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**CHIPPENHAM  
TOWN COUNCIL**

Improving the quality of town life

## FULL COUNCIL

Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of Full Council held in the Town Hall on Wednesday 28 September 2022 at 7.00 pm.

**COUNCILLORS:**

Desna Allen	Liz Alstrom (Chair)	Jenny Budgell
Clare Cape	Pete Cousins	William Douglas
Gemma Grimes	Kathryn Macdermid	Conor Melvin
Nick Murry	David Poole	Nic Puntis
Chris Ruck	Matthew Short	George Simmonds
Myla Watts	Hayley Wilson	

**OFFICERS:**

Mark Smith, Chief Executive  
Nick Rees, Director of Resources  
Matt Kirby, Director of Community Services  
Lynsey Nichols, Head of Communications & Customer Services  
Gillian Ballinger, Head of Finance  
Beth O'Brien, Head of Venues  
Andy Conroy, Head of Planning  
Heather Rae, Head of Democratic Services

## **PUBLIC**

**PRESENT:** There were two members of the public present

## **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were two public questions, one verbal question and one written question received in advance. A copy of the questions is appended to these minutes at **APPENDIX A**, the responses were not part of the meeting but are appended to these minutes at **APPENDIX B**.

### **33. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Declan Baseley due to a prior engagement, Councillor James Bradbury due to a prior engagement, Councillor Robert Giles due to ill health, Councillor Angie Litvak-Watson due to a prior engagement, Councillor Andy Phillips due to ill health, Councillor Nina Phillips due to supporting Councillor Andy Phillips, and Councillor John Scragg due to being on holiday.

### **34. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

35. **MINUTES**

Councillor Clare Cape requested an amendment to the minutes of the Council meeting held on 22 June 2022 to reflect her comments regarding ambulance waiting times accurately. With all in favour, it was agreed that the following be included in the minutes under minute 30iv.: *‘Councillor Clare Cape who sits on the Health Select Committee informed Councillors that they have been looking into the concerns regarding ambulance waiting times. This is a whole system problem and is currently being looked into.’*

The minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 22 June 2022 with the above amendment were proposed by Councillor Desna Allen, seconded by Councillor Chris Ruck and with all in favour, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

The minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 22 June 2022 with one amendment to minute 30iv. were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

36. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- i. a) The Mayor asked all present to be upstanding to join in a minute's silence as a mark of respect and gratitude for the lifetime of service given by our longest-reigning Monarch, Queen Elizabeth II.  
  
b) The Mayor invited all to join her Charity Coffee morning on Friday 30 September in aid of Wiltshire Air Ambulance and Heals Charities. Further information was available on the Town Council website.
- ii. The list of engagements undertaken by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor since the last Council meeting held on Wednesday 22 June 2022 were noted.

37. **POLICE REPORT**

The Sergeant updated on the current policing priorities within the Chippenham area including anti-social behaviour near Unity House, rough sleepers, and Saddler's Mead car park.

Councillors raised issues including, catalytic convertor thefts, CCTV, press on high crime rates in Chippenham, bike thefts, speeding on Hungerdown Lane and parking on double yellow lines particularly on Old Hardenhuish Lane during school drop off and pick up times. The Sergeant emphasised the importance of members of the public making reports so that incidents can be investigated and recorded and questioned whether there would be support for volunteers to do a community speed watch.

The Chair thanked the Sergeant for attending the meeting and answering Councillor questions.

**RESOLVED that:**

The update be noted.

38. **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

- a. **Amenities, Culture & Leisure Committee**  
The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2022 were presented by Councillor Nick Murry with all matters resolved.
- b. **Planning, Environment & Transport Committee**  
The draft minutes of the meetings held on 23 June, 14 July, 04 August and 25 August 2022 were presented by Councillor Gemma Grimes with all matters resolved.
- c. **Strategy and Resources Committee**  
The draft minutes of the meeting held on 08 June and 07 September 2022 were presented by Councillor Desna Allen with all matters resolved.
- d. **Human Resources**  
The draft minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 19 May and the meetings held on 09 June and 01 September 2022 were presented by Councillor Desna Allen with all matters resolved.

39. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS TO ESTATE UPDATE**

The Director of Community Services presented the report regarding environmental improvements to the Council's estate and the next steps involved. The Director of Community Services outlined the recommendations that we focus spend this financial year on Stanley Park Sports Ground this would be followed by the Neeld, Town Hall and the Museum. It was noted that if the Council do all the works recommended, based on an internal team of 3 officers over 4 years, this would cost £1.3-£1.5 million. To achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 significant levels of insetting or offsetting would need to be done. Councillors thanked the officers for work undertaken so far and supported a fabric first approach, starting the process with Stanley Park and trusting officers to use their knowledge and contacts to achieve the best carbon reduction possible.

Councillors questioned the speed and reduction in budget from £200,000 to £50,000. The Director of Community Services confirmed the importance of not putting budget in that cannot be delivered within the financial year. Officers are confident that Stanley Park can be delivered and be a beacon to prepare for the next stage and to begin looking at insetting and offsetting which is critical to achieving carbon neutrality. It was noted the tender and project management aspects take time. Councillors asked whether any

vehicles being replaced could be electric or hybrid. The Director of Community Services confirmed electrification of fleet is continually being assessed and noted the Climate and Biodiversity Officer is looking at the impact of using items for longer, releasing embedded carbon within them.

Councillor Desna Allen proposed the recommendations of the report, Councillor Bill Douglas seconded and with all in favour, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

i) Council approved the use of the £200K budget for 2022/23 to carry out the estate greening works to Stanley Park as outlined within the report.

ii) Council recommended an allocation of £50K into next year's capital budget for the pre tender fabric stage of The Neeld and Town Hall, and implementation of identified 'quick win' energy saving measures across the estate.

40. **403 SUSTRANS ROUTE WORKING GROUP - REQUEST FOR CHIPPENHAM TOWN COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATION**

The Director of Community Services presented the report to consider the request for a Councillor to act as a representative on the 403 Sustrans Route Working Group. Councillors requested that usual meeting times and frequency be included in these proposals in future for Councillors to consider whether they can attend alongside other commitments.

Councillor Nick Murry nominated Councillor James Bradbury, this was seconded by Councillor Matthew Short, with no other nominations and with all in favour, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

Councillor James Bradbury be nominated as the Town Councillor representative on the 403 Sustrans Route Working Group.

41. **CHIPPENHAM COMMUNITY TOWN TEAM - REQUEST FOR CHIPPENHAM TOWN COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE**

The Head of Democratic Services presented the report to consider a request for a Town Councillor to act as a representative on the Chippenham Community Town Team, a group set up by the Chippenham Community Hub. It was noted that due to the requirement to be non-political, it was recommended that, if the position is supported, the Mayor be nominated to attend due to their requirement to be non-political in their civic role.

Councillors questioned the purpose of the Community Town Team and stated they did not have sufficient information about their remit to decide. Officers confirmed the remit of the Councillor representative is to attend meetings and report back and the purpose of the Community Town Team

was outlined on their website: *'the next phase of development is to join with other organisations, businesses, authorities, to begin planning for a future that will enable both this generation and those still to come to thrive and enjoy all the benefits that a good neighbourhood can offer.'*

Councillors recognised the danger of being appointed to every group in the town and agreed that outside representation had to be meaningful and have a clear purpose. It was noted that there are some conflicting groups in the town trying to do the same thing, the benefit has not been made clear. Councillors questioned whether they wanted to support a Town Council representative on the Community Town Team. Councillor Clare Cape proposed the idea, initially put forward by Councillor Liz Alstom to invite a representative to the next Council meeting to provide more information before a decision is made. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Nic Puntis and with the majority in favour, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

i) Councillors agreed that before supporting a Town Council representative to the Community Town Team more information was required.

ii) Councillors requested that a representative from the Community Town Team be invited to attend the next suitable Council meeting to present their remit and the purpose of a Town Councillor representative.

42. **NOMINATION TO ALMSHOUSES - OUTSIDE REPRESENTATION**

With all in favour, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

i) Council noted the resignation of Mr Jerry Hughes as trustee of Mrs. Utterson's Almshouses.

ii) Council nominated Mr Paul James as replacement trustee of Mrs. Utterson's Almshouses for the remainder of the term of office until 30 November 2025.

43. **AUDIENCE AGENCY PROPOSAL - REQUEST FOR BUDGET**

The Head of Venues presented the report to seek Council approval for the purchase of off-the-shelf solutions from The Audience Agency to provide a deeper understanding of the current and potential audience of the Neeld and so inform and optimise the future use and service offer of the Neeld. With all in favour, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

Council approved an in-year budget overspend of £2,600 for the purchase of off-the-shelf audience research solutions from The Audience Agency as recommended by the ACL Committee on 13 July 2022.

44. **CHANGE OF FUNCTION - DECOUPLING OF GRIEVANCE AND COMPLAINTS PANEL**

The Head of Democratic Services presented the report regarding the proposal to decouple the Grievance and Complaints Panel, with the 'Grievance Panel' remaining under the Human Resources Committee. The Complaints Panel would move to under the auspices of the Strategy and Resources Committee (S&R), to align the Complaints process with the Committee that adopts and reviews the Policy.

Councillors questioned whether a Councillor could sit on more than one panel, the Head of Democratic Services was not aware of anything to prohibit this. The Chief Executive highlighted the resulting potential conflict of knowledge and interests to be declared. With the majority in favour of the proposals, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

i) Council approved decoupling the existing 'Grievance & Complaints Panel' of the Human Resources Committee (HR). The 'Grievance Panel' will remain under HR. Council agreed to move the Complaints Panel to under the auspices of the Strategy and Resources Committee (S&R), to align the Complaints process with the Committee that adopts and reviews the Policy.

ii) Council delegated to the Chief Executive any necessary updates to Policies and Standing Orders to reflect these changes.

45. **CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE**

The Head of Democratic Services outlined the remit of the Civility and Respect Pledge. Councillors highlighted that this level of behaviour was expected regardless of a pledge and that this should be reflected at all levels of government. With the majority in favour of signing the pledge, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

i) Chippenham Town Council sign the Civility and Respect Pledge and:

- will treat all councillors, Chief Executive and all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.
- has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff.
- Chippenham Town Council has signed up to Code of Conduct for councillors.
- has good governance arrangements in place including, staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy.
- will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.
- will commit to calling out bullying and harassment when if and when

it happens.

- will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council e.g., via the Local Council Award Scheme.
- supports the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.

#### 46. COUNCILLOR MOTION

Councillor Pete Cousins presented the Councillor motion on ‘warm rooms’ and highlighted the two public questions relating to the topic. The motion was seconded by Councillor Nick Murry. Councillors noted that Wiltshire Council are preparing to address this issue due to the cost-of-living crisis but nothing had been confirmed yet.

Councillors supported helping residents of Chippenham that are struggling. Some Councillors noted that the second proposal of the motion relating to the use of the reception area as a ‘warm room’ could have an effect on staff who are not trained in social care, disrupt usual working practices and increase cleaning requirements. It was noted that Chippenham Borough Lands Charity would be doubling their Christmas meals vouchers offered to help. Some Councillors noted this motion referred to heating not food or financial support.

A recorded vote was requested in accordance with Standing Order 16.2. Part i) and part ii) were voted on separately:

*‘i) That the Chief Executive is requested to write to the Chief Executive of Wiltshire, requesting that Wiltshire Council consider the setting up of ‘warm rooms’, for Chippenham residents. We believe that Chippenham Town Council should request that they allocate space at the Olympiad, Monkton Park Offices and the Library, which will be available to Chippenham residents as places to sit and keep warm during the forthcoming autumn and winter.’*

<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstention</b>
Desna Allen		
Liz Alstrom		
Jenny Budgell		
Clare Cape		
Pete Cousins		
Bill Douglas		
Gemma Grimes		
Kathryn Macdermid		
Conor Melvin		
Nick Murry		
David Poole		
Nic Puntis		

Chris Ruck		
Matthew Short		
George Simmonds		
Myla Watts		
Hayley Wilson		
<b>Total - 17</b>	<b>Total - 0</b>	<b>Total - 0</b>

*‘ii) We would also request that Full Council consider making the reception area within the Town Hall available for residents during the day, as a place to sit and keep warm, delegating the detail of how this is delivered to the Chief Executive.’*

<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstention</b>
Pete Cousins	Desna Allen	Clare Cape
Gemma Grimes	Liz Alstrom	Hayley Wilson
Conor Melvin	Jenny Budgell	
Nick Murry	Bill Douglas	
David Poole	Kathryn Macdermid	
Chris Ruck	Nic Puntis	
Matthew Short	George Simmonds	
Myla Watts		
<b>Total - 8</b>	<b>Total - 7</b>	<b>Total - 2</b>

With all in favour of part i) of the motion and the majority in favour of part ii) of the motion, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

i) Council agreed to request the Chief Executive to write to the Chief Executive of Wiltshire, requesting that Wiltshire Council consider the setting up of ‘warm rooms’, for Chippenham residents. The letter should request that they allocate space at the Olympiad, Monkton Park Offices, and the Library, which will be available to Chippenham residents as places to sit and keep warm during the forthcoming autumn and winter.

ii) Council agreed to making the reception area within the Town Hall available for residents during the day, as a place to sit and keep warm, delegating the detail of how this is delivered to the Chief Executive.

**47. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE**

The Head of Planning updated Councillors on the progress of the Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan since the last update in June. It was highlighted that the Neighbourhood Plan was likely to be made in Autumn 2023.

**RESOLVED that:**

Councillors noted the report.



48. **URGENT ACTION FORMS**

**RESOLVED that:**

The Urgent Action Forms regarding ‘urgent actions required following the death of Queen Elizabeth II’ and ‘Legionella testing’ were noted.

49. **COUNCILLOR'S FEEDBACK**

i. There were no updates from Town Councillors on significant work they are involved with.

**At 8.55pm, the Mayor asked Councillors present whether they would be in favour of continuing the meeting past 9pm if required in accordance With Standing Order 15.7, all Councillors were in favour.**

ii. Councillor Jenny Budgell highlighted as the Councillor Representative on Chippenham Borough Lands Charity (CBLC), CBLC is running Christmas meal vouchers, anyone can apply using the form on the website for help. There will be £30,000 available for Chippenham residents which is double the amount last year. Each case is considered on its own merit, then food vouchers are issued.

The Head of Democratic Services highlighted that Councillor John Scragg had provided a written report on the activities of the Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) (copy attached to the minutes).

iii. Councillor Nic Puntis as a Wiltshire Councillor updated on potential flooding expected in the area. Any reports of flooding to be reported through the proper channels.

iv. There were no Committee or Sub-Committee membership changes.

v. There were no potential CIL projects suggested to be funded by the 85% of CIL that Wiltshire Council retain.

50. **ITEMS FOR COMMUNICATION**

Councillors requested communications on the ‘warm rooms’ initiative.

51. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of Full Council will be held at 7pm on Wednesday 23 November 2022.

The Chair closed the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

Signed on behalf of the Town Council as a true record of the meeting.

Signature

Date

### Public Questions - Extraordinary Full Council 28 September 2022

1. “Thank you for the opportunity to address the meeting this evening regarding Agenda Item 14 - a motion from several councillors referring to the potential problems the community could be facing in the months ahead - and apologies for not being able to attend in person. At the Community Hub it was very sad recently to hear an elderly lady say that when it gets cold this winter her and her husband intend to stay in bed until after midday and return there around 5pm/6pm in order to stay warm, given that they will not be able to heat their house. This is not an action that anyone in our community should have to consider in 2022, and so, alongside all the other community activities that Chippenham Community Hub offer, we intend to create the ‘Hub Living Room’ where our doors are open two days a week offering a warm quality social space.

It would, of course, be fantastic if the people of Chippenham and the surrounding villages could have a complete weekly calendar of these ‘Living Rooms’ where they can avoid social isolation, loneliness and all the effects of prevailing national conditions that might make this winter one to endure, rather than one to live to the full. This really is achievable and so my question to Councillors this evening is “Would you please consider asking officers to co-ordinate a meeting of the many superb organisations in the town who can, and will, offer this help in order that it is both effectively executed and efficiently communicated to our community”?

Together we can be a force for good, so let’s show the people of Chippenham the quality that comes from the community working as one. Lets make this a town of Living Rooms. Kind regards, on Behalf of Chippenham Community Hub”

2. “I am the member of the leadership team at Sheldon Road Methodist Church on the corner of Sheldon Road and Audley Road and I wish to address you briefly on a project that we have been running and an initiative that we wish to develop. We’ve been acutely aware for some considerable while in the current economic climate many families and individuals are struggling to make ends meet, we recognised that people find themselves in these difficult situations not often of their own making and it is if you like, if I can use that word, our mission to bring hope to those who find themselves in difficulty. We have been delighted to be able to run a community lunch project on Saturdays from July to September, we are now able to also confirm this Saturday 01 October we are able to run this again, weekly on a Saturday to 17 December. Anybody who walks through the door on a Saturday, we don’t ask to qualify them, we don’t ask any questions, and they are provided with a free 2 course lunch. That can be people with all sorts of needs and difficulties.

We are also grateful for grant money that we receive from Chippenham Borough Lands Charity and Chippenham Lions, the total grant money is about £3250, which allows us to continue this project beyond hopefully the new year again as no doubt everybody is aware the situation is not going to improve. There is a need we also believe to grab an initiative of the warm spaces project, to provide spaces for people who are having difficulty in heating their homes, or having difficulty in making ends meet, as simple as that. We need a coordinated approach, no one organisation can do that on their own. We, Sheldon Road, are talking to other faith groups and non-faith groups in Chippenham to try and have a cohesive and coordinated approach, nobody can do this on their own. We've led the way we hope in implementing the community lunch project, in a warm and friendly atmosphere on a Saturday and we anticipate that as the autumn turns into winter the demand is going to become even greater. May I pose a question to the Council, will the town council take a lead in coordinating this initiative across the town to provide a warm space somewhere across the town each and every day?"

## APPENDIX B

### Not part of the meeting

Response to Public Questions asked at Extraordinary Full Council on 28 September 2022:

**1 & 2:** Thank you for your public question to Full Council on Wednesday 28 September 2022. Councillors passed the motion to write to Wiltshire Council requesting that Wiltshire Council consider the setting up of 'warm rooms', for Chippenham residents. To note allocating space at the Olympiad, Monkton Park Offices and the Library, which will be available to Chippenham residents as places to sit and keep warm during the forthcoming autumn and winter. The Chief Executive was also delegated to investigate making the reception area within the Town Hall available for residents during the day, as a place to sit and keep warm. Thank you for your ongoing work and support as a community group in Chippenham. The Council is currently considering organising a meeting with stakeholders and community groups.

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Report by Cllr J R Scragg

Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (WALC)

This report is based on the report I produced for Community First for their AGM which will be held in Devizes Town Hall on 12<sup>th</sup> October (commencing 1730hrs). It explains the relationship between the two organisations.

WALC plays an important role in the effective management of local community affairs in Wiltshire and Swindon unitary areas through its support to town and parish councils who are members. This includes the provision of training to councillors and clerks in partnership with various trainers, responding to queries from local councils on legal, procedural and community topics, and keeping councils up to date with changes in legislation and government policy. The Association responded in 2021/22 to the substantial demand for the training of new councillors following the elections in May 2021. WALC provides a channel of communication with the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) which has staff with legal and other expertise to support the sector and represent its interests at government level. WALC's role is entirely consistent with the aims of Community First which supplies the secretariat and all the necessary office and supervisory facilities to WALC. This is provided through a Memorandum of Understanding between WALC and Community First and through the employment of the Local Councils' Adviser (also referred to as the County Secretary), who reports to the Executive Committee of WALC which comprises representatives of member councils. Some of the annual fee paid by member councils to Community First is for the salary of the two WALC members of staff and overheads although another part of the fee goes straight to NALC as WALC collects this on behalf of NALC. Decisions on policy and finance, including the WALC membership fee, are made by the Executive Committee and/or by the Association's AGM.

During 2021/22 the existing Local Councils' Adviser, Katie Fielding, resigned to take up another post and Community First managed the recruitment in April 2022 of a replacement, Deborah Bourne. It also ensured continuity of service in the interim by the employment of a temporary member of staff. More recently, in implementation of a decision by the WALC Executive Committee, Community First successfully recruited a part-time office assistant, Helen Akiyama to support the Local Councils' Adviser.

During 2021/22 WALC membership stayed constant at 230 members from a possible 272 parish and town councils (and also Salisbury City Council) within the unitary areas of Wiltshire and Swindon. This included 10 new councils, replacing 10 Councils who did not renew their membership.

WALC will hold its AGM on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2021. This will be held in the Village Hall in Avebury. Further details will be issued by Deborah Bourne but any councillor or officer of a member council (including Chippenham of course) can attend. There will be guest speakers from NALC to explain the role of that organisation and refer to current issues. I will also be attending the NALC AGM, to be held on Zoom on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

Cllr John Scragg

23rd September 2022

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