



**Devizes**  
**Town Council**

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

# **DEVIZES TOWN** **COUNCIL**

You are summonsed to attend a meeting of the Devizes Town Council Committee at the following, place and date.

Date: 7 October 2014

Time: **6.30 pm**

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

Enquiries: Town Hall - Tel: 01380 722160

Councillors:	Brewer	Mrs Bridewell	Mrs Burton
	Carter	East	Evans
	Mrs Evans	Geddes	Giraud-Saunders
	Hopkins	Johnson	Nash
	Ody	Parker	Mrs Rose
	Smith	Wooldridge	

## **AGENDA**

### **1. MINUTES**

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council held on the 9 September 2014.

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

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

To receive any disclosures by a Councillor(s) and/or Officers in matters to be considered at this meeting in accordance with the provisions of Sections 94 or 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the National Code of Local Government Conduct.

4. To receive announcements and communications.
5. To answer questions (if any) under standing order No. 15.

**6. MINUTES OF MEETINGS FOR INFORMATION**

Since the last meeting of the Council on 19 June 2014 the following Committees have taken place whose minutes have been approved as a correct record and signed by the appropriate committee chairman.

The minutes of these meetings have been previously circulated to all members.

<b>COMMITTEE NAME</b>	<b>COMMITTEE DATE</b>
Planning	3 June 2014
Planning	17 June 2014
Planning	1 July 2014
Planning	15 July 2014
Planning	29 July 2014
Planning	12 August 2014
Planning	26 August 2014
Planning	9 September 2014
Community & Civic Resources	20 May 2014
Community & Civic Resources	3 June 2014
Community & Civic Resources	15 July 2014
Recreation & Properties	20 May 2014
Recreation & Properties	3 June 2014
Recreation & Properties	1 July 2014
Recreation & Properties	12 August 2014

**NOTE:** Before dealing with the next item (No 7) the Council will wish to consider whether or not to suspend Standing Order No 5 (members to stand when speaking). If the Standing Order is to be suspended, it must be done by way of a proposition, duly seconded and carried.

**7. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – REPRESENTATION FROM UNITARY COUNCILLORS**

There were no reports from Unitary Councillors.

**8. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – PROJECT LIST**

Circulated alongside this agenda is a list detailing the current position with regard to ongoing and proposed projects.

**9. REPORT FOR INFORMATION– CLARIFICATION ON MOTIONS AND RULES OF DEBATE**

At a recent meeting of Community & Civic Resources Committee, there was some confusion with regard to Standing Orders regarding motions and rules of debate.

For clarification, the following Standing Orders are relevant to this matter

**Rules of Debate**

45. *A motion or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded and it shall, if required by the Chairman, be put into writing and handed to the Chairman before it is further discussed or put to the meeting.*
52. *An amendment shall be either:*
- (a) to leave out words*
  - (b) to leave out words and insert or add others*
  - (c) to insert or add words*
53. *An amendment shall not have the effect of negating the motion*
54. *If an amendment is carried, the resolution, as amended shall take the place of the original resolution and shall become the resolution upon which any further amendment may be moved.*
60. *When the motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except the following:*
- (a) to amend the motion*
  - (b) to proceed to the next business*
  - (c) to adjourn the debate*
  - (d) that the question be now put*
  - (e) that a member (named) be not further heard*
  - (f) that a member (named) do leave the meeting*
  - (g) that the motion be referred to a Committee or to Council*
  - (h) to exclude the public and press*
  - (i) to adjourn the meeting*

In essence Standing Orders allow for only one motion to be considered at a time – although amendments can be considered. However please note that an amendment cannot have the effect of negating the original proposal.

Therefore, Chairman should not accept a second proposition until the first motion has been dealt with.

**10. REPORT TO TOWN COUNCIL - WILTSHIRE MARKET TOWNS NETWORK – COUNCILLOR NIGEL CARTER**

**Guildhall, Salisbury**

**Thursday 10 July 2014**

The meeting convened at 1000, with a reasonable attendance from towns across the county. Devizes was represented by Tony Duck (Chamber of Commerce), Tony Aldridge DCAP) and the author.

A number of topics were addressed:

- **The Benefits of Special Markets** (Ellie Gill, Plan Fresh Ltd) – the speaker is a West Lavington resident and had a social enterprise outlet in Emery gate for a period. Has also worked for the ‘Love and Open Market’ initiative which, over the last three years has consolidated markets in 920 locations across the UK. Her recommendations on local markets embraced many good ideas already being actioned in Devizes. Her other message was that social media was a good way of promoting markets.
- **Swindon and Wiltshire Economic Plan Update (Tim Martienssen, Wiltshire Council)** – no significant impacts upon Devizes, but main thrust towards attracting big business and providing homes and opportunities for skilled, retiring armed forces personnel.
- **The Future of High Streets** – intended to be an interactive session, it was only briefly so and was principally a briefing on potential developments in the high street, e.g. the return of the supermarkets to the high street, the consolidation of internet marketing with ‘see and touch’ shop windows for potential purchases.
- Sadly, those who have a key role to play – high street landlords – are rarely represented in consultations or discussions on these issues.
- **Night Time Economy** – presentations from Chippenham Street Pastors, St Stephen’s Place and Purple Flag, Salisbury, revealed the work of volunteers in caring for late night revellers and the benefit of working with proprietors of establishments contributing to the evening/late night offer to ensure, safe and secure opportunities for all.

Tony Aldridge gave the only Town Team Update, emphasising the success of our campaign to get tourist buses back in Devizes.

**11. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF AUDIT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2013 – 2014**

Members of the Committee will recollect that at the meeting of the committee held on 19 June 2014, members approved accounts for the year ended 31 March 2014.

The Annual return for the financial year along with supplementary documents was sent to Grant Thornton UK LLP on 20 June 2014. The notice of satisfactory conclusion of the Audit was received from the auditors on 22 August 2013.

The requisite notice of conclusion of the audit has been placed on the Devizes Town Council notice boards.

**12. REPORT FOR DECISION – INTERNAL CONTROL/FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

**Recommendation**

To decide on the recommendations of the Councils external auditors regarding internal control procedures and their potential addition to the Councils' Financial Regulations.

**Purpose of the Report**

To decide whether to agree to the recommendations of Grant Thornton UK LLP, the Councils external auditors.

**Background**

As part of the Town Councils annual audit for the year ended 31 March 2014, Grant Thornton, the Councils external auditor included comments under other matters not affecting our opinion which we wish to draw to the attention of the Council.

The three matters are:

- To review and reconcile Petty Cash payments.
- To review and reconcile PAYE/NI AND VAT payments.
- To review and reconcile Bank reconciliations.

Although internal control procedures are in place in respect of each of the aforementioned items, these are not currently reflected in Devizes Town Council financial regulations. Grant Thornton are requesting that these are added to our Financial Regulations.

**Options Considered**

**The Council is asked to agree the following additions to Financial Regulations.**

1. The Councils Accounts Administrator to undertake a monthly reconciliation of the Petty Cash system ensuring that a cheque is raised after that reconciliation to ensure a balance of £200 is maintained. This will be available to be checked by the Administration & Finance Manager as part of month end routines.
2. The Councils Accounts Administrator to undertake a monthly reconciliation of the PAYE/NI account. This will be available to be checked by the Administration & Finance Manager as part of month end routines.
3. The Councils Accounts Administrator to undertake a quarterly reconciliation of the VAT account. This will be available to be checked by the Administration & Finance Manager as part of the quarter end routines.

**Implications and Risks**

**Financial and Resource Implications**

Officers are not aware of any financial or resource implications.

**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**

Should the committee decide not to add the following internal controls to the Councils Financial Regulations, the Councils external auditors are extremely likely to include the same comments in the 2014/15 external audit report and potentially qualify the audit in that financial year.

**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 – FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE WORKING PARTY PROPOSALS**

**Recommendation**

To decide on the recommendations of the Finance and Governance Working Party in respect of two matters delegated for its consideration.

### **Purpose of the Report**

To decide whether to agree the recommendations of the Finance and Governance Working Party or to agree alternative arrangement.

### **Background**

At its meeting on 12 June 2014 the Finance and Governance Working Party formed recommendations on three matters delegated for its consideration by the Community & Civic Resources Committee on 27 August 2013.

The three matters are:

- To review financial documentation produced for wider community distribution to ensure its clarity and relevance.
- To examine any relationships that exist with providers of goods and services
- To consider the benefits of splitting the ceremonial role of the Mayoralty from that of corporate leadership

These matters were included within a report for information brought to the last meeting of the Community and Civic Resources Committee on 26 August 2014. However, these matters do need formal decision and, therefore, have been brought to this meeting of the Council

### **Options Considered**

The Council is asked to agree the recommended proposals or agree alternative arrangements in respect of the matters as follows:

To review financial documentation produced for wider community distribution to ensure its clarity and relevance.

It is recommended by the Finance & Governance Working Party that this matter be passed to the Communications Working Party to take forward.

To examine any relationships that exist with providers of goods and services.

It is recommended by the Finance & Governance Working Party that a register of current suppliers developed and maintained by officers was adequate and no further action required

To consider the benefits of splitting the ceremonial role of the Mayoralty from that of corporate leadership

It is recommended by the Finance & Governance Working Party that given the difficulties in achieving this, it should not be pursued

### **Implications and Risks**

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

Officers are not aware of any financial or resource implications

#### **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 and Governance Working Party has been charged with a number of responsibilities to pursue and it is essential that these are brought back for formal agreement by committee or Council to ensure that there is no risk of matters not being formally resolved.

#### **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 – MISSION STATEMENT AND CORE OBJECTIVES**

### **Recommendation**

That the Council reviews the proposals from the Finance and Governance Working Party and decides whether to adopt the proposals as stated. Retain the existing provisions or agree alternative.

### **Purpose of the Report**

For the Council to consider what its direction and ambitions are through its Mission Statement and Core Objectives

### **Background**

Following the elections in May 2013, members of the council were able to explore the Council's Mission Statement and Core Objectives for the new administration.

The matter was explored at a Forward Planning session held in July 2013 with the conclusion was that no major changes needed to be effected and the matter to be brought back to the Full Council for decision.

At the Council meeting in December 2013 the existing Mission Statement and Core Objectives were included as an agenda item for decision.

The Council agreed that the Mission Statement and Core Objectives did not, in fact, reflect the aspirations of the new administration and referred the matter to the Finance and Governance Working Party to bring back recommendations.

The Working Party has considered the matter on a number of occasions and has now formed recommendations for the consideration of the Council.

The existing and proposed Mission Statement and Core Objectives are contained in a comparative table doc 14/1.

### **Options Considered**

The committee needs to decide to either:

- a. Adopt the proposals developed by the Finance & Governance Working Party or
- b. Maintain the status quo or
- c. Agree alternative proposals

### **Implications and Risks**

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

There are no obvious financial or resource implications, however the Mission Statement and Core Objectives should inform the priorities for the Council which may well have implications

#### **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 implications for the Council associated with this decision other than establishing the Council's objectives in respect of the environment

#### **Risk Assessment**

Failure to agree the Council's Mission Statement and Core Objectives may mean that decisions are made "piece meal" with no clear priorities and strategies

#### **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 – DRAFT ESTIMATES FOR 2015/16

### **Recommendation**

The Council is recommended to identify any amendments to the draft estimates or matters that need be further explored, for the financial year 2015-16. The estimates will remain as draft until formal ratification and the setting of the precept in December.

### **Purpose of the Report**

To consider the budgeted income and expenditure for the financial year 2014-15 and the impact on the Council Tax base following the implementation of the Localisation of Council Tax Support legislation.

### **Background**

During the preparation of the 2014/15 budget consideration was given to the future year estimates following the Government's decision to alter the Council Tax base which had a significant impact on the level of payments residents are expected to pay. It was agreed that where possible the increase would be held at 1.98%. Whilst this has been achieved, the value of the support grant given to offset immediate impact of the legislation is unknown so officers have made an estimate based on advice received in 2013.

Officers present the draft budget, which is circulated alongside the agenda. Below is a brief commentary on various headings.

### **Explanation of Budget Headings**

Set out below is a commentary on the principal budget headings.

#### Revenue Budget

Officers have, where possible, held the budget at the 2013/14 level. These calculations are based on the presumption that services will be delivered in the same way to the same standard.

#### Corporate

##### *Democratic Services*

This is a revenue budget for the cost of the democracy, and includes the cost of preparing and servicing of meeting, working parties, officers attending meetings and consultation with the public.

##### *Member Support*

Members are encouraged to participate in training when available. The budget heading also provides funding for members to attend conferences and networking opportunities.

*Twining*

Devizes will host the twinning weekend in 2015. The funding covers the cost of a civic reception. Unlike previous years No EU twinning grant will be received therefore there is some concern over the funding of the weekend. The twinning association will need to be innovative in their planning.

*Civic & Ceremonial*

The civic events along with the officers' allowances ensure that Devizes is able to uphold its civic traditions. Consultation with the community has indicated that it is these kinds of events which make Devizes special and add to the sustainability of our community.

*Mayoral Allowance*

This budget heading has been increased in line with inflation, in accordance with a council policy made some years ago. It would be for members to decide to increase or reduce this amount. It should be noted, however, that the Mayoral year is very demanding and the budget is intended to defray the costs of the year to ensure that financial considerations are not a barrier to taking on the role.

*Communications*

Whilst the cost of producing the Messenger for Devizes residents is unlikely to increase in the short term and therefore this budget value is unaltered, it has been agreed that its distribution should be extended into Roundway, with the additional cost being met by Roundway Parish Council.

The website budget has increased to meet the cost of a new site being developed through the communications working party.

*Corporate Management*

This cost centre is where the majority of senior management time is accounted for. It encompasses the cost of running the organisation, managing the various strategic corporate objectives and delivering Council decisions. It also includes items such as audit fees, professional advice and the annual return.

*Bank Interest*

As a number of larger projects have been delivered, the value of cash reserves held by the Council have continued to decrease, thus further reducing the capital base to earn interest. Reserves will again be placed on deposit for different terms as appropriate and are constantly reviewed to maximise the return in a very difficult climate.

### Grants

#### *Grace and Favour bookings & Free Lettings*

Provided to organisations, which benefit the community of Devizes, technically there is no limit to the value of these bookings as they are allowed in accordance with Council policies. The income is allocated against the Venues income. However, there is a cost to the Council in terms of the buildings not being available for commercial bookings and in staffing and utility costs. Members may wish to place a ceiling on these type of bookings.

#### *General Grants*

These have remained the same and are distributed in October of each year to organisations who apply.

#### *Annual Grants*

There are a number of organisations in the Town who receive an annual grant, they do however need to put their application in writing. Historically the Council has taken the view that the activities they undertake for the town are worthy of regular direct support.

#### *All in One Catering*

The relates to agreed discount for the night club operation

### Commercial Properties

The Commercial Property Management charges are at a contract price. Legal fees remain the same as last year.

There are no rent reviews scheduled for the 2015-16 financial year.

### Arts Development

#### *Devizes Outdoor Celebratory Arts and Devizes Festival*

The Council gives support for DOCA and The Devizes Festival provided by free use of its venues and in the case of DOCA direct financial support.

### Venues – Town Hall & Corn Exchange

#### *Expenditure*

Officers have thoroughly reviewed these cost centres and have stripped back as far as possible without impacting on service delivery. Many of the cost centres relate to items which fluctuate with the usage of the buildings.

#### *Income*

Officers remain concerned that the Council's single biggest customer is Wiltshire Council and given the financial pressures that it is facing there could be an impact on the hire of the Town Council venues.

The Venues Working Party have discussed marketing with officers; however, it is felt prudent to retain Income budgets for the Town Hall room hire, bar and catering at the same level as 2014-15 with a marginal increase in the Corn Exchange room hire.

#### Devizes Leisure Centre

Devizes Town Council is subject to a 60-year agreement which commenced in 1988 which requires ongoing annual revenue funding. This is subject to a calculated formula.

#### Parks & Open Spaces

##### *Open Space Management*

This relates to all the open and recreational spaces owned by the Council other than Hillworth Park. The budget has been reviewed and officers believe that the figures are realistic to maintain our current level of service delivery. If members wish to reduce these budgets then there will need to be clarity of expectation as to where the reductions in service will be made.

The Council will continue to outsource activities such as the watering and the buying in of plants although the main grounds maintenance delivery will be delivered through in house staff. In the past full outsourcing has been tested however due to the relatively small value of the contract sum and the nature of the contract complexity, it makes it difficult to realise savings of enough significance to make it worth the reduction in service flexibility.

##### *Hillworth Park*

There is a separate cost centre whilst the park is still subject to lottery support. The project is now on the final retention although the grant expiry date is not until March 2016.

##### *Cemetery*

This reflects the cost and income for administering the Cemetery on behalf of the Joint Burial Committee.

#### Christmas Lights

##### *Christmas Business Trees*

This is a project to encourage an increase in the amount of Christmas lights displays in the town. The Christmas lights working party have agreed to run the scheme for a further year.

#### *Christmas Festival & Lights*

This is the third year of a five-year contract with Flag and Flagpole. There were a number of failures last year in the scheme which will be addressed this year. Some of these will have a cost implication although at the time of the preparation of this report that information has not been received.

#### Admin Support

All costs have been reviewed and it is hoped to be able to manage within these budgets. The cost is spread across all cost centres.

#### Cemetery

This is the value of the funding demand from the Joint Burial Committee. This has been held at the same level as 2014/15.

#### Community Safety

The Council has currently agreed a further one year commitment to support the cost of the Town's CCTV system to a value of £18000. Future year commitments are currently being explored.

#### Town Centre Management

Over the previous years the Town Council has been able to give significant support to groups who have taken on or run services, which manage town centre activities or functions. In the 2013-14 financial year a three year commitment was made towards the funding of an Events Coordinator at £10,000 per annum.

#### Capital Expenditure

Items, which are not regular revenue expenditure, are identified separately.

#### **Earmarked Reserves**

In addition to the budget, officers have attached a copy of the Council's Earmarked Reserves. These are funds which have been accumulated for specific projects where it has not been possible to raise the finance in a single financial year.

#### **Options Considered**

The Council needs to decide if they feel that the proposed budget is in line with the level of services it wishes the Council to deliver in 2015/16

## **Implications & Risks**

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

The budget reflects the Council's ability to fund its Financial and Resource needs for the financial year 2015/16.

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

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

### **Environmental Implications**

Officers are not aware of any environmental implications associated with this decision.

### **Risk Assessment**

Not setting a budget would leave the Council open to challenge by the auditors for financial mismanagement. In addition, the Council will not be able to set a precept and therefore will have its precept imposed by Wiltshire Council.

### **Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any implications Under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

## **16. TO PASS THE FOLLOWING SEALING RESOLUTION**

THAT the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to or the Town Clerk do sign on behalf of the Council where appropriate any Orders, Deeds or Documents necessary to give effect to any of the matters and recommendations contained in the reports received and adopted at this meeting or other decisions of the Council thereat.

## **17. QUESTION TIME**

A short time is allowed at the discretion of the Town Mayor 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

**18. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

At the Chairman's discretion, members of the public attending the meeting will be allowed to ask questions addressed to the Chairman concerning the administration, function or responsibilities of the Council or upon a matter, which was the subject of debate at the meeting.

A person may also be permitted to make a statement or address the Council upon a matter of concern to that person which is relevant to local government, or to the Council's administration or upon a subject, which may be of general interest 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.

Town Clerk