



**THE TOWN COUNCIL
OF
ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA
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STEPHEN MARKS
Clerk to the Town Council

Our Ref: SM/P&R

Date: 08th December 2022

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** will be held on **THURSDAY 15th DECEMBER 2022** in Room 5 at Leamington Spa Town Hall, Parade, CV32 4AT, commencing at 6.00 pm.

The business will be as set out below.

Yours faithfully,

S Marks

CLERK TO THE TOWN COUNCIL

To Councillors: Alan Boad, Sarah Boad, Will Bryce, Mubarik Chowdry, Judith Clarke, Bill Gifford, Jade McGhee, Ruggy Singh and Nick Wilkins.

(All other Members of the Town Council – for information.)

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members of the Committee to declare any interest they may have in items identified for discussion at the Meeting, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

3. **PUBLIC FORUM**

To receive representations from members of the public in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders. Notification of participation in the public session should be submitted in writing to the Town Clerk prior to commencement of the meeting.

4. MINUTES pp3-5
To consider and approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th November 2022 (Report No.4)
5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES
6. MAYORAL SUPPORT / ACTIVITY pp6-7
To consider the activity of officers.
7. CIVIC DINNER pp8-9
To consider matters associated with the Civic Dinner.
8. STAFF CAPACITY / RECRUITMENT pp10-11
To consider staff capacity issues and recruitment.
9. POLICY UPDATE pp12-15
Training & development policy
10. TOWN HALL / OFFICE ACCOMMODATION UPDATE pp16-18
To receive a brief update
11. PENSION REVALUATION pp19-20
12. BUDGET 2023/24 pp21-28
To consider a draft budget for 2023/24
13. FINANCE & PAYMENTS p29
To consider and approve a schedule of payments arising.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 16th NOVEMBER 2022, 6PM AT LEAMINGTON SPA TOWN HALL

Present: Councillors Alan Boad, Mubarik Chowdry (Chair), Judith Clarke, Bill Gifford, Ruggy Singh, Amanda Stevens.

Officers: Town Clerk

48. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Sarah Boad (Cllr Amanda Stevens substituting), Cllr Will Bryce and Cllr Nick Wilkins.

Absent – Cllr McGhee

49. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Gifford declared a general non pecuniary interest as a WDC and WCC Cllr.

50. Public Forum

No representations / questions from the public.

51. Minutes

Resolved that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 13th October 2022 (Report No.4) are confirmed as a correct record.

52. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Local Transport Plan 4 consultation was considered by Council on 10th November.

53. Budget / finance monitoring

Noted significant sum of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funds received. CIL working group will be considering possible spend, with a view to making recommendations to Town Council.

Noted £6k allocated to WDC for warm hubs by Town Council on 10th November 22.

Resolved that the financial information provided is noted.

54. Budget 2023 / 24

The committee considered report number 9 regarding the draft budget for 2023/24.

The Town Clerk noted a proposed civic dinner budget of £2k instead of £1500 was included in the draft budget.

There was some discussion about the format / purpose of the Civic Dinner. It was agreed that this should be considered further in due course to clarify the issues for the benefit of staff.

There was discussion regarding a possible event to mark the coronation of King Charles 3rd. Proposals included an outdoor screen to show the coronation service, possibly with seating or picnic blankets. It was noted that Town Council staff would have very limited capacity to deliver the event, especially with elections in such close proximity. Further discussion with WDC and Leamington BID would need to take place re nature of any event. It was agreed that a sum of £10k be added to the draft budget as a contribution to such an event.

The cleaning of the war memorial was discussed. It was agreed that a further £1k increase to the assets budget is included in the draft budget.

Noted could use projects budget for any activity to mark the Bruhl 50th twinning anniversary.

Resolved that the following amendments are made to the draft budget:

£10,000 added as a contribution to an event to commemorate the Kings Coronation.

The assets budget is increased to £3,000.

55. Climate change working group

Suggested Director of Climate Change also invited to full council.

Resolved agreed the approach to the climate change working group.

56. Allotments

Resolved that the following allotment grants are approved

(1) **Binswood Allotment Society**

£1800 for water provision. Will need to provide information about the works.

£1500 for community hut and butterfly garden

(2) **Campion Hills Allotments**

£750 for clearance / tidying and various environmental improvements (water storage, composting and soil improvement measures)

(3) **Cliffe Allotments**

£400 for hedge cutting subject to a quote being provided and written request for the grant being provided.

(4) **Old Milverton Allotments**

£1290 for boundary hedge cutting and tree felling.

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 15th DECEMBER 2022

Mayoral Support Activity

1. **Purpose**

To consider and review Mayoral Support activity

2. **Background**

2.1 During their Mayoral year the Mayor benefits from the support of officers, notably the Civic & Communications Officer. The purpose of that support is to enable the Mayor to undertake their duties smoothly and effectively, thus representing the Town Council as appropriate. These arrangements are broadly summarised in the Town Council's Mayoral Protocol document, which is attached at Appendix A.

2.2 However, staff capacity is limited and spread across a number of functions / activities. Thus it is important that there is clarity in relation to the support that is available to the mayor.

3. **Core Activity**

3.1 The core activity of staff (primarily the Civic & Communication Officer) in supporting the Mayor can be identified as follows:

To manage the Mayor's diary and appointments – this broadly involves:

- Receiving invitations for the mayor to a huge range of events and functions.
- Liaising with the organisation inviting the Mayor
- Advising the Mayor and researching background information where required
- Drafting speeches for the Mayor where required
- Co-ordinating the Mayor / chauffeur
- Having an overview of civic regalia and its use
- Producing press releases / communication relating to Mayoral Activities

Civic / Mayoral events:

To organise and deliver key civic / mayoral events:

- Remembrance event (supporting Town Clerk)
- Civic Dinner
- Civic Service
- Mayoral awards event

Communication activity:

In addition to these civic support activities, the Civic & Communications officer leads the delivery of the Town Council's communication activities (liaising closely with the Town Clerk.)

This includes formal press releases, regular communication activity (e.g. social media) as well as taking a more overarching view of communication activity.

Other activity:

In addition to this core work – the Civic and Communications Officer assists other staff in dealing with various Town Council activities. This includes for example:

- Supporting blue plaque events.
- Supporting Leamington in Bloom activities

4. **Charity activity**

As part of their Mayoral year, if they wish, the Mayor can identify a charity to support during the year. In doing so the Mayor can help promote the charity, raise their profile and where possible assist them to fund raise.

However there is very limited Town Council staff capacity to support specific fund raising events. The Civic Dinner offers an opportunity to raise some funds for the Mayors charity. However, other events are time consuming and mean that officer time is spent on those, rather than core Town Council activities.

As such, it is proposed that additional charity fund raising activity should primarily be led by the Mayor's charities themselves, with support of the Mayor, and with limited input/oversight from Town Council staff.

This is not intended in any way to diminish the importance and value of the Mayor's charity fundraising, but it is important to recognise the limits of staff capacity, both to enable core Town Council work to be delivered and to avoid too much pressure being put onto staff both to raise funds and to fit in extra activities beyond which may be deliverable in the available time / capacity.

5. **Summary**

In summary there is limited staff capacity to deliver / manage events designed to raise funds for the Mayor's charity. Any time spent on such activities means staff time is not being spent on other core Town Council functions / activities, of which there are many. In order to avoid confusion and to ensure staff can prioritise their capacity, clarity is sought in relation to staff time spent on fund raising activities.

6. **Recommendations**

In order to operate within the capacity of staff and to enable the core activities of the Town Council and the Mayor to be delivered, it is recommended that:

Staff support for the mayor is limited to the core activities:

- Managing the Mayors calendar and supporting the Mayor to attend events to which they are invited.
- Providing advice and support to the Mayor.
- Promotion and communication relating to Mayoral Activity
- Organisation and delivery of key civic / mayoral events, as identified.

And that any other charitable fund raising activities are led by the Mayor's charity, working with the Mayor and with peripheral support from Town Council staff.

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 15th DECEMBER 2022

CIVIC DINNER

1. **Purpose**

To consider the format of the annual Civic Dinner

2. **Background**

2.1 The annual Civic Dinner is one of the civic events that the Town Council organises during the year and as it's name clearly suggests, is a dinner hosted by the Mayor. When discussing the draft budget for 23/24, a number of issues were raised in relation to the civic dinner and it was apparent that there was a wide range of views on the purpose / format etc of the Civic Dinner and the financial aspects.

It is felt that it would be helpful for all involved (notably the Mayor at the time and Town Council staff) to have some clarity regarding the Civic Dinner.

2.2 The Civic Dinner takes a lot of staff time and capacity to organise. It is primarily led by the Civic & Communications Officer but in practice it involves all of the Town Council staff, particularly on the night of the event itself.

3. **Issues**

3.1 Cost / budget – The Town Council makes budget provision for the Civic Dinner. In 2022/23 this was £1500. In practice this is not enough to fund a formal dinner. The costs for the 2022 Civic Dinner were approximately £2500, primarily consisting of venue costs, catering costs and some other sundry / peripheral costs.

Therefore tickets to the dinner are generally sold to attendees to seek to help cover the costs incurred. Consideration is also made to raising funds for the Mayors charity through ticket sales – however this both has the effect of placing pressure on staff to raise funds in this way, as well as inevitably increasing the ticket cost.

In practice the Town Council needs to cover the costs of the dinner – so some income from attendees / tickets is needed to achieve this. Ticket costs will of course be dependent on costs for the dinner, balanced with the Town Council's agreed budget.

3.2 Purpose – clarification of the purpose of the civic dinner would be useful. This could include:

- Celebrating the Mayors activity during the year.
- Promoting the Mayors charity.
- Recognising contributions to the community

-Raising funds for the Mayors charity. (as far as is practicable)

3.3 Tickets

As the Town Council's budget does not cover the full costs of the dinner, tickets need to be sold to ensure that a loss is not made. This can be difficult to judge – as it is dependent on the number of tickets sold and whether there is an aspiration to raise money for the Mayor's charity via the ticket sales.

3.4

Venue – the Civic Dinner 22/23 took place in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall. Not only could this be deemed as the 'home of the Mayor', it facilitates the organisation of the event due to the suitability of the venue and the good working relationship between Town Council and WDC Town hall staff. Costs are also reasonable in comparison to many other venues.

3.5

Friday / Saturday – While staff do work on weekends for a wide variety of events and activities, holding the civic dinner on a Friday evening aids in the preparation for the event and minimises the additional staff capacity / resource required at the weekend.

3.6

Fundraising

The Civic Dinner offers an opportunity to raise some funds for the Mayors charity. However it can be very challenging to balance the costs of the event with the aspiration to raise funds for the Mayors charity. Therefore it is proposed that the tickets are primarily used to offset the costs of actually hosting the event, with Mayoral charity fundraising to be dealt with separately, for example through a raffle or similar activity as part of the dinner. (although in practice any surplus from ticket income will be added to the mayors charity fund).

3.7

Risk – to some degree there is (financial) risk involved in the civic dinner in relation to covering the costs of the event. This needs to be considered carefully when organising the event to ensure costs are reasonable / manageable.

4. **Proposal / Recommendation**

In order to provide clarity for all those involved in the Civic Dinner and to assist its successful organisation / delivery, it is proposed that the following principles are agreed in relation to the civic dinner:

- The Civic Dinner will ordinarily take place at the Town Hall.
- Dinner costs will be balanced between the Town Council's budget for the event and any ticket income – seeking to keep tickets to a modest cost, but recognising the need to deliver the event within the budget available.
- Fundraising for the Mayors charity will be dealt with as a separate activity at the civic dinner (eg raffle etc).
- The dinner will generally take place on a Friday evening.

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 15th DECEMBER 2022

STAFF CAPACITY / RECRUITMENT

1. **Purpose**

To consider staffing and capacity issues.

2. **Background**

2.1 The Town Council's Deputy Town Clerk will be leaving the Town Council at the end of 2022. Inevitably this will have a significant impact on staff capacity. Consideration needs to be given to the impact on the staff team and the prioritisation of activity until a replacement is recruited and settled in to the organisation.

3. **Capacity impacts**

3.1 The Town Council has a staff of 4 officers, 3 of whom are 'office based'. Inevitably the loss of one officer therefore has a substantial impact on staff capacity.

3.2 Although recruitment will be undertaken as quickly as is practicable, there will inevitably be a significant period of time where staff capacity will be significantly reduced. It is anticipated that this is likely to be 3-4 months, but this will depend on a range of factors. Consideration needs to be given to how this reduced capacity is managed.

3.2 The staffing committee and Town Council have recently (Nov22) reviewed the relevant job description, which has been renamed Deputy Town Clerk (was previously Democratic Support Officer). Therefore it is felt that recruitment can / should go ahead without further review of the job description.

4. **Work activities and priorities**

4.1 The Deputy Town Clerk leads on a number of key areas of work, including:

Planning matters
Supporting Cultural & Community Committee
Managing the community grants programme
Blue Plaques
Leamington in Bloom
Street Trees

It was also intended that the Deputy Town Clerk would lead on the Town Council's input into any Coronation event and to the refresh of the Town Council's website.

- 4.2 There will inevitably be greatly reduced capacity while the post is vacant. It is proposed that the following work areas are prioritised during this time:

Planning matters – to ensure that the Town Council is able to respond to planning applications and matters.

Cultural & Community Committee – ensure operation / support of the committee.

Grants – to ensure successful applicants are communicated with and future grant rounds are advertised and managed effectively.

The other areas of work, while very much valued, will need to be reduced in terms of their activity while staff capacity is reduced. Where this work is supported by a working group (Leam in Bloom, Blue Plaques), the Town Clerk will discuss the implications of this with the working group, including the nominated Cllr representatives.

- 4.3 Other staff will need to be involved with this work and this will therefore increase their workload, requiring suitable prioritisation of other activities. This will be managed as effectively as possible.

5. **Summary / recommendations**

In summary, the Town Council's staffing capacity will be significantly reduced while the post of Deputy Town Clerk is vacant and to a lesser degree while a new recruit is being brought up to speed in the role.

In recognition of this reduced capacity, it is proposed that work is prioritised as described in this report and that the reduced capacity of the staff team during this period is acknowledged.

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 15th DECEMBER 2022

POLICY UPDATE – TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

1. **Purpose of the Report**

To consider a Training and Development policy

2. **Background**

- 2.1 At its meeting on 3rd February 22 the Policy & Resources Committee received a report on the Town Council's current policies and key documents. Within that report was a recommendation that the Town Council's key policies and documents should be the subject of a rolling programme of review to 'ensure the Town Council maintains a comprehensive and up to date suite of policy and procedure documents to assist the smooth operation of its activities'. This recommendation was approved by the committee.

This report considers a draft Training and Development Policy.

3. **Training and Development**

- 3.1 The ability of the Town Council to operate effectively and in accordance with relevant legislation, guidance and good practice is very much dependent on the knowledge and skills of those involved in working on behalf of the Town Council, particularly elected members and staff but also volunteers where relevant.
- 3.2 The proposed policy seeks to recognise the importance of training and development to the organisation as well as describe how relevant training and development will be identified and provided.

4. **Draft Policy**

A draft Training and Development Policy is attached at Appendix A

5. **Recommendations**

- i) That the committee considers the draft Training & Development Policy.
- ii) That the committee recommends adoption of the Training & Development Policy to the Town Council.



Royal Leamington Spa Town Council Training & Development Policy (DRAFT)

December 2022

1. Introduction & Purpose

Royal Leamington Spa recognises that the people working on its behalf are its biggest asset, whether they are elected Councillors, employees or volunteers. Having access to the right skills and knowledge is critical to the professional and effective operation of the Town Council. Therefore, the Council is committed to providing appropriate training to help individuals fulfill their roles effectively and thus help the Council to achieve its objectives.

2. New staff / volunteer

New staff (and formal volunteers) will be taken through a structured induction process as part of starting their new role. This will look to familiarise them with relevant aspects of the Town Council generally as well as the specific requirements of their role. As part of this process, learning and development needs will be discussed, and any specific training requirements identified and addressed.

3. Councillors

An induction pack will be provided to all new Councillors, with a range of information generally about local councils and about Royal Leamington Spa Town Council specifically. Induction training will also be arranged, which new Councillors are expected to attend / participate in. Councillors will be given the opportunity to identify any further training needs / interests relevant to their role. Councillors will routinely be advised of any suitable training / development opportunities that may arise.

4. Identifying training needs

In addition to induction processes, training needs will be identified in a number of additional ways. It will be considered as part of the following processes:

- Annual appraisals
- Action / service planning
- Team meetings
- One to one meetings / discussions
- Changes to roles / responsibilities
- Skills audits

Should individuals identify training needs in other ways, they should discuss this with the Town Clerk in the first instance.

5. Consideration of training needs

A variety of factors will be taken into account when considering training needs / requests, including:

- Legal / health and safety requirements
- Requirements of the role
- Benefits to the Town Council, including contributing to the Town Council's stated objectives and service plans
- Benefits for individual development
- Availability of effective methods of learning / training
- Cost / resource requirements

Staff / Cllrs should not commit to undertake training until the appropriate approval has been given.

6. Methods of training / learning

The Town Council recognises that there are a wide variety of methods of training / learning, including:

- Formal training sessions (face to face and virtual), including those available through the Town Council's membership of the local association of local councils.
- Training courses and qualifications, including sector specific qualifications
- On the job training
- Mentoring
- Shadowing
- Reading / researching
- Attendance at networking meetings / briefings
- Conferences / seminars
- Annual membership / subscriptions to relevant organisations

Ordinarily, training that is agreed is beneficial to the trainee and Town Council will be funded by the Town Council and (for staff) undertaken in work time. However, in some circumstances, consideration will be given to whether alternative arrangements are more suitable (e.g. where there is more benefit to the individual or training is beyond that required by the Council.)

Should training be requested that is not a direct requirement of the role, the circumstances will be considered and a decision made by the Town Clerk or involving Councillors (staffing committee / Policy & Resources committee) where appropriate.

7. Resources

The Town Council is committed to resourcing training and development appropriately, subject to consideration of costs (financial and other), need for training, benefits to Council and staff, and value for money. As part of its annual budget setting process, the Town Council will identify a sum for both member and staff training. This will consider any training already identified or any future anticipated training needs. Other budget considerations will relate to memberships / subscriptions and resources for learning materials / publications. Should a learning / development need arise that exceeds available resources, this will be analysed in more detail and consideration of additional resources given through the Town Councils usual decision making processes.

8. Monitoring and review

Records of training will be kept by the Town Clerk to ensure effective monitoring, review and future planning of training and learning needs and activity.

Anyone undertaking substantial training will be expected to report on progress / effectiveness either to the Town Clerk (in the case of other staff) or to the staffing committee in the case of the Town Clerk.

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 15th DECEMBER 2022

TOWN HALL CREATIVE HUB PROJECT – BRIEF UPDATE

1. Purpose of the Report

To provide a brief update in relation to the proposals for the future of the Town Hall, following the report and presentation to the Town Council in September 2022.

2. Background

2.1 Warwick District Council owns and manages Leamington Spa Town Hall. The Town Council has a lease for office space at the Town Hall which currently runs until 31 August 2027.

2.2 WDC has been considering plans to invest in the Town Hall to create a 'Creative Hub' within the building. This project is one of a number of projects in Leamington Spa part funded by the Government's Future High Streets Fund and part of the town's wider Creative Quarter initiative. Approximately £1.7 million has been secured by WDC from the Future High Streets Fund specifically for the Town Hall project, although it is acknowledged that further funding may be required depending on the scope of the work identified and ultimately agreed.

3. Town Hall Creative Hub Project

3.1 The broad aim of the project is to:

'transform Leamington Spa's Grade II listed Town Hall into a major hub for creativity. It will provide a unique space where world class performers rub shoulders with digital SMEs, global companies, and recent graduates - creating opportunities to co-curate, learn and develop. The revitalised building will act as a beacon for the district's creative industries, enticing people to the area for meetings, networking events and symposiums in four newly refurbished inspirational spaces, alongside existing tenants.

Specifically, the fund will seek to:

- *Install infrastructure to significantly increase visibility and accessibility.*
- *Reconfigure the ground floor box office to create a welcoming and active open plan visitor anchor point.*
- *Refurbish other parts of the building to create c.1536 sq/m of high quality, creative flexible meeting space for the cluster, community groups and public bodies, including improvements to accessibility to the upper floors.'*

- 3.2 WDC have secured architects Purcell to help deliver refurbishments funded by £1.738M of Future High Street Fund monies by the end of March 2024.
- 3.3 Proposals are being worked up with the intention of submitting a planning application in early 2023.

4. Update from WDC

A recent update from WDC advises:

Architects Purcell and their technical team continue to progress the proposals towards a target planning application submission early in 2023 and are on-track so far.

A planning pre-application walkover with the WDC Conservation Officer and Planning Officer was held on Thursday 10th November.

A pre-application advice note is due to be circulated following this meeting. A Conservation Advisory Forum session was held on Thursday 1st December. Feedback on the proposals was positive with support for the enhancements to the main entrance and reception area, the remodelling of the rear area to include a new lift and the proposal for a new entrance onto Livery Street. It was recommended that the proposals for the new door could be taken further with options to either recess or add additional detailing to make it more prominent. Purcell are to consider options for this.

This concludes RIBA work stage 2 on Concept Design and the team are now moving to stage 3 on Spatial Co-ordination as the detail of the plans now starts to take shape. Plans will continue to be developed and shared with stakeholders prior to forming the planning application.

The Leamington Town Council offices are highlighted as a phase 2 project so there will be plenty of time to consider this further and ensure any relocation to the second floor meets requirements in full.

5. Implications for the Town Council

The Town Council has a number of interests in the project, notably:

- The implications for and role of the Town Hall as an important building and focal point for the Town.
- The implications for the Town Council in terms of its office base at the Town Hall.

5.1 Office base

The Town Council has a lease for office space at the Town Hall which runs to 31 August 2027. This currently consists of an office along with small meeting room, as well as the Mayoral Parlour, which is essentially a space to support the activities of the Mayor and keep civic regalia.

As indicated in the update from WDC – there are no proposed changes to the Town Council's office spaces in phase 1 of the project.

6. Town Council input into options / proposals

At its meeting on 29th September, the Town Council **resolved**:

- i) That authority be delegated to Policy & Resources Committee to respond to WDC if not practical to bring the matter back to full Town Council due to timescales / deadlines.
- ii) That the Town Clerk convene a meeting of the accommodation working party if deemed necessary.

This was in acknowledgement of the fact that the development of proposals may not fit neatly with Town Council meetings

7. Summary

Work is progressing with phase 1 plans to make changes / improvements to the Town Hall. At this stage this does not include changes to the Town Council's office accommodation arrangements.

8. Recommendations

That the Committee:

- i) notes and considers the information provided in the report, including the update from WDC
- ii) specifically notes that details regarding any change to Town Council office space does not form part of the phase 1 proposals, but will be considered further in phase 2.
- iii) agrees that WDC be asked to share fuller details of the Town Hall proposals at the earliest practicable opportunity
- iv) agrees that WDC is asked to ensure plenty of time for full dialogue with the Town Council before committing to any move of the Town Council offices
- v) agrees that WDC be asked to provide information about how any disruption associated with the implementation of the Town Hall improvements will be managed.

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 15th DECEMBER 2022

PENSION REVALUATION

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the draft outcome of the triennial pension review and other related pension matters.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Warwickshire Local Government Pension Fund is part of the national Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The LGPS was set up by the UK Government to provide retirement and death benefits for local government employees, and those employed in similar or related bodies, across the whole of the UK. The Administering Authority (Warwickshire County Council) runs the Fund, in effect the LGPS for the Warwickshire area, to make sure it:
- receives the proper amount of contributions from employees and employers, and any transfer payments;
 - invests the contributions appropriately, with the aim that the Fund's assets grow over time with investment income and capital growth; and
 - uses the assets to pay Fund benefits to the members (as and when they retire, for the rest of their lives), and to their dependants (as and when members die), as defined in the LGPS Regulations. Assets are also used to pay transfer values and administration costs.
- 2.2 The Town Council is defined within the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations as an admitted body. By resolution local Parish and Town Councils must apply to join the LGPS. Royal Leamington Spa Town Council was admitted to membership of the Warwickshire Fund in 2002.
- 2.3 The LGPS is a Defined Benefit scheme. Employees' benefits are guaranteed by the LGPS Regulations, and do not change with market values or employer contributions. Investment returns will help pay for some of the benefits, but probably not all, and certainly with no guarantee. Employees' contributions are fixed in those Regulations also, at a level which covers only part of the cost of the benefits. Therefore, employers need to pay the balance of the cost of delivering the benefits to members and their dependants.
- 2.4 Every Fund utilises experienced Fund Managers to ensure that it is able to meet its current and future obligations from within the assets under investment. This is achieved through a Funding Strategy Statement. The draft FSS for the Warwickshire Fund has recently been reviewed and published. A full copy is available from the Town Clerk on request.

2.5 The FSS focuses on how employer liabilities are measured, the pace at which these liabilities are funded, and how employers or pools of employers pay for their own liabilities. As part of the FSS, the Actuary will undertake a periodic review, usually every three years to assess how well the Fund liabilities are being met from the various sources of revenue upon which it relies. It is this that is used to assess Employer contribution rates.

3. **Warwickshire Pension Fund Performance – Parish and Town Councils**

3.1 The draft results of the 2022 valuation have now been published and will be circulated as a separate document along with a FAQ document. Members will note that the Town Council is assessed as part of a pool of similar employers – town and parish councils. From time to time, with the advice of the Actuary, the Administering Authority may set up pools for employers with similar or complementary characteristics. This will always be in line with its broader funding strategy.

3.2 The intention of the pool is to minimise contribution rate volatility which would otherwise occur when members join, leave, take early retirement, receive pay rises markedly different from expectations, etc. Such events can cause large changes in contribution rates for very small employers in particular, unless these are smoothed out - for instance by pooling across a number of employers.

3.3 The draft 2022 valuation has led to the Town Council's likely employer contribution rate reducing very slightly from 21.1% (for years ending 31Mar21, 31Mar22 and 31Mar23) to 21.0% (for years ending 31Mar24, 31Mar25 and 31Mar26.)

3.4 Funding position – the funding position has moved from a position of 100% funding level (at the time of last valuation) to a position of 111% as at 31March 2022. This is obviously a strong position although it should be noted that there remains much market uncertainty.

4. **Pension Performance**

4.1 Each year the performance of the Warwickshire Pension Fund is reported to the Pension Fund Managers. This is reviewed by the Fund Board annually to ensure performance continues to meet the Fund liabilities. This is also reported at the Annual General Meeting which was last held on 04 November 2022.

5. **Conclusion / recommendation**

5.1 The funding position for the Parish and Town Council pool of the Warwickshire Pension Fund (which includes Leamington Spa Town Council) has moved from a position of 100% funding level (at the time of last valuation) to a position of 111% as at 31March 2022. This is of course not an indicator of future performance which will be influenced by the performance of investments, interest rate changes and the rate at which employees retire and draw upon the fund.

5.2 For the next three years from April 2023 - March 2026, the Town Council's contributions are likely to be very slightly lower than the last 3 years. (21.0% vs 21.1%.)

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 15th DECEMBER 2022

DRAFT BUDGET 2023/24

1. **Purpose of the Report**

To consider further the draft budget for 2023/24 and to recommend a budget to the full Town Council.

2. **Background & Context**

- 2.1 The Council is required to set its budget and advise Warwick District Council of the precept requirement. This is to enable the District Council to calculate the level of Parish Precepts (known as special expenses) and to accordingly set the level of Council Tax for the new financial year beginning on the 1st April 2023. Warwick District Council has now written to the Town Council asking that it advises WDC of the town council precept (as a lump sum) by Friday 13th January 2023. The Town Council is scheduled to meet on 12th January and will need to agree its budget and thus the town council precept on that date.
- 2.2 The Policy & Resources committee considered the process / timescales for setting the budget at its meeting on 13th October 2022. It then considered the draft budget in detail at its meeting on 16th November. The meeting on 15th December offers a further opportunity to consider the budget and to make a final recommendation to the Town Council.
- 2.3 Attached at Appendix A is a further revised draft budget for consideration. This is based on the discussions that took place at the 16th November meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee and any further information obtained by the Town Clerk since that meeting. A commentary is provided in Appendix B of this report, identifying any specific issues or notable amendments contained within the draft budget.
3. **Key Points for 2023/24**
- 3.1 As in previous years, the budget has largely been prepared on the basis of nil growth with the exception of known / likely inflationary increases or indeed minor decreases to reflect likely spend. Due to current economic conditions, inflationary pressures are greater this year than previously. Efforts have been made to identify actual / likely increases in costs but this is not always possible this far in advance of the start of the new financial year.

3.2 Tax Base

Since the meeting of this committee on 16th November 2022, Warwick District Council has written to each town and parish council indicating the number of properties used to calculate the Council Tax for the 2022/23 financial year.

In writing to town / parish councils, WDC has noted: *Please be aware that due to the current economic conditions, there has been a general increase in the number of dwellings being subject to Council tax support or other related discount. This may result in smaller than expected growth, and in some cases, a reduction in the tax base compared to last year.*

For the Leamington Spa town area the number of relevant properties for the 2023/24 financial year is 17226.33, which is an increase from 17,000.07 in 2022/23. This means that the lump sum precept will be shared across a slightly higher number of properties in the town and will affect the precept level at Band D accordingly. This change is reflected in the draft budget which is at **Appendix A**.

- 3.3 A provision of £10k has been included for the Kings Coronation. Given the capacity required to organise and deliver such an event, the Town Council will again look to work with WDC and Leamington BID. However, BID Leamington has indicated that it will have limited resources to support this due to the timing of the BID renewal. Further discussions with WDC will take place. The Town Council has very limited capacity to deliver such an event.

- 3.4 The draft budget as it currently stands would be a total of £451,709 and would require a total precept of **£442,519** (compared with £421,770 in 22/23).

This is a 4.92% increase on the total precept sum of 2022/23.

This is a 3.54% increase in the precept for a Band D property. (£25.69 vs £24.81)

(Note: the discrepancy in the above percentage rises is due to the increase in the council tax base from 17,007.07 to 17226.33, and thus the sharing of the total precept sum across a slightly larger number of properties).

This would be an increase of £0.88 per 'band D' property for the 2023/24 year.

- 3.5 For information, attached at Appendix C is a list of parish precepts in the Warwick District Area. This shows that the precept for Leamington Spa is very much at the lower end of the spectrum in comparison to other towns/parishes in the district.
- 3.6 Should there be any further budget proposals, members and political groups are encouraged to explore these with the Town Clerk to ensure that any related implications (staffing / delivery / capacity) can be identified and thus considered fully during the meeting to inform the final recommendation to the Town Council.

4. **Recommendations**

i) That the committee considers further the information provided in the report and the revised draft budget for 2023/24.

ii) That the committee recommends a 2023/24 budget for consideration by the Town Council at its meeting on 12th January 2023.

Appendix A

RLSTC DRAFT BUDGET 2023/24 (08Dec22)							
	2021/22	2022/23	Expenditure to 30/10/22	Expected out-turn 22/23	projected under / over spend (-)	Draft 2023/24	Notes
1. Member Allowances	18000	18000	8,333	18,000	0	18000	
2. Employee Salaries	153000	159,000	87,041	163,000	-4000	171,000	Anticipated salary cost increases
3. Mayoral Transport							
Uniform	300	300	0	300	0	300	
Fuel	450	450	110	200	250	300	reduce to reflect likely costs
Sundries	50	50	114	50	0	150	
Garage Rental	565	565	360	565	0	650	increase to reflect poss costs
Lease Charges	3027	3900	2389	4,100	-200	3700	new lease vehicle
4. Civic Expenses							
Regalia Maintenance	350	350	0	0	350	350	
Town Hall Mayoral Roll Board	390	390	130	260	130	250	reduce to reflect likely costs
Mayoral Photograph	325	325	240	325	0	325	
Civic Service	250	250	0	150	100	250	
Remembrance Service	1400	1000	247	700	300	1000	
Annual Parish Meeting	250	250	80	80	170	250	
Civic Regalia - Purchase	1000	1000	0	1,000	0	1000	
Civic Dinner	1500	1500	536	1,500	0	2000	reflect increasing costs
Civic Activity	500	500	121	500	0	500	
5. Administrative Expenses							
Insurance	2414	2500	2,460	2,460	40	3500	quotes to be obtained
Stationery / miscellaneous	550	550	210	550	0	550	
WALC / NALC Membership	2550	2560	2558	2,558	2	2650	
Audit fees	1350	1400	1240	1,240	160	1400	
Office equipment renewal	500	500	220	500	0	500	
Photocopying & Printing	650	500	141	500	0	500	
Postage	900	500	0	250	250	350	reduce to reflect likely costs
Staff training & memberships	1300	1200	583	1,000	200	1000	reduce to reflect likely costs
Member training	500	500	90	250	250	1500	training for new Cllrs
Web Site hosting	700	700	336	672	28	750	
Council Meetings - Room Hire	1000	1300	650	1,300	0	1000	
Minute Binding etc	200	200	0	0	200	200	
Payroll Agency	1400	1450	855	1,465	-15	1600	
Banking charges	900	750	179	350	400	800	
I.T. equipment, repair and support	1250	1,250	0	1,250	0	1,250	maintain to create reserve for equipment renewal
Mobile phone costs	325	350	170	325	25	350	
Software costs	750	750	132	300	450	1,000	anticipate additional licences
Accountancy software	1000	1,400	993	993	407	1,100	reduce to reflect likely costs
Website redesign	4000	2,500	0	0	2500	0	fund from reserve
HR Support	500	500	0	0	500	500	
6. Property and Asset Maintenance							
Town Hall - Annual Rent	9050	9300	6871	9,170	130	10300	
Town Hall - Maintenance Charge (inc. NNDR)	15520	15,520	6692	11,500	4020	15,520	inc allowance for essential building maintenance
Telephones & Broadband	500	560	370	560	0	600	
Asset maintenance	0	1500	1506	2,000	-500	3000	war memorial
Telephone Kiosk - Clarendon Avenue	500	0	0	0	0	0	Combine into asset maintenance budget
War Memorial	0	0	0	0	0	0	Combine into asset maintenance budget
Lillington Highway Signage	500	0	0	0	0	0	Combine into asset maintenance budget

7. Mayor's Award	300	300	272	272	28	500	increase to reflect costs
8. Twinning (not LITS)	400	400	89	289	111	400	
9. Grants and Community expenditure							
Citizens Advice Bureau	20000	20000	0	20,000	0	20000	
Christmas Lighting	20000	20000	0	20,000	0	20000	
Leamington in Bloom	3000	3,000	2095	3,000	0	3,000	
Leamington International Twinning Society (LITS)	3000	3000	3000	3,000	0	3500	Request from LITS to increase
Community Grants	50000	45000	24719	45,000	0	45000	
Climate Change	0	5000	0	5,000	0	5000	
Blue Plaques	1800	2500	366	1,500	1000	2000	reduce to reflect likely costs
Tree Planting and Maintenance	16500	20000	0	20,000	0	20000	
Guided Walks - History Group	500	500	0	500	0	500	
District Shopmobility Scheme	26000	26000	13000	26,000	0	26000	
Social Cohesion Fund	10300	10300	1754	9,254	1046	9254	Proposed reduce (Children's centres -£7500) & Lillington Library - £ 1754
Neighbourhood Development Plan	2000	500	30	30	470	300	reduce to reflect likely costs
Projects Budget	6000	6000	0	6,000	0	6000	For projects identified / developed in year.
10. Elections	18000	20000	0	0	20000	20000	To be added to elections reserve
11. Allotments	5800	5800	4717	5,800	0	10310	amended to reflect allotment rental spend
12 Budget Options					0		
Planter maintenance	500	0	0		0	0	moved to property and assets
Queen's Platinum Jubilee		10,000	10000			0	One off
Kings Coronation						10,000	
BUDGET TOTALS	414,266	434,370	Underspend / Overspend		28802	451,709	
Less Projected Income	2000	100	less projected income		9,190		Interest / allotment income
Budget requirement before reserves	412,266	434,270	Budget requirement before reserves			442,519	
Less Contribution from reserves	0	12500	Less Contribution from reserves (if any)			0	
Budget requirement from Precept	412,266	421,770	Budget requirement from Precept			442,519	
Projected Precept at Band D	£23.94	£24.81	Projected Precept at Band D			£25.69	
Total budget as % of 21/22		104.85%	Total budget as Percentage of 2022/23			103.99%	
Precept (Band D) as % of 21/22		103.63%	Precept (band D) as % of 2022/23			103.54%	
Earmarked Reserves at 31March 2022		281,877					
Earmarked - Comm Infrastructure Levy		31382					
Platinum jubilee		10000					
Future elections		50000					
IT & Website		6000					
O/S allotment grants		7600					
One off accommodation costs		5000					
Adjusted / general reserves		171,895					

Appendix B - Notes / commentary on draft budget:

The commentary and notes below provide supporting / explanatory information on various aspects of the budget. The numbering used in the text below reflects the numbering used for budget headings in the draft budget for ease of use.

2. Salaries

The expenditure on salaries represents a significant proportion of the Town Council's spending. As is usual, the salary increase for 2023/24 is subject to national negotiations. At the time of writing, the salary increase for 2023/24 is not yet known. Therefore the increase in the salary budget is a best estimate of likely salary increases for 23/24.

The increase also takes into account the national salary award for 22/23, which was only recently announced in early November 22. Due to the current economic circumstances this proved to be higher than was anticipated when the 22/23 budget was set. This has had to be reflected in the salary budget.

3. Mayoral Transport

An increase for garage rental costs has been included in anticipation.

4. Civic Expenses

- Civic Dinner budget has been increased to reflect rising costs – further discussion ref the Civic Dinner is included on a separate agenda item, the results of which should inform the budget setting.

5. Administrative expenses

- Insurance agreement needs to be updated and costs are being sought. Provision for an increase is included in the draft budget.
- Cllr training budget increased in case of new members elected
- Postage – reduced to reflect more use of electronic communication / payments

6. Property & Asset maintenance

- Increase to pay for cleaning of war memorial
- Increase ref office rent – confirmation being sought.

7. Mayors Awards

- Increase to reflect costs

9. Grants and community expenditure

- Twinning – reflects a request from LITS to increase slightly.
- Blue plaques – reduction to reflect costs

11. Allotments

Budget amended to reflect total costs (inc rents) – offset by incoming rents identified in income.

12. King's Coronation

Proposed budget of £10k to contribute to a partnership event in the town to celebrate the coronation.

Appendix C

Parish and Town Council Precepts

The table below gives the additional precept requested by each Parish and Town Council in the Warwick District area and the corresponding amounts of Council Tax applicable to dwellings in valuation Band D.

Parish and Town Council	Precept 2021/22 £	Precept 2022/23 £	Band D Equiv. £
Baddesley Clinton	3,500	3,500	31.26
Baginton	15,967	17,178	54.26
Barford, Sherbourne & Wasperton	54,236	56,948	59.70
Beausale, Haseley, Honiley & Wroxall	7,500	7,500	22.00
Bishops Tachbrook	125,000	134,840	55.25
Bubbenhall	18,000	18,000	57.50
Budbrooke	30,600	36,700	42.48
Burton Green	18,595	19,350	28.06
Bushwood	0	0	0.00
Cubbington	51,390	54,960	36.21
Eathorpe, Hunningham, Offchurch, Wappenbury	15,518	15,116	45.68
Hatton	14,200	14,384	15.43
Kenilworth	183,928	204,280	20.71
Lapworth	22,664	22,900	22.91
Leek Wootton	18,331	20,137	38.56
Norton Lindsey	10,000	10,000	44.44
Old Milverton & Blackdown	7,500	7,500	46.34
Radford Semele	33,604	35,574	33.52
Rowington	20,430	20,430	35.94
Royal Leamington Spa	412,266	421,770	24.81
Shrewley	7,903	5,904	13.87
Stoneleigh & Ashow	17,709	18,352	40.76
Warwick	502,569	561,187	44.79
Weston-under-Wetherley	11,000	11,000	57.27
Whitnash	234,409	284,394	79.57
Total Warwick District Council Area	1,836,819	2,001,905	951.32
Average			35.50

Report No 13.

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 15th DECEMBER 2022

PAYMENTS

1. **Purpose of the Report**

To consider and approve a schedule of payments – a schedule will be circulated.