

WIMBORNE MINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the **PERSONNEL, POLICY & STRATEGY COMMITTEE** held on **FRIDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2020 at 10.00 am** in the Committee Room, Town Hall, Wimborne Minster.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllr S K Bartlett (Chairman of the Council – in the chair)
Cllr K F Webb (Vice-Chairman of the Council)
Cllr C A Chedgy (Chairman Resources Committee)
Cllr W J Richmond (Chairman Recreation & Leisure Committee)
Cllr M R Tidd (Chairman Planning & Environment Committee)

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr C L Butter

OFFICERS PRESENT

Town Clerk
Assistant Town Clerk

205 **PROJECT ACTION PLAN (Min 139– 01.11.19)**

The Town Clerk submitted for information an updated Project Action Plan, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as **Appendix A** to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The Town Clerk reported further updates on some of the projects as follows:

Neighbourhood Plan – No response had been received from Dorset Council. Letters had also be sent to neighbouring parishes to advise them of the work this Town Council was continuing to pursue.

Whilst the project to review Standing Orders and Financial Regulations was now complete, the Town Clerk would now review the Delegation Scheme for committees.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the ICT provider had sourced a laptop for Members and a prototype would soon be made available in the Council offices for Members to view and test.

The Town Clerk had spoken to the Community and Open Spaces Manager from Dorset Council regarding the ownership of amenity spaces on the Cranfield Estate who had confirmed that if it did not own

open spaces, it was possible that it would cease maintaining them. He added that he had estimated the cost of this Council's Grounds Team undertaking the maintenance based on fortnightly grass cutting. Cllr Chedgy requested that the maintenance of the trees on the amenity areas was also accounted for in this calculation. The Town Clerk would include an item on the agenda for the next Council meeting.

The Committee noted the updates.

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COUNCIL CHAMBER REFURBISHMENT
(Min 129 – 22.10.19)

Cllr Webb submitted for information a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as **Appendix B** to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

It was emphasised that all spending to date had been in accordance with Financial Regulations and had been taken from the grant of £25,000 awarded by East Dorset District Council specifically for the purpose of decorating and modernising the Chamber.

A discussion took place on the need to replace the carpet in the Chamber, stairway and corridors. Quotations had been obtained and the costs could be met from the grant. Whilst the Committee was supportive of replacing the carpet, a suggestion was made that, as an alternative to carpet, the Council might explore the possibility of hard surface floor covering which could be cheaper to maintain. Quotations would be obtained. (Note: since the meeting the preferred carpet contractor has advised that because of the uneven and wooden floor in the Council Chamber, a hard surface floor covering would be much more expensive than carpet as the whole floor would have to have a screed applied to ensure it was perfectly flat. Therefore, the replacement carpet has been ordered as originally proposed.)

In the schedule of costs produced by Cllr Webb provision had been made for recording equipment in order to record Council meetings. A wider discussion took place on the need to improve accessibility to meetings held in the Chamber. The Officers would begin to undertake initial research and provide options to Members as soon as possible. This project would be added to the Project Action Plan.

The Chairman of the Council reminded Members of the need to maximise income from its assets and supported the changes being made to the Council Chamber as a positive step to generate more bookings.

The Town Clerk had taken the opportunity to obtain quotations for replacing the damaged carpet in the Committee Room. A further quotation would be obtained for a hard surface floor covering as suggested for the Chamber.

207 **CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY TASK AND FINISH GROUP (Min 186 – 07.01.2020)**

Cllr Webb submitted a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as **Appendix C** to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cllr Webb added that the Task and Finish Group which had met the previous day, had approved the recommendations as laid out in the report including the option to have quarterly Group meetings to discuss progress and ideas. Cllr Webb advised the Committee that activity on the Climate Emergency Policy was not limited to those members currently on the Task and Finish Group and that all Councillors were welcome to put forward and champion any ideas and projects for consideration.

Cllr Webb and other Members would continue to work on any outstanding matters.

Quotations had been obtained for various initiatives that would reduce the Council's carbon footprint and these were set out in the report. Low Carbon Dorset had offered to prepare a pre-application for a grant from that body based on the quotations received and advise whether the proposals were sufficiently innovative to meet the criteria for a 40% grant towards the costs. The Committee was happy for the quotations to be sent to Low Carbon Dorset for consideration prior to the Council being asked whether it wished to submit a formal application.

RECOMMENDED that the changes suggested by the Climate Change and Biodiversity Task and Finish Group be adopted.

208 **PUBLIC SECTOR BODIES (WEBSITES AND MOBILE APPLICATIONS) (NO. 2) ACCESSIBILITY REGULATIONS 2018**

The Assistant Town Clerk submitted a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as **Appendix D** to these Minutes.

The Assistant Town Clerk provided a brief overview of the report and the implications of the legislation which would come into force in September 2020. Three options had been suggested in the report for compliance.

Discussion followed and Members were supportive of Option 3, on the basis that it would be less time consuming for staff in terms of reviewing and moving over content to a new website.

RECOMMENDED that Option 3 as set out in the report be adopted.

The meeting closed at 11.00 am.

Signed Dated
Town Mayor and Chairman of the Council

Item 2 - Project Action Plan – 7 February 2020

Project Name	Project Status	Start Date	End Date	Lead Person	RAG Status	Completed Progress	Planned Next Steps
Chamber Renovation	Live	Sep-18	March 2020	Cllr Webb/ TC	Green	Internal decorations have commenced and are due to complete by the end of February 2020.	See Agenda Item 3.
Neighbourhood Plan	Live	June 2019	August 2019	Cllr Tidd/ TC/ ATC	Green	At the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 28 January 2020, the Council agreed to set up a Task and Finish Group (Advisory Committee) and to write to Dorset Council, as the local planning authority, to request Wimborne Minster as a designated neighbourhood plan area. A letter was sent to Dorset Council on Friday 31 st January 2020.	To set up a Neighbourhood Plan Task and Finish group and await response from Dorset Council.
Health and Safety Review	Complete	June 2019	January 2020	TC/ ATC	Green	The Council has outsourced this service. The ATC has had an initial telephone consultation with the new provider and a consultant site visit is booked for 26 th February 2020.	Project is complete. Compliance will become a business as usual activity. There may be a slight increase in workload and the need for some officer and member training over the next couple of months to ensure we are meeting the required standards.
Climate Change and Biodiversity Task and Finish Group	Live	July 2019	December 2019	Cllrs Shirley and Webb	Green	See Agenda Item 4.	
Land and Leases Review: a. Bowls Club b. Tennis Club c. Rugby Club	Live	a. Jun-17 b. Jun-17 c. Mar-18	a. Unknown b. Completed c. Completed	TC/ CAC	Green	a. Lease and Maintenance agreement agreed by Bowls Club Solicitors and awaiting engrossments. b. New lease deferred indefinitely. c. Deed of Variance completed.	a. Awaiting engrossments from solicitors – expected week commencing 3 February 2020. b. NFA. c. NFA.
Website Accessibility – Phase 1	Live	July 2019	October 2019	ATC	Green	Changes to government legislation require the Town Council to update the website to ensure it is accessible to all users by September 2020. The Assistant Town Clerk and Finance Administrator have completed training webinars. The Council's ICT	See Agenda Item 5.

Project Name	Project Status	Start Date	End Date	Lead Person	RAG Status	Completed Progress	Planned Next Steps
Community Asset and Amenity Areas Transfer	Live	Jun-18	Continuous	TC	Amber	<p>provider has now completed an audit of the Council's website.</p> <p>The District Council agreed list of assets to be transferred. The Town Council accepted the majority of these on 20 November 2018.</p> <p>Reports on title received on various land and property to be transferred.</p>	Further progress dependant on Dorset Council.
Standing Orders/Financial Regulations Review	Complete	Apr-19	Sept-19	TC/ ATC	Green	The revised Standings Orders and Financial Regulations have been approved by Council.	No further action.
ICT Upgrade	Live	Mar-19	Summer 2019	ATC/ TC	Green	ICT supplier has been appointed and upgrade of office ICT equipment completed this week.	A decision on member tablets is required. The ICT supplier has sourced a couple of options which were considered not suitable. It is hoped that the ICT supplier will have a better option available at the meeting. The Assistant Town Clerk will review office printers next as the current contract is coming to an end.
Development of a Corporate Strategy Phase 1 – Member Development and a Council Vision	Live	June 2019	Autumn 2019	ATC	Green	The PPS Committee agreed to progress this project at the meeting held on 6 August 2019. The Assistant Town Clerk and Chairperson of the Council have been working on the first draft of the Strategic Plan and it is nearing completion.	The Assistant Town Clerk to finalise first draft and share with members for initial thoughts and feedback.
Upgrade of CCTV System	Completed	Jan-18	August-19	TC	Green	Project is completed except for Dream Boats camera.	No further action until a solution can be found on radio connection to Dream Boats.
Ownership of Amenity Spaces (Cranfield Estate)	On Hold	Jan-18	Unknown	WJR	Green	Cllr Richmond reported findings to P and E Committee on 3 December 2019 and recommended to Council that Dorset Council claim adverse possession of the relevant areas. At the request of the Town Clerk, Council	Town Clerk to report to Council in due course.

Project Name		Project Status		Start Date		End Date		Lead Person		RAG Status		Completed Progress	Planned Next Steps
												deferred approval of the recommendation pending further investigations.	

Project: Chamber Refurb Update

Date: February 2020

Project Manager: Cllr Webb

Background

The Chamber Refurbishment has been on the list of projects to prioritise since at least 2018 but due to other priorities and a lack of earmarked funds, no action had been taken.

The room had not been refurbished, including carpet, furniture and 'styling' for almost 20 years. Hence it was looking dated and could well be having a negative impact on the Council's ability to maximise income generation i.e. room bookings and civil ceremonies.

Having canvassed East Dorset District Council for a number of months in 2018/2019 for supportive funding for a number of projects (for growth and capacity to manage the impact of LGR), WMTC was awarded £75k (of the £100k requested), for the specific projects listed (see Wimborne Minster Town Council – Preparing for the Future Report 5/1/2019 Author Cllr Webb). There were some elements of the request that were not deemed suitable for EDDC support but £25k was acceptable as the budget for the Chamber refurbishment.

On receipt of the capital amount, the Chamber project was able to start, beginning with getting 3 quotations for interior decoration. Whilst quotes were being sourced, many hours were put into researching a suitable and sympathetic scheme for the Chamber, costing furniture, IT, window dressings, lighting etc. At the end of this phase and at the same time as the quotes went to Resources Committee, a 'Mood Board' was put in reception for 2 weeks for Cllrs to consider the scheme put forward. It was also brought into the Resources meeting for those that hadn't come into the offices to view it in their own time.

No queries, objections or views of any type were stated during the 2 weeks or at the meeting and all Cllrs were aware that the decoration – and by definition, the project was beginning in January.

Current Situation

- As the decoration started, orders were made for the complimentary items to fit once complete. These are still arriving – some are already fitted.
- The decoration of the Chamber is now complete and the hallway and stairs is nearing completion.
- All purchases have been agreed between Cllr Webb and the Town Clerk - including consultation with officers. All purchases have individually been within the Town Clerk's spend authority (save the decorating which was agreed at Resources). There is only one further item expected to be outside of the Town Clerk's spend limit (the storage cupboard) and we are still waiting for the quote for this although it is expected to be approximately £2-£2.5k. The cupboard is to be built in Oak (due to the height and size, it cannot be a cheaper MDF), and it will have similar profiling to the doors to the Chamber and be painted the same colour as the bar and glass cupboard. The cupboard is to store all items that need to be stored in the Chamber (and which were held in that corner behind a room divider which was

PPS Project Update

scruffy and will not be in keeping with the smart décor and furniture, indeed the 'mess' will detract from the finished look). The budget allows for this to be completed as planned. The item (if within budget), can be agreed between the Town Clerk and the Resources Committee Chairman.

- Chairs and tables are being ordered shortly. Whilst the current tables are still useable and made of a quality wood, their styling is dated and their weight is a burden to officers that have to move them around regularly – which requires 2 officers for H&S reasons. They do not fold, so are an unsightly addition to the room when set up for civil ceremonies and/or larger public meetings (when they are spread around the edges of the room impinging on the space available). The new tables will be foldable and more business-like (rather than the country farmhouse style of the existing ones which do not match the Georgian nature of the building/room or the new scheme).

Summary

The Chamber is a functional room for Council meetings and is also an income generator. The purpose of this exercise is to update the room to get best value from it as a resource.

Whilst efforts were made to be inclusive before embarking on the project, no Cllrs expressed an opinion on the Mood Board and indeed if they all had, it may have proved impossible to get a consensus and the project could well have stalled.

The effort to date in researching, sourcing, consulting with officers and contractors/suppliers, is between 50-60hrs of time (Cllr Webb) and more for others involved.

As there is budget headroom, additional quotes are being sourced to potentially update the carpet in the Chamber.

The budget was awarded to WMTC on the basis it was spent on the refurbishment as detailed. There is no argument to be had to suggest the money should be spent on something different and it was not raised directly from WMTC taxpayers.

When the room is complete, new photographs will be taken for the website and each year Ads are placed in local publications to promote the space for civil ceremonies and other hirings. This will be a good opportunity to highlight the work done.

This report captures work done for quite some months as PPS has not met for some time but as with other ongoing projects, updates would have been given at PPS had the meetings taken place.

Item	Number	Estimate	Unit Cost	Subtotal	Delivery	Net TOTAL	VAT Recoverable	Gross	Difference	Company	Notes
CS LED Bulbs (Hallway, Landing and Toilet Lights)	8	£ 8.00	£ 8.00	£ 64.00		£ 64.00		£ 64.00	£ -53.33	B and Q	Paid
Palafina Flush Ceiling Light (Hallway and Landing)	3	£ 100.00	£ 120.00	£ 300.00		£ 300.00	£ 60.00	£ 360.00	£ 200.00	BHS	Paid
Nimbus Large Flush Bathroom Light (Toilet Lights)	2	£ 50.00	£ 35.00	£ 58.33		£ 58.33	£ 11.67	£ 70.00	£ 8.33	BHS	Paid
Chamberly Chandelier (Chamber)	3	£ 1,800.00	£ 599.00	£ 1,497.51		£ 1,497.51	£ 299.50	£ 1,797.01	£ 302.49	The French Bedroom Company	Paid
Yoker Picture Lights (Chamber)	10	£ 375.00	£ 29.56	£ 294.00	£ 10.00	£ 304.00	£ 60.80	£ 364.80	£ 71.00	National Lighting	Awaiting VAT Invoice - estimate based on 12 no.
Vienna Chrome Wall Lights (Chamber)	6	£ 456.00	£ 54.18	£ 325.08		£ 325.08	£ 54.18	£ 379.26	£ 185.10	Laura Ashley	VAT Invoice requested - awaiting receipt
Blinds		£ 1,500.00		£ -		£ -		£ 1,500.00			
Chairs		£ 1,200.00		£ -		£ -		£ 1,200.00			
Tables		£ 1,200.00		£ -		£ -		£ 1,200.00			
Framing		£ 1,500.00		£ -		£ -		£ 1,500.00			
Carpet cleaning (may go to replacement)		£ 250.00		£ -		£ -		£ 250.00			
Speaker		£ -		£ -		£ -		£ -			
Accessories/Misc (500 total)		£ 55.00	£ 55.00	£ 55.00		£ 55.00		£ 55.00	£ -55.00	Esy	No VAT to recover
Accessories - Felle book for Twinning				£ 34.02		£ 34.02		£ 34.02		Gold Leaf Supplies Ltd	Paid
Silver leaf glue				£ 20.62		£ 20.62		£ 20.62		Gold Leaf Supplies Ltd	Paid
Artificial Bay Laurel Trees - not including pots				£ 131.67		£ 131.67	£ 26.33	£ 158.00		Blooming Artificial Ltd	Cost of pots refunded as unsuitable
Newgate Wimbledon Wall Clock				£ 110.50		£ 110.50		£ 110.50			Paid
Ribbons and lights and chair covers		£ 150.00		£ -		£ -		£ -			
Bar (went to refurb instead)	0			£ -		£ -		£ -			
Carpentry (New Storage Cupboard and Bar)	0	£ 2,400.00	£ -	£ 2,400.00		£ 2,400.00		£ 2,400.00		Doc's Fitted Furniture Ltd	
Decorating Services (inc materials and scaffold)	0	£ 6,250.00	£ -	£ 7,500.00		£ 7,500.00		£ 7,500.00	£ -1,000.00	Abacus	Net VAT Reg. Higher than quote due to refurbishing items and fixing broken panes
Electrical Services	0	£ 600.00	£ -	£ 500.00		£ 500.00	£ 100.00	£ 600.00	£ 100.00	Kingmaker Electrical Contractors	Awaiting Invoice
Recording Equipment (unknown)		TBC		£ -		£ -		£ -			
		£ -		£ -		£ -		£ -			
		£ -		£ -		£ -		£ -			
		£ -		£ -		£ -		£ -			
Total Estimated Cost		£ 17,906.00	Total Actual Spend - as at 01.02.20	£ 10,585.88		£ 10,585.88	£ 623.14	£ 3,959.02	£ 7,301.43		
TOTAL EXPECTED EXPENDITURE (Net)				£ 12,805.88		£ 12,805.88					

Awaiting Costs
Light Bulbs for Council Chamber
Cost to fit Lights in Landing, Hallway and Toilets
Painting Cupboard
Picture Framing Charge
Tables (Kelly to insert figures)
Chairs (Kelly to insert figures)
Carpet Cleaning
Curtains? Blinds?
Faux Plants and Accessories

Subject: Future of the Task and Finish Group

Date: 31st January 2020

Author: Cllr Webb

1. Background

After the Climate Emergency policy was adopted in July 2019, it was agreed that a Task and Finish Group be set up with interested Cllrs who could in turn recruit external members from the community who would contribute to the activity and expertise required. This group has met 5 times inc/up to February 2020.

The related topics as set out in the TOR principles are diverse;

- Land and Buildings
- Vehicles
- Plant and Machinery
- Flora and Fauna on Council owned land
- Subsidising public transport
- Supportive grants (to help others implement)
- Reviewing Council priorities to ensure compatible and supportive with the policy,

This meant that any meaningful progress could only be possible with close and careful planning and management. Therefore the structure was set around established Project and Programme Management principles. The discrete areas were 'streamed' with a nominated Cllr leading on each one with Cllr Webb as the Programme Manager overseeing the streams (and involved in the W&R stream).

2. Participants

The original Cllrs on the group have changed from those involved at the start;

- Cllr Butter left the group before meetings began and Cllr Hopkins took that place.
- Cllr Roberts was unable to attend day time meetings and was not able to receive emails or communications so has not been part of the group since the 2nd meeting.

The group now consists of;

Cllr Webb, Cllr Bartlett, Cllr Chedgy, Cllr Shirley, Cllr Roe, Cllr Hopkins.

It was agreed in the TOR that members of the community were welcome to be included in the Programme and that each individual Project Stream Leader (PSL) would take it upon themselves to identify and recruit appropriate people.

At the time of writing, other than the communication with Wimborne War on Waste (with the Waste and Recycling Stream), no other community members have been working alongside PSLs.

Climate Emergency Task and Finish Group Report

3. Progress

Adopting the Climate Emergency policy and agreeing the TOR for the associated work was a positive step forward for the Council.

In a short period of time the following has been achieved;

- Low Carbon Dorset conducted a site survey and reported on the energy efficiency and potential improvements and implementations possible in Council owner buildings.
- Many (but not all), quotes have been secured for the recommendations from that report.
- A £15,000 budget has been agreed to support funding to support the policy.
- Plans are in place to apply for a Grant from Low Carbon Dorset (the above budget of £15k will hopefully represent only 60% of the entire spend on related projects).
- Draft Policies are being created to compliment the CE Policy e.g. how to deal with consumables, suppliers etc. to reduce waste and carbon footprint.
- Small changes have already been introduced via conversations with established suppliers e.g. to reduce or eliminate single use plastic.
- Steps have been taken to change how weeds are managed i.e. to avoid toxic chemicals.
- Conversations have been had with Wimborne War on Waste re cooperative working.
- Asset registers and energy usage information has been provided by the officers (for comparisons and Cost Benefit Analysis).

4. Moving Forward

Whilst a great deal has been done in the short time since the CE policy was adopted, there are still opportunities for further 'wins' and current activity needs to be seen to completion. However it is clear that this will prove to be difficult and time consuming with such a small group involved. The group includes Cllrs that work full or part time and/or have other significant Council business to attend to, so are unable to take projects forward at a pace.

It is worth pointing out there are Cllrs involved in other high priority activity such as Neighbourhood planning, Strategic planning, IT upgrades, various compliance matters e.g. GDPR and Health & Safety, along with 'business as usual' activity such as Budgeting.

For this reason the structured nature of the Programme does not suit the input of 'wo/man' hours. Any project plan requires specific actions with start and end dates attached and clear commitments to complete those actions. This is proving impossible and was highlighted as a risk in the last Programme RAG report. Therefore a change is needed and the following proposal is aimed at keeping a focus on the CE policy but in less of a prescribed project format.

4.1 Re structure proposal

- To discontinue the structured Task and Finish Group approach to conducting research and managing projects that relate to potential CE policy complimentary implementations.
- Instead to allow any Cllrs to investigate and 'champion' particular pieces of work at their own speed. Reports to be created to suggest purchases, changes or implementations for consideration by PPS (and onward recommendations to Council).

Climate Emergency Task and Finish Group Report

- To continue to capture an overall picture of the related actions ongoing – a Programme Plan as currently exists, overseen by Cllr Webb. The objective being to capture progress and report on it.
- Cllr Webb to see through the actions related to the LCD grant and subsequent project implementations.
- Cllr Webb to complete the draft policies.
- Such 'Champions' are still able to recruit members of the community to work on research and/or projects.
- OPTIONAL : To continue to have the T and F group meet quarterly to discuss progress and ideas.

Summary

- a) The previously highlighted risk of lack of resource has seriously impacted the ability of the group to take further actions forward.
- b) Positive steps forward have been taken and are ongoing (including agreeing a budget).
- c) The shape of the work to change to include an overseeing role but allowing any Cllr to 'Champion' any complimentary ideas or projects to be agreed by Council – in a Business as Usual way (but with the backing of the CE policy and budget to support any proposals).
- d) OPTIONAL – To continue to have an overseeing role of activity to monitor progress and successes.

ESTIMATED COSTS

Costs for Climate Emergency

1	Single 4KW solar panels (Pavillion)	5000.00
2	Redcotts lodge	3550.00
3	Committee Room	5000.00
4	Loft Insulation at Goundsman's Lodge	500.00 e
5	Secondary Glazing for Council Chamber	2000.00 e
6	Butt Bins	750.00 e
7	Lighting Fixtures and bulbs where necessary	2000.00 e
8	Smart radiator valves (TRVs)	1500.00 e
9	Partnership projects (working with groups, incentives, equipment etc. in town)	10000.00 e
10	Any vehicle changes?	?
11	Any Groundsman equipment/machinery changes?	?
	TOTAL	30,300.00
	60% Grant received, new total for WMTC to fund	12,120.00

Date: 7 February 2020

Reference: Item 5 – Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018

Author: Assistant Town Clerk

1. Overview of the Legislation

New regulations came into force for public sector bodies on 23 September 2018. The regulations require public sector bodies to make their website or mobile app more accessible by making it 'perceivable, operable, understandable and robust'.

The 2018 regulations build on existing obligations to people who have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 (or the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in Northern Ireland). These state that all UK service providers must consider 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled people.

In order to be compliant with this legislation, the Council's website (and where appropriate, mobile app) must:

- meet the international Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (known as WCAG 2.1 AA) accessibility standard; and
- publish an accessibility statement that explains how accessible your website or app is.

The guidelines and principles explain how to make digital services, websites and apps accessible to everyone, including users with impairments to their:

- vision – such as severely sight impaired (blind), sight impaired (partially sighted) or colour-blind people
- hearing – such as people who are deaf or hard of hearing
- mobility – such as those who find it difficult to use a mouse or keyboard
- thinking and understanding – such as people with dyslexia, autism or learning difficulties

Legislation requires the emphasis to be on the principles, not technology. For example, the need to think about the different ways that people interact with content. Users might:

- use a keyboard instead of a mouse
- change browser settings to make content easier to read
- use a screen reader to 'read' (speak) content out loud
- use a screen magnifier to enlarge part or all of a screen
- use voice commands to navigate a website

The principles apply to all aspects of the Council's digital service (including code, content and interactions).

2. Disproportionate Burden

The legislation allows for some organisations to not fully meet all the accessibility standards if they consider the impact of fully meeting the requirements too much for the organisation to reasonably cope with. The 2018 regulations call this a 'disproportionate burden' e.g. the Council might judge that the benefits of making some things accessible would not justify the impact on the organisation. In that case, the Council would claim it would not be reasonable for it to make those things

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accessible because it is a disproportionate burden. Should the Council wish to declare that making particular things accessible is a disproportionate burden, certain legal processes and assessments must be followed. When undertaking the assessment, lack of time or knowledge will not be considered. Similarly, attempting to argue that making things accessible is a disproportionate burden because it is not a council priority will not be accepted as a reasonable claim.

3. Timeframes

Most existing websites that were published before 23 September 2018 need to comply with the 2018 regulations by 23 September 2020.

It is your Officers' understanding that if it were to create a new website, compliance must be immediate on the 'go-live' date.

4. Wimborne Minster Town Council's Current Site and Known Issues

The Town Council's original website was built in the noughties and maintained for free until 2011. In 2016, the Council outsourced the maintenance of the website to a new provider and it was modernised as required at that time.

A further review was undertaken in 2019, and a decision to change provider and outsource the Council's ICT service provision including the website was approved and a contract awarded to Rejuvenate IT. In the past couple of months, staff have noticed reduced functionality of the website. Rejuvenate IT was asked to complete a review of the website and provide their observations. These are as follows:

The current site is built on Wordpress. Various theme and plugins have been utilised but with a lot of custom coding. Due to this, Rejuvenate IT is currently unable to update the website and its plugins as this will wipe the custom changes, resulting in most of the websites features being inaccessible. This also means that they are unable to make the site accessible to comply with the new regulations.

As the website has not been updated it is susceptible to security risk, this could result in people getting into the site as the security patches cannot be applied.

The site also holds a lot of content and Rejuvenate IT has suggested a more simplified content to improve the user experience.

5. Future Options

Rejuvenate IT would recommend keeping the site on the Wordpress platform as the staff are already trained and know how to use it. However, they have recommended a site refresh to ensure all security patches and updates can be applied in future, which would also make the site easier to navigate and give it a more modern feel. This will allow the use of accessibility plugins to comply with the new legislation.

Option 1 – Do Nothing

This is not a feasible option given the need to comply with new legislation coming into force by September 2020.

Option 2 – Wimborne Minster Town Council work with Rejuvenate IT

Rejuvenate IT will develop the site and ensure all features are working before training and handing back over to WMTC to move across the relevant site content.

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This would cost approximately £1,000.

Option 3 – Rejuvenate IT complete refresh of the Council's website

Rejuvenate will develop the site, ensure all features are operational and move content on to the new site. Some input from WMTC staff will be required to advise on which content is still current and relevant.

This would cost approximately £1,700.

6. Conclusion

It is recommended that the website be updated, and the use of custom coding is minimised. This will ensure seamless installation of future site and plugin updates as well as security patches.

7. Recommendation

It is **RECOMMENDED** that **Option 2** be adopted and the cost be met from the IT upgrade grant from East Dorset District Council.