

Minutes of the Council Meeting held at the Town Hall on Monday 13 January 2025

Present Councillor A Brown (Chair)
Councillors S Abbott, H Belcher OBE, N Brakspear, J Brook, T Bush, T Ellis,
N Farmer, R Hopkinson, D Jarman, A Mackie, G McCaffery, R Munn,
J Roberton, L Waugh, A White and R Williams.

In Attendance Mrs K Gilby (Finance and Planning Officer)
D Martin (Chief Executive)
Sgt M Tripp (Wiltshire Police)
D Walters (Wiltshire Councillor)

188/24 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillors A Thomas and G Ward.

189/24 Public Question Time and Petitions

There were none.

190/24 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.

There were none.

191/24 Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 9 December 2024

Resolved

That the Minutes be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

192/24 Matters Arising from the above Minutes

There were no matters arising.

193/24 Policing and Community Safety

Sgt Tripp attended the meeting and gave the following report:

There were 39 community engagements completed in December. These visits included several visits to local community hubs, retail theft awareness meetings and events including the Christmas lights switch on.

Local Police worked alongside the officers from the Special Constabulary on a night-time economy operation. This was to ensure high visibility patrols on the last weekend before Christmas and to provide reassurance to the public, local licenced premises and their licence holders/staff.

Local officers worked alongside rural crime police officers providing high visibility patrols in the Corsham area following recent reports of burglaries. These patrols would continue over the next few weeks whilst specialist departments continue their investigations into the burglaries.

A Closure Order was obtained by the local team for an address in Churchill Way, Corsham. This was to provide protection to identified vulnerable persons living within the house. This order provided a list of who could frequent/live at the address. The court order provided police a power of entry to complete checks at the address and a power of arrest for persons found on site not permitted.

Police incidents included: four drivers arrested for drink driving; six dwelling burglaries; five non-dwelling burglaries; eight reports of criminal damage (three incidents involve damage to vehicles); 11 reports of theft (six reported shoplifting), and five motor vehicle thefts.

One male had been arrested for public order offences committed in the town centre over the last few months. This was following a number of complaints about the male's behaviour from shop owners/workers and members of the public.

Councillor J Roberton reported that the Special Constables had also been doing a lot of work in the area including an anti-drink drive operation and a retail crime operation. A day of action was planned at the end of January and there was a drive to recruit more Specials.

194/24 Chair's Announcements

On 10 December the Chair had visited the Corsham Gymnastics Club. More than 1,000 people used the club each week.

On 12 December the Chair attended the Corsham Area Board Meeting. Grants were awarded to Inclusive Intergenerational Dance (iID) and the Repair Café at The Pound.

The Chair had visited Wadswick Green retirement village to discuss how the residents could become more integrated into the town.

The Chair had met with Peacock Women's Institute and learned of their ambition to install a poppy cascade at St Bartholomew's Church and possibly on the High Street planters. They would appreciate donations of red wool. Approximately 15,000 poppies were required.

The Chair reminded Councillors of the importance of declarations of interests and conduct during meetings.

The Chair updated Councillors on personnel changes taking place, Mrs M Jones, Head of Finance and Administration was retiring at the end of March. Mrs K Gilby had been

promoted to fill her position. Recruitment was underway for a new Finance and Planning Officer with interviews scheduled for 17 February.

The Chair reminded Councillors that volunteers were needed to complete the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan Character Area Assessments which would be used to update the Corsham Design Guide.

195/24 Correspondence

- i) Members Information Sheet Nos. 585 and 586 were noted.
- ii) Late correspondence – there was none.

196/24 Reports from Council representatives appointed to outside bodies

Councillor S Abbott reported that Corsham Youth Zone was going from strength to strength. Councillors asked for it be noted that Emma Drage and Rachel White be thanked for all their hard work.

Councillor N Farmer reported that he had attended The Pound AGM. It had been a successful year with increased ticket sales. Rising costs were still an issue. They thanked the Town Council for its continuing support.

Councillor A White reported that the Corsham Twinning Association would be visiting France in 2025. They had lots of fundraising events planned and would be approaching the Town Council for funding support.

Councillor D Jarman reminded Councillors that the next Business Breakfast would be held at Digital Mansion Corsham on 29 January.

Councillor J Roberton reported that Corsham Climate Action (CCA) were holding a social event at The Three Brewers 16 January. The next CCA meeting was on 28 January and the next litter pick and repair café were on 25 January.

Councillor G McCaffery reported that he had attended the recent Wiltshire Association of Local Councils meeting.

Councillor H Belcher reported that she and Councillor J Brook had attended a recent Potley and Pockeridge Community Association Meeting. All was going well especially with The Brunel Shed.

197/24 Minutes of the Finance and Administration Committee Meeting held on 11 December 2024

Resolved

That the Minutes be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

198/24 Matters Arising from the above Minutes

There were none.

199/24 Minutes of the Council (Planning) Meeting held on 18 December 2024

Resolved

That the Minutes be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

200/24 Matters Arising from the above Minutes

There were none.

201/24 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 for the 2025/26 financial year was considered. The Town Council's overall draft budget showed 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 had 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).

Resolved

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.

202/24 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, had been circulated. A breakdown of the £40,000 Market Towns Grant received from Wiltshire Council would be included on the next Members Information Sheet. The increased demand for community facilities (especially sports facilities) would be fed into the Neighbourhood Plan Review.

Resolved

That the monitoring report be noted.

203/24 Corsham Parish/Town Council 130th Anniversary and 25th Anniversary (*Minute 11/24*)

January 2025 was the 130th Anniversary of Corsham Parish Council being formed. This was 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 were 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 was also being considered.

Resolved

That the plans for anniversaries be noted.

204/24 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 could be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-devolution-white-paper-power-and-partnership-foundations-for-growth/english-devolution-white-paper>. Whilst there was little mention of town and parish councils, the white paper was 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 at: 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 had discussed a proposal for the creation of a Heart of Wessex combined authority, jointly with Dorset and Somerset Councils, on 9 January 2025. The proposal was supported by Wiltshire Council.

The Town Council discussed the impact of the potential changes which included opportunities around transport, in particular rail and bus services.

Resolved

That the update on the English Devolution White Paper be noted.

205/24 Elections Update

It was highlighted that the local elections would take place on 1 May 2025. The Notice of Election would be published on 11 March. Wiltshire Council's webpage had the key dates and other important information (<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/local-elections>). The webpage would be updated regularly so Councillors were encouraged to check it for new information.

Wiltshire Council would be holding a webinar on the 11 February which was aimed at those candidates who wanted to stand for election. The webinar would cover the formal nomination process, how to stand for election, how to submit nomination papers and what it was like to be a Councillor. There would also be information for Towns and Parishes.

There would be a three-week window whereby nominations could be submitted. Wiltshire Council would be setting up a booking system and encouraging candidates to make an appointment to visit one of the nominated council buildings which would be assigned dependent on which area the parish sits. For Corsham this was likely to be Monkton Park council offices, Chippenham. This was also an opportunity for Wiltshire Council's officers to check that nominations were completed correctly. People were encouraged to submit their nominations as early as possible. All candidates and those that are re-standing were 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 was 1 May 2025. Verification and count would be on Friday 2 May at County Hall, Trowbridge, The Olympiad, Chippenham and Five Rivers, Salisbury.

Resolved

That the Elections update be noted.

206/24 Vacancies on Committees, Other Groups and Outside Bodies

As a result of the Councillor vacancy arising from Adrian Jones's resignation, there were opportunities to fill a number of committee, working group and outside body vacancies.

The Council was also permitted to co-opt to fill the Councillor vacancy as no election was necessary. This was due to the vacancy arising less than six months prior to the ordinary local council elections.

Resolved

- i) That for the remainder of the Council year Councillor A Brown be appointed as a representative on Corsham Youth Zone; and Councillor G McCaffery be appointed as a representative on Corsham Sports Forum and the Corsham Parish/Town Council 25th/130th Anniversary Group.
- ii) That if a valid application for co-option was received by the Chief Executive by 12 noon on 30 January 2025, they would be considered for co-option at the February Council meeting. After that date people would be encouraged to stand for election.

207/24 Issues for Corsham Area Board Consideration (*Various Minutes*)

Further to previous meetings, this regular agenda item asks the Town Council to identify issues for Area Board consideration. There were no new issues.

208/24 Authorisation of cheques and payments

Accounts for Payment - Corsham Town Council - 13 January 2025

Online Banking Payments

Name	Amount
Salaries & Payments - CTC Staff	£32,336.69
Wiltshire Pension Fund - Pension Contributions for January	£10,901.28
Wiltshire Pension Fund - Employer Contribution Adjustment Employee 69 November	£377.93
HMRC - Tax & NI for January	£10,647.59
HMRC - NI Employer Contribution Adjustment Employee 69 November	£160.14
Methuen Hall Trust - Hire of Council Chamber and Town Hall for January	£740.00
Methuen Hall Trust - Hire of Main Hall for Community Meetings	£375.00
Methuen Hall Trust - Hire of Town Hall for Corsham Community Club Lunch	£188.00
Advanced Metal Treatments - Powder Coat Bench	£360.00
Travis Perkins - Crowd Barrier Hire Christmas Lights, Bolt Lock, Parts for Litter Bins, Insulation Board, Universal Panel Saw, Tarpaulin, Socket set	£663.56
British Heart Foundation - Defib Pads and Starter Kit for Broad Mead Defibrillator	£94.00

DLP Planning - Corsham Neighbourhood Plan Preparation for Local Green Spaces and Non-Designated Heritage Assets	£1,800.00
Hogs Heaven Catering - Helper Food Christmas Lights	£70.00
J H Jones - Grave Digging x 3 and Root Barrier Installation in Ladbrook Lane Cemetery	£2,040.00
Leafield Environmental Ltd - 2 x Heritage Round Litter Bins	£780.00
Idverde - Monthly Public Convenience Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance	£3,811.63
MediaClash Ltd - Quarter Page Advert in December	£156.00
Pipe Dream - Live Music Performance at Christmas Lights	£150.00
Corsham Windband - Live Music Performance at Christmas Lights	£150.00
Milk and Tweed - Story of the High Street Project, Web Hosting and Support	£1,664.00
West Country Tree Services Ltd - Tree Work at The Batters and Moor Park Tree Work	£864.00
Simply Sweepers - Road Sweeping Zones 2 and 3 and Waste Disposal Charges	£1,874.74
Wessex Tree Consultancy - Arboricultural Report of 22 Sites	£8,290.00
M B Bells - Rectify Fault on Christmas Lights Outside Town Hall	£200.10
Walkers are Welcome Towns Network - Annual Subscription 2025	£90.00
Rialtas - Omega Cashbook Group Training on Teams	£78.00
Online Playgrounds - Spare Parts for Play Areas	£88.28
Cass Design Consultants Ltd - Character Assessment Design Guide and Policy Work	£3,305.60
Your Wiltshire - Advertising Free Parking in January Edition	£78.00
Bath and North East Somerset Council - Data Protection Support Services	£1,428.00
Local Toilet Hire - 3 x Toilets for Eco Fair and Taste of Corsham	£696.00
Value Products (Safety Signs4Less) - Keep Clear Signs for Automatic Door A/House	£26.41
A T Graphics (Coach Tours UK) - Advertising in Coach Tours UK	£300.00
NALC - Power Shift 2025 Conference, Asset Management Training JW	£120.00
Global Media Ltd - Radio Advertising Shopping and Free Parking in Corsham	£871.73
Alarms and Electrical - Annual Service Charge for Fire and Intruder Alarm Systems	£406.80
Ashridge Trees Ltd - Hedging for Neston Recreation Ground and Trees for Beechfield	£956.10
Anywhere Deckchairs - Deckchairs x 36 for Taste of Corsham and Refundable Damage Deposit	£780.00
Workwear Express - Portwest 7-in-1 Breathable Hi-viz Jacket	£143.39
IAE - Prosafe Gate Repair Kit for Springfield Play Area	£255.64
The Safety Supply Co Ltd - Chainsaw Protective Jacket and Safety Sign	£269.62
Amazon - Desk and Wall Calendars	£39.84
Proludic - Play Equipment Parts	£135.27
Great West Way - Media Discovery Event	£498.00
Coppard Plant Hire - Telehandler for Christmas Lights	£418.32
Health Assured - HR Consultancy	£522.00
Urban Foresight - Town Transport Plan 3rd Installment	£6,000.00

Cheques

None for this month.

Charge Card 2 x Statements

Grants Online - Annual Subscription	£150.00
Project Skills Solutions - NRSWA Course N Maggs	£312.00
GOV.UK - ULEZ Payment in Bath - Christmas Tree Collection	£9.00
Toolstation - Combination Lock	£33.98
Survey Monkey - Subscription Renewal Charge	£408.00
Henry Pumps - Pump for Cemetery	£291.00
DBS Service - DBS Renewal	£16.00
Henry Pumps - Hoses for Pump	£88.20
Garden and Hire Spares - Chainsaw Chains	£74.76

Grants

The Brunel Shed	£750.00
Rewired Counselling in Partnership with The Pound Arts Centre	£500.00

Sub total

£98,834.60

Cheques/Internet Banking Paid Outside of Meeting

There were none.

Payments Made by Direct Debit/Standing Order

West Mercia Energy - Guide Hut Electricity November	£104.12
West Mercia Energy - Electricity for Public Conveniences November	£68.00
UK Fuels - Fuel for Work Vehicles	£194.28
Hills Waste - Waste collection December, Christmas Lights and Skip Exchange	£1,340.63
SGW Payroll - Monthly Payroll Processing - no invoice received	
Peninsula - Monthly HR and Health & Safety Advice	£460.72
Onecom - Monthly IT and Telephone Support	£1,271.11
Vodafone - One Net Mobile Telephones Plus Additional Monthly Invoice	£502.97
SSE - Electricity for Skatepark Lighting - no invoice received	
SSE - CCTV Electricity - no invoice received	
Mainstream Digital - Telephone Line Quarterly Rental	£64.80
Viking Direct - Stationery	£159.21
SUB TOTAL	£4,165.84

TOTAL

£103,000.44

Resolved

That the cheques and transfers be authorised for payment.

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm and closed at 8.31pm. There was one member of the public present at the start of the meeting and none at the end.

CHAIR

DATE