

## Minutes

### Policy & Resources Committee

<b>Date</b>	10/01/2023
<b>Time</b>	19:00 – 21.:08
<b>Location</b>	Pitman room
<b>Present</b>	Councillor Stewart Palmen, Councillor David Cavill, Councillor Denise Bates, Councillor Jo Trigg, Councillor Chris Hoar, Councillor Graham Hill, Councillor Antonio Piazza, Councillor Daniel Cave, Councillor Stephen Cooper (Sub for A Bryant)
<b>Officers</b>	Lance Allan (Town Clerk), Juliet Weimar (Head of Resources), Natasha Patterson (Council Secretary) Via Teams
<b>Public</b>	1 & Cllr. A Bryant via Teams
<b>Press</b>	0

## MINUTES

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### 3404 - APOLOGIES

- a. **The Council received** apologies from Cllr. A Bryant & Cllr. G Bridges
- b. **RESOLVED:** to accept those apologies received from Cllr. A Bryant & Cllr. G Bridges with reasons for absence.

### 3405 - MINUTES

- a. **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 1st November 2022
- b. **There were** no questions arising from those minutes.
- c. **RESOLVED** To note the minutes of the Civic Board held on Tuesday 29th November 2022.
- d. **RESOLVED** To note the minutes of the Risk & Audit Panel held on Tuesday 29th November 2022.
- e. **RESOLVED** To note the Internal Auditor's report.

### 3406 - DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

### 3407 - CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements from the Chair.

### 3408 - OPEN FORUM

Mr Mitchell - I am curious on the Town council projects that the bandstand has priority over the Toilets. Toilets are desperately needed, while the bandstand is used once a year, hopefully more after the refurb. I was wondering if that could be changed as the toilets will be used more often.

### 3409 - QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

The Committee noted the question from Cllr. Edward Kirk

#### **QUESTIONS:**

Please may I have confirmation of the date notice was given and confirmation that the two new clients identified will make a net positive contribution to budget?

Please can the Council let me know what other savings were identified and considered within these committees?

**ANSWER:** The following written answer was provided after the meeting.

Notice was given to Westwood on: 25.11.22 and comes into effect on: 31.03.23.

The new clients will NOT make a positive contribution to budget. Schools outside the main Trowbridge catchment area such as Westwood have been making a positive contribution but in recent years the town council has been concentrating on service provision through Active Trowbridge to schools in the main Trowbridge catchment. Westwood is the last school to which Active Trowbridge provide regular services which is not in the main Trowbridge catchment. Schools in the main Trowbridge catchment receive a discount which results in services to those schools being subsidised from the Council Tax.

Both the Leisure & Information Services committee and the Museum committee considered their budget requirements in detail. The Museum Manager explained to the committee that the council had sought to ensure that the new museum opened on at least six days per week but that it was not possible with the number of staff hours available when accounting for holidays, sickness, external training, and the outreach services to open the museum on a Monday. Further savings from opening even fewer days per week were discussed but not considered acceptable. In taking the decision to cease service delivery at Westwood the L&IS committee acknowledged the wish of the council to concentrate on delivering services to Trowbridge schools in line with the Council Strategy to achieve a more Active Trowbridge. Further savings in staff in Active Trowbridge would not deliver significant savings as each FTE has a net cost of around £11,000 per annum and would result in diminution of services to schools. The Active Trowbridge Manager has been given a very stretching target for 2023/24 and is only able to achieve this through delivering additional services in the December school holiday and reducing the range of free services offered in the summer school holiday. In addition, savings have been made through a reduction in the number of vehicles and price increases above inflation.

### **3410 - TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

**RESOLVED to note the Town Clerk's report.**

Points to note from report:

**Cllr: S Cooper:** Do we know more regarding the Museum ownership and it being a long lease rather than ownership.

**Town Clerk:** Our surveyor is assessing that information, a report is yet to come back.

**Cllr A Piazza:** A general question is there a reason for staff turnover?

**Juliet Weimar:** There are many reasons, a staff member left, after being with us 6 years, it is quite natural for people to move on after 5-6 years, others it is health reasons. There is a high turnover in the civic but that is normal in the hospitality industry. We are looking for replacements, it is a difficult time to recruit but we have introduced our rewards and benefits package. A new member of staff has started in HR.

**Cllr. J Trigg:** The town fund, I know officers are working on the last bit, when will we all as councillors see this final plan.

**Town Clerk:** An action plan needs to be put together, for the funds to be released.

**Cllr. S Cooper:** Support for Ukrainian families, Wiltshire Council has formally acknowledged us as a HUB. We have created a shared mailbox on the trowbridge.gov.uk page. Called Ukraine Hub. I am the only one who has access to this mailbox, if any other councillor would like access, then please

let me know. The next main thing we intend to do is to try and sort out seminars and workshops for those Ukrainians we have in the area, who would like to set up business here in Trowbridge. It was confusing having two Facebook pages, so the Trowbridge friends of Ukraine page has gone and there is just one Facebook page called Trowbridge homes for Ukraine.

**Cllr S Palmen:** Breakthrough Trowbridge is no more; it has been absorbed into Nexus at West Wiltshire Vineyard and is going very well.

**Action: To write a letter to Rev. Barrie thanking him for all his hard work.**

**Cllr. J Trigg:** 9<sup>th</sup> December is the last Weaver's market of the year.

### **3411 - FEES & CHARGES - VENUES**

**The committee considered for approval Fees & Charges related to Venue Services.**

**RESOLVED: the Committee approved the Fees & Charges 2023-24 as indicated in the Civic Board report. With an amendment which is as follows:**

Multiple discounts may be available if you qualify for two or three of the above.

### **3412 - BUDGET 2023-24**

**To committee considered** the Town Clerk's Report (Section 2.1 Budget) and the following:

**RESOLVED: That in order to meet; the budget expenditure requested by the committees; the adopted Council Strategy 2021-25; the requirement to fund an increase in General Reserves over the medium term and in anticipation of additional services being transferred from Wiltshire Council, with an expectation from the community that the town council will take full responsibility for those additional services and deliver a quality of service better than that experienced in recent years (whilst they have been the responsibility of Wiltshire Council), the Committee approves the following RECOMMENDATION to Council;**

<b>That the Council approves the department Budgets for ongoing activities as detailed on the budget spreadsheets, totalling</b>	<b>£2,140,991</b>
<b>That the Council approves the loan finance Budgets as detailed on the budget spreadsheets, totalling</b>	<b>£416,672</b>
<b>That the council approves the capital budget as detailed on the budget Spreadsheets, totalling</b>	<b>£33,600</b>
<b>That the Council approves a contribution to General Reserves of</b>	<b>£24,000</b>
<b>That the Council therefore approves a total budget requirement of</b>	<b>£2,615,263</b>
<b>Resulting in a net precept requirement of</b>	<b>£2,615,263</b>
<b>Which results in a TOTAL INCREASE of £20.21 or 10.1% on the Trowbridge Town Council 'Band D' Council Tax Charge, to</b>	<b>£220.31</b>

**Which is less than £4.24 per week.**

**Cllr. Piazza & Cllr. Cave against**

### 3413 - EXTERNAL AUDIT

The committee considered the following report and recommendations:

**RESOLVED:** That the Council confirms its opt-in to the services provided by SAAA for the procurement of External Auditors.

PKF Littlejohn have been reappointed by SAAA as the External Auditors for Wiltshire for the five-year period.

**RESOLVED:** The Council noted the appointment by SAAA of PKF Littlejohn as External Auditors for 2022-23 to 2026-27.

### 3414 - PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

To committee considered 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 action of Councillors Denise Bates and Graham Hill who reviewed the bank reconciliations on 5/1/23 & 10/1/23 and found no errors. These were duly signed.

	Payments	Receipts
October	£264,175.00	£122,264.56
November	£405,934.46	£94,914.90

**RESOLVED:** That the committee approves the payments & receipts for October and November and have been signed by Cllr. D Bates & Cllr. G Hill.

### 3415 - TOWN PROJECTS

The committee noted the Town Clerk's report regarding the following:

#### 1. DORIC PARK

**RESOLVED:** the committee notes the report and the additional questions from DLUHC and makes the following RECOMMENDATION to FULL COUNCIL on 17th January 2023: That the Council approves the submission of responses to all of the additional questions from DLUHC in respect of the borrowing application for Doric Park including information extracted from the approved 2023/24 budget.

Cllr. Piazza against  
Cllr. Cave abstain.

#### 2. SERVICE DELEGATION

Town clerk received an email from Adrian Hampton at Wiltshire Council regarding the cemetery and that Trowbridge will have to take the cemetery in April 2023. The Town Clerk has replied to this with; The town council will not take on the cemetery April 2023, will not continue with the service delegation if this is the case and will continue to offer a top-up service.

**RESOLVED:** the committee notes the update regarding progress with Service Delegation with Wiltshire Council and supports the Town Clerk with his response to Wiltshire Council.

### 3416 - POLICIES

The committee considered the following revised policy.

**RESOLVED: to approve the revised Pension Discretions Policy.**

**3417 - MOTIONS**

**No motions were submitted.**

**3418 - MEDIA RELEASES**

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

- Budget
- The applications for General Grants are now open and all applications should be submitted by the closing date of 30th April for consideration in July.
- Forthcoming events Armed Services day and Coronation celebrations look out for more information in the coming weeks.

**3419 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 7th March 2023.

*Signature*..... *Date*.....