

ANNUAL REPORT

2019–2020



CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2019 - 20



This has been a challenging year for your town council. The town Council is preparing to take on the provision of more services currently provided by Wiltshire Council. Other towns have faced the same decision - increase council tax or stand by and watch services decline.

We have been making extensive preparations and believe that we can provide better quality services for Warminster residents. The experience built up since taking on the Lake Pleasure Grounds has been invaluable. 8 children's play areas have already been taken on by the Town and improvements are underway.

We have plans to run our own road sweeper and this service should start soon. Due to the importance of the responsibilities that these services impose on us we are reviewing our staff and committee structure. The whole process over the past few years has been a huge change for the town council and our budget has gone from £500,000 in 2016/17 to £1.3 million for this financial year.

In January 2019 full council approved the building of our new skatepark. This was funded by grants and Community Infrastructure Levy money from developers. Opening on time and within budget, the skatepark is proving incredibly popular with skaters, BMX riders and scooters with users aged 4 -40 !

We are seeking to rebuild the paddling pool in the Lake Pleasure Grounds and proposals from contractors are going to councillors to consider the best way ahead.

We have decided to provide our own road sweeper, dedicated to keeping the streets of Warminster clean. This service will start soon.

A by-election was held due to the resignation of George Jolley, and Chris Spender was successful and welcomed to the Council. At the time of writing, the Country has gone into lockdown because of COVID19 it it will not be posisbel to hold the usual Town Meeting to prenst this annual report.

Paul Macfarlane

Mayor of Warminster

Councillor Paul Macfarlane

Warminster Civic Centre



The Civic Centre is the perfect venue for conferences and meetings, as well as for private functions such as weddings and birthday parties. It is easily accessible for people of all abilities, and with the Western car park immediately adjacent to the building there's never any problem finding a parking space.

The coffee bar in the foyer provides a warm and safe place to meet friends and colleagues. Events have ranged from blood donating to Zumba, childrens' parties to wedding receptions, conferences to martial arts, U3A to pilates. Whatever your event, chat to us and see how we can help.

Our male and female toilets both have baby changing facilities and there is a standard disabled toilet. We also have a fantastic fully equipped Changing Places Personal Care Room for use by adults and children with profound disabilities. This includes a height-adjustable adult changing bench, and a shower

Civic Centre Film Matinees

The Civic Centre shows film matinees on the third Wednesday of each month. Tickets are just £4 and include tea or coffee. Delicious Marshfield ice creams are on sale in a range of flavours. Films are shown in seasons of four, with the audience getting the chance to choose from a selection of films on the third film showing of the season (in March, August and November). The top four choices are selected for the next season. Films are shown soon after their general release.

Christmas Market

The Christmas Market on 30th November was a sell-out with 34 stalls offering a wide variety of Christmas gifts. The stallholders were delighted that more shoppers than ever visited. Bookings are already being taken for this year's market on 28th November.

Christmas Lights

The Town Centre was closed for the Christmas Lights switch-on and large crowds gathered for the entertainment and to cheer on Longleat's Viscount Weymouth, Ceawlin Thynn and Viscountess Emma Weymouth.

The lantern parade, was led by the band, Jamma de Samba. (sponsored by Three Horseshoes Walk) Other sponsors were Northwood, (the estate agent) and Brian Loveday Scaffolding. Thanks also to Warminster Community Radio and the Feoffees of St Lawrence Chapel. The Christmas Window competition really took off this year. Our congratulations to the winner, Simply Hair.



Town Development

The Town Development Committee, chaired this year by Cllr Rob Fryer, deals with issues relating to the town's infrastructure, many of which are projects requested by residents. This year these have included the following:

- Cllr Denis Brett took over as the Town's Speed Champion, tasked with promoting and encouraging speed watch initiatives around the Town. We need more volunteers to make the scheme work.
- Cllr Steve Jefferies is the Town's Litter Champion. With the support of officers this initiative has been a great success with residents coming together regularly to clear up litter hot spots in the town. The town council provides all the equipment. More and more people borrowing equipment from the council to help run their own litter picks.
- No.3 The High Street has got planning permission, unfortunately, the Council has no powers to make the owners do anything with the site.
- The Regeneration Working Group has been meeting with Wiltshire Council and the owners of Three Horse Shoes Walk to progress our longer term aspirations for the Town Centre
- Any highways issues are referred to the Community Area Transport Group of Wiltshire Council for decision based on feasibility and cost. Once schemes have been approved the Town Council would normally be expected to contribute 25% of the cost.

Planning Advisory Committee

The Planning Advisory Committee, chaired by Councillor Steve Jeffries, meets more than any other committee of the Council, coming together every month to consider all planning applications submitted to the planning authority, Wiltshire Council.

The Planning Advisory Committee can only object to planning applications on planning grounds. These are set out in law. They can take into consideration the policies in the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan.

The committee can make site visits if they think it will assist with their deliberations.

The Town Council is only a consultee, it can comment on planning applications but, the ultimate decision rests with Wiltshire Council and they have to follow national planning laws.

Town Promotion Sub-Committee

The Town Promotion Sub-Committee looks at ways to better promote the town. There are several outside representatives from businesses in the town. This year the committee has been chaired by Councillor Nick Pitcher and Sue Fraser.



Events

The sub-committee has worked to try and ensure town events gain maximum publicity. The Christmas Light Switch on, the Remembrance Day commemoration and Spring in the Park all attracted thousands of people from in and around Warminster. The Inspire music event and the Warminster Wobble were also big attractions.

Warminster Parking Partnership

The Town Council runs the Warminster Parking Partnership, allowing shoppers to reclaim their first two hours of parking costs by taking their refund vouchers to those retailers who display the Parking Partnership sign in their windows. The maximum refund for two hours is now £1.30. There are currently a dozen businesses signed up to the partnership. The Council welcomes any independent business who wish to join the scheme.



HR

The HR committee is comprised of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and chairs of committees, and meets quarterly to discuss any issues relating to staffing and to monitor the Council's risk assessments.

Finance and Assets Committee

The Finance and Assets Committee is chaired by Councillor Chris Robbins. It monitors all the Council's financial procedures and approves relevant expenditure. It scrutinises the draft budget before making recommendations to Full Council. The Council has had very good reports from both the internal and external auditors.

Full Council

Full Council meetings oversee reports from committees and it deals with issues that need decisions from all members. The most important decisions it took this year was to take on the running of some services historically provided by Wiltshire Council. The choice facing councillors was to take on the services or let them decline still further. The consequence has been an increase in Council Tax. Councillors do not expect to have to make such a substantial increase in future years.

Devolved Services and Assets Committee

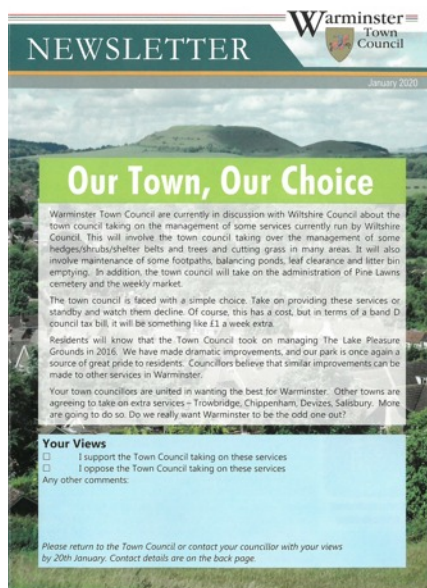
The Devolved Services and Assets Committee manages the Lake Pleasure Grounds and the public toilets. It is chaired by Councillor Sue Fraser.

Highlights of the past 12 months have been:

- Continuing to develop the Pavilion Café. The café is open every day between 10-00am and 5.00pm in the summer (1st April–30th September) and from Thursday to Sunday, 9.30am to 3.30pm in the winter (1st October–31st March). It is run by a Café Supervisor with assistance from seasonal staff. Sales in the Café were up on last year and we will work to help them to continue to grow. The kitchen is being refitted.
- Reapplying for Green Flag status for the Lake Pleasure Grounds. Being awarded Green Flag status in 2017, 2018 and 2019 was a fantastic achievement and we hope to repeat the success in 2020.
- Signs have been put up to ask people to keep their dogs under control and away from wildlife and to remind people using boats in the lake not to go close to the Islands.
- Boats on the lake were even more popular in 2019 than in 2018.. Four rowing boats and two canoes are available for hire during the season.
- The students of Fairfield Farm College help keep the Elisabeth Collyns Garden a relaxing spot in the busy Lake Pleasure Grounds.
- The tree trail booklet was so successful it had to be reprinted.
- Flower beds were again planted by local primary schools and schools are being approached to engage in this again.
- The council has built a new state-of-the-art skatepark . Grants are from The Military Covenant, The Ernest and Marjorie Fudge Trust and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.
- We look forward to the Skatepark Jam on 4th April.
- Much of the tarmac paths have been renewed and where tree roots have been a problem, a flexible gravel surface has been laid.
- The wild flower area has been extended.
- Further improvements to the Lake Pleasure Grounds are being considered for future years. These include improvements to the tennis courts and the boat house.



Communications



Communicating with residents is a key part of the Council's activities, and it takes many forms. There is an increasing reliance on social media with the Town Council and Civic Centre having Facebook pages and Instagram accounts to communicate information on the latest news and activities. There are also Facebook pages for the Lake Pleasure Grounds and the Pavilion Café.

The newsletter is distributed to 7,800 homes via the *Warminster Way* and *The Villager*.

The Town Council's website contains the timetable, agendas and minutes of council meetings, and also has a calendar of events at the Civic Centre and elsewhere in the town. The council is happy to advertise charity events in the town if the groups send us the relevant information. The Data Transparency Act 2018 is recognised by the Town Council and it observes the requirement of getting as much information uploaded onto the website as possible.

We advertise all our meetings weekly in the *Warminster Journal*, as well as posting notices on our internal and external notice boards at the Civic Centre. Many events are advertised in the *Warminster Journal*, such as the Remembrance Service, Civic Award and Christmas Market. The Council sends out regular press releases to the media. We obtain coverage in local papers and across many parts of Wiltshire. We feature on local radio, in magazines and occasionally on TV. It is important to keep Warminster's profile high and spread the word about local achievements.

CCTV

Warminster's CCTV operations are an important part of the Town Council's activities. Headed by supervisor Mike Herriott, a dedicated small team of staff and volunteers situated in Dewey House work closely with the local community police team as well as agencies from further afield. The Council is currently looking for volunteers to join the team. Anyone interested should contact Mike Herriott on 01985 217604.

The cameras situated in the town are working 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and the team also covers the monitoring of Westbury town and the West Wilts Trading Estate. In addition close working relationships with Warminster Garrison and Battlesbury Barracks enable a wide range of issues in respect of prevention of crime to be covered. The CCTV team continues to be involved in the local Pubwatch and Shopwatch schemes and supplies radios to participants. These help reduce shoplifting, vandalism and other crimes.

The Town Council supports volunteer activity such as the Community Litter Pick and Community Speedwatch. We recognise the huge importance of voluntary work to the well being of our town.

YOUR TOWN NEEDS YOU!



**Wanted
Volunteer CCTV
Operators**

Full training provided with recognised qualification and licence

If you are interested in helping your community and can offer at least 4 hours a week, contact Mike Herriott, CCTV Supervisor on 01985 217604



New Services

The town council has taken on the maintenance and management of 8 play areas in Warminster, previously managed by Wiltshire Council. These are already having maintenance and rejuvenation work carried out on them to bring them up to the town council standards.

Later this year the town council will take on further services from Wiltshire Council, these include: many verges, grass cutting, hedges, shrubs, shelter belts, trees, amenity footpaths, leaf clearance, balancing ponds, fencing, cuttings removal and disposal, litter picking, bin emptying, fly tipping, graffiti removal, hazardous waste, waste disposal, dead animals (road kill), road sweeper.

Events

The eleventh Warminster Wobble festival of cycling took place in June 2019 and is now an established event in Wiltshire, attracting cycling enthusiasts from far and wide. The Town Council contributes £3,000 annually towards the Wobble.



The Inspire music festival was held in July and had a varied line-up. Inspire showcases local music acts with an emphasis on youth and inspiring people to take up a musical instrument. The Council provides a budget of £3,500 for this event.

The Carnival attracted large numbers of people from Warminster and the surrounding area, and continues to be very important in Warminster's events calendar. The Council

provides annual funds of £3,000 towards the Carnival. This year Warminster Carnival won the Wessex Circuit Cup, beating many larger towns.

A list of all the regular events held at the Civic Centre and elsewhere in Warminster is available from the Civic Centre. The Town Council is also happy to display posters for local events on its community notice boards, its website and its Facebook pages.

The Town Council is a member of Visit Wiltshire which provides a forum to advertise events in the town throughout the county.

Spring in the Park in May 2019 was a huge success with an estimated 4000 people attending. This year we aim to be just as successful and hope for similar good weather.

Smaller events have been held in the Pavilion Cafe including readings of Room with a Broom, with the witch (right) and a bat walk.



Grants

The Town Council agreed and paid for grants from the Town Council budget. Recipients were from a range of organisations from support services, sports clubs and the arts. They included: Help Counselling Services, Jacobs Ladder Wiltshire CV, Warminster Athenaeum Trust, Warminster Group Diabetes UK, Warminster Flers Association, Warminster Philharmonic Orchestra, Warminster and District Stroke Club. The Town Council also makes recommendations to the Dewey Trust, which gives grants to local organisations.

If your organisation has not had the benefit of a grant, please contact the Town Council to discuss your requirements. Grant application forms are available online at www.warminster-tc.gov.uk or can be picked up from the Council offices. Applications must be received at the Civic Centre in May 2020. Grants will be decided by the Finance and Assets Committee in June.

WCR

Warminster Community Radio (WCR) has a service level agreement with the Town Council. In return for the Council providing an annual sum of £10,000 to WCR for five years from April 2017, the period of a full broadcasting licence, WCR assists at all Council events including the provision of a public address (PA) system and outside broadcasts for the Civic Service, Remembrance Sunday and the Christmas Lights switch on. They will be providing the PA for Spring in the Park. They are available to support and advertise other events in the town.

Mayors Charity

The Mayors Charity this year has been the buddy bag foundation. 48,000 children require emergency accommodation in the UK every year. Children are often fleeing a violent situation, and have to leave home quickly, without the chance to collect basic items. These children arrive in emergency accommodation with just the clothes they're wearing.

The buddy bag mission is to make a difference to the children who have to live through this traumatic experience. We provide each child with a Buddy Bag, with which we can help to restore a sense of safety and security. A Buddy Bag is a backpack that contains all the essential items a child needs. They include toiletries, pyjamas, socks and underwear. They also include comfort items such as a book, a photo frame and a teddy bear. A Buddy Bag is something a child can call their own, no matter where they go. By providing these children with a few essential items, we help make the transition into emergency care a little easier.

100% of donations go to the cause buddy bag don't use any fundraised money to pay for the running costs of the foundation.





The European Agricultural Fund for Rural
Development:
Europe investing in rural areas

The new community skatepark in the Lake Pleasure Grounds would not have been built without the financial support of the above organisations.

Freedom of Information requests received 01/04/2019–31/03/2020

One - 28 November 2019 regarding the Folly Lane, Rehobath in the neighbourhood plan.

List of complaints received 01/04/2019–31/03/2020

None

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all the staff at the Civic Centre, CCTV and in our wonderful Park , for the support I have received from them in my term of office. In particular, Tom Dommett, the Assistant Clerk, has covered for the Clerk during a prolonged period of absence. It has been an honour for me to represent Warminster as Mayor for a second time. I have thoroughly enjoyed my term of office, especially in having the opportunity to meet many of the residents of the town who give up their time so selflessly for the benefit of others. It never ceases to amaze me how many diverse organisations there are in the town and how much they rely on support from volunteers. I would also like to thank my wife The Mayoress for the many times throughout the year that she has accompanied me at the various functions and visiting our many charity group meetings.

Mayor of Warminster,
Councillor Paul Macfarlane.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2019–2020

The end of the Council's financial year is 31st March and shutdown of the accounts will take place in April 2020 to account for all expenditure and income. This report gives details of the income and expenditure to 29th February 2019 with a breakdown of our current situation. Once the accounts are completed these figures may have changed. The full audited accounts are available to the public and the details are advised on completion of the process which will take place by the end of June 2020.

The Councillors will make declaration through their annual governance statement that they understand their responsibility to have and maintain a sound system of internal control which includes the preparation of the accounting statements. This means they followed the Accounts and Audit Regulations, made proper arrangements for the safeguarding of public money and have only done what they have the legal power to do and have complied with proper practices in so doing. The Council has the general power of competence 'The power to do anything that individuals may generally do'.

An assessment of the risks facing this smaller authority has been undertaken and the Councillors have taken steps to manage those risks including internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.

Throughout the financial year an effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems has been carried out by the appointment of a competent independent person to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority. Appropriate action was taken on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audits.

Throughout the financial year this smaller authority has disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.

Fiona Fox BA (Hons) MCIPD FISLCC
Town Clerk and RFO
31st March 2020

SUMMARY OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE TO 29th FEBRUARY 2020

Due to the timing of the Town Meeting this set of figures represents 11 months' Income and Expenditure. The final figures will be established following the closedown operation on 23rd April 2020. Completed accounts are likely to be available in June 2020 and will be available for the public to inspect.

	Budget 2019-20	Actual 2019-20
Expenditure at 29th February 2019		
Administration	238 840	244 602
Properties, buildings and town amenities	568 627	710 246
Town development, grants and projects	127 600	109 182
Total gross expenditure	935 067	1 064 030
 Income at 29th February 2019		
Miscellaneous	148 584	402 151
Precept	786 483	786 483
Total income	935 067	1 118 634

	£
The Precept amounted to	786,483
Long-term Liabilities	
Public Works Loan Board	333,165
General Reserves	207 021
Earmarked Reserves:	
Capital Projects	244,250
Devolved Services	37,588
Elections	16,080
Tennis courts	10,000
CCTV	16,176
Catenary cables	3,168
Training	1,406
Play Areas	44,908
Town Crier	1,261
WW1 Commemorations	1,000
Website	863
Outdoor Gym	6,000
CIL17/18	6,739
CIL 18/19	88,156
CIL 19/20	41,059

Warminster Town Council is composed of 13 councillors. The town is divided into four wards: Warminster West, Warminster East and Broadway, each with four councillors, and Copheap with one councillor. The Council is led by the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor, who are elected each May at the Annual Meeting.

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Town Council meetings and committee meetings are held at the Civic Centre and are open to the public. The public are welcome to attend the majority of council meetings, either to listen or to speak in the public session.

Dates and times of meetings and agendas are posted on the notice boards at the Civic Centre, and are listed on our website at www.warminster-tc.gov.uk. Meetings are also listed in the *Warminster Journal*.

Minutes of Council meetings can also be found on our website or requested from the Civic Centre.

The Town Council offices at the Civic Centre are open Monday–Friday, 9.00am–4.30pm, and the public are welcome to call in during those hours.

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