

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

Tel: 01249 702130

Email: towncouncil@corsham.gov.uk

www.corsham.gov.uk

7 November 2023

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend the Council Meeting to be held at the Town Hall on Monday 13 November 2023 at 7.30pm.

Please would members of the Accounts Sub-committee arrive by 7.10pm.

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 October 2023 – *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 No. 556 and 557 – *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 18 October 2023 – *attached*.
11. Matters Arising from the above Minutes – *for information only*.
12. Minutes of the Council (Planning) Meeting held on 25 October 2023 – *attached*.
13. Matters Arising from the above Minutes – *for information only*.
14. Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Delivery and Monitoring Working Group Meeting held on 9 November 2023 – *to follow*.
15. Matters Arising from the above Minutes – *for information only*.
16. Environmental Issues – Policy Review and Climate and Ecology Bill Consultation:
 - i) Environmental Policy Review - The Town Council's Environmental Policy has been reviewed by the Environmental Project Officer in consultation with other Officers. The updated draft policy is *attached* – *for consideration and approval*.
 - ii) Climate and Ecology Bill – To consider the attached report and recommendation in support of the Climate and Ecology Bill as put forward by the Zero Hour group.
More information about the Bill and supporting organisations can be found at <https://www.zerohour.uk/>. This two-minute video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXIVs-sW5y4> may also prove useful – *for consideration*.
17. Consultation on possible changes to Wiltshire Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme – With reference to the attached documents, Wiltshire Council is consulting on possible changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The consultation questions can be found here: <https://surveys.wiltshire.gov.uk/Interview/227f8d85-5991-4336-8054-34b824e9fe09>. The changes would result in a reduction to the Council Tax Base (the number of Band D equivalent properties). This should be offset to a degree by an increase in the number of properties built. The Band D equivalent figure for 2024/25 will be known at some point during the consultation period. The consultation closes on 27 November 2023 – *for consideration*.
18. Remote Meetings – Government has recently rejected the Lord's amendment to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill which would have enabled local councils to choose to hold hybrid/online Council meetings. The National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and other bodies will continue to campaign for the change. The Town Council currently allows anybody, including Councillors, to observe Council and Committee meetings online and, with the Chair's

permission, speak. Voting remotely is not permitted. This arrangement has increased community engagement in Town Council work and enabled Councillors to remain involved in Town Council business when they otherwise would not have been.

It is recommended that this 'observer only' arrangement be continued for Council and Committee meetings on the clear understanding that those not physically in the meeting room have no right to speak without the Chair of the meeting's consent and they have no voting rights. For Councillors, online presence does not count towards the meeting quorum or the six-month non-attendance rule (which can lead to automatic disqualification). Additionally, if the usual Chair of the meeting is joining remotely, they would not be permitted to Chair the meeting. This is because they would not be able to vote. This is especially important as there would not be a mechanism for a casting vote.

With regards to Working Groups and Panels, as they are not decision-making, these can continue as face-to-face, online or hybrid. It is still recommended that, for hybrid meetings, the Chair must be physically present – *for consideration*.

19. Former Family Centre, Beechfield Road, Corsham (*Minute 120/23 and others*) – Further to previous meetings, Corsham Area Board has received an update from the NHS regarding the vacant property.

Draft Corsham Area Board Minute 12 October 2023: A statement was read out, with a further update promised for the next Area Board meeting in January: 'The Chippenham, Corsham and Box PCN are interested in taking some space in Corsham Health Centre in the short to medium term. Discussions are underway with other health providers including the RUH and AWP [Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust] to see if a solution can be found that maximises the use of the space to make bringing the building back into use financially viable. Graham Wilson is currently on leave, but a further update will follow on his return.' Simon Yeo, Assistant Director of Estates, NHS Bath and North-East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board (ICB). *The update was described as positive by the Board and expectation for a further update at the next Area Board meeting in January was expressed.*

- *For information and comment.*

20. Change of Start Time for the December Council Meeting – A request has been received to bring the start time of Council meeting on 11 December forward from 7.30pm to 7pm. This is due to the Councillor Christmas Social Evening taking place after the meeting – *for approval*.
21. Vacancies on Committees, Other Groups and Outside Bodies (*Minute 148/23 and others*) – Further to previous Council meetings there are opportunities to fill the current vacancies which are:

Accounts Sub-Committee – one reserve
Community Wellbeing Group – up to two
Appeals Panel – one

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

22. 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 – *suggested issues invited*.
23. Authorisation of cheques and payments – A list will be available at the meeting.

A Meeting of the Accounts Sub-committee will take place at 7.10pm.

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