



# Devizes Town Council

[www.devizes-tc.gov.uk](http://www.devizes-tc.gov.uk)

## **Community & Civic Resources Committee**

You are summonsed to attend a meeting of the Community & Civic Resources Committee at the following, place and date.

Date: Tuesday, 14 JULY 2015

Time: Immediately after the Planning Committee Meeting

Venue: Council Chamber, Town Hall, St John's Street, Devizes

Enquiries: Town Hall - Tel: 01380 722160

The Town Mayor (Councillor Giraud-Saunders)

Chairman: Councillor Geddes

Councillors: Mrs Bridewell  
East  
Nash

Mrs Burton  
Evans  
Wooldridge

Corbett  
Hopkins

## **AGENDA**

### **1. MINUTES**

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the minutes of the Community and Civic Resources Committee Meeting held on 16 June 2015 which have been circulated alongside the agenda.

### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

### **3. DISCLOSURE(S) OF INTEREST**

To receive any disclosure(s) of interest by a Councillor or an officer in matters to be considered at this meeting, in accordance with provisions of Sections 94 or 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the National Code of Local Government Conduct.

**4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

At the Chairman's discretion, members of the public attending the meeting will be allowed to ask questions, make a statement or address the Council upon a matter of concern to that person which is relevant to the Council. A time limit of 5 minutes per person will be permitted, but this may be extended at the Chairman's discretion and a maximum period of 20 minutes has been allocated by the Council for this item of business

**5. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – NARRATIVE INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT JUNE 2015**

**1 MONTH THEREFORE 8%**

**INCOME**

1. 1<sup>st</sup> half of precept received April 2015
2. 8 commercial properties pay on a quarterly basis therefore income skewed.
3. JBC salary recharge received quarterly therefore income again skewed.

**EXPENDITURE**

4. Initial £2,500 DOCA granted paid in April 2015
5. Green Lane rental of £2450 paid in April 2015.
6. Christmas Festival & Lights weighted towards end of year.
7. Initial £4,000 payment to Town CCTV system paid in April 2015  
Capital Expenditure not consistently spread over the year.

**6. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – SCHEDULE OF ACCOUNTS PAID**

A Schedule of Accounts Paid is attached for information (doc 6/1 – doc 6/2).

**7. REPORT FROM INSPECTOR MATTHEW ARMSTRONG**

Inspector Armstrong will attend the meeting, providing that there are no operational requirements for his time.

**8. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – WILTSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (WALC) – ISSUED BY COUNCILLOR WOOLDRIDGE**

Attached is a report from the meeting of WALC from Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015 (doc 8/1).

**9. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – COUNCIL SURGERIES**

The Police have now joined Councillors at the Monthly resident's surgeries held at the Town Hall.

Both the police and the Council will promote the event to ensure that the widest possible audience sees it.

Officers suggest that the new initiative is given six months to evaluate, at which time a decision can be made about the future of these surgeries.

**10. REPORT FOR DECISION – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

**Recommendation**

To review and adopt the amended Community Engagement Policy.

**Purpose of the Report**

To allow the Council to review and adopt the Equal Opportunities Policy which has not been updated since 2009.

**Background**

This item was deferred from the Full Council meeting on 16 June for amendments to be made to the policy. The Council were informed that from time to time it is important that the Council reviews its policies with a view to ensuring that they are appropriate and fit for purpose.

The Community Engagement Policy, circulated alongside the agenda, has had a number of minor amendments but there is no material change to the previous adopted policy.

**Options Considered**

That the Council adopts the Community Engagement Policy as presented.

**Implications and Risks**

**Financial and Resource Implications**

There are no financial or resource implications in respect of this decision, being essentially an administrative matter.

**Environmental Implications**

Officers are unaware of any environmental implication for the Council associated with this decision.

**Risk Assessment**

The adoption of a robust Community Engagement Policy will help to ensure that the Council engages in an open, transparent and proactive way with the people of Devizes

**Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

**11. REPORT FOR DECISION – FINANCE & GOVERNANCE WORKING PARTY**

**Recommendation**

That the Committee reviews the progress of the Finance & Governance Working Party's work programme.

**Purpose of the Report**

To review the progress made by the Finance & Governance Working Party with a view to considering whether its role is now complete.

**Background**

The Finance & Governance Working Party's terms of reference were agreed by this Committee at its meeting on 27 August 2013. A number of additional items of investigation were referred to the Working Party, namely the development of a policy on Freeman and the Review of the Mission Statement and Core Objectives.

Two final matters remained outstanding being

1. The review of the Council's relationship with those community groups to which grants or resources are provided
2. The review of the financial investment portfolio.

With regard to the first outstanding item, the recommendation of the Working Party was that those groups who receive an annual grant should complete a form each year to identify

- How the grant benefits their organisation
- What the money was spent on
- Who benefits from the service they provide
- Is there any other organisation providing a similar service in Devizes

Additionally, a Grants Policy has been developed that was agreed by the Full Council at its meeting on 16 June 2015.

With regard to the matter of the financial investment portfolio, the recommendations of the Finance & Governance Working Party are the subject of a separate report for this meeting.

A position statement identifies the work programme and the progress and status of the working party – doc 11/1 refers

**Options Considered**

Subject to the decision of this meeting with regard to the matter of the financial investment portfolio, the work of the Finance & Governance Working

Party is complete and the Committee are recommended to note this and agree that that the working party be dissolved.

### **Implications and Risks**

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

There are no financial or resource implications associated with this working party except for the staff support.

#### **Legal Implications and Legislative Powers**

The Council will be considering this matter under its General Power of Competence.

#### **Environmental Implications**

Officers are unaware of any environmental implication for the Council associated with this decision.

#### **Risk Assessment**

The Finance & Governance Party has served to review and make recommendations on a number of matters of concern to the Council. This has now been completed and any risks associated with those areas of concern, mitigated.

#### **Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

## **12. REPORT FOR DECISION – FINANCIAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

### **Recommendation**

That the committee reviews the notes from the working party and support its conclusions.

### **Purpose of the Report**

To support the conclusions reached by the Working Party in regard to the investment strategy.

### **Background**

The Finance & Governance Working Party has now met to consider the final outstanding matter within its work programme. The notes of that meeting are attached at doc 12/1.

The Working Party concluded that the Town Council has insufficient funds to place monies on a long term investment and that the Admin and Finance Manager should continue to place funds on short term deposit to ensure a moderate return with continued flexibility.

### **Options Considered**

The committee needs to decide if it accepts the findings of the working party and therefore authorises the Admin & Finance Manager to continue to manage the Town Council's balances through short-term deposit.

### **Implications and Risks**

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

Income from investments provides additional resources for the Council. However, with the large capital expenditure on planned projects, the Council's balances have reduced and therefore, income from those investments will reduce accordingly.

#### **Legal Implications and Legislative Powers**

The Council will be considering this matter under its General Power of Competence.

#### **Environmental Implications**

Officers are unaware of any environmental implication for the Council associated with this decision.

#### **Risk Assessment**

The continued flexible approach of short-term deposit will ensure that the Council is able to respond to cash flow issues without exposing itself to risk of funds being inaccessible.

#### **Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

## **13. REPORT FOR DECISION – TOURIST INFORMATION FACILITY**

### **Recommendation**

That the committee guides officers on how it wishes to progress developing an enhanced tourist information service in the town.

### **Purpose of the Report**

To decide if the Town Council wishes to pursue enhancing the current services which supports visiting tourists.

### **Background**

At its meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June the Committee resolved that officers should write to Wiltshire Council seeking an indication about whether a unit in the refurbished Shambles could be made available for a Tourist Information Centre.

A response has now been received from Wiltshire Council setting out costs and the minimum lease period (doc 13/1).

The committee needs to decide, given the costs, if they wish to continue with the development of this initiative and if so on what basis.

The Town Council is currently a member of the local tourism partnership and therefore consideration needs to be given to including other organisations that have an interest in enhancing the visitor experience in Devizes.

### **Options Considered**

The Committee needs to decide if it wishes to develop the initiative further and if so what mechanism they wish to use.

The committee needs to decide if it wishes to include other partners in the initiative

### **Implications and Risks**

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

Officers are unaware of any Finance and Resource implication for the Council associated with this decision.

#### **Legal Implications and Legislative Powers**

The Council will be considering this matter under its General Power of Competence.

#### **Environmental Implications**

Officers are unaware of any environmental implication for the Council associated with this decision.

#### **Risk Assessment**

Officers are unaware of any risk implication for the Council associated with this decision.

#### **Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

## **14. REPORT FOR DECISION – TOWN BENCHMARKING & TOWN CENTRE CONSULTATION DAY**

### **Recommendation**

That the committee decides if the Council will continue to support the town benchmarking exercise with officer support and to undertake the Town Centre User Survey

### **Purpose of the Report**

The town benchmarking exercise has been conducted for the last three years and the Town Benchmarking Steering Group have decided that it should be conducted for 2015. The committee is asked to give the Council's support to this project.

### **Background**

The town benchmarking exercise has been conducted for 2012, 2013 and 2014 giving valuable empirical evidence in understanding the economy of the town and, also, providing a tool to be able to engage successfully with the local business community.

As the Committee will be aware, the benchmark exercise measures the economic health of the town using 12 key performance indicators

- 1 Commercial Units by Use Class
- 2 Comparison / Convenience Goods
- 3 Trader Type
- 4 Vacancy Rates
- 5 Markets
- 6 Prime retail property yields
- 7 Zone A rents
- 8 Footfall counts
- 9 Car Parking
- 10 Business Confidence Surveys
- 11 Town Centre Users Survey
- 12 Shoppers Origin Surveys

The Benchmarking Steering Group, comprising of representatives from the Town Council, DCAP and the Chamber of Commerce, lead on the collection of the data.

The Town Council has traditionally undertaken the Town Centre User Survey as its contribution to the project as well as lending officer support. This year it is planned to undertake the Town Centre User Survey on Thursday 17 September 2015 to make the data gathering reasonably consistent with previous years.

The Town Centre User Survey is attached doc 14/1 refers.

### **Options Considered**

The committee needs to decide if:

1. It wishes to lend officer support to the delivery of the benchmarking exercise  
  
and
2. It wishes to support the exercise by undertaking the Town Centre User Survey on Thursday 17 September 2015  
  
and
3. It wishes to include any additional questions in the Town Centre User Survey and if so, what those additional questions would be.

## **Implications and Risks**

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

There are no significant financial and resource implications with the exception of stationery and photocopying, plus officer time.

### **Legal Implications and Legislative Powers**

The Council will be considering this matter under its General Power of Competence.

### **Environmental Implications**

Officers are unaware of any environmental implication for the Council associated with this decision.

### **Risk Assessment**

The exercise has become a useful tool to engage with the business community and provide valuable information on the economic condition of the town. Without this data there is the risk of making decisions without understanding the true conditions that exist.

### **Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

## **15. REPORT FOR DECISION – WILTSHIRE COUNCIL PRECEPT**

### **Recommendation**

To decide if the Committee has a view on the level of precept Wiltshire Council should be setting for its 2016/17 budget.

### **Purpose of the Report**

To formerly consider issues raised at a recent forward planning workshop about the level of Council Tax Wiltshire Council raises to deliver community based services.

### **Background**

At a recent forward planning workshop, the issues of reducing services standards for community based activities, including street scene management, by Wiltshire Council was discussed.

It was recognised that the primary reason for service reduction was budgetary pressures and many of the services that's suffering the reduction in service standards are not statutory nevertheless they do make a significant difference to how people feel about where they live.

At the forward planning workshop it was felt that this Council should write to the leader of Wiltshire Council urging her to do all she can to raise income to deliver services.

### **Options Considered**

The Committee needs to decide if it has a view on how much Wiltshire Council should increase its precept by in order to support Community Services.

### **Implications and Risks**

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

Officers are unaware of any Finance and Resource implication for the Council associated with this decision.

#### **Legal Implications and Legislative Powers**

The Council will be considering this matter under its General Power of Competence.

#### **Environmental Implications**

Officers are unaware of any environmental implication for the Council associated with this decision.

#### **Risk Assessment**

Officers are unaware of any risk implication for the Council associated with this decision.

#### **Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

## **16. REPORT FOR DECISION – SUPPORT FOR THE NOISE OUTREACH PROJECT**

### **Recommendation**

That the committee decides if it can support the Noise outreach project, an initiative being organised by St James' Church in Devizes.

### **Purpose of the Report**

To guide officers on members views in respect or a request for support for the Noise out reach project.

### **Background**

The proposal is for the entire St James' Church community to work together in serving the area of the parish on the east side of Devizes. Initially, this will involve starting small, and will take place over one weekend in October. The hope is that the entire church commits to being part of this, serving in a variety of ways, together with community members, workers, and organisations such as the Town Council. Over the course of the weekend they will work on a number of small projects identified with the help of local community groups and individuals.

The vision for the Community Outreach Project pilot is not just about a weekend, but that projects that are worked on are sustainable with a longer term impact and benefits, and also that local people are empowered and encouraged to continue working together to benefit the whole community throughout the year.

In the longer term, the aspiration for the project is for it to build on the success of this initial pilot and extend to other areas of the town, with the support of the newly constituted *Churches together in Devizes*, growing slowly and relationally.

In line with Bishop Nicholas' visit to the Deanery, focusing on Renewing Hope, members of St James Church have explained to officers that they believe passionately that there is increase urgency for them to reach. A Guiding Group of 8 members with complementary skills and experience has been established to lead the Community Outreach project forward and the initial proposal received PCC approval at the March 2015.

### **Success outcomes**

1. Positive relationship building in the community leading to sustainable long term benefits.
2. Both 9.00am and 11.00 congregations recognise the benefits of working selflessly and purposefully together and want to repeat the experience.
3. Increased participation in 2016 Community Project(s).

For the Community Project to take off we have planned our first venture to be a 'quick win'. By choosing the east side of town we can build on the success of relationships forged in recent years through the Litter Pick, running the CAP Course and St James', Southbroom Academy and pilot the approach for future development in other areas of town in years to come. We would also be working in the very heart of our parish.

It is hoped that the project will develop along the same lines as The Noise in Filton, Bristol [www.thenoise.org.uk](http://www.thenoise.org.uk). This is a group in Bristol who do a similar weekend annually, albeit on a much larger scale starting small with 30 volunteers working in Lockleaze, North Bristol, in 2001, and then growing slowly and relationally over the last 10 or so years, to over 1000 volunteers working in communities in both North and East Bristol, in 2015.

The Noise will commit to each specific community it works in, committing to working together with community members, workers, and organisations, and, in future years, other churches, to help meet real and local needs.

Aster Community Care and other outside agencies will generate a list of potential projects

Southbroom St James' Academy as a venue for The Family Fun afternoon

The Noise, Filton coordinator and team for their skills and experience and accepted their offer of the loan of equipment for our first venture.

We also hope to enlist the support of Nursted Community School as a venue for Community teas,

Cornerstones Community Centre – as a pop-up café

**Possible sources of additional volunteers**

- Devizes Churches together
- Community First
- Veterans in Action

The Project is seeking the support of the Town Council in two way. At the end of the weekend they may well be a need for the central collection of litter picks and weeding which the project will struggle to undertake through lack of appropriate resources and the would wish to make Grant Application through the Council annual grant provision. With that regard, the project coordinators have asked if they could make an application early as the Council's grant decision date is after the project weekend and an earlier decision would help with their financial planning.

**Options Considered**

The commit needs to decide if the Council will commit resources as request to by the project coordinators

The Committee needs to decide it the will allow then Noise outreach project to submit a grant application for early consideration.

**Implications and Risks**

**Financial and Resource Implications**

There will be a small resource implication if the committee agree to this request.

**Legal Implications and Legislative Powers**

The Council will be considering this matter under its General Power of Competence.

**Environmental Implications**

Officers are unaware of any environmental implication for the Council associated with this decision.

**Risk Assessment**

Officers are unaware of any risk implication for the Council associated with this decision.

**Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

**17. REPORT FOR DECISION – GOVERNANCE REVIEW & DEVOLUTION OF SERVICES FROM WILTSHIRE COUNCIL**

**Recommendation**

That following a meeting of members of Devizes Town and Roundway Parish Councils with Wiltshire Corporate Director, Carlton Brand, that the Governance Review Working Party be asked to form some recommendations on a joint working arrangement to support the progress of the Governance Review and to consider the devolution of services to the two councils.

**Purpose of the Report**

To develop a mechanism by which Devizes Town Council and Roundway Parish Council can work together to deliver the Governance Review to form a new or merged council and to consider what services that a joint council may wish to deliver.

**Background**

At its meeting on the 31 March 2015, this Committee reaffirmed the Council's position that governance would be better served by the merger of Devizes Town and Roundway Parish Councils or the creation of a new council formed of the two areas.

On 27 April 2015 Roundway passed a similar resolution and a consensus has now been reached between the two councils to work together through the Wiltshire Council Governance Review that is currently being undertaken.

On the 23 May 2015, all members of both Councils were invited to a meeting with Carlton Brand, Corporate Director, Wiltshire Council, to understand informally what the processes are to creating or merging the two councils.

In addition Dr Brand outlined the financial position at Wiltshire Council and how the Town and Parish Councils may wish to deliver services that are significant to local communities that might not receive the same priority at Wiltshire Council.

Currently, there is a Joint Governance Working Party comprising members of both Devizes Town and Roundway Parish Councils. The Devizes Town representatives are Councillors East, P Evans, Hopkins, Nash and Wooldridge.

An option would be for Devizes Town Council to approach Roundway Parish Council with a view to asking this Working Party to develop some options for a more formal working arrangement. A model based on the Joint Burial Committee arrangement with limited delegation could be drafted by the Working Party to bring back to each Council for agreement.

### **Options Considered**

That the Committee agrees for an approach to be made to Roundway Parish Council to request that the Governance Working Party is asked to develop some options for a more formal working arrangement – including one based on the Joint Burial Committee a model.

That the Committee confirms or amends representation on this Working Party as it was appointed to in 2014 and not reviewed as part of the committee/working party appointment process at the start of the civic year.

### **Implications and Risks**

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

There are no significant financial implications in development of a model of formal working arrangements except for officer resources.

#### **Legal Implications and Legislative Powers**

The Council will be considering this matter under its General Power of Competence. However, the legal mechanism for governance lies with Wiltshire Council

#### **Environmental Implications**

Officers are unaware of any environmental implication for the Council associated with this decision.

#### **Risk Assessment**

The financial position for Wiltshire Council means that there are many services and assets that hold greater priority with the Towns and Parishes than for Wiltshire Council. For Devizes Town and Roundway Parish Councils to be in a position to jointly manage and respond to these challenges will reduce the risk to the town of a reduction in standards and facilities.

#### **Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

## **18. REPORT FOR DECISION – CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

### **Recommendation**

To decide whether to vire monies from the Town Centre Management budget to replace the damaged lights on the main Christmas tree, which is situated in the Market Place. To also agree to vire monies from the Town Centre Management budget to purchase a Christmas tree and lights in the newly renovated Albion Place.

The Town Centre Management budget currently stands at £9,000.00.

### **Purpose of the Report**

To provide information on various options to enable members to make a decision.

### Background

The Market Place Christmas tree provides the main focal point of the decorations over the Christmas period. Switching the lights on is the culmination of the Christmas Festival, which is attended by more than three thousand visitors to the town and is growing in popularity.

The tree lights are more than five years old and a number of the strings have stopped working which, last year, reduced the impact of the lights overall. The company who manage the lights for the Town Council, Flag and Flagpole, have advised that a further set of 24V heavy duty LED pea lights will ensure full coverage. These commercial grade LED lights have a life expectancy of around 75,000 hours.

Following an extensive refurbishment, it has been agreed by those organising this years Christmas Festival to incorporate Albion Place into the festivities. This year, there will be a children's choir drawn from all local schools singing in Albion Place and, following their performance, they will head the main lantern parade. It has also been agreed to move Santa's Grotto from the Wharf into Albion Place, which is an attraction that historically is very well supported. Traders are extremely pleased that this area of Devizes will be part of the festival in this way and hope that it will encourage more footfall through Sidmouth Street.

The refurbishment design has allowed for a flagpole or Christmas tree to be erected. Owing to the fact that Albion Place will have a central role in the Christmas Festival it is hoped that a 20-foot tree and new lights sourced from Flag and Flagpole could be installed.

Project	Cost
Additional lights on Market Place Christmas tree	£1120.00
20 foot tree for Albion Place	£256.00
120m string of 24V heavy duty LED pea lights for Albion Place tree	£900.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2276.00</b>

### Options Considered

- To vire money from the Town Centre Management budget in the sum of £1120.00 for the purchase of additional heavy duty LED lights for the Market Place Christmas tree.
- To vire money from the Town Centre Management budget in the sum of £256.00 for the purchase a Christmas tree for Albion Place.
- To vire money from the Town Centre Management budget in the sum of £900.00 for the purchase heavy duty LED lights for the Albion Place tree,

- To vire money from the Town Centre Management budget in the sum of £2276.00 for the purchase additional heavy duty LED lights for the Market Place tree, a Christmas tree and lights for Albion Place.

### **Implications and Risks**

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

As there is no budget for the project, if agreed, the monies will have to be vired from the Town Centre Management budget.

#### **Legal Implications and Legislative Powers**

The Council will be considering this matter under its General Power of Competence.

#### **Environmental Implications**

Officers are unaware of any environmental implication for the Council associated with this decision.

#### **Risk Assessment**

Officers are unaware of any risk implication for the Council associated with this decision.

#### **Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

### **19. QUESTION TIME**

A short time is allowed at the discretion of the Chairman for councillors to ask questions on matters which are not on the current agenda but which are related to matters which have been previously discussed on an agenda relevant to the committee.

At least 24 hours' notice must be given to officers of the intended question. All other matters should be raised on an agenda and the request should be submitted through the Town Clerk

TOWN CLERK