

Malmesbury Town Council

Town Hall
Malmesbury
Wiltshire
SN16 9BZ
1st August 2007.

You are summoned to a Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee to be held on Tuesday 7th August 2007 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Malmesbury, commencing at 7pm.

J Penfold
Town Clerk

Cllr. J Bowen
Cllr. Mrs C C Doody
Cllr. J Lawton
Cllr. M Snell

Cllr. Mrs A Davis (V/Chair)
Cllr. P J Goldstone
Cllr R F Sanderson
Cllr. C M Vernon (Chair)

A G E N D A

1. Apologies.
2. Public Question Time.
3. To receive declarations of interest in accordance with the Local Councils (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007.
4. To receive, and adopt the minutes from the meeting held on 5th June 2007.
5. To consider a report on the impact of Value Added Tax for hirers of the Town Hall, attached as Report No.2
6. To consider a report on the Citizens Advice Bureau Board, attached as Report No.3
7. To consider a report on the funding of the Town Hall Project, attached as Report No.4.
8. To consider a report on the formation of an Assets Working Group, attached as Report No.5
9. To consider the appointment of Paul Hallam as Internal Auditor for the Town Council accounts for the years 2007/8 and 2008/9.
10. To consider a report on the formation of a Working Group to consider applications received for section 137 grants, attached as Report no.6
11. To consider a request for grant funding to assist the formation of a Credit Union in Malmesbury, Report No.7.

12. To receive and approve the final accounts for the year ended 31st March 2007, attached as Report no.8
13. To consider a report on the current expenditure for the financial year 2007/8, attached as Report No.9
14. To consider a request to install an electricity supply to serve the market cross area as outlined in attached Report No10.
15. To receive a report from the Town Clerk on arrangements for a lease to Friends of Athelstan Museum and consider the appropriate level of rent to be recommended to Council. Details in the attached Report No.11.
16. To consider a quotation received for the replacement of the Christmas Lights, attached as Report No.12.
17. To consider the report from the Internal Auditor for the period ending 31st March 2007.

Report No. 2.

Report to Policy & Resources Committee 7th August 2007.

Value Added Tax

1. Background

- 1.1 Malmesbury Town Council previously resolved to register for Value Added Tax (VAT) in order that any VAT paid out in respect of the proposed refurbishment of the Town Hall may be reclaimed.
- 1.2 In view of the impact this will have on the users of the Town Hall in terms of VAT being added to hire fees, discussions were held with the local tax inspector to ascertain if any group could be exempted from the imposition of the tax.
- 1.3 The advice provided by the inspector confirmed that although some of the activities of specific user groups may be regarded as tax exempt this does not affect the liability for VAT charged on the hire fee for use of the Town Hall.
- 1.4 Therefore VAT must be added to all hire fees levied for use of the Town Hall and the tax either paid by the users or the Town Council.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The Town Council will register for VAT with effect from 1st September 2007 and from this date the tax will be added to taxable items sold by the Town Council and to the hire fees charged to users of the Town Hall.
- 2.2 Those hirers who have been able to register for VAT may be able to reclaim the taxable element in the usual manner. Others, such as clubs and societies, will be faced with a 17.5% increase in hire fees at a time when routine operation has been disrupted as a consequence of the refurbishment programme.
- 2.3 Members may wish to consider if assistance could or should be given to the latter group during the period of disruption.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 Based upon current fees received from regular hirers, including the pre-school, dance school, clubs and societies the total level of taxation in a full year at standard rate would be in the region of £4,500.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Committee is requested to note the report and advise if any recommendation should be made to Council about mitigating the impact of VAT upon clubs and societies that regularly meet at the Town Hall.

Jeff Penfold
Town Clerk
16.07.2007

Report No. 3.

Report to Policy & Resources Committee 7th August 2007.

Citizens Advice Bureau

1. Background

- 1.1 The North Wiltshire Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) has for a number of years provided a drop-in facility in Malmesbury Town Hall, used mainly but not exclusively by residents of Malmesbury and the surrounding villages.
- 1.3 The accommodation in the Town Hall was originally provided free of charge by the North Wiltshire District Council and more recently by the Town Council.
- 1.3 The facilities currently used by the Bureau include two cellular offices on the first floor used for interviews and an administration office on the second floor.
- 1.4 During the last year the team were able to assist over 200 persons through the Malmesbury offices.

2. Proposal

- 2.2 The agreed refurbishment plan for the Town Hall does not provide for any cellular offices to remain on the first floor and until further funding is made available for the second phase the two offices on the second floor will not be Disability Discrimination Act compliant.
- 2.2 The Town Clerk has met with the manager of the North Wiltshire Citizens Advice Bureau to ascertain if any of the space available after the first phase of refurbishment would be suitable for continued use by the CAB and if there was scope for maintaining a service during the refurbishment.
- 2.3 In view of the type of accommodation required by the CAB in order to maintain privacy it has reluctantly been concluded that the CAB will be unable to operate from the Malmesbury Town Hall with effect from 1st September 2007. In addition, the lack of availability of suitable cellular offices after completion of the work will prohibit the re-establishment of a service in April 2008.
- 2.4 The CAB is currently reviewing the method of first contact for clients with North Wilts one of the few remaining where face to face contact has been maintained. The indications are that this is not sustainable and investigations into other forms of initial contact are currently being undertaken.
- 2.5 It has been suggested that a self-help screen or electronic information board may be an appropriate way forward and if so it may be possible, if required, to accommodate the screen within the Town Hall.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications within the report, the CAB does not provide rental income

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Committee is requested to note the report and agree to consider any request to site a CAB information screen in the Town Hall after completion of Phase 1.

Jeff Penfold
Town Clerk
16.07.2007

Report No. 5.

Report to Policy & Resources Committee 7th August 2006.

Review of Assets held by Malmesbury Town Council

1 Background

- 1.1 Although Malmesbury Town Council holds very few physical assets from which to generate additional annual income the Town Hall does contain a number of articles accumulated over the years.
- 1.2 In addition to equipment necessary for the operation of services there are several items of Mayoral insignia, furniture, art and historical artefacts stored within the Town Hall. .

2. Proposal

- 2.1 There will be being reduced storage or display space in the agreed scheme for refurbishment of the Town Hall and the business plan was based upon there being flexibility so as to enable all rooms to be used to their full potential.
- 2.2 In 2006 a Working Group was formed to review the assets held by the Town Council and time was concentrated on the future use of the Flying Monk Playing Field. The Group comprised of Councillors C M Vernon, J A Bowen, Mrs C C Doody and M H Snell.
- 2.3 It is proposed that the working group be re-formed to consider the use and future of assets such as those mentioned in paragraph 1.2 and to make recommendations to Policy and Resources Committee.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications attached to this report.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Committee appoints a small working group to review the assets held by the Town Council and make recommendations about their future and appropriate charges to be levied for use.

Report No.6

Report to Policy & Resources Committee 7th August 2007.

Section 137 - Small Grants Allocation

1. Background

- 1.1 Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 empowers local councils to spend a limited amount of money for purposes for which they have no other specific statutory spending power.
- 1.2 Malmesbury Town Council has regularly included a sum of money in the annual budget to facilitate the award of small grants to local organisations or service providers, using the power contained in section 137.
- 1.3 For a number of years the grants were awarded to the same organisations without receiving any information about how the money was spent and what was achieved. These organisations have included the Library, Youth Orchestra, Bobby Van, Splash, and Council for Voluntary Service.
- 1.4 In January 2007 the Town Council agreed that the award of any grant would be confined to those organisations providing support or benefit to the residents of Malmesbury that was not supplied by any other agency or public body. The maximum level for each grant within any twelve-month period not to exceed £100.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 In the current financial year there is a total of £795 set aside for small grants plus a further £795 from the year 2006/7 brought forward into this year by agreement of the Town Council on the 10th July 2007.
- 2.2 At the meeting of the Town Council on 10th July 2007 it was agreed that a grant of £300 be paid to the Twinning Association for the year 2005/6. In order to fund this payment the £300 will either need to be taken from balances or may be paid from the revised amount of £1,590 now set aside for section 137 payments.
- 2.2 It was agreed in January 2007 that that a working group comprised of the Chair, Vice-Chair and one other member of the Policy & Resources Committee meet twice each year to allocate the funding set aside for small grants.
- 2.3 The Town Clerk has only received two applications for support and the committee is invited to confirm the membership of the working group that will then meet and consider the applications for grant aid s soon as possible.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 The Policy & Resources Committee is empowered to spend the money allocated within the budget for the purposes of small grants without reference back to the Town Council provided the total amount is not exceeded.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The committee is recommended to:-
- (i) confirm the membership of the working group that will consider the applications for grant aid.
 - (ii) determine the account used for the payment of £300 to the Twinning Association .

Jeff Penfold
Town Clerk
17.07.2007.

Report No. 7.

Report to Policy & Resources Committee 7th August 2007.

Malmesbury Credit Union

1. Background

- 1.1 Credit Unions are community based local savings and loan schemes. Managed and run by trained volunteers, credit unions offer people who live or work in the area a chance to save regularly (by cash, standing order, payroll deduction or at a collection point) and to borrow at a reasonable rate of interest.
- 1.2 There are five credit unions in Wiltshire and anyone who lives or works in the county can join at least one of them. The credit unions are named after the district in which they are based.
- 1.3 In North Wiltshire there are contact points in Calne, Chippenham, Corsham, Wootton Bassett and the Potley and Pockeridge Community Centre.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 Community First has indicated that they wish to open a contact point to serve the residents of Malmesbury and the surrounding villages.
- 2.2 Whilst the credit union system is designed to be self-financing once operational there are certain start up costs that need to be funded whenever an outlet is opened in a new area.
- 2.3 The Project Officer from Community First has been offered the use of an office in the library as a collection point but funding is required for marketing and other start-up administration costs.
- 2.4 In other towns the local councils have provided modest grants to assist with the establishment of a local facility for residents.
- 2.5 A request has been received from Community First that Malmesbury Town Council considers the provision of a grant for £400 to enable the Credit Union to provide a local facility in Malmesbury.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The request for financial assistance in advertising and setting up the Malmesbury Credit Union may be accommodated from the funding set aside for section 137 payments provided the committee agreed that there was a valid reason for exceeding the maximum grant level of £100.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Committee approves the request for a grant of £400 to support the formation of the Malmesbury Credit Union, payment being made from the budget available for section 137 payments.

Jeff Penfold
Town Clerk
17.07.2007.

Report No.10.

Report to Policy & Resources Committee 7th August 2007.

Market Cross Electricity Supply

1. Background

- 1.1 During the last two years Malmesbury Town Council has arranged for a Farmers Market to attend the town on two Saturdays each month throughout the year.
- 1.4 The Market organiser makes a payment to the Town Council based upon 15% percentage of the total stall hire charges recouped from traders.
- 1.3 The organiser has requested that the Town Council consider installing an electricity supply in the market cross area for use by market traders and others involved in similar activities.

2. Proposal

- 2.3 An estimate has been received for the installation of a suitable power supply, accessed through a lockable street column.
- 2.2 The total estimated cost of the work is in the region of £1,700 for a four socket metered supply

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There is no specific provision within the 2007/8 budget for these works and it is unlikely that the cost would be recovered from users within a short period of time. The monthly income received from the market organiser has been approximately £110 with a total income of £1855 since the market commenced.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Committee is requested to note the request and determine any action to be taken.

Jeff Penfold
Town Clerk
23.07.2007

Report No.11.

Report to Policy & Resources Committee 7th August 2007.

Lease to Friends of Athelstan Museum

1. Background

- 1.1 During the negotiations surrounding the transfer of Malmesbury Town Hall from the District Council to the Town Council it was accepted that the Athelstan Museum would be retained in the building and have the benefit of a rent-free period of three years from the date of transfer.
- 1.5 The Friends of Athelstan Museum investigated various sources of funding to support their plans to refurbish the museum and found that one of the required criteria was a lease of at least 15 years.
- 1.3 The Policy & Resources Committee considered a request from the Friends of Athelstan Museum for a fifteen year lease on 20th March 2007. The request was agreed at Committee and the minutes approved by the Council on the 10th April 2007.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The Town Council agreed the award of a 15 year lease subject to the Friends of Athelstan Museum making payment to the Town Council for heating, lighting, insurance, rates, cleaning and maintenance, based upon the area occupied for use by the Museum.
- 2.2 It was also agreed that, although the original rent-free period was for a term of three years from the date of transfer, the lease should include for a rent review after the expiration of this term and at regular intervals to safeguard the interests of the Town Council.
- 2.3 In approving the above it was recognised that at the present time the Museum does not generate high levels of income but it was felt that such a clause be included in the lease to safeguard the future interest of the Town Council.
- 2.4 Discussions about the details of the lease have taken place with Friends of Athelstan Museum prior to their submitting a bid to Heritage Lottery. One of the areas of concern is the level of rental income expected by the Town Council. The Town Clerk has been advised by the Friends of Athelstan Museum that the bid for funding will fail unless it is supported by a sustainable business plan where the rent required is set at an affordable level, having regard to the predicted income of the Museum.
- 2.5 The original business plan for the museum shows the anticipated annual income stream in the first phase of being between £2,000 and £3,000 per annum. The accounts for year ended 31st March 2007 confirm an annual income of £10,936 although much of this was derived from grants and donations. Attached to this report as appendix A is the five year financial plan upon which the bid for funding has been based.

- 2.6 From the figures presented by FOAM it is unlikely that at current income levels they will ever be able to afford the commercial market rent for the space, previously assessed at £16,000 per annum.
- 2.7 Whilst the Council may wish to support the view that the rent charged will only be whatever FOAM can afford, legal advice has confirmed that a figure must be stated in the lease and that this figure will be regularly reviewed and increased by whatever inflation factor is deemed appropriate.
- 2.8 Members of the Committee are requested to consider what initial rent level should be recommended to Council for inclusion in the lease.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The original business plan for the Town Hall included rental income and contribution towards expenditure from the space occupied by the museum. If this is to be forgone then the additional cost of operating the Town Hall will need to be supported through the precept.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Committee is requested to note the report and determine the rent level to be recommended to the Town Council

Jeff Penfold
Town Clerk
30.07.2007

Description	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Budget					
Friends of Athelstan Museum					
01/04/08 - 31/03/13					
Income					
General Donations	1,600	1,650	1,700	1,750	1,800
Grants (Restricted income for salaries etc.)	50,000	20,000	21,000	22,000	23,000
Membership Donations	1,500	1,520	1,540	1,560	1,580
Membership Income	1,000	1,020	1,040	1,060	1,080
Other F/R	10,000	10,500	11,000	11,500	12,000
Parish Donations	750	750	750	750	750
Preview Donations	300	325	350	375	400
Sale of museum books/postcards	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Ticket Sales	800	800	800	800	800
Bank Interest	50	55	60	65	70
Total Income	68,000	38,620	40,240	41,860	43,480
Expenditure					
Energy and Utility Costs	1,000	1,100	1,210	1,331	1,464
Entertainment and refreshments	500	512	525	537	550
Equipment	500	512	525	537	550
Exhibit Purchase	100	102	105	107	110
Fundraising Costs	800	820	841	862	883
Insurance	350	360	370	380	390
Malmesbury Memories	400	410	420	430	440
Marketing and Communications	150	154	158	162	166
Membership/Professional Fees	50	51	53	54	55
MTC and other Room Hire	100	100	100	100	100
Misc.	150	150	150	150	150
Museum Postcards and Books (FoMA , CT etc.)	700	700	700	700	700
Phone/Computer/ et al	1,000	1,025	1,050	1,070	1,100
Postage and Stationery	500	513	525	538	552
Printing and presentational material (Exhibitions)	300	308	315	323	331
Rates	750	766	785	800	820
Salaries dependent on Grants	56,000	22,440	22,889	23,347	23,814
Total Expenditure	63,350	30,022	30,720	31,427	32,174
Profit/Loss - sub total	4,650	8,598	9,520	10,433	11,306
Risks and Reserves	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Profit/Loss - Total	-350	3,598	4,520	5,433	6,306

Report No.12.

Report to Policy & Resources Committee 7th August 2007.

Christmas Lights

1. Background

- 1.1 Each year during the Christmas period the Town Council arranges the installation of lights in the High Street and Triangle area. The funding for this operation is a combination of budget provision and income from appeals to local businesses and organisations.
- 1.6 The lights are conventional coloured bulbs arranged on strings and powered by 240v current. The Working Group has been investigating with local suppliers the availability and cost of replacing the lights with low voltage LED.

2. Proposal

- 2.4 Four suppliers have been approached to provide quotations but only two have replied and both have endeavoured to provide an enhanced display incorporating motifs and variations.
- 2.2 The quotations received have not been readily comparable but have confirmed that to provide strings of LED lights in the same areas as the existing display and spaced at 50cm centres would cost in the region of £3,000.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There budget for the current year includes a total of £1,000 as the Town Council contribution towards the installation and provision of a festive lighting display.
- 3.2 In the event that the committee was minded to proceed with purchase it would be prudent to approach both suppliers with a single specification in order that a true comparison may be made.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Committee is requested to note the above and determine any action to be taken.

Jeff Penfold
Town Clerk
31.07.2007

Report No.13.

Report to Policy & Resources Committee 7th August 2007.

Internal Audit Report 2006/7

1. Background

- 1.1 Each year an Internal Auditor appointed by the Town Council examines the Council's finances in order to ascertain that the necessary safeguards are in place and there has been compliance with appropriate regulations and financial controls.

2. Proposal

- 2.5 The Internal Auditor appointed by the Town Council for 2005/6 and 2006/7 is Paul Hallam and a copy of his report is attached as Appendix A.

- 2.6 The main areas requiring attention have been discussed with the Town Clerk and the following action is proposed.

2.2.1 Financial Regulations The existing financial regulations are still valid and the Town Clerk ensures that compliance is maintained. However, a revised updated version will be produced during the Autumn for adoption before the next financial year.

2.2.2 Risk Management The auditor has indicated a requirement to ensure that risks are regularly reviewed in a formal manner rather than as currently exists. This need not be a complicated system and could be included in the work of the Asset Management Group within the current financial year.

2.2.3 Asset Management The formation of an Asset Management Group will provide the forum for undertaking a full review of assets held by the Town Council with recommendations to this committee for action as required.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Committee is requested to note the report from the Internal Auditor and agree any action to be taken.