Community Grow	
Apple festival	£1000
Total	£7198

New applicants are listed below.

	ORGANISATION	REQUESTED	SUMMARY	RECOMMENDATION
10	Trowbridge District Girl Guiding	£1,500.00	We wish to take our members (girls aged 4- 18) on a district holiday. With this, girls will need to pay money in order to go. During my time as District Commissioner, I aim to give as many girls opportunities as I can. We currently have 12 units in the area and I aim to help each one of them grow and make girlguiding more well known. In order to take the girls on holiday, I need to pay a deposit of £500. While the girls money goes towards this, I do not have the funds in our account to pay at this time. With the support of the council our girls will be able to pay slightly less (making it more accessible to more people), it will also mean that the money will be able to pay for some of the girls from more deprived backgrounds to come, as several miss out because their family cannot afford to come. Money from the council will also be put aside to make sure that they can attend. We aim to subsidise the girls when necessary – getting to know the families means we can support them, even when they do not want to ask for it. Many of our families have struggled over the past few years, as many others, we want these girls to still have the opportunities they need and deserve.	£400
11	Trowbridge Link Community minibus		Trowbridge link are going to start a service that was previously ran by the guild of community Service. It will run along side the link service but be ran by a sub-committee. The service will be taking the elderly and the disabled to lunch clubs, helping to support 4-5 social lunch clubs. This service will be ran by Volunteer. The plan is to start this service on 3rd October. Would like funding to start up. Medicals , minibus awareness cost and a permit from Wiltshire Council.	£400
12	St Johns Ambulance Wiltshire	£2,000.00	To purchase a community support vehicle unit, for our volunteers as they deliver first-aid to communities across Wiltshire. The vehicle will be based at the swindon Hub and will cost £65,000. The community support unit will contain facilities essential to enable rapid and safe response from the volunteers.. The new CSU vehicles will enable more volunteers to travel as one and as well as being just right for the job, it means we are able to 'retire' a number of older and less suitable ambulances from our fleet, improving our service and our environmental footprint.	£500
13	Trowbridge Future	£1,000.00	Trowbridge Future is a small independent charity supporting some of the most vulnerable people in the community of Trowbridge. During these unprecedented times Trowbridge Future will be able to offer Warm Spaces where particular marginalised and vulnerable people will be able to come and keep warm and connect with other people. Those that might not seek support elsewhere. Trowbridge Future are asking for an £1,000 as a contribution to the additional costs for electricity we are going to face at our Seymour Community Hub and Shires Community Hub.	£1,000
14	Stay Safe Initiative	£2,000.00	The Stay Safe initiative CIC is a not for profit company set up to help educate and protect children, young people and their families. Providing relevant, up to date education through engaging, workshops, assemblies, presentations and projects on the important subject of Anti-bullying, Online Safety and Personal Safety.	£251
15	60+ Social Afternoons RVS	£1,250.00	To provide opportunities for older people to get together for companionship and activities to improve the lives of older people. Providing social activities and social events to help reduce loneliness and isolation.	£500
17	Foodage4thought	£2,000.00	We run adult cooking, nutrition and well-being classes in the community. The purpose of the organisation is to raise the profile and educate people to equip themselves with the dietary knowledge and technical know-how to cook quick, affordable, seasonal, nutritious, sustainable and inspirational food.	£251
18	Age Uk Wiltshire	£750.00	To provide support and advice for the older generation and their families within Trowbridge area.	£500
19	Weavers Market	£1,500.00	To help the market stay Financially Solvent for the next year.	£1,000
	TOTAL		BUDGET for 2022/23 is £12,000 for General Grant Applications	£12,000

2.2 AGENDA ITEM 15B CORE GRANTS

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee makes additional Core Grant Awards for 2023/24 to successful applicants or makes no additional Core Grant Awards for 2023/24.

The following applications have been made for core Grants 2023/24 to be considered at this meeting for incorporation into the 2023/24 draft budget.

New applications are:

	ORGANISATION	REQUESTED	SUMMARY	RECOMMENDATION	Additional Funding
1	WHY	£3,577.50	Funding for 3x45x£26.50. To support individuals that have had a cancer or life threatening diagnosis.		St James Trust £700
2	Wiltshire Digital Drive	£15,000.00	Our vision is to bridge the growing digital divide in Wiltshire. To make sure that everyone in the county benefits from the opportunities that technology offers us. Current staffing is donated by two founding companies in order to move the organisation forward we are seeking funding for a corporate fundraiser.		Awarded £750 from General Grant
3	Trowbridge short matt Bowls Club	£3,500.00	To support the cost of hall hire, so meembers ranging in age (61-93) can enjoy a friendly game while benefitting from light exercise.		
4	The Amber Foundation	£5,000.00	To offer 24 hour support to 2 homeless young people for a period of 6 months, to get their lives back on track.		Area Board Grant £5000

2.3 AGENDA ITEM 15C GRANTS POLICY 2023/24

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee approves the Grants Policy 2023/24 including revisions to inform the 2023/24 budget.

The Grants Policy is considered annually to inform the budget process the Grants Policy for 2023/24 is presented for approval to incorporate any additional Core Grants approved by the committee and reflect other changes. (Circulated with agenda)

3. AGENDA ITEM 16 REWARDS & BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYEES

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee approves the introduction of MY Staff Shop and the Shared Cost AVC scheme, facilitated by AVC wise. To give their employees access to the best possible benefits to support their overall wellbeing and improve job satisfaction and provide greater opportunity for employees to make their money work harder for them at a time when it means the most.

For 12-18 months, following lockdown, we have struggled to recruit for roles across all departments. We have had to re-advertise due to the low number and poor quality of applications received. For more unsocial roles, with irregular working patterns; Civic Supervisors, Rangers, and Sports Coaches, we have had to undertake several rounds of recruitment before suitable candidates have been appointed and some are still unfilled.

As a local authority, we are unable to match salaries to the private sector, so it is crucial that we offer our current and future employees a broad range of rewards and benefits to both attract new prospective candidates and to retain our current valued employees. In doing so, the high cost of recruitment will be mitigated, along with the loss of knowledge and experience when employees leave the council to find new employment. It will also bring us in line with a wide range of local authorities across the UK currently offering rewards and benefit packages.

We are proposing a range of initiatives, some of which will have a small cost to the Council but will be of significant financial benefit to our employees, and will ultimately save the council money in the long term by improving attrition rates. These include My Staff Shop and AVC Wise.

3.1 My Staff Shop

My Staff Shop is a one-stop shop for employers to offer their employees a range of benefits including:

- **Retailer Discount Card**
- **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)**
- **Health & Wellbeing Cash Plan (HWC)**

Retailer Discount Cards offer discounts on goods and services for employees including major retailers such as Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda, hospitality, entertainment, home and garden, clothing, holidays, health and fitness including the Puregym recently opened in Trowbridge. Discounts can be made via physical and reloadable cards and digital cards via an app. For example, an employee can load their Tesco gift card with £100.00 and it will cost the Employee £96.00 – saving them £4.00. Funds are added to the gift card via the app almost instantaneously, allowing them to purchase funds whilst standing in the queue at the checkout.

This saving may seem small, but when considered across a month and a year, the saving could definitely go a small way to help families with the increase in the cost of living. For example, when considering grocery shopping alone:

- A monthly spend for a family at Tesco = £400
- Using my staff shop, will save £16 a month, and £192 a year.

On average, My Staff Shop customers can save £1,373 per year on their everyday expenditure from groceries to clothes, and home insurance to holidays.

The cost of offering the Retailer Discount Card service is £0.50* per employee per month.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

We have seen an increase in the number of employees taking time off sick with stress or anxiety related illness. In the last 12 months, almost 20% of our employees have either taken time off with stress or are currently taking medication for anxiety. We are proposing to introduce an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), to assist employees with personal or work-related problems that may affect their job performance, health and general well-being. An EAP is a 24 / 7 counselling and legal telephone assistance service for our employees and their family. There is also a translation service, offering immediate access to an interpreter in almost 200 languages, ensuring we meet the needs of diversity, equality and discrimination within the workplace and community. Six counselling sessions are available to employees per episode. Additionally, My Staff Shop offers this service to employees and the employee's spouse, children and non-marital partner living in the same household as the employee.

The cost of offering the EAP is £0.55* per employee per month.

Health and Wellbeing Cash Plan (HWC)

A Health and Wellbeing Plan can help employees with financial support when they have a dental or medical issue. We can help alleviate some of the additional costs and stresses that can be brought on by a planned or unexpected medical incident such as a stay in hospital or emergency dental treatment. A HWC can also give employees the ability to seek support for some of the ailments that might otherwise go untreated, through health screening programmes, such as Physiotherapy, Allergy consultation and Breast screening. The HWC cash plan makes payments to employees, should they have a medical incident. There are four levels of benefit that can be offered from bronze to platinum.

We are proposing Trowbridge Town Council offer employees the bronze level:

The cost of the Health & Wellbeing Cash Plan is £5.97* per employee per month.

Overall cost of introducing MY STAFF SHOP

MY STAFF SHOP - COST TO TROWBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL			
Cost per Employee	Per Month (£)	Per Annum (£)	x 57 Employees (£)
Initial Cost			500.00
Retailer Discount	0.50	6.00	342.00
Employee Assistance Programme	0.55	6.60	376.20
Wellbeing Cashback	5.97	71.64	4083.48
Total cost to TTC*	7.02	84.24	

Total cost in year 1 - £5301.68 (includes one off set up fee)

Total cost in year 2 - £4801.68

Total cost in year 3 - £4801.68

To conclude: For less than £85 per annum per employee, a 0.3% increase on this year's total salary budget, we can offer My Staff Shop support service to our employees, to help and support them at times of financial difficulty and to support their mental and physical well-being. This is particularly important for retaining long-term staff, especially for those who have reached the top band of their pay scales and need an incentive to stay with the Council.

If anyone would like more details on this please contact council.secretary@trowbridge.gov.uk

3.2 Additional Voluntary Contribution Shared Salary Sacrifice Scheme (AVC Wise)

Given the challenging financial climate, employee financial wellbeing is becoming increasingly important for employers. Now more than ever, organisations are looking to give their employees access to the best possible benefits to support their overall wellbeing and improve job satisfaction. Shared Cost AVCs are a great way to fulfil our duty of care as an employer, by offering our LGPS members the opportunity to make their money work harder for them at a time when it means the most. A Shared Cost AVC scheme enables both TTC and our employees to make extra savings in National Insurance contributions (NICs) when compared to a standard Additional Voluntary Contribution Scheme. With a standard AVC, the employee only makes savings in Income Tax, and TTC as the employer make no savings.

	Employer	Employee
Standard AVC	nil	Income tax saving
Shared Cost AVC (Wise)	NI Saving	NI Saving

We currently offer our employees a Standard AVC scheme through Prudential, which provides the employee a tax relief of 20%. For example, an employee's contribution of £100 into their AVC will only cost them £80. Under the shared cost AVC Wise scheme, both the employer and the employee can make savings. The employer contribution is the amount of salary sacrificed by the employee. The employee agrees to pay a monthly £1 fixed deduction as their individual contribution to the shared cost arrangement. In the example below, if a member paid a Shared Cost AVC of £250.00, Trowbridge Town Council's National Insurance Savings (15.55%) would be £38.72, 4.5% fee payable to AVC Wise Ltd: £11.21 + VAT would therefore leave Trowbridge Town Council with a net saving of £25.27 in this example.



Joe
 Salary: £30,000
 Regular AVC: £250 per month (£3,000 each year)

	Without AVC	With Standard AVC	With AVC Wise
Gross monthly pay (before main scheme contributions)	£2,500	£2,500	£2,251
Joe's LGPS contribution	£162.50	£162.50	£162.50
Joe's AVC contribution	£0	£250	£1
Employer AVC contribution	£0	n/a	£249
Total AVC contribution	n/a	£250	£250
Joe's Income Tax	£258.00	£208.00	£208.00
Joe's National Insurance	£204.36	£204.36	£174.48
Joe's monthly pay after tax	£1,875.14	£1,675.14	£1,705.02

All figures provided are for illustrative purposes only and are not guaranteed.

Employer NI	£271	£271	£232
Fee	£0	£0	£11
Saving	£0	£0	£28

This example is based on the April to October NI rate of 15.5%, which is currently proposed to reduce back to 13.8%.

We currently have four employees who pay into an ACV standard scheme. By introducing the AVC Wise, TTC could expect to achieve immediate annual savings of around £1,345, based on 15.55% employer saving, if all four members transferred to the scheme. The Council is permitted to treat the Shared Cost AVC

amount as part of an employee's pensionable pay and, therefore, the contributions that both the employee and the Council make into the LGPS will continue as though their salary had not been reduced. Consequently, the main LGPS benefits will be unaffected by joining the Shared Cost AVC scheme, including any benefits due to dependants in the event of death. AVC Wise currently work with 170 partner organisations and have 27,000 LGPS members including 112 Councils across the UK.

If anyone would like more details on this, please contact council.secretary@trowbridge.gov.uk

3.3 AGENDA ITEM 17 HEALTH AND SAFETY PACKAGE

RECOMMENDATION: that the council approves the Worknest Health and Safety plan at the cost of £2522 + VAT per year

A proposal for a Health and Safety workplace package. Worknest will act as our named legally required Competent Person. They will assign a highly qualified locally based, Council expert Health & Safety Consultant to visit each of our premises and the areas we manage and be our primary point of contact. Worknest will also assign one of their office-based Health & Safety Consultants to give additional day-to-day telephone and email support with our health and safety challenges. They will become an extension of our team.

They will include in their service:

Support to match your particular requirements: They will make an initial remote visit to understand our Council's responsibilities and our current health and safety systems and procedures, needs and challenges.

A bespoke Health & Safety Management System: The system will include a detailed Health & Safety Policy and Employee Handbook and all the necessary arrangements to ensure its effective implementation.

General Risk Assessments.: Each year they will visit all our properties and the areas we manage, identify areas of non-compliance, as well as areas where we comply fully. We will receive a written report and prioritised action plan, including practical advice to remedy areas of non-compliance and apply good practice. We will:

- Identify areas of risk and actions required.
- Review our Health & Safety Policy and Health & Safety Employee Handbook.
- Give us hands-on practical support in respect of key actions/challenges.
- Advise on training requirements for staff;
- Update our Health & Safety Journey Plan and objectives.
- Work to certify your Council as Health and Safety compliant

We will also have access to their award-winning cloud-based Health & Safety Software, that will revolutionise our approach to risk and safety management. This simple and secure way to manage compliance will allow us to confidently meet our legal requirements through a number of easy to use applications.

- Monitor and control those actions identified in our General Risk Assessment and assign ownership to those responsible.
- Create bespoke risk assessments for specific activities, areas and items in your workplace;
- Implement our own monitoring checks at the desired frequency to proactively manage our work environment.
- Maintain a register of all our statutory compliance certification to ensure that re-examination is undertaken.
- Record all accidents and incidents and conduct a comprehensive investigation.
- Safely store, retrieve and modify important health and safety documentation including our Health & Safety Policy and Employee Handbook, General Risk Assessment and Action Plan.
- Access their comprehensive health and safety library of materials, including guidance documents for employers and employees and a suite of risk assessment templates and completed examples.

4. AGENDA ITEM 18 TOWN PROJECTS

4.1 AGENDA ITEM 18A DORIC PARK

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee notes the report and the lack of any further acknowledgment from DLUHC regarding the borrowing application.

Our consultants have confirmed that no further activity is being undertaken by the preferred contractor Beard under the Letter of Intent beyond that which has already been invoiced and paid. No further works will be undertaken pending receipt of borrowing approval and approval of the Council. The Neighbourhoods Services team commenced grass cutting supervised by an ecologist on 24th October.

4.2 AGENDA ITEM 18B SERVICE DELEGATION

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee notes the update regarding progress towards a Service Delegation agreement with Wiltshire Council and the suggested recommendations to Council, subject to consultation by officers at a meeting of the Service Delegation Working Group. Next working group meeting is on 7th November

At the quarterly meeting with Senior Directors at Wiltshire Council the resolutions of both Wiltshire Council and Trowbridge Town Council regarding Service Delegation were discussed. In respect of each part of the Town Council resolution the current position is as follows:

A. Progresses negotiations with Wiltshire Council, for the transfer of all remaining services covered by the Wiltshire Council Policy: 'Defined minimum of all services to be devolved' except the Down Cemetery, from Saturday 1st April 2023, with a commitment to include those services relating to the Down Cemetery (maintenance and burials & memorials) from on Monday 1st April 2024.

Wiltshire Council has agreed to this proposed timetable.

B. Requires that, in addition to such service devolution the Down Cemetery should also be a full asset transfer, to take effect on the same date.

Wiltshire Council will commit to commencing the Asset Transfer process alongside the above Service Delegation timetable but this may not be completed at the same time and will include all appropriate assets, not just the cemetery.

Town Clerk's recommendation to Council on 15th November is that this position is accepted.

C. Requires that, Wiltshire Council commit to an independent report by the ICCM relating to the arrangements for transfer, capacity and related issues.

Wiltshire Council are not prepared to engage with the ICCM.

D. Requires that, Wiltshire Council commit to including the provision of a new cemetery for Trowbridge in the Local Plan which includes 2038 in its plan period.

Wiltshire Council consider that it is not their responsibility to justify the need for a new cemetery.

The Town Council is likely to remain concerned, particularly given the experience with delays around Trowbridge related to the development of sports facilities and restrictions related to the Greenbelt and ecology matters. The extent to which Wiltshire Council will need to support this requirement will require a clear and unequivocal commitment from Wiltshire Council to include a new cemetery in the Local Plan AND then require developer(s) to include the provision of land and preparations of that land to be used as a cemetery. It cannot be up to TTC to find a suitable plot of land and buy it and developers then pay a contribution.

The Town Clerk will bring recommendations to full council on the 15th November.

4.3 AGENDA ITEM 18C ALLOTMENTS

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee approves further consideration of the potential for the town council taking responsibility for the allotments at Southwick, currently managed by Wiltshire Council.

Trowbridge Town Council holds three allotment sites, two are managed by the council; at Mornington Gardens (Bradford Road) & Home Close Farm (Dursley Road) and one which is leased to an Association at Gloucester Road. The town council currently has 3 available plots which are being allocated with 80 people registered on our waiting list. At Southwick there are two allotment sites, one is managed by [Southwick Allotment Association](#) with 54 plots. The others are managed by [Wiltshire Council](#) with 64 plots. Southwick Parish Council have recently reaffirmed their position that they do not wish to manage the allotments. Wiltshire Council has its own waiting list which would need to be merged with the town council list.

4.4 AGENDA ITEM 18D MUSEUM FREEHOLD

RECOMMENDATION: That the Council engages our property consultants and surveyors to discuss the potential for freehold purchase of the Museum from the current owners.

The Town Clerk has been approached by the new owners of the Shires, who have asked if the Council would be interested in purchasing the freehold of the Museum, no values have been discussed.

5. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

3.1 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - At the end of Q2 the Council had received £9,178 of CIL. The budget for 2022/23 is £20,000. The majority of CIL has provisionally been allocated to the Doric Park project. Now that Elm Grove has been permitted the CIL contribution has been estimated as around £250,000 expected in the period 2024-2027. In September we also received £208.73 and in October £4370.81 given a total of £13548.39 for the year so far.

3.2 Risk & Audit Panel – The Panel considers financial matters, risk, insurance etc. and meets quarterly. The last meeting was held on the 16th August. The notes of that meeting were appendix 2 on the P&R September report. The next meeting is on 29th November.

6. HUMAN RESOURCES

6.1 Recruitment – Starters and Leavers

Neighbourhoods

- Kelly Corke and Billy Stewart have been appointed as Rangers and joined on 3rd October

Leisure

- Callum Heal joined as a Sports Coach on 30 hours on 1st July
- Jasmine Todd, Healthier Communities Coordinator, returned from maternity leave on 1st July.

Resources

- Jenna Grieve left as Resources Assistant on 31st August to pursue a career as a Carer in a residential home for people with dementia. Recruitment for a HR Assistant is ongoing.
- Amy Abram joined the department on 5th September as Finance Assistant. Amy previously worked as a Finance Assistant at Chippenham Town Council

Civic

- Sergio Ely resigned as Civic Supervisor on 30th September.

- Dani Moon joined as his replacement on 19th October

Recruitment is ongoing for the following positions.

- One x HR Officer; two x Sports Coaches, either qualified or as apprentices; one x Facilities Co-Ordinator; one x Events Assistant; and Casual Bar and Venues Staff

Apprenticeships

- Beatrice Bush is due to finish her apprenticeship as a Learning and Outreach Assistant at the Museum in November, and will take up a permanent part-time role on completion
- Paige Jones and Conor Martin are undertaking level 2 apprenticeships with Active Trowbridge

6.2 Society of Local Council Clerks - The Town Clerk completed his term of office as a director of the SLCC on 1st November.

7. TOWN DEVELOPMENT

Committee meets: 22nd November, 13th December & 3rd January to consider regulatory matters consulted on by WC; planning, listed building and tree applications, road closures, traffic regulation and licensing.

7.1 Employment/Mixed-use/Brownfield Housing sites

A. Under construction

The Pavilions White Horse Business Park – Conversion of (former Virgin) offices in the Northwest corner to 104 new homes has been permitted. Block A now occupied.

Clark's Mill – Work has commenced on conversion to 19 dwellings next to the Town Bridge.

Stallard Street - the villas fronting the former Bowyer's site are being refurbished for residential.

United Church Buildings – Work has commenced on conversion into 26 apartments.

McDonogh Court – Polebarn Rd permitted for 18 new homes. Selwood with Ashford Homes.

B. Planning approved.

Bradford Road – Accessed from the sewage works access road, permitted for employment uses. The town council requires the cycle/pedestrian link across the site to be provided.

Integrated Care Centre adjacent to the hospital to replace its services. Due for completion 2024.

Courtfield House – Ashford Homes for conversion and houses in the grounds permitted.

Ashton Street Centre – To be developed by WC's Stone Circle, permitted for 48 dwellings.

C. Planning applications under consideration.

Innox Mills – An application for the majority of the site including 284 homes has been submitted

D. Potential

County Hall East – WC are considering options for this site which they own but has some significant environmental obstacles around sewers, culverts and the riverbank.

Hospital – Promoted in the 'One Public Estate' bid by WC and partners for up to 200 houses.

Homefield House – Conversion to 18 residential apartments, previous application withdrawn.

Biss Farm – Employment allocation, Persimmon withdrawn for 267 houses, school, pub and care-home between Leap Gate & W Ashton Rd. TTC supports the allocation of this site to include housing.

7.2 Greenfield Housing Sites – Some have been delayed pending resolution of mitigation measures associated with Bats. The following provides a summary of the situation.

A. Ashton Park and associated sites -The area south of Leap Gate and east of the River Biss is in West Ashton parish, the remainder of the development site is in Trowbridge.

Persimmon 2,500 houses, employment, sports pitches, open space, allotments, play areas, 2 primary and 1 secondary schools and A350 improvements was permitted in April 2018, revised in July 2021, S106 agreement being negotiated with a condition that such S106 agreement should be approved by January 2023.

Wain Homes application for 91 houses lost on appeal for alternative access via Toucan Street.

Details of Ashton Park and the WHSAP sites are available in [previous reports](#).

B. Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (WHSAP):

H2.1 Elm Grove Farm – Permitted for 260 houses, upgrading and extension to the recreation ground, provision of allotments, open space, cycle paths and SUDS ponds, to be developed by Redrow.

H2.2 White Horse Business Park & North Bradley – 175 houses. TTC has raised significant objections.

[Castlewood Property Ventures](#) revised application for the blue part; 91 homes.

[Vistry Homes](#) application for the red part for 100 houses.

H2.3 South West of Elizabeth Way - Hilperton Parish on the town boundary at least 423 Houses.

[HGT Developments](#) Permitted for 165 to be developed by [Bellway](#).

[Barratt](#) Permitted for 187.

[Persimmon](#) Application for 71.

[Wiltshire Council](#) owns the remaining area, approved by WC for disposal.

H2.4 Church Lane – Accessed off Frome Road, 55 houses, application submitted.

H2.5 Spring Meadows – Accessed off Frome Rd; application for 50 houses, Newland Homes.

H2.6 Southwick Court – New access from Frome Rd; Savills for Waddeton Park for 180 houses. North Bradley and Southwick Parish Councils have raised objections. TTC has raised significant objections.

7.3 Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) - In 2019/20 WC worked with stakeholders and the public to develop projects submitted to central Government. In 2021, WC was successful in securing £16.347 million to develop these. Details are available from the link to the WC website above including:

- Pedestrian/cycle and public space enhancements including wayfinding at key entrance points: Wicker Hill/Hill Street, Manvers Street/Church Street, Church Street/Union Street, Castle Street, Roundstone Street.
- Public Realm Project
- Vacant commercial unit grants
- Town Hall renovation – In September the cabinet approved that the project progresses to the next stage and, on completion, a 125-year lease be offered to the Town Hall Trust. Planning is due to be submitted by the end of October and discussions have commenced with a preferred contractor. Approval from DLUHC of a revised allocation from the Trowbridge FHSF pot is awaited. Further public engagement is being planned during November. Completion of stage 2, including tender, planning approval and agreement for lease is scheduled for February 2023.

8. TOWN COUNCIL SERVICES

Heads of Service and Department Managers make detailed reports to their respective committees, published the week before the meeting. The Council Secretary is responsible for administering these committees.

8.1 CULTURAL SERVICES

Museum - Has been accredited for another 5 years by the Arts Council. An Accredited Museum operates by gold standards of Museum Practice. Next Meeting 20th December to review Q2 and draft budget.

Town Hall - The Town Hall is owned by Wiltshire Council and is operated by Trowbridge Town Hall Trust as an arts and community venue. (See 5.2 above)

8.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The Facilities Manager supports all of our other departments with building, technical and project matters including insurance, risk, Non-Domestic Rates, information technology and utilities.

Neighbourhoods - Our Neighbourhoods Team look after play areas, recreation grounds, bus shelters, grit bins and support the activities of WC in looking after our streets, including providing our own street sweeping and weed clearance services. Neighbourhoods and Facilities next meeting 20th December to review Q2.

Recycling - Officers have looked into how Trowbridge Town Council can do more re-cycling. At this present time, no more, than what is being done, can be done. However after Service delegation this could be revisited and to see what allegeable options are available.

Information Technology - The Facilities Manager is in the process of changing the council's technology support package to a company that deals mainly with councils. This will include new hardware and a more compressive support package. Over the comings weeks there will be opportunities for all staff and councillors to see demos and have Q&A sessions.

8.3 VENUE SERVICES

Longfield Community Centre – The DVSA lease the small hall.

Civic Centre - Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health partnership (AWP) lease some office spaces. We provide a conference suite along with a calendar of events that suit all the community. The Civic Board meet on the 29th November to review Q2.

8.4 LEISURE & INFORMATION SERVICES

Leisure and Information Services next meeting is 6th December.

Active Trowbridge - providing a range of services to the community and schools.

Information Services - With housing developments planned for over 3000 houses in the town in the next few years, the department will be key to delivering against the strategic aim of a more vibrant town, distributing information to people thinking of moving to Trowbridge or buying a new property. There is a new Video that showcases Trowbridge, enticing people to move to the town and Discover TROWBRIDGE. Additionally there has been some positive coverage of the town on [‘Muddy Stilettos’](#) recently.

Events - Unfortunately due to the death of the Monarch, Uniformed the town day was cancelled in September. Future events are: Christmas Lights Weekend November 18th - 20th . On Friday 18th there will be a lantern parade, Christmas lights switch on and Christmas Markets. And on Saturday 19th - Christmas Markets and Craft Fairs: Weavers, The Town Hall and The Civic and on Sunday 20th a Santa Dash.

Freedom of Information - We have had 24 requests for FIOs in the last 12 months the chart below shows a comparison with other councils.

Requests for Information in the past 12 months		
Authority	Number of FOI's	Invested in Training
Marlborough	2	No
Melksham	1	No
Ludgershall	2	No
Cricklade	2	No
Chippenham	10	Yes
Amesbury	0	No
Calne	3	No
Salisbury City	34	Yes
Tidworth	2	No
Bradford on Avon	25	No

Bradford on Avon have reported that in the past 12 months, the requests received have increased hugely compared to previous years. Due to this, they are now looking at investing in staff training to be able to keep up with the increase.

The Charges against FOIs are worked out based on the Freedom of Information act. Regardless of pay, the employee carrying out the request is set at £25.00 per hour. This is then broken down by four sections.

Determining whether we hold the information
Finding the requested information, or records containing the information
Retrieving the information or records
Extracting the requested information from records

Anything out of the categories above is not included. Therefore, costs are not a true reflection of how much it actually costs the council as we can only record based on Freedom of Information act guidance. Example: If a requestor puts in a request and the requester then continues to email and call staff, councillors etc . . . all this time cannot be included. If the requestor then appeals, this time is not included. There have had 10 FOIs since the beginning of August. The cost of these FOIs to the council is estimated as £1406.45.

9. CIVIC & DEMOCRATIC ACTIVITIES

9.1 Calendar of meetings - Committee meetings are normally held at 19:00 (unless otherwise stated). Members of the public are welcome to attend committee and Council meetings, unless specifically excluded due to the confidential nature of business. Please contact council.secretary@trowbridge.gov.uk by 16:00 Monday; the day before the meeting if you wish to attend. If you prefer, or where it is not possible for you to attend due to reaching the capacity limit, listen-in access will be available online via Microsoft TEAMS: please go to the Town Council Website – Your Council – [Meetings](#) to find the link. Only those attending in person will be able to ask questions and make statements during the public period. Questions and statements can otherwise be submitted in advance by 16:00 on the Monday. The Civic Board and Risk & Audit Panel are not open to the public and therefore do not make decisions – they make recommendations to P&R.

November	1 st	Policy & Resources (Q2 & Grants)
	8 th	NO MEETING
	15 th	Full Council Meeting
	22 nd	Town Development
	29 th	Civic Board
	29 th	Risk & Audit
December	6 th	Leisure & Information
	13 th	Town Development
	20 th	Museum
	20 th	Neighbourhood Services
	27 th	NO MEETING
January	3 rd	Town Development
	10 th	Policy & Resources (Budget)

9.2 Dates for your diary

Armistice Day – Friday 11th November 10:50 Town Park.

Remembrance Sunday – Sunday 13th November 09:30 St James' Church, 10:50 Town Park.

Christmas Lights – Friday 18th – Sunday 20th. This includes a lantern parade, Christmas light switch on the Friday, Christmas Markets all weekend.

9.3 Twinning - Several councillors along with the Twinning association went to Leer in Germany, on October the 10th for 5 days. Twinning Associates from Leer are planning a trip to Trowbridge next year.

10. TROWBRIDGE PARTNERSHIPS

10.1 Trowbridge Place Partnership - Met on Friday 14th October, attended by Andrew Murrison MP, Cllr Stewart Palmen, developers and officers from Wiltshire Council, the town council and the Local Enterprise Partnership. The Town Clerk asked if quality of broadband was a particular issue in Trowbridge and the developers and LEP confirmed that this was the case. Andrew Murrison MP asked if Wiltshire Council would be consulting on the potential locations for the new leisure centre. Dave Redfern (Asst. Dir. WC) would take this question away for further consideration.

10.2 Studley Green Youth Action Funding Cabinet report on visit - At the cabinet meeting on 11th October a report was considered following visits by the Leader of Wiltshire Council to Studley Green amongst other areas likely to benefit from Youth Action funding.
The report can be accessed as follows: [Update on Social Mobility and community conversations](#)