

# Public Document Pack



**CHIPPENHAM  
TOWN COUNCIL**

Improving the quality of town life

## FULL COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Council held in the Town Hall on Wednesday 17 May 2023 at 7.00 pm.

<b>COUNCILLORS:</b>	Desna Allen	Liz Alstrom (Chair - Part)	Declan Baseley (Chair - Part)
	James Bradbury	Jenny Budgell	Clare Cape
	Pete Cousins	William Douglas	Robert Giles
	Gemma Grimes	Angie Litvak-Watson	Kathryn Macdermid
	Conor Melvin (Vice Chair -Part)	Nick Murry	Andy Phillips
	Nina Phillips	David Poole	Nic Puntis
	John Scragg	Matthew Short	George Simmonds
	Myla Watts	Hayley Wilson	

**OFFICERS:** Mark Smith, Chief Executive  
Matt Kirby, Director of Community Services  
Heather Rae, Head of Democratic Services  
Alex Cooper, Democratic Services Officer  
Michael Weeks, Democratic and Civic Officer

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

### PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There was one written public question, a copy of the question is appended to these minutes at **APPENDIX A**. The response was not part of the meeting but is appended to these minutes at **APPENDIX B**.

### 1. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### Outgoing Mayor, Councillor Liz Alstrom, in the Chair

- i. a) The Mayor announced the winners of the Mayor's charity raffle which was held to raise money for the Mayoral charities of HEALS and Wiltshire Air Ambulance. First prize of Boomtown tickets was awarded to Liam Murray, second prize of a viewing of formula 1 catered event was Richard Bennett and third prize of a necklace was Roz Starrs. The Mayor thanked all those that took part in the raffle, donated, and helped support the Mayoral ball at the end of April, the community and officers were highlighted. The total amount raised would be announced at the Mayor's Investiture next Wednesday.

b) The Mayor noted some key members of the community were retiring from their roles, on behalf of the Council the Mayor thanked Reverend Rod Key of St. Andrew's Church, who had supported the Council in civic events such as Remembrance Sunday and Civic Sunday for many years. The Mayor also thanked Mr. Brian Pratt, who had served as Deputy Macebearer and Macebearer for the Town Mayor, his outstanding dedication to the role was recognised and we are very grateful that he has supported the current Deputy to be able to step up into the role. Attendees thanked them and recognised their contributions with a round of applause.

c) The Mayor noted this would be the last Council meeting for a long-standing member of the Council who would be retiring following this meeting. Thanks were given to Councillor Nina Phillips for serving as a Chippenham Town Councillor for 24 years. Councillor Nina Phillips has been a dedicated member of the Town Council over the years and supported Councillor Andy Phillips in his former role of Town Mayor. The Mayor presented a card of thanks on behalf of staff and Councillors to thank Councillor Nina Phillips for service to the town and residents, attendees thanked Nina and marked this outstanding services to the town with a round of applause.

d) The Mayor read out the following statement:

“As my year as Mayor of Chippenham comes to a close, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to my fellow councillors, the Town Council, and the people of Chippenham for entrusting me with this role. It has been an honour to represent our town and its residents, and I have been continually inspired by the dedication, passion, and commitment that I have witnessed in our community. My thanks to my fellow councillors and the Town Council Officers for your collaboration, guidance, and teamwork. It is through our combined efforts that we are able to make a positive impact and bring about meaningful change that will continue benefit our town. But above all, my heartfelt appreciation goes out to the people of Chippenham. Your kindness, generosity of spirit, that I have encountered during my tenure have been truly remarkable. Your support and encouragement have been a constant source of inspiration, and I have been proud to work alongside you to help make our community an even better place to live. It has been an honour to represent our town and its residents, and I will cherish the memories always.”

- ii. The list of engagements undertaken by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor since the last Council meeting held on Wednesday 22 March 2023 were noted.

2. **ELECTION OF THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL WHO SHALL BE KNOWN AS THE TOWN MAYOR 2023/24**

Councillor Declan Baseley was nominated by virtue of their role as Deputy Town Mayor 2022/23, this was proposed by Councillor James Bradbury seconded by Councillor Nick Murry. With all in favour, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

Councillor Declan Baseley be elected Chair of the Council, known as Town Mayor of Chippenham, for the municipal year 2023/24.

3. **DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE OF TOWN MAYOR**

**RESOLVED that:**

The Mayor read out and signed the declaration of acceptance of office, witnessed by the Chief Executive. The declaration was signed by Councillors Pete Cousins and Nick Murry.

**Newly elected Mayor, Councillor Declan Baseley, in the Chair.**

4. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

5. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

6. **ELECTION OF THE VICE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL WHO SHALL BE KNOWN AS DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR 2023/24**

Councillor Nic Puntis was proposed by Councillor Declan Baseley, seconded by Councillor Robert Giles. Councillor Conor Melvin was proposed by Councillor Desna Allen, seconded by Councillor Jenny Budgell. A vote was taken and the with majority in favour of Councillor Conor Melvin, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

Councillor Conor Melvin be elected Vice Chair of the Council, known as Deputy Town Mayor of Chippenham, for the municipal year 2023/24.

7. **MINUTES**

The minutes from the meeting held on 22 March 2023 were proposed by Councillor Desna Allen, seconded by Councillor Liz Alstrom and with all in favour, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

The minutes from the meeting held on 22 March 2023 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

8. **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

a. **Planning, Environment & Transport Committee**

The draft minutes of the meetings held on 09 March, 30 March, and 20 April 2023 were presented by Councillor Gemma Grimes with all matters resolved.

b. **Strategy and Resources Committee**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 05 April 2023 were presented by Councillor Desna Allen with all matters resolved.

9. **COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM NOTES**

**RESOLVED that:**

The notes from the Community Safety Forum meeting held on 14 March 2023 were noted.

10. **YOUTH COUNCIL MINUTES**

**RESOLVED that:**

The notes from the Youth Council meetings held on 21 March and 18 April 2023 were noted.

11. **ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

The Mayor sought nominations for the position of Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2023/2024. Councillor Pete Cousins was proposed by Councillor Nick Murry and seconded by Councillor Matthew Short. Councillor Desna Allen was proposed by Councillor Jenny Budgell and seconded by Councillor Clare Cape. With no further nominations and the majority in favour of Councillor Pete Cousins, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

Councillor Pete Cousins be elected Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2023/2024.

12. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

The Mayor sought nominations for the position of Deputy Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2023/2024. Councillor Desna Allen was proposed by Councillor Jenny Budgell and seconded by Councillor Clare Cape. Councillor Matthew Short was proposed by Councillor David Poole and

seconded by Councillor Angie Litvak-Watson. With no further nominations and the majority in favour of Councillor Matthew Short, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

Councillor Matthew Short be elected Deputy Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2023/2024.

13. **COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT**

The Chief Executive presented the nominations that had been provided by Group Leaders in advance. Councillor names for the membership of Standing Committees and Sub Committees for the municipal year 2023/2024 were read out by the Chief Executive and voted en bloc. With all Councillors in favour, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

The Councillors named below be appointed to the relevant Committee or Sub Committee for the municipal year 2023/2024:

a) Amenities, Culture and Leisure Committee

Desna Allen	Liz Alstrom	Declan Baseley	James Bradbury
Jenny Budgell	Bill Douglas	Robert Giles	Matthew Short
Kathryn Macdermid	Nick Murry	Chris Ruck	Myla Watts

b) Planning, Environment and Transport Committee

Clare Cape	Bill Douglas	Robert Giles	Gemma Grimes
Conor Melvin	Andy Phillips	Nina Phillips	David Poole
Nic Puntis	John Scragg	Matthew Short	Hayley Wilson

c) Human Resources Committee

Desna Allen	Jenny Budgell	Pete Cousins	Robert Giles
Gemma Grimes	Angie Litvak-Watson	Conor Melvin	George Simmonds
Myla Watts			

d) Strategy and Resources Committee

i) It was noted that the Leader of the Council, Councillor Pete Cousins, is automatically Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee (SO 12.1m viii).

ii) It was noted that the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Matthew Short, is automatically Vice Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee (SO 12.1m ix).

iii) It was noted that the Chair of Council (Town Mayor), Councillor Declan Baseley, is automatically appointed to the Strategy and Resources Committee (SO Appendix A 3.1c).

iv) The remaining 9 seats were filled by nominations and the full membership of the Strategy and Resources Committee be:

Desna Allen	Declan Baseley	Jenny Budgell	Clare Cape
<b>Pete Cousins (Chair)</b>	David Poole	Andy Phillips	Chris Ruck
John Scragg	<b>Matthew Short (Vice)</b>	George Simmonds	Myla Watts

e) Finance Sub Committee

Desna Allen	James Bradbury	Jenny Budgell	Robert Giles
Conor Melvin	David Poole	Chris Ruck	John Scragg
Matthew Short			

f) Council Donations Sub Committee

Desna Allen	James Bradbury	Jenny Budgell	Bill Douglas
Nick Murry	Matthew Short	Myla Watts	

g) Civic Matters Sub Committee

<b>Declan Baseley (Chair)</b>	Robert Giles	<b>Conor Melvin (Vice)</b>
Andy Phillips	Nina Phillips	

h) Dispensations Sub Committee

Desna Allen	Clare Cape	Pete Cousins
Nick Murry	Matthew Short	

#### 14. WORKING PARTY, STEERING AND ADVISORY GROUP APPOINTMENT

The Chief Executive presented the nominations that had been provided by Group Leaders in advance. Councillor names for the membership of Working Parties, Steering and Advisory Groups for the municipal year 2023/2024 were read out by the Chief Executive and voted en bloc. With all Councillors in favour, it was;

##### RESOLVED that:

The Councillors named below be appointed to the relevant Working Parties, Steering and Advisory Groups for the municipal year 2023/2024:

i) **Working Parties**

a) Neeld Development Working Party

It was noted that this Working Party did not need to be reconstituted.

b) Stanley Park Sports Ground Working Party

Desna Allen	Liz Alstrom	Clare Cape
Pete Cousins	Bill Douglas	Chris Ruck
Matthew Short	David Poole	Hayley Wilson

c) Public Convenience Working Party

Desna Allen	Liz Alstrom	Declan Baseley
Robert Giles	Angie Litvak-Watson	Nick Murry
John Scragg	Matthew Short	Myla Watts

ii) **Steering and Advisory Groups**

a) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Declan Baseley	Clare Cape	Robert Giles
<b>Nick Murry (Chair)</b>	<b>John Scragg (Vice-Chair)</b>	Matthew Short

b) Climate and Ecological Emergency Advisory Group

Liz Alstrom	<b>Declan Baseley (Chair)</b>	James Bradbury
Clare Cape	Pete Cousins	Nick Murry

iii) **Community Safety Forum and nomination of Chair**

a) Community Safety Forum

Liz Alstrom	<b>Desna Allen (Chair)</b>	Nick Murry
-------------	----------------------------	------------

Councillor Desna Allen was elected Chair of the Community Safety Forum.

15. **REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Chief Executive presented the nominations for representation on outside bodies that had been provided by Group Leaders in advance and further nominations were sought where required. Councillors voted for all nominations en bloc, with all Councillors in favour, it was;

**RESOLVED that:**

i) The Councillors named below be appointed to the relevant outside body for the municipal year 2023/24:

<b><u>Outside Body</u></b>	<b><u>Councillor(s) appointed</u></b>
<b><i>Wiltshire Council</i></b>	
Chippenham & Surrounding Villages Area Board	Pete Cousins and Conor Melvin
Local Highway and Footway Improvement Group (LHFIG)	Matthew Short
Chippenham Health & Wellbeing Group	Clare Cape and Robert Giles
Chippenham Local Youth Network	Kathryn Macdermid and Conor Melvin
<b><i>Honorary</i></b>	
Rotary Club	Mayor, Declan Baseley
Chippenham Sea Cadets	Mayor, Declan Baseley
Chippenham Twinning Association	Mayor, Declan Baseley and Clare Cape
<b><i>Other</i></b>	
Waste Not Want Not Recycling	Angie Litvak-Watson

Project	
Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (WALC)	John Scragg
Friends of Chippenham Station	Robert Giles, Angie Litvak-Watson and John Scragg
403 Sustrans Route Working Group	Gemma Grimes

ii) Mrs Ruth Lloyd (external) and Mrs Margaret Harrison (external) be appointed as trustees to the Vicar and Churchwarden's Charities Committee for the Parish Church of St Andrew until May 2027.

iii) The following ongoing positions were noted:  
 Trustee of Mrs Utterson's Almshouses (From 01 December 2021 for 4 years until Nov 2025)  
 = Councillor Jenny Budgell and Mr Paul James (external).  
 Trustee of Chippenham Borough Lands Charity (From June 2021 for 4 years until May 2025)  
 = Councillor Jenny Budgell.

16. **GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE**

**RESOLVED that:**

Chippenham Town Council resolved from 17 May 2023, until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Council, that having met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (prescribed conditions) Order 2012, to adopt the General Power of Competence.

17. **ITEMS FOR COMMUNICATION**

Councillors requested new appointments such as the new Mayor be communicated.

18. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of Full Council will be held at 7pm on Wednesday 21 June 2023.

The Chair closed the meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.48 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



# Appendix

## Public Question - APPENDIX A

Public question at Full Council on Wednesday 17 May 2023:

1. “On 29th April 2021 I received a reply to my Freedom of Information request following reticence by Chippenham Town Council to collaborate with Kandu Arts on the delivery of a celebratory festival to thank those who saw us through the pandemic by providing the Neeld Hall and Town Hall free of charge as a venue. I had asked in the knowledge that other organisations had been granted free usage of the Neeld Hall, for detail of those organisations who had benefitted from this.

The initial documentation I was sent “Free of charge hires by organisations of the Neeld Hall and Town Hall” listed the organisations 2014 -2021 this however was an incomplete return as it did not detail all the organisations who had it for free and who had agreed the free hires. In a meeting in January 2023 my colleagues were told that the Neeld and Town Halls were never let for free! My subsequent request from 31st March 2023 requesting further information has listed the information the Council holds on how the organisations were granted free usage. 12 of the 14 show that Council does not hold this information and that 2 of the bookings were approved, one by an unnamed Town Councillor who secured the Hall free of charge for the Chippenham Area Board and the other that it was approved free of charge by the Venues Manager for an event in aid of SSAFA.

It is of grave concern that it would appear that due accounting protocol, health & safety and recording of these bookings has not been followed and that the 14 “free” lettings appear entirely discretionary. In the interests of what appears to be hap-hazard appropriation of public funds, resources and very definite lack of transparency which has without a doubt impacted the local community, please can it be minuted how the position relating to the Council’s ability to consider reduced community rates has been clarified with the relevant staff and on what basis these decisions have been made.”

## Not Part of the Meeting - APPENDIX B

### Response to Public Question - Full Council 17 May 2023

1. Thank you for your public question asked at Full Council on 17 May 2023, this response will be appended to the minutes. As the Freedom of Information response noted, the Council does not hold the information relating to the exact manner that 14 free uses of the Neeld or Town Hall were granted, these were bookings from 13 April 2014 to 08 October 2018.

The Town Council hires spaces at commercial and community rates, the Council has a process outlined in the Fees and Charges Schedule that enables the Chief Executive to consider requests from community groups for subsidised room rates. This delegated authority to the Chief Executive was first considered by the Amenities, Culture and Leisure Committee in November 2018, and staff are aware of this process. Community groups seeking financial assistance should be referred to the procedure for grants and donations from the Town Council via application to the Council Donations Scheme.

Draft