



Dear Councillor

15 October 2021

You are summoned to join a virtual informal Extraordinary Meeting of the **TOWN COUNCIL** via video link on **FRIDAY 22 OCTOBER 2021 at 10.30 am**.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Lawrence Hart'.

Town Clerk

Members of the public are advised that although the Covid restrictions have been relaxed, the return to face-to-face meetings has not yet commenced. As a consequence, the Council's committees will meet informally and virtually for the time being and the Town Clerk will make the decisions under delegated powers after each meeting based on the discussions held by Councillors.

Members of the public and press will still be allowed to listen *and watch* the informal meeting in audio mode only using Zoom. To avoid disruption the public and press will not be displayed on video or be able to be heard by the meeting. Members of the public are still invited to submit questions to the Committee in writing by 9.30 am on the day before this meeting (i.e. Thursday, 21 October 2021) using the following email address: office@wimborne.gov.uk or by delivering a hard copy of the question to the Town Hall, West Borough.

AGENDA

- 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2 QUEEN ELIZABETH LEISURE CENTRE – CONSULTATION (Min 70 – 24.09.21)**
To consider the report of the Chairman (copy attached).
- 3 DORSET COUNCIL – COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**
The Chairman to report.
- 4 THE QUEEN'S GREEN CANOPY – TREE TRAIL (Min 51 – 23.07.21)**
To consider the report of the Town Clerk (copy herewith).
- 5 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (Min 304 – 09.10.20)**
To consider the report of the Town Clerk.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

6 REVIEW OF MEETINGS & WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

To consider the report of the Personnel, Policy & Strategy Committee (copy herewith).

Note: Item 6 will be dealt with in private session and will not be available for the public to listen or watch.

LOCALISM ACT 2011 and CODE of CONDUCT

Members are reminded to comply with those elements of the Localism Act and the Town Council's Code of Conduct in respect of disclosable pecuniary interests.

GENERAL CONDUCT

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety, Human Rights and Data Protection (General Data Protection Regulation).

PUBLIC ATTENDANCE AT VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Members of the public and press will be allowed to listen *and watch* the meeting in audio mode only using Zoom. To avoid disruption the public and press will not be displayed on video or be able to be heard by the meeting. **Please choose one of the following options to observe and / or listen to the meeting from 10.30 am:**

To access online via Zoom website:

1. Access the Zoom Video and Teleconferencing website by the following link:
<https://zoom.us/>
2. Click to 'Join a Meeting'
3. When prompted, insert Meeting ID and Password as below:
Meeting ID: 952 9978 0632
Password: 593870

Please note, you may be asked to register and sign into your Zoom user account. This will require a personal email address and password

To access audio only by telephone:

1. Dial United Kingdom: +44 330 088 5830; or +44 131 460 1196; or +44 203 481 5237; or +44 203 481 5240; or +44 208 080 6591; or +44 208 080 6592.
2. When prompted, insert Meeting ID and Password as below:
Meeting ID: 952 9978 0632
Password: 593870

Any questions which members of the public wish to put to the Council or Committees must be in writing and received by 9.30 am on the preceding working day before the meeting using the following email address: office@wimborne.gov.uk. Alternatively, a written question can be delivered to the Town Hall by 9.30 am on the preceding working day before the meeting. Every effort will be made to answer the question at the meeting but there may be a need to obtain information from other sources and in those circumstances a written response will be provided at a subsequent time.

WIMBORNE MINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

DATE: 22 OCTOBER 2021

REFERENCE: ITEM: 2 – QUEEN ELIZABETH LEISURE CENTRE -
CONSULTATION

AUTHOR: CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

As Members will be aware, the consultation by Dorset Council on the possibility of ending the dual use agreement with Queen Elizabeth's School regarding the Leisure Centre has caused considerable alarm amongst Wimborne Minster residents and the wider community.

As Members will also be aware, Dorset Council would not give the Town Council an extension of time in order to prepare a response to the consultation exercise. The Portfolio Holder had suggested that the Town Council completes the survey instead by 7 November 2021. There might be an opportunity for a meeting with the Portfolio Holder after the closing date.

Last Wednesday, I had a meeting with the Head Teacher of Queen Elizabeth's School and the Director of Resources for the Academy Trust in the hope of finding out more information in relation to this proposal.

I explained that WMTC were aware that WARD Members were taking actions in relation to their roles at DC but that WMTC Members felt strongly that we should also make representation on their behalf.

Background

I was advised that, the Land that the Leisure Centre (LC) is built on is owned by QE Charitable Trust (separate to Academy Trust). EDDC built the LC as a 'dual use' facility i.e. for the community and for the School. There is a 'dual use' agreement put in place up to 2080s to ensure the building could be used for both community and School moving forward.

This agreement has a withdrawal clause that both parties can invoke with two years' notice, this is the clause that DC are now looking to invoke.

A shared cost arrangement sees a split of 60% costs being met by EDDC (transferred to DC) and the remainder to the School.*

This facility is much more substantial than schools would ordinarily build were it to be building a non 'dual use' facility i.e. larger and has enhanced facilities more targeted to private members rather than school children. Therefore, the costs that will remain if DC withdraw will be extraordinary compared to that which a school would normally suffer.

Had they envisioned having to maintain and fund their own school facility, this would not have been the design or size that QE School would have chosen.

*The facility was awarded status of 'Exceptional Funding Factor' by the School Funding Agency (SFA). This award must be requested by and received by DC (to be redistributed to QE) and is worth the 40% of costs that QE are liable for – approx. £280kpa. The status reflects the exceptional nature of the facility i.e. that it is not what a school would normally have for their own use and that the running and maintaining of it would be significantly more on the basis of it being of 'dual use'.

DC have made it clear that their intention is to withdraw from the agreement, thereby no longer contributing the 60% of costs, but in addition, will no longer apply to the SFA on QE's behalf, for the additional 40%. So, by withdrawing from the agreement, QE will lose 100% of the costs to maintain the LC. QE are unable to apply directly to the SFA for that funding.

Building Maintenance

Prior to these discussions (possibly 2019), a buildings maintenance inspection was done by an independent person commissioned by DC and a Buildings Condition Report provided. A number of significant areas of works were identified. After the consultation was announced – a further inspection was done and far less work was identified. QE are sceptical about the reduced works recommended, now that DC are in negotiations to hand off the building.

There has been some discussion about DC giving a capital sum to reflect works needed.

Consultation

DC are hoping that QE will retain at least some of the existing facility for community use and would have liked that included in the consultation, but QE were not able to make any commitments without financial information relating to the running costs and revenue being provided to them.

Conclusion

Although the facility is located in the parish of Pamphill, as mentioned earlier it is of considerable importance to Wimborne Minster residents and their wellbeing.

I asked what WMTC could do to support QE with their position.

They asked that we make a point of the following;

- That we ask that DC take seriously the responses to the consultation and act accordingly;
- Consider the impact on the community and climate (excess travelling to alternative sites);
- Reconsider their proposals to withdraw;

- If they are unable to review their decision, to consider a fair and reasonable revenue package to maximise community use going forward.

Therefore I suggest the following actions:

1. That the Town Council writes to Dorset Council in the strongest possible terms about the need to retain this facility, given the impact on the community and climate, with a view to withdrawing the proposal to terminate the dual use agreement.
2. I also recommend that meetings be sought between representatives of the Town Council and the Dorset Council Cabinet and that prior to that meeting every effort be made to obtain the data from Dorset Council which has justified this proposal even being considered as a possibility.

WIMBORNE MINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

DATE: 22 OCTOBER 2021

REFERENCE: ITEM: 4 - QUEEN'S GREEN CANOPY – TREE TRAIL

AUTHOR: TOWN CLERK

The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) is a unique tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 which invites people from across the United Kingdom to **"Plant a Tree for the Jubilee."**

Individuals, groups, villages, cities, counties, schools and corporations will be encouraged to play their part to enhance the environment by planting trees from October 2021, when the tree planting season begins, through to the end of the Jubilee year in 2022.

The Recreation & Leisure Committee agreed to take part in this initiative at their meeting on 23 July 2021 and have identified a site to plant a Wintering Cherry Tree (*prunus x subhirtells autumnalus rosea*) near to the The Lodge at Redcotts Recreation Ground.

During that meeting it was suggested by the Chairman of the Council that a trail of newly planted trees could be created around the Town. If the Council is minded to develop this idea, other stakeholders/landowners would be approached to ask if they would be willing to allow a tree to be planted on their land. All trees planted as part of the tree trail would need to be on publicly accessible land.

It was anticipated that at least ten trees would be needed for the trail with the Wintering Cherry being tree number 1.

Suitable tree species have been identified by the Recreation & Leisure Committee and the likely cost would be approximately £200-£300 per tree. This would be taken from the General Fund.

The Council is asked whether it supports this project.

Wimborne Minster Town Council

Subject: NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW – Report Item 5
Date: 22 October 2021
Authors: Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk

1. Background

Members will recall that in December 2020, the Town Council resolved to defer a decision on the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Wimborne Minster until October 2021 and no work has been carried out on this project since that date.

2. Current Position

A copy of the Officer's report written in October 2020 is available to view as **Appendix 1** to this report. Members are advised that the current 4 year Neighbourhood Planning Funding Support Programme lead by Locality on behalf of MHCLG which has been running since April 2018 will end in March 2022. The continuity of funding from MHCLG to Locality for Neighbourhood Planning will be subject to the Government's Spending Review 2021. It is not yet known at this stage whether further Government funds will be allocated to the Support Programme.

3. Officer Recommendation

Whilst the Officer report written in October 2021 remains current and valid, there are now further considerations for the Council to review.

The first, is the anticipated changes to the staffing structure early next year which will have an impact on the timescales of starting the project.

The second, is that following the COVID-19 pandemic and rising living costs, the Town Council has intimated that it does not wish to see a significant increase in the precept for the Town for 2022/23. The project costs for the development of a Neighbourhood Plan are likely to have a substantial impact on the Town Council's budget.

Following the extensive new housing developments around the Town in recent years and the now limited land availability, the true benefit of the development of a Neighbourhood Plan is reduced. This is the shared view of the Chairman of the Planning and Environment Committee.

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that the Town Council does not pursue the development of a Neighbourhood Plan in the foreseeable future.