



Meeting	Full Council
Date	22 March 2023
Report Title	Councillor Motion 1 - Letter to Wiltshire Council re elections
Author	Councillors Desna Allen and Liz Alstrom

COUNCILLOR MOTION

To consider the following motion from Councillors Desna Allen and Liz Alstrom:

The Chief Executive is requested to write to the Chief Executive at Wiltshire Council on behalf of Chippenham Town Council, referring to this motion and the decision of Full Council to support this motion, expressing the town council's dissatisfaction that Wiltshire Council have now decided to pass on the cost of election and the democratic process at parish council level to the parish councils. The letter shall also ask Wiltshire Council to reconsider the decision and make the points as set out below.

Background

The Strategy and Resources Committee which met on the 15th February 2023 agreed to make provision for the funding of the new cost for elections by reserving an amount deemed necessary by the Director of Resources within Capital Earmarked Funds as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process, in preparation for the next local elections in May 2025 and for future by-elections.

This decision was made because of Wiltshire Council's recent decision to recharge the full cost of elections as from the next local elections in May 2025. The Town Council have been provided with a baseline estimation of cost per elector for uncontested and contested elections. The current electorate of the 8 wards in Chippenham is calculated at c.28,500 (as of February 2023). It is believed that the costs will be in the order of £48,450.

Wiltshire Council have decided to recover the election costs from the parishes within Wiltshire, there is no legislation compelling them to recover the costs, they could have continued with the status-quo. Parish councils receive no funding from central government, or indeed the principal council, all Chippenham Town Council expenditure is either funded through the precept or income from fees and charges.

It is quite likely that some of the smaller parish councils shall have to spend a significant proportion of their precept on the cost of elections at the expense of their services and/or facilities. The action of recharging the cost of the elections could fetter the democratic process and could well see some councils choosing to co-opt councillors rather than going through an election process, this would clearly not serve democracy well.



Meeting	Full Council
Date	22 March 2023
Report Title	Councillor Motion 2 - Potential drinking fountains
Author	Councillor Declan Baseley

COUNCILLOR MOTION

To consider the following motion from Councillor Declan Baseley:

- 1. Officers investigate the potential costs of procuring and installing free-to-use public drinking fountains and bottle refill stations propose suitable locations and liaise with Wessex Water about potential funding for supply, installation and maintenance.**
- 2. Officers present a report to a future meeting of the Amenities Culture & Leisure Committee (ACL), that sets out the costs of procuring and installing free to use public drinking fountains and bottle refill stations and potential locations.**
- 3. Based on the recommendation of ACL, any additional budget requirement is brought back to a future meeting of Full Council for approval, given that there is no provision in the either the approved Income and Expenditure budget for 2023/2024 or the council's capital programme for this activity.**

Background

Unlike most market towns in Wiltshire, Chippenham does not have any public drinking fountains to provide residents and tourists with quick and easy access to drinking water.

As Summers begin to stretch longer and burn hotter, we will see a greater demand for accessibility to water, Chippenham Town Council should therefore take action to alleviate the discomfort of our residents before it becomes a serious issue.

The provision of public drinking fountains and bottle refill stations will not only provide our residents with the dignity of immediate access to refreshment, but will also cut down on plastic waste as residents will not have to resort to purchasing bottled water.

There is already a system in place on the high street for residents to request bottle refills from shops, however this is poorly advertised to residents and is much less convenient than using a public drinking fountain.



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Additionally, it is not easy for the public to access free refills in shops when they are visiting our parks or participating in recreational activities. Furthermore, this service is inadequate for keeping up with the demand of big events such as the folk festival.

Chippenham is a bustling town with a thriving market and large annual events, we should be providing water on demand to the public and to tourists visiting our town.