

NOTES OF THE **MEETING** OF THE **STRATEGIC PLANNING FORUM** HELD ON **WEDNESDAY 20<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2024** AT NEWTON'S PLACE, WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT AT 7.00 P.M.

**PRESENT:** Councillors M Joyce (Chairperson) Presiding  
D Corney-Walker (Vice Chairperson)

P Bullivant	C Parker (Deputy Mayor)
L Cooke	P Parker
C Davieson	M Ryan
A Hall (Mayor)	L Wood

Councillor N Yabsley also attended the meeting.

In attendance: Philip Rowe – Town Clerk  
Samantha Scott – Deputy Town Clerk & RFO  
Linda McQuirk – Principal Administrator

**SP26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None, all members were present.

**SP27. INTERESTS**

None declared.

**SP28. MINUTES**

The notes of the Strategic Planning Forum held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024 were received and signed as a correct record.

*Cllrs P Parker and P Bullivant abstained from voting.*

**SP29. TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT**

The Town Clerk reported on two potential development opportunities in the town centre:

- a) Site #1 - an indicative plan has been drafted which outlines how the space could be used. Communication has been established with the owner and the administrators; progress is slow due to the property owner living abroad.
- b) Site ~2 - the developers are attending a meeting with the Town Clerk next week.

**SP30. BUDGET AND STRATEGY FOR THE PERIOD 2025/26 AND THE FOLLOWING YEARS**

Budget report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024

The Deputy Town Clerk and RFO introduced the draft budget report for the period 2025/26, as circulated prior to the meeting. In addition, the report was displayed on the screen. The RFO advised there had been some questions received in advance of the meeting which had been answered satisfactorily.

Page	Cost Centre	Account	Comment
2	4000	Salaries	Includes the two new roles, increase in Employer's National Insurance and the estimated pay award in 2025.
	4092	Christmas Lights Electricity	Increased by 2.5%
	4101	Subscriptions	Increased, as agreed at previous SPF meeting.
	4107	IT equipment and support	Increased, as agreed at previous SPF meeting.
	4110	Franking machine rental	Slight decrease
	4111	Franking machine consumables	Slight decrease
3	4112	Legal & Professional fees	Slight increase
	4171	Phone system cost at Newton's Place	£2,000 saving, new provider.
	4173	Mobile phones	Slight decrease
	4205	Omega support costs	Increased, as agreed at previous SPF meeting.
	4270	Public relations	Increased by inflation.
4	4151	Gas	Increased by inflation.
	4152	Electricity	Increased by inflation.
	4155	Refuse collection	Increased by inflation.
	4160	Window refurbishment	Planned refurbishment.
	4185	Catering/hospitality	Slight decrease
	4197	Van - fuel	Increased by inflation.
5	4198	Van – maintenance	Increased, as agreed at previous SPF meeting.
	4200	Members training	Slight decrease.
	4210	Mayoral allowance	Members discussed the Mayoral allowance and agreed to retain the current budget.
	4212	Town Crier's expenses	Overspend due to new uniform. Slight increase agreed.
	4216	Civic Regalia	Members discussed condition of the current regalia and agreed to retain the current budget.
6	4251	TCP events	Moved to Events budget
7	4166	St Leonard's Clock Tower maintenance	Increased to cover anticipated repair bill to the east clock face.
	4164	War Memorial maintenance	Increased to allow for annual clean and repair.
8	4126	Dog bin emptying	Increased, as agreed at previous SPF meeting.
	4127	Gardening contractor	No budget allocated - Victoria Gardens will be managed by the FMO team.
	4260	Golden Lion Square	It was suggested any remaining budget is used to purchase materials for the refurbishment of GLS.

10	4306	Museum items for sale	Members discussed process for recording income, agreed no change required.
It was agreed that any remaining museum budget is ear marked in reserves to support the What's In Store project.			
12	4378	D-Day	Incorrect budget heading.
13	4400	Allotment maintenance	Increased to cover additional allotment sites.
14	4420	Footpath maintenance	Moved to FMO budget.
	4440	Cleaning Bradley Leat	Clean scheduled for 2025
15	4501	Newfoundland Way toilets	Members noted the cost to maintain the facilities and noted the potential increase in toilets in the future.
16	5556	Citymaster 1650	Increase for consumables.
	4502	Buckland skate park	No budget allocated.
	4504	Notice boards and street furniture	No budget allocated.
	4505	Benches/seats	Increased for the Linger Longer project
	5555	Facilities maintenance	Increased cost of maintenance
	901	EMR: Election	<b>AGREED</b> to increase the Ear Marked Reserves budget for elections to £12,000

Arising from consideration of the draft budget or 2025/26, it was:

**AGREED** that the Strategic Planning Forum **recommend** the Budget and Precept for 2025/26, as set out below, and the draft Budget Report for 2025/26 to the Finance and Audit Committee meeting to be held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025:

Precept £ 2025/26	Multiplier	Actual Band D cost	Actual Band D Incr.	Band D % Incr.	Band D cost per week	Band D cost per day	Diff in pence per week	Diff in pence per day	Total Precept
£1,698,731	8,909.50	£190.67	£8.79	4.83%	£3.67	52.24	0.17	0.02.41	£1,698,731

*Councillor P Parker abstained from voting.*

### **SP31. ITEMS ARISING AND FUTURE AGENDAS**

The Town Clerk referred to a report on how other similar sized Council's broadcast their meetings, as tabled at the meeting. It was noted there is little consistency. The Clerk is researching options.

The Town Clerk advised that he has received quotations for the market valuation and building survey of Old Forde House. The quotes will be reported at the Finance & Audit committee meeting in January 2025.

### **SP32. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2025.

The Meeting closed at 20:15 hrs.

Chairperson.....Date.....