

# STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN COUNCIL

## GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING

24 October, 2017

### TOWN CLERK'S OPEN REPORT

#### 1) Cemetery and Town Hall Fees

- **To review the draft proposed tariffs for the Cemetery and make a recommendation to the Finance & Scrutiny Committee**
- **To note the process for amending the Town Hall Tariff**

##### 1.1 **Cemetery**

A review of the Cemetery fees is undertaken on an annual basis. Unless there is a directive by the Finance & Scrutiny Committee or the General Purposes Committee to undertake a specific evaluation of the existing fee structure, they are reviewed each year in line with inflation.

With this in mind, the Deputy Town Clerk has been working on an inflationary figure of 3.9% (based on RPI as of August 2017).

Attached as **Appendix 'C'** is the proposed schedule of fees for 2018/2019, which sees an inflationary rise across the board. Due to it being a relatively small percentage increase, some of the figures were 'awkward' and therefore have been rounded up or down to make them more manageable. The Tranquility Garden fees are currently being worked on and will be tabled at the meeting. The proposed increase will also be in line with inflation.

Members are requested to review the fees in order to bring a recommendation to the Finance & Scrutiny Committee.

##### 1.2 **Town Hall**

The annual review of the Town Hall tariff is now due as part of the budget process. It will need to be discussed by the Town Hall Sustainability and Income Task and Finish group and if they agree that the fees should be increased, it will be by no less than 3.9%, which is the RPI rate of inflation in August 2017. The proposed fees are attached **Appendix 'D'**.

2) Street Furniture & Amenities Request for Dog Hygiene Bin in Avenue Ward – deferred from the 26.9.17 GP Meeting

- **To consider and resolve during the next agenda item**

This matter was discussed and not resolved at the General Purposes Committee Meeting on 26 September, 2017. It was therefore AGREED that this matter would be returned to the next General Purposes Committee Meeting and discussed as part of the overall plan for the provision of street furniture and amenities which is the next issue on the agenda.

Councillor Bott advised at the meeting on 26 September that, together with Councillor Short, they would meet the site manager from Mainstay Residential Limited in order to discuss the request for a dedicated dog hygiene bin in Barn Lane, as there is currently uncertainty where this bin can be located.

3) Additional Street Furniture and Amenities

- **To agree the facilities for inclusion in the 2018/2019 Budget**

At the General Purposes Committee Meeting on 26 September, 2017 members were asked to consult or have a 'ward walkabout' with their fellow ward member, to discuss the need and determine the location of additional street furniture and amenities which are required in each ward for the following year. This enables a more accurate figure to be included in the budget and should pre-empt further requests for amenities on a piecemeal basis.

Amenities are considered biannually, in September in time for the budgeting process, and at the February General Purposes Committee Meeting.

Members were asked to submit their list of requirements to the Town Clerk by Monday 16 October in order for the list to be compiled and costed for consideration at the General Purposes Committee Meeting. The ward members from Hathaway responded advising that they did not foresee the necessity for further street furniture or amenities in their ward. The Avenue ward members also met with their District Council counterpart and have asked for bin provision to facilitate the new build in this area.

Ward	Amenities Required	Cost
Avenue	4 bins	Litter Bins: £340 each + £105.75 annual emptying charge <b>£1783</b>
Bishopton - no response		
Bridgetown - no response		
Clopton - no response		
Guildhall - no response		
Hathaway	No further amenities required	
Guildhall - no response		
Shottery - no response		
Tiddington - no response		
Welcombe - no response		

The Town Clerk spoke to the Heads of Service, Robert Weeks - Head of Planning and Housing, and Tony Perks - Head of Technical and Community Services at the District Council regarding the concern raised at the last General Purposes Committee Meeting. The significant increase in housing development is, and will continue, to significantly impact on the number of street furniture and amenities that the Town Council is being asked to provide.

Currently, the District Council's street scene department comments on planning applications for new developments, but it would appear that they do this primarily to ensure that adequate space and facilities are provided for waste disposal such as dustbins or wheelie bins. They are not commenting on street furniture such as street litter bins which double as dog hygiene bins.

Mr Weeks made the point that the Town Council could request such provisions in their response to planning applications, although he was unsure whether this would be enforceable on the developer. He also advised that such provision could be provided by the Town Council from their CIL levy.

The Town Clerk responded that if the provision was financed from s106 monies which go primarily to SDC, then it would be somewhat understandable, as it has to be of direct benefit to the development from which it arises. However, in terms of CIL, which

should be received by the Town Council from February/March 2018 onwards, it could be argued that the community at large is being asked to pay for amenities which directly benefit a specific area i.e. is it fair for Bishopton 500 to contribute for amenities in Shottery 800 and vice-versa? Simplistically, it should be the developer who pays for and installs adequate facilities on their developments at the outset.

However, if the Town Council were to stipulate street facilities in their planning application responses, Mr Weeks was also concerned that this may have an impact on the budget of the Technical and Community Services Department and referred the Town Clerk to Mr Perks.

Mr Perks considered it sensible for the Town Council to raise awareness of the necessity to stipulate a provision in their response to planning applications, as the developer, or the Town Council, will be responsible for their provision.

He confirmed that they will not be installed by the District Council, although SDC will assist and advise on the level of litter bin provision and their placement in order to maximise the quality of the local environment. They would also make arrangements with Biffa (the cleansing contractor) to ensure that the bins are emptied at an agreed frequency.

This is also the situation across the town as the District Council will no longer install bins etc. Any additional amenities and the cost of emptying them must be borne by the Town Council.

Prior to installation, permission must be sought from the landowner and the amenity should not be placed on private ground. Consequently, both the District and County Councils will need to be involved in the process. The policy for the Installation of Amenities and Street Furniture, attached as **Appendix 'E'** explains the whole process, and has recently been reviewed by the Governance & Policies Panel. The policy is being recommended to Council by the G&PP for approval and adoption.

#### 4) Ward Watch

- **To approve the Calendar of Meetings**

During the discussion at the last General Purposes Committee Meeting on areas of concern raised by Stratford Leys Residents' Association, it was considered prudent to reinstate the Town

Council's Ward Watch meeting in order to 'feed' unresolved issues or community matters of great concern through to the wider Forum.

The intention was that attendance at these Ward Watch meetings could be shared so that the meetings have just one member from each ward present. It was resolved that the Town Clerk would write to WCC's Community Forum to ascertain the Forum meeting schedule in order to draw up the proposed Ward Watch calendar of meetings.

The Town Clerk received a response from Ali Mainey, the Community Development Worker from Warwickshire County Council. Her email is attached as **Appendix 'F'**.

The Governance and Policies Committee reviewed the Terms of Reference of the proposed Ward Watch Forum which are attached as **Appendix 'G'**. These too are being recommended to Council for approval and adoption.

In order for Ward Watch to be successful, it will be necessary to obtain the 'buy-in' from the other authorities and outside agencies, so it would be helpful if the General Purposes Committee would consider the proposed calendar of meetings which should take place at 2.15pm on a date to be agreed.

It is probably too late to instigate Ward Watch this year, as setting a date six weeks before early December means that the agenda would need to be circulated next week, and the exercise to contact all the other agencies has yet to begin. It is therefore proposed that the calendar of meetings for 2018 is:

Ward Watch Meeting	Community Forum
Wednesday 31 January 2018	March 2018
Thursday 3 May 2018	June 2018
Wednesday 1 August 2018	September 2018
Wednesday 31 October 2018	December 2018

None of these dates clash with published WCC or SDC Meetings.

5) River Avon Mooring

- **To review the Avon Mooring Tenancy Agreement and bring a recommendation to the Finance & Scrutiny Committee**

The three year tenancy agreement that Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council has with the current tenant is due for renewal.

The tenant has paid £600.00 per annum for a period of three years for the use of part of the Avon Mooring, approximately 37 feet (11.27m). The Tenant is permitted to moor a boat no longer than 25 feet but has never chosen to exercise this right. The other part of the mooring, which was originally earmarked for use by the Sea Cadets, is no longer used by the organisation and when it was, it was provided on a pro bono basis.

Now that the tenancy agreement is up for renewal, the Deputy Town Clerk contacted the Avon Navigation Trust to ascertain the latest tariff for mooring sites on the Avon. They advised a tariff of between 75p to 90p per foot per week, depending on the facilities at the mooring. Arguably therefore, the Town Council Mooring would equate to 75p per week as there are no parking rights or electricity. This equates to a yearly rental of £975.00.

Although this is more than the current tenancy agreement, Council is asked to take into account that the mooring site is actually overseen and to some extent, cared for, by the existing tenant who is quick to alert the Council of any problems. The approach is steep and if a tenant actually moored a boat and used it frequently, there is every likelihood that expense would be incurred by the Town Council to ensure that the physical structure remains sound and fit for purpose.

Before advertising the mooring, Council is requested to determine whether the existing tenant should be offered any leeway from his existing £600.00 per annum to the possible £975.00, which is not guaranteed but is more likely if advertised on the open market.

6) 2017/2018 Budget

- **To review the draft proposed General Purposes Budget for 2018/2019 and make a recommendation to the Finance & Scrutiny Committee (budget to be circulated and tabled)**

October sees the start of budget deliberations amongst the spending Standing Committees, with recommendations being passed through to the Finance & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 21 November, 2017.

At the time of the papers despatch, the Deputy Town Clerk was still working on the proposed draft budget. It will therefore be circulated to members by email prior to the General Purposes Committee Meeting and will also be tabled at the meeting.

The proposed draft budget for the General Purposes Committee, will be determined using intelligent predictions and past evidence.

Members are asked to take note of the directive from the Finance & Scrutiny Committee when reviewing the budget proposal - spending Standing Committees must compile their proposed budget requirement by proven need or accurate estimates, rather than using an unsubstantiated, arbitrary 'may need' budgetary cushion.

Town Clerk  
24 October, 2017