



Shaftesbury Town Council

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To: Members of Shaftesbury Town Council's Full Council (FC), Councillors Austin, Brown (Chair), Cook, Hall, Jackson, Kirton, Lewer, Loader, Perkins, Proctor, Taylor (Vice-Chair), Todd. All other recipients for information only.

You are summoned to a meeting of the Full Council for the transaction of the business shown on the agenda below. To be held at 6.00pm on

Thursday 07 March 2019 in the Council Chamber, Shaftesbury Town Hall

Claire Commons PSLCC, Town Clerk

Members are reminded of their duty under the Code of Conduct

Public Participation

The Chairman will invite members of the public to present their questions, statements or petitions submitted under the Council's Public Participation Procedure.

Members of the public and Councillors are entitled to make audio or visual recordings of the meeting provided it does not cause disruption or impede the transaction of business. Out of courtesy to those present, the Council requests that intention to record proceedings is brought to the Chairman's attention prior to the start of the meeting.

Agenda

- 1 APOLOGIES2**
To receive and consider for acceptance, apologies for absence
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST2**
Members and Officers are reminded of their obligations to declare interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct 2012. The Clerk will report any dispensation requests received.
- 3 MINUTES2**
To confirm as a correct record, the minutes of the previous meeting of the Full Council.
- 4 SWIMMING POOL5**
To consider short and medium term improvements to the Shaftesbury Oasis pool
- 5 LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME - QUALITY GOLD.....9**
To recommend to Full Council to apply for the Quality Gold level of the Local Council Award Scheme
- 6 PLANET SHAFTESBURY 19**
To consider request for free use of the Guildhall

(End)

1 Apologies

To receive and consider for acceptance, apologies for absence

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The Council (including committees) should approve (or not) the reason for apologies given by absent councillors. If a council member has not attended a meeting of the council (or its committees) or has not tendered apologies which have been accepted by the council (or committee), for six consecutive months, they are disqualified.

1.2 Apologies received to date

2 Declarations of Interest

Members and Officers are reminded of their obligations to declare interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct 2012. The Clerk will report any dispensation requests received.

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to a councillor's interest, the councillor has the responsibility of declaring that interest in accordance with the adopted code of conduct. (Shaftesbury Town Council, 2012)

2.2 Declarations of Interest or dispensations received to date

3 Minutes

To confirm as a correct record, the minutes of the previous meeting of the Full Council.

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 When the meeting is approving the draft minutes of a previous meeting as an accurate record, the only issue for the meeting is whether the minutes accurately record the proceedings of the meeting and the resolutions made at them. It is irrelevant if the chairman or other councillors were not present at the meeting to which the draft minutes relate.
- 3.1.2 If it is necessary for the draft minutes of the previous meeting to be corrected because of an inaccuracy in them, then the amendments to the draft minutes must be approved by resolution. (Tharmarajah, 2013, p. 154)

3.2 Minutes to be adopted

- 3.2.1 5th February 2019
-

Extra Ordinary Full Council

Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Full Council held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, High Street, Shaftesbury Dorset SP7 8LY on Tuesday 5th February 2019 commencing at 7.01 pm.

Members Present

Councillor Brown (Chair)
Councillor Taylor (Vice Chair)
Councillor Austin

Councillor Cook
Councillor Loader
Councillor Proctor

Absent:

Councillors Lewer, Kirton, Todd, Hall, Jackson and Perkins

Officers Present:

Claire Commons PSLCC, Town Clerk
Brie Logan, Business Manager
Zoe Moxham, Office Administrator

In Attendance:

8 members of the public (6 representatives from the Shaftesbury Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee Group)

MINUTES

Public Participation

Members of the public were invited to make representations to the Council on any matters relating to the work of the Council or to raise any issues of concern. The following matters were raised;

- **Planet Shaftesbury** – A report was given regarding a new local group calling itself Planet Shaftesbury, meetings are being held on the third Thursday of every month at the Town Hall to discuss climate issues. All Councillors and residents in Shaftesbury were invited to attend and support the new group.
- **Schools** – An update was requested on whether a new school was going to be provided in Shaftesbury. *Councillor Brown advised that it is Dorset County Council who is responsible for the Schools in Shaftesbury and that they would be able to provide an update.*
- **Hospital** – An update was requested regarding the future of the Westminster Memorial Hospital. *Councillor Austin reported that it is likely to remain as it is for the next 5-10 years and that much work is being carried out across the County to look at the future of the healthcare structure.*

F123 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Kirton and Perkins due to work commitments and Councillors Todd and Lewer due to personal reasons. Councillor Jackson for running late due to work commitments. Councillor Hall was absent.

F124 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

All members were invited to declare any interests throughout the meeting if the need arose. None were declared.

F125 Minutes

F125a It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 08 January 2019 and the minutes were duly signed.

F125b It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 22 January 2019 and the minutes were duly signed.

F126 Neighbourhood Plan – Policy Intentions

7.22 pm – Councillor Jackson arrived at this point.

F126a Officer report 0219FC4 was received and it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Shaftesbury Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee Policy intentions for the following themes;

- Town Centre
- Community and Leisure
- Green Infrastructure
- Design and Heritage
- Housing and Employment

F126b It was **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to sign off the questions for the Issues and Options Phase 1 Consultation the Town Clerk and Business Manager.

F126c It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the consultation plan.

Thanks, were extended to the Shaftesbury Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee members for all their work on the project so far.

F127 Community Radio

Officer report 0219FC5 was received and it was **RESOLVED** to write a letter of support for a new local radio, run by This Is Alfred, Shaftesbury.

F128 Confidential Business

Officer report 0219FC6 was received and it was **RESOLVED** that, in accordance with Section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during the discussion to discuss Item 7, Correspondence, in confidential session due to commercially sensitive information. (as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of Section 100a(4) of the Local Government Act 1972), and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

F129 Correspondence

Officer report 0219FC7 was received and it was **RESOLVED** that a letter is issued drawing the matter to a close, to be signed by the Mayor and Chairman of the General Management Committee.

Action: Town Clerk

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.30 pm

Signed

Date

4 Swimming Pool

To consider short and medium term improvements to the Shaftesbury Oasis pool

4.1 Recommendation

- 4.1.1 To approve the recommendation from the General Management Committee to spend £17,555 in readiness for the pool opening at the end of May 2019.
- 4.1.2 That STC Ground Staff allocate 2 days during April to support the external garden maintenance required to improve the external aesthetics of the pool building.
- 4.1.3 That the Council works in collaboration with Build Love, Guy's Marsh and Weston/ Salisbury College as part of the Council's drive to add value in terms of skills development
- 4.1.4 That the Council undertakes a further user experience survey (for the whole season) to gather feedback on the longer-term aspirations
- 4.1.5 That the Council considers the long terms options (as per longer term considerations) on the table

4.2 Summary

- 4.2.1 Review of the swimming pool ahead of opening for 2019 has highlighted areas requiring immediate attention to be fit to open and longer term proposals to improve the user experience. Please see 'Background' below.
- 4.2.2 An additional meeting of the Council is required to authorise expenditure for this project and to consider the longer term vision for the pool. Councillors are asked for their availability for a meeting during the week commencing 4th March 2019.

4.3 Financial Implication

- 4.3.1 Summary of costs including resource, equipment and building materials – Maintenance/ operations to prepare for the season including a full paint renovation on internal and external areas (see table below)
- 4.3.2 2 days STC staff x 2 as part of spring project hours 7 hours x 2 x 2 @ £12 per hour – indirect cost £336
- 4.3.3 Ear Marked Reserves – swimming pool nominal code 4931 has a balance of £29,145

2019 season preparation	Costs	Longer term considerations	Costs
External paint work including columns, doors, walls, window frames – labour and materials	16 days @ £264 = £4224	Replace poolside floor	Each consideration will be costed up pending outcome of GEM
Internal paint work including columns, doors, walls, window frames – labour and materials	14 days @ £264 = £3696	New urinal unit (boiler and sprinkler heads)	
Repairs to pool floor	£2000 (estimate)	Outdoor showers not fit for purpose – need replacement showers	

Report 0319FC8

New freezer (as part of retail development plan)	£250	Poolside lighting- operating for night time sessions	
Outdoor showers – water pressure too low – boiler service and water flow problem to be resolved	£1000 (estimate)	Full Lido experience adjacent to Barton Hill	
Lockers need replacing – many are broken and are aesthetically a poor standard	£4000	Full plant renovation - replace equipment with commercial plant	
Modular shelving to store retail overstock	£250	Retractable roof consideration	
Improve signage to swimming pool (welcome zone)	£500	Arrange quote for a Disabled hoist	
Second filing cabinet (storage)	£100	Explore feasibility of making the facilities DDA accessible	
Lifeguard Chair	£970	Cubicles x 2 (improve male and female changing facilities)	
Office door blind	£50		
Purchase merchandising equipment to drive presentation of stock – change reception area in to a shop	£68 (crates) £26 (mannequins) £100 (shelving) Total: £195		
Purchase of non-food merchandise (stock) to drive income (sales) - to include goggles, swimming costumes, hats, towels,	24 x goggles £144 12 x Hats £34.56 24 x Towels £142.80 Total £320		
Total of all expenditure £17,555 (all figures in bold added together)			

4.4 Legal Implication

4.4.1 Local Councils may provide swimming pools and bathing places under their general power to provide recreational facilities (Public Health Act, 1936 s.225)

4.5 Risk

4.5.1 Risk Assessment process would be managed by STC and Build Love/ Weston College – both organisations would conduct risk assessments and method statement in advance of work starting.

4.5.2 STC, HMP Guys Marsh and Build love all have PLI

4.5.3 H&S hazards identified need to be resolved in advance of the 2019 season

STRATEGIC PLAN AREA: RESIDENTS LIFESTYLE - OUTDOOR, LUKE KIRTON

4.6 Background:

- 4.6.1 There has been minimal investment in the Oasis pool since the transfer of the asset to STC in 2015. Much of the pool is tired and needing investment to improve the standard of the environment. The improved user experience is likely to have appositve effect on ticket sales.
- 4.6.2 There has never been a formal action plan adopted since the ownership of the pool transferred to STC. An action plan for the 2019 season plan has been created in collaboration with the Pool Manager, the Finance and Services Officer and the Head Groundsman (please refer to appendix A).
- 4.6.3 The action plan (not included in this report) People (staff), Customers (pool users), Operations (including maintenance and finance), Sales (income including profit) will form a discussion point at an EFC in early March 2019. Longer term opportunities will also be presented for consideration.
- 4.6.4 The poolside 'extension area' (internal and external space) is high maintenance and on an annual basis time money is invested to bring it in to an operational state for the season. A longer-term proposal would be to consider this area being converted in to a UPVC structure which mitigates the annual need for maintenance.
- 4.6.5 Pre-season costs have been calculated and are based on improving the user experience for the 2019 season. There are over 50 entries in the action plan, the majority are based on improving the user experience which should convert in to higher sales.
- 4.6.6 HR Committee agreed a new operating structure with the objective of the pool becoming an integrated way of working for the pool Manager and staff and the bar being raised in terms of management functionality.
- 4.6.7 The PIR from the Bell Street toilet project has highlighted a positive collaboration between STC, Build Love, Guy's Marsh and Weston College. The pool project could take the collaboration to the next level thus demonstrating a positive social impact within the community. Build Love have since been contacted by Salisbury College to explore future learner-based work experience projects in Shaftesbury.

(End)

Report Author:
Brie Logan, Business Manager

Appendix B. Photos



Figure 1 Exterior paint lifting from the surface



Figure 3 Welcome zone is not inspirational

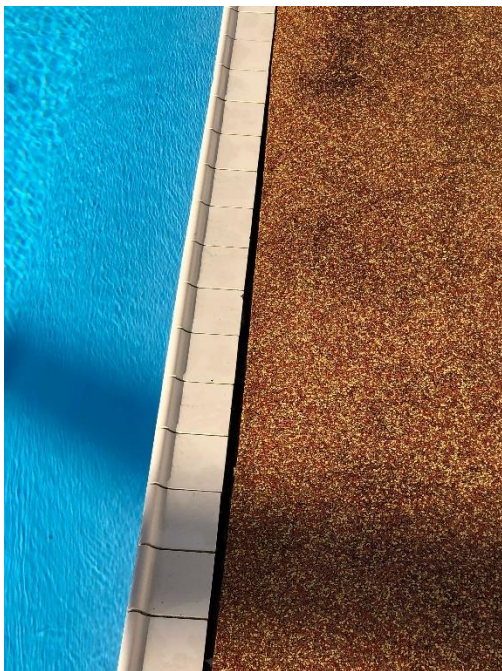


Figure 2 Resin floor is splitting away from the pool edge



Figure 4 Wooden pillars are badly weathered and need re-varnishing

5 Local Council Award Scheme - Quality Gold

To recommend to Full Council to apply for the Quality Gold level of the Local Council Award Scheme

5.1 Recommendation

- 5.1.1 That the Council confirms by resolution that the requirements for the Quality Gold level of the Local Council Award Scheme are met and provides 5 submission statements for the accreditation panel.

5.2 Summary

- 5.2.1 Officers have checked the scheme criteria and, with the inclusion of the policies put forward for adoption by this Committee, meets the requirements for the Quality Gold Accreditation.
- 5.2.2 The full guidance for the LCAS is available <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/our-work/lcas/1855-local-council-award-scheme-guide-2016-pdf/file>
- 5.2.3 The Town Clerk is preparing the draft submission statements and these will be provided to members prior to the meeting on 7th March.

5.3 Financial Implication

- 5.3.1 There is a £50 registration fee which has already been covered by the Council when it registered but did not submit for the Foundation stage award.

STRATEGIC PLAN AREA: POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GOVERNANCE, MARK JACKSON

(End)

Report Author:
Claire Commons PSLCC, Town Clerk

Appendix C. Local Council Award Scheme checklist

This document is a resource for Local Councils taking part in the Local Council Award Scheme

My council has not registered to take part in the scheme – this document is a useful tool to map where you do meet the criteria, and to help you see what work would need to take place before you apply

My council has the relevant criteria in place and has already registered with NALC – you can complete this document and submit it to your local accreditation panel. This will help them find the necessary information and make sure they don't miss any details by mistake.

Tip – proving a web link to the exact page or document needed is important as it will reduce the risk of the panel missing any necessary information. So instead of <http://www.nalc.gov.uk> use <http://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/improvement-and-development/local-council-award-scheme>

Tip – some information and documents are not required to be published online. To keep things simple email these to the panel coordinator at the same time as providing this document. That way they have all the information in one place.

Tip – Don't forget to read the full criteria in the Local Council Award Scheme guide. This form just has the summary, but there is further essential information in the guide which can be downloaded from <http://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/improvement-and-development/local-council-award-scheme>

What criteria do I need to meet for each award level?

If you are applying for Foundation – just the Foundation criteria

If you are applying for Quality – both Foundation and Quality criteria

If you are applying for Quality Gold – Foundation, Quality and Quality Gold criteria

If you are unsure what criteria you are required to submit please check with your County Association.



The council confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it publishes online:

Criteria	Do you meet these criteria?	Where are these published online?
1 Its standing orders and financial regulations	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/policies/ Standing Orders Direct Link Financial Regulations Direct Link
2 Its Code of Conduct and a link to councillors' registers of interests	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/policies/ https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/who-we-are/
3 Its publication scheme	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/freedom-of-information/
4 Its last annual return	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/2018-end-of-year-accounts-website.pdf
5 Transparent information about council payments	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/data-transparency/
6 A calendar of all meetings including the annual meeting of electors	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/committees/
7 Minutes for at least one year of full council meetings and (if relevant) all committee and sub-committee meetings	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/committees/
8 Current agendas	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/committees/
9 The budget and precept information for	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/data-transparency/

the current or next financial year		
10 Its complaints procedure	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/policies/
11 Council contact details and councillor information in line with the Transparency Code	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/find-us-contact/ https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/who-we-are/
12 Its action plan for the current year	Yes	5 Yr Strat Plan – Home Page
13 Evidence of consulting the community	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/ https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/16897-2/ https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/public-budget-meeting/
14 Publicity advertising council activities	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/ https://www.facebook.com/ShaftesburyTownCouncil/ https://twitter.com/ShaftesburyTC
15 Evidence of participating in town and country planning	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/press-statement-shaftesbury-neighbourhood-plan/ https://www.shaftesburyplan.co.uk/

Report 0319FC9

The council also confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it has:

Criteria	Do you meet these criteria?	Where are these published? Can they be provided electronically?
16 A risk management scheme	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/policies/
17 A register of assets	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Asset-Register-Current.pdf
18 Contracts for all members of staff	Yes	Held by the Clerk
19 Disciplinary and grievance procedures	Yes	Updated versions for adoption by GEM 26 th February 2019
20 A policy for training new staff and councillors	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2019-01-29-Staff-and-Member-Training-Policy.pdf
21 A record of all training undertaken by staff and councillors in the last year	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/who-we-are/ Staff Training Records held by the Clerk. Sector related achievements on the Who We Are page
22 A clerk who has achieved 12 CPD points in the last year	Yes	CPD Record held by the Clerk and reviewed by the HR Committee



The council confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it publishes online:

Criteria	Do you meet these criteria?	Where are these published online?
1 Draft minutes of all council and committee meetings within four weeks of the last meeting	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/committees/
2 A Health and Safety policy	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Safety-Policy-Safety-Arrangements.pdf
3 Its policy on equality	No	DRAFT – GEM to adopt 16/2/19
4 Councillor profiles	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/who-we-are/
5 A community engagement policy involving two-way communication between council and community	No	DRAFT – GEM to adopt 16/2/19
6 A grant awarding policy	Yes	www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/policies
7 Evidence showing how electors contribute to the Annual Parish or Town Meeting	Yes	Letters to community orgs Advert and press release Posters Minutes
8 An action plan and related budget responding to community engagement and setting out a timetable for action and review	Yes	Strategic Plan 5 year budget forecast Recommend review at the start of May for next 5 years
9 Evidence of community engagement, council activities and the promotion of democratic processes in an annual report, online material and regular news bulletins	Yes	Annual Report www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/council-news/ https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/ https://www.facebook.com/ShaftesburyTownCouncil/ https://twitter.com/ShaftesburyTC https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/the-wilderness/ https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/project-belle-public-consultation/

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10 Evidence of helping the community plan for its future	Yes	https://www.shaftesburyplan.co.uk/
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Report 0319FC9

The council also confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it has:

Criteria	Do you meet these criteria?	Where are these published? Can they be provided electronically?
1 a scheme of delegation (where relevant)	Partial	DRAFT – GEM to adopt 16/2/19
2 up-to-date insurance policies that mitigate risks to public money	Yes	Held by the Town Clerk
3 addressed complaints received in the last year	Yes	Held by the Town Clerk
4 at least two-thirds of its councillors who stood for election	Yes	
5 a printed annual report that is distributed at locations across the community	Yes	Annual Report
6 a qualified clerk	Yes	CiLCA and CertHE in Community Governance
7 a clerk (and deputy) employed according to nationally or locally agreed terms and conditions	Yes	Business Manager to deputise in the absence of the Clerk.
8 a formal appraisal process for all staff	Yes	
9 a training policy and record for all staff and councillors	Yes	https://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk/who-we-are/ Staff Training Records held by the Clerk. Sector related achievements on the Who We Are page



The council confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it publishes online:

Criteria	Do you meet these criteria?	Where are these published online?
1 A business plan covering a financial forecast for at least three years linked to revenue and capital plans for the council and its community	Strat Plan and 5 Year forecast?	Strategic Plan 5 year budget forecast
2 An annual report, online material and at least four news bulletins a year with evidence of		Annual Report
a engaging with diverse groups in the community using a variety of methods		Project Belle Visitor Survey Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committees Facebook Twitter Podcasts
b community engagement leading to positive outcomes for the community		As above; Positive outcomes this yr; new skate park equipment, benches installed, play equipment Safer path , St James Fence and Flytipping
c a broad range of council activities including innovative projects		Toilets, Skate Park, Project Belle, CCTV Enmore green park repairs, Land transfer, Neighbourhood plan, advisory committees, heritage lanterns, The Wilderness
d co-operating constructively with other organisations		Community Website in collaboration with Swans trust and orgs Build Love public toilets Advisory Committees

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The council also confirms by resolution at a full council meeting, that it has prepared statements (of no more than one page each) to be presented to the accreditation panel showing how it

Criteria	Do you meet these criteria?	Have you provided these to the accreditation panel?
1 Ensures that the council delivers value for money	Financial Regulations Does not delegate excessive amounts to the Clerk	
2 Meets its duties in relation to bio-diversity and crime & disorder	Opens communications with local Police, CCTV Draft Bio-diversity Policy for adoption at GEM 26/2/19	
3 Provides leadership in planning for the future of the community	Strat plan, based on public consultations Created Advisory Committees	
4 Manages the performance of the council as a corporate body	Audits, Governance review	
5 Manages the performance of each individual staff member to achieve its business plan	Internal management policies Staff Appraisals, Objectives, Contracts	

6 Planet Shaftesbury

To consider request for free use of the Guildhall

6.1 Recommendation

6.1.1 That the request is considered.

6.2 Summary

6.2.1 At a meeting of the Council on 5th February, a member of the public spoke about Planet Shaftesbury. They followed up with correspondence the following morning;

Thank you for the opportunity to let councillors know about Planet Shaftesbury last night. For those who weren't there, what I said is attached.

Planet Shaftesbury is a sufficiently new 'organisation' that it's quite hard to describe, but probably best thought of as a loose network of individuals and emerging groups who share a concern about climate change and want to encourage and support local responses. An outcome from the meeting on 1st Feb was that people decided they'd like a monthly opportunity to meet, share information, exchange ideas, co-ordinate activities, etc. We have opted for the 3rd Thursday of the month and have reserved the Guildhall from 21st February onwards.

Councillors seemed broadly supportive last night but on behalf of Planet Shaftesbury I'm asking the Council to offer more tangible support by agreeing that the group can use the Guildhall for these monthly gatherings without charge. Please can you put this to Council at the next opportunity? With many thanks

6.3 Financial Implication

6.3.1 Not for Profit Local Community Organisations receive 50% discount for hire of the Guildhall bringing the price for a 4 hour session from £118 to £59.

STRATEGIC PLAN AREA: ASSET MANAGEMENT, ANDY PERKINS

(End)

Report Author:
Claire Commons PSLCC, Town Clerk

Appendix D. **Letting Shaftesbury Town Council know about Planet Shaftesbury**

I want to let councillors know about something that happened downstairs last Friday evening. You'll remember what it was like on Friday: we had snow; the schools were closed; Tesco's didn't get its usual delivery of newspapers. And yet on Friday evening around 25 people had enough enthusiasm to get themselves to the town hall to join in discussions that could lead to making a difference for our community.

- They talked about reducing the CO2 emissions linked to car use – by encouraging walking or cycling to school, promoting car sharing, and encouraging Lidl's to provide electric charging points and bike racks
- They talked about reducing our waste – by learning from neighbouring towns, by finding out more about what happens to our sorted waste and what really can be recycled, by hosting repair workshops and/or a swap shop
- They talked about local food production and promoting the community farm and allotment gardening
- They talked about helping wildlife and boosting biodiversity – by erecting more birdboxes, working with Shaftesbury in Bloom to encourage planting that better supports nature, and looking at how we could manage our hedgerows and verges for biodiversity
- They talked about a website that will carry information and help townspeople to connect with all this and more

I've not mentioned all of it ... but where did this energy and enthusiasm come from?

It's a response to climate change. These people shared a sense of urgency about making lifestyle changes which we're being advised are necessary if we're going to avoid climate catastrophe. Local people concerned about the climate emergency have started to connect with one another spontaneously after a couple of meetings in the town – one at the end of October when there was a talk by activists from the Extinction Rebellion, and one in mid-January when the speaker came from the Wildlife Trust. Friday's meeting was an opportunity for those who could make it to gather in one place to explore where their concern, energy and enthusiasm might lead.

This emerging network is calling itself Planet Shaftesbury. Planet Shaftesbury seems to be building momentum. Individuals and groups will continue to act separately and they've decided also to come together on a monthly basis. To me this seems to offer a force for positive change in the town; it could play a developmental role; it could lead to a more resilient community.

I'd like to invite all councillors, staff and public to connect with Planet Shaftesbury. I'll also be approaching the council with a formal request for support for the network.