

Town Hall, High Street, Corsham, Wiltshire SN13 0EZ

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7 January 2025

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend the Council Meeting to be held at the Town Hall on Monday 13 January 2025 at 7.00pm.

Please would members of the Accounts Sub-committee arrive by 6.40pm.

Yours sincerely



David J Martin
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Press and Public – To observe the meeting online or take part in Agenda Item 2 - Public Question Time and Petitions, please click [here](#) or email dmartin@corsham.gov.uk for instructions.

AGENDA

1. Apologies.
2. Public Question Time and Petitions.
3. Declarations of Interest.

To receive any Declaration(s) of Interest under Corsham Town Council's Code of Conduct issued in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.

4. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 9 December 2024 – *attached*.
5. Matters Arising from the above Minutes – *for information only*.
6. Policing and Community Safety – To consider policing and community safety issues – *for information and comment*.

7. Chair's Announcements.
8. Correspondence –
 - i) As mentioned in Members Information Sheet Nos. 585 and 586 (*to follow*) – *to note*.
 - ii) Late correspondence – *to note*.
9. Reports from Council representatives appointed to outside bodies.
10. Minutes of the Finance and Administration Committee Meeting held on 11 December 2024 – *attached*.
11. Matters Arising from the above Minutes – *for information only*.
12. Minutes of the Council (Planning) Meeting held on 18 December 2024 – *attached*.
13. Matters Arising from the above Minutes – *for information only*.
14. Budget and Precept for 2025/26 – With reference to the recent round of committee meetings and the report to the Finance and Administration Committee meeting on 11 December 2024, the draft budget is attached (see DRAFT for 2025/26 column).

The Town Council's overall draft budget shows an increase in spend of £183,635 (plus use of £225,812 of earmarked reserves) with a precept increase of £106,547 (8.68%). However, the decrease in the number of Band D Equivalent properties has increased the figure to 8.72% per property. The overall Band D Equivalent charge would increase from £247.22 to £268.78 (an increase of £21.56 per year or just over 41p per week).

Recommendation

It is recommended that the draft budget proposals be approved by the Full Council, with a budget of £1,799,760, including £225,812 from earmarked reserves, and a precept of £1,333,847 for 2025/26.

15. Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Update (*Minute 144/23 and others*) – The EIGHTH monitoring report, in the form of a RAG (Red/Amber/Green) Report and update sheet, is attached – *for information and comment*.
16. Corsham Parish/Town Council 130th Anniversary and 25th Anniversary (*Minute 11/24*) - January 2025 is the 130th Anniversary of Corsham Parish Council being formed. This will be followed, in May 2025, by the 25th Anniversary of the Town Council changing from a parish council.

The 25th/130th Anniversary Working Group, Community Services Committee and officers are planning a number of initiatives, mainly focussed on the 25th Anniversary, including: a short story competition looking at what Corsham could be like in another 25 years; time capsule; new logo and design for the Newsletter; and a youth arts project as part of the Peacock Arts Trail. A Town Hall open day is also being considered – *for information and comment*.

17. The English Devolution White Paper – Power and Partnership: Foundations for Growth – The English Devolution White Paper was presented to Parliament on 16 December 2024. Details can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-devolution-white-paper-power-and-partnership-foundations-for-growth/english-devolution-white-paper>. Whilst there is little mention of town and parish councils, the white paper is welcomed by the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks.

The NALC's and the SLCC's initial responses can be found here:

https://www.nalc.gov.uk/resource/nalc-calls-for-stronger-neighbourhood-governance-in-response-to-english-devolution-white-paper.html?utm_campaign=Chief%2Bexecutive%2527s%2Bbulletin%2B-%2B19%2BDecember%2B2024&utm_medium=email and <https://www.slcc.co.uk/slcc-welcomes-english-devolution-white-paper-but-calls-for-more-clarity-for-local-councils/>.

Wiltshire Council is due to discuss a proposal for the creation of a Heart of Wessex combined authority, jointly with Dorset and Somerset Councils, on 9 January 2025. Wiltshire Council's Chief Executive gave the *attached* update to town and parish council clerks and chief executives at a meeting on 19 December 2024 - *for information and comment*.

18. Elections Update – The local elections will take place on 1 May 2025. The Notice of Election will be published on 11 March. Wiltshire Council's webpage has the key dates and other important information: <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/local-elections>. The webpage will be updated regularly so it is worth checking for new information.

Wiltshire Council will be holding a webinar on the 11 February which is aimed at those candidates who want to stand in the Election. The webinar will cover the formal nomination process, how to stand for election, how to submit your nomination and what it is like to be a Councillor. There will also be information for Towns and Parishes. Further information will be available shortly.

In terms of a timeline, there will be a three-week window whereby nominations can be submitted. Wiltshire Council will be setting up a booking system and encouraging candidates to make an appointment to visit one of the nominated council buildings which will be assigned dependent on which area the parish sits. For Corsham this is likely to be Monkton Park council offices, Chippenham. This is also an opportunity for Wiltshire Council's officers to check the nominations have been completed correctly and people are encouraged to submit their nominations as early as possible. It is a legal requirement for candidates or a representative to hand in their nominations rather than post for example. All candidates and those that are re-standing are asked to familiarise themselves with the Electoral Commission website: <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance-candidates-parish-council-elections-england/resources-candidates-parish-council-elections-england>.

Polling day is Thursday 1 May 2025. Verification and count will be on Friday 2 May at County Hall, Trowbridge, The Olympiad, Chippenham and Five Rivers, Salisbury – *for information and comment*.

19. Vacancies on Committees, Other Groups and Outside Bodies – As a result of the Councillor vacancy arising from Adrian Jones’s resignation, there are opportunities to fill the current vacancies which are:

Community Services Committee – one vacancy
Finance and Administration Committee – one vacancy
Strategic Planning Working Group – one vacancy
Workshop Task Group – one vacancy
Corsham Parish/Town Council 25th/130th Anniversary Group – two vacancies
Corsham Sports Forum – one vacancy
Corsham Youth Zone – one vacancy

If any Councillor would like to fulfil any of the above roles, they can be appointed at the Council meeting – *for consideration*.

20. Issues for Corsham Area Board Consideration (*Various Minutes*) – This regular agenda item asks the Town Council to identify issues for Area Board consideration and receive a Wiltshire Councillor update on key points covered at Corsham Area Board meetings – *for discussion*.
21. Authorisation of cheques and payments – A list will be available at the meeting.

A Meeting of the Accounts Sub-committee will take place at 6.40pm.

The Methuen (Town) Hall meeting will take place immediately after the Council meeting.