

ANNUAL REPORT

2014–2015



Chairman's Report

This past year has held particular significance because it marked the beginning of the commemorations of the period of the First World War. The Town Council has been successful in obtaining Heritage Lottery funding for a WWI project which will ensure that Warminster's Great War heritage can be researched and archived in a format that can be accessed by all and preserved for the future. So far two exhibitions have been held, in August 2014 and January 2015, which have attracted several hundred visitors including children from local primary schools, and the Finds Days have produced some fascinating artefacts and stories. The Remembrance Service this year paid tribute to the centenary, and the reading of the names on the War Memorial by children from Kingdown and Warminster Schools made this service particularly poignant, as so many of the families still remain in Warminster to this day.

One of the greatest challenges facing the Town Council this year has been the production of the Neighbourhood Plan, the first draft of which is undergoing consultation from 17th March until 8th May. All residents are urged to submit their comments on the Plan on the consultation response forms. We need your views on how the level of development that is being asked of the town can best be integrated and what services need to be put in place to ensure that Warminster can truly be: 'A Place to Live; A Place to Work and A Place to Enjoy'. We want everyone to have their say!

Events in the town continue to draw increased numbers – the Festival, Carnival, Inspire and Christmas Lights were all rewarded with enthusiastic participation, and the new Town Promotion Team will look to build on these successful events.

Warminster Civic Centre

The Civic Centre is proving to be an increasingly popular venue, with a large number of regular hirers providing an interesting range of weekly, fortnightly and monthly activities for residents of Warminster – Tumble Tots, Zumba Gold, Pilates, Yoga, U3A, to name but a few – as well as a variety of one-off larger events. The table below compares the average weekly use of the Centre compared with last year's figures based on a full 52-week year. The figures represent an average increase of 7 hours per week, and equate to 10.5 hours usage a day.

Hours used weekly	2013–14	2014–15
Exercise classes	10	12.5
Council meetings	3	4
Meetings	11	15
Bazaars	3	2
Health	7	7.5
Private functions	7	8.5
Dance events	6	6
Other	20	18.5
Total	67	74



The Christmas Market on 29th November was another great success, combining once again with the Christmas Lights switch-on led by the irresistible Jamba de Samba. Free parking in the town all day helped to contribute to both events being very well attended. Stallholders have already started booking their tables for this year's market on 28th November.



The monthly film matinees continue to attract a regular group of viewers, with a steady increase in numbers. The accessibility of the Civic Centre has been a particular plus for the film shows, and we continue to offer free entrance to carers.

The first Flower and Vegetable Show was held on 20th September 2014. A second show is scheduled for the slightly earlier date of 5th September, which aims to capture the end of the summer growing season. The categories have been extended to include photography.

The team of staff continue to look at new marketing opportunities to encourage usage. The Civic Centre can cater for a great variety of activities and events as well as personal parties and celebrations.

Christmas Lights



The Christmas Lights Committee disbanded this year after 17 years together. The Council have been indebted to the commitment and hard work provided by volunteers and contractor during this time. The Council is investigating how the light display can be delivered in 2015 but a team of volunteers will still be needed for hosting a switch-on parade. These include: arranging the provision and erection of Christmas trees for businesses and collecting payments;

organising the lantern workshops and parade; arranging the street entertainment; synchronising the switch-on; applying for the road closure and a host of other tasks that make this such a joyful and colourful occasion. If anyone would like to help please contact staff at the Town Council, 01985 214847 or admin@warminster-tc.gov.uk.

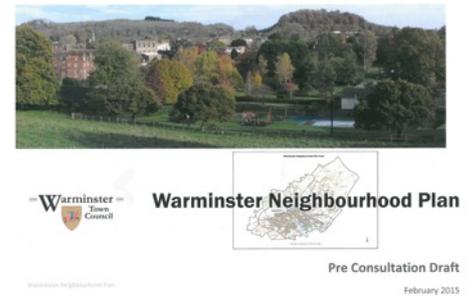
Civic Plan

Of the nine projects listed on the Civic Plan for 2013–2017 the two projects that continue to be worked on are as follows:

1. Town Park – negotiations have begun with Wiltshire Council on the transfer of the park to the Town Council and to establish all the financial implications this would entail.
2. Costs are being obtained for illuminating the Post Office building at night to make the town more attractive.

Town Development

The Town Development Committee has been chaired this year by Councillor Jamie Cullen and deals with issues relating to the town's infrastructure, many of which are projects requested by residents. It is the parent committee of the CCTV and the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group. The draft Neighbourhood Plan for Warminster is undergoing consultation as this annual report is published. It looks at what is needed to ensure that all new developments can be properly integrated into the town and that there are adequate health, leisure, education and business facilities to accommodate the needs of an expanding population. All the documentation can be found on the Town Council's website:



www.warminster.uk.com/council/neighbourhood-plan.php

Despite the 'access only' sign and road markings at the entrance to Beech Grove, a design approved and chosen by residents they are still unhappy that the road is being used as a rat run. It has been suggested a Community Speedwatch group be set up to monitor this.



The Copheap War Memorial was repaired with the help of Aspire.

Warminster Maltings have requested a waiting restrictions bay outside the business to enable lorries to load and unload during working hours. Increased parking in the area during the day is causing difficulties for delivery lorries.

St George's School has requested a pedestrian crossing to the school on Woodcock Road, as there is a danger to pupils from speeding traffic. This has been approved as part of their Travel to School Plan and should be installed in the next financial year.

The Avenue School has been granted match funding of £200 from the Council towards planting oak, sycamore, willow and birch trees in the town park. The trees represent the school's house names and the school would like to publicise their activities to the towns residents. It is hoped that planting can begin in the autumn and permission has been granted by Wiltshire Council, the current owners of the park.



Imber Road residents have asked for Wiltshire Council highways officers to look into a solution to the problems caused by increased parking on the north side of the road between East Street and Fairfield Road, which has effectually created a single carriageway for the large delivery vehicles and buses which use this route to access businesses in Fairfield Road. Traffic issues have also been raised by residents of Chain Lane, Plants Green and Hillwood Lane which are being considered by the local Area Board community area transport group.

Work has been completed successfully on the flood relief path at Portway which will improve the situation for residents when excessive rain occurs on the estate.

The cycle and pedestrian route from Portway to Furnax Lane business park has been completed and been named Glovers Lane. The lane has become very well used by pedestrians and cyclists.

The pigeon nuisance in the centre of town is a continuing problem, and would appear to be exacerbated by people deliberately feeding the pigeons. 'Please do not feed the pigeons' signs have been installed on posts within the area.



Efforts are ongoing to remove the unsightly scaffolding from 3 High Street. The Council has been working with stakeholders to try and highlight the issue of absentee landlords and their effects on businesses in small towns.

We still distribute, free of charge, biodegradable dog bags for owners to use in picking up their dog waste and these can be collected at the Civic Centre.

Planning

The Planning Advisory Committee, chaired by Councillor Sue Fraser, meets more than any other committee of the Council, coming together every three weeks to consider all planning applications submitted to the Principal Authority, Wiltshire Council.

Ashwood House, the new care home on the site of the old Beckford Centre, opened in September 2014 and has already reached its capacity of 80 residents. It is run by the Order of St Johns and replaced the old Woodmead care home which could only house 42 residents.



There have been a few contentious planning applications this year which have engaged the interest of residents who came out in force to register their opposition against proposed developments. The councillors recommended rejection of the following plans for the reasons outlined:

- Bath Road/Church Street – overdevelopment, on a flood plain, in a conservation area, access problems, ecology factors, outside the settlement boundary.
- Grovelands Greensquare project – on a flood plain, outside the settlement boundary.
- St Andrews Road – drainage, access, overdevelopment, ecological loss.
- Coldharbour Lane Romany gypsy site – flooding, gas main, does not conform to specifications for gypsy sites.
- Fairview House, Gypsy Lane – overdevelopment of site with no safe provision for children's play or pedestrians.
- West Urban Extension – Persimmon and Hannick plans referred back for a Master Plan for whole area and to keep development to the original 900 homes allocated. A West Urban Extension Master Planning Working Group is in the process of being set up as a working group of the Planning Advisory Committee to focus on how it is envisaged that the whole of the strategic site in the Core Strategy will be developed.

Full Council

In addition to ratifying the work of the three sub-committees – Finance and Assets, Planning Advisory and Town Development – Full Council is the parent committee of the World War I working group. It also looks at issues of interest to the town which are not covered at sub-committee level, such as the work of the Community Operations Board (COB).

A Town Promotion Team has been set up to look at how best to promote the variety of activities and events that take place in the town, as so often we hear the public say “I didn’t know it was on”.



The group are looking at what methods can be used for publicity to

ensure that all of the town’s residents get the information that is relevant for them.



Devolvement of Services is one of the topics being discussed strategically by members. As cutbacks are faced by the principal authority, the Town Council will consider what services it would like to manage itself. The Town Park is one asset which is currently under discussion.

Work undertaken by the Dog Warden working group decided that should it wish to carry out its own campaigns it would be able to hire suitably trained professionals rather than employ a member of staff. Consideration will be given should such work be required within the town at a later date.

The Council was delighted to receive Heritage Lottery funding of £36,800 for the World War I project which will involve a series of activities up to 2018. So far there have been two very successful exhibitions at the Civic Centre, in August 2014 and January 2015, which attracted in the region of 1500 visitors including Years 5 and 6 children from six local primary schools. There have also been three Finds Days which have uncovered a host of local material for the archives, and a number of volunteers have undertaken an oral history training course to enable them to interview residents with family histories from the Great war. All of the information gathered through the project will be used to create a contemporary portable heritage resource in the form of a series of touch screen units which will be located in schools, the Civic Centre and on tour at key venues and events in the town and surrounding villages.



Wiltshire Council submitted proposals for the methodology to determine new settlement boundaries as the existing boundaries were quite dated. The Core Strategy states that by and large development within the settlement boundary is supported, whereas that outside the settlement boundary by and large is not supported unless there are special circumstances, for example rural exception sites for social housing. So many residents came to the Full Council meeting to discuss this issue on 15th September 2014 that the Cley Room was unable to cope with the numbers and the item was deferred to an extraordinary meeting on 14th October 2014. It was agreed at the meeting that the suggested new settlement boundaries should be altered to ensure that Tynings Allotments and the Town Park and its land, including the Warminster Football Club, should be placed outside the settlement boundary, and that the original 50 metre buffer zone that had been proposed for the West Urban Extension should be reinstated.

Communications

Communicating with the electorate is a key part of the Council's activities, and it takes many forms. There is an increasing reliance on social media with the Town Council and Civic Centre having Facebook pages and Twitter accounts to communicate information on the latest news and activities.

The Town Council's website contains the timetable, agendas and minutes of Council meetings, and also has a calendar of events at the Civic Centre and elsewhere in the town. The Council is happy to advertise charity events in the town if the groups send us the relevant information. The Data Transparency, recently updated is recognised by the Town Council and it observes the principles of getting as much information uploaded onto the website as possible.

We advertise all our meetings weekly in the Warminster Journal, as well as posting notices on our internal and external notice boards at the Civic Centre. Additional events are advertised in the Warminster Journal, such as the Remembrance Service, Civic Award and Civic Service.

To keep information up to date every committee and working group of the Council looks at relevant press releases to send to our media contacts. We are published in most of the local papers in and around Warminster, and feature on local radio, in magazines and occasionally on TV.

Enterprise Warminster

Enterprise Warminster continues to run the Warminster Parking Partnership, which allows shoppers to redeem the cost of their first two hours of parking by taking their refund vouchers to those retailers who are part of the scheme and who display the Parking Partnership sign in their windows. Terms and conditions may apply, with most retailers asking for a minimum spend. The scheme is entering its fifth year of operation, and has maintained a fairly steady demand over the past year, with £5,735.00 having been refunded and an average of 715 vouchers being submitted per month. There are currently 24 businesses signed up to the partnership.



CCTV



The operations at CCTV remain an integral part of the Town Council's operations. Headed by supervisor Mike Herriott, a small dedicated team of staff and volunteers work closely with the local community police team as well as agencies from further afield. Members of the public are often not aware the cameras situated in the town are working 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, and the team also cover the monitoring of Westbury Town and the West Wilts Trading Estate. In addition, close working relationships with the Land Warfare Centre and Battlesbury

Barracks enable the town to cover a wide range of issues in respect of prevention of crime. A recent call for more volunteers to work with the CCTV team has led to eight new volunteers going through their initial training and Mike has been delighted with this level of response from the public. If you have an interest in being a part of the team, please contact the Town Clerk.

Civic Award

The recipient of this year's Civic Award was John Bosley, who received the award for the second time for the selfless way in which he continues to serve the people of Warminster despite being in his ninetieth year. He has collected for the British Legion's poppy appeal for the past 42 years, and fundraises for Macmillan Cancer Support and Arnhem Widows and Veterans. He is also active on several committees including Warminster Park Community Centre and Neighbourhood Watch. He was a member of Wiltshire Police from 1947 until 1973, attaining the rank of sergeant. Following his retirement he became Deputy Superintendent at Warminster Sports Centre, acting as a swimming instructor. He always helps members of the community in whatever way he can, being particularly vigilant over the health and welfare of his elderly neighbours.



Events

The sixth Warminster Wobble took place from 21st to 22nd June 2014. This event goes from strength to strength, with an upsurge of interest in cycling, and plans for this year's event on 14th–15th June 2015 are well under way.



The second Inspire music festival was held on 27th July 2014. Fine weather attracted a larger audience than the first year, and there was a great atmosphere in the park all afternoon. The line-up for the 2015 event on 26th July 2015 is now complete, and this looks set to be a popular annual event.

The biannual Warminster Festival was held from 18th October to 2nd November 2014 and was themed on the Wonders of Warminster. It opened with a lively street fayre in the High Street, with flash mobs and street theatre, and closed with an Old Tyme Music Hall at the Athenaeum. There was something for everyone, including a games challenge day at the Civic Centre, and a highly entertaining edition of Call My Bluff at the Athenaeum, starring local 'celebrities' including the Mayor and Town Clerk. There were a host of other activities in the packed programme, and the organisers were delighted with the attendance at the events.



The Carnival, Fireworks and Remembrance Service all attracted large numbers of people from Warminster and the surrounding area, and all continue to be very important in Warminster's events calendar.

Grants

A total of 33 grants were agreed and paid for from the Town Council budgets and the Dewey Trust. These covered a whole range of different organisations from charitable bodies such as Warminster and District Stroke Club and Carers Support to community arts, music and sporting activities such as Warminster Museum and History Society, Warminster Cycle Group, Warminster Youth Centre and Warminster Highbury Youth Football Club. The Council also supports the Carnival, Warminster Wobble, Warminster Festival and the Inspire music festival.

If your organisation has not had the benefit of a grant from the Council, please contact the Civic Centre to discuss your requirements. Grant application forms are available from the Civic Centre and online. Applications must be received at the Civic Centre by 31st May 2015, and grants will be decided by the Finance and Assets Committee in July and be given out in September.

List of complaints received 01/04/2014–31/03/2015

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|----------|----------|---|
| 16.10.14 | S George | Complaint regarding Mayor's handling of Extraordinary Full Council Meeting on 14th October 2014 on the proposed methodology for revised settlement boundaries. The complaint was debated by the HR Committee on 27th October and a response sent to the complainant by both the Mayor and the Town Clerk. |
| 09.12.14 | D Smith | Complaints about lack of information on the proceedings of the HR Committee, and request for Council to issue a statement on its provision of good value for money. Response from Town Clerk outlining the Terms of Reference of the HR Committee. Request for statement of value for money referred to Finance and Assets Committee for debate at meeting on 5th January 2015 to which complainant invited to attend |
| 10.12.14 | A Wright | Complaint about procedure during debate on gully clearing at Full Council meeting on 17th November 2014. Response from Town Clerk clarifying Standing Orders procedures and the positive outcome of the discussions on gully clearance with Wiltshire Council. |

Freedom of Information requests received 01/04/2014–31/03/2015

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|----------|----------|---|
| 03.06.14 | A Wright | Request for records of floods at Boreham Roundabout and Smallbrook Road/Lane. Flood Report and Plan sent 04.06.14. |
| 04.11.14 | P Evans | Request for evidence of T.M44 Air Conditioning Assessment Certification for Council buildings. Response sent twice by email; on 21.11.14 but failed to reach recipient. Certification not needed as installation of units only took place in 2011 and also the units are too small re kW output to qualify for certification. |

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Town Clerk, Heather Abernethie, along with her staff at the Civic Centre and CCTV for the support I have received from them in my term of office. It has been an honour to represent my home town of Warminster for a second time as mayor. I have greatly enjoyed meeting all the volunteers who give up so much of their time for the benefit of others. I would also like to acknowledge another group of volunteers – my fellow Councillors and all those people who work so tirelessly within our working groups, for their support during the past year. I wish my successor the very best for the year to come.



A. Davis

Councillor Andrew Davis
Mayor of Warminster
31st March 2015

FINANCIAL REPORT 2014–2015

The end of the Council's financial year is 31st March and shutdown of the accounts will take place on 27th April 2015 to account for all expenditure and income. This report gives details of the income and expenditure to 28th February 2015 with a breakdown of our current situation. Once the accounts are completed these figures may have changed. The full audited accounts are available to the public and this is advised on completion of the process. To finalise the annual return the final accounts are usually published and adopted by the end of June each year.

The elected Members approved the accounting statements prepared in the way prescribed by law and requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices. They have maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption, and reviewed its effectiveness. Proper arrangements are in place to safeguard the public money and resources in their charge.

All reasonable steps have been taken to assure themselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices that could have a significant effect on the ability of the Council to conduct its business or on its finances. It has only done things that it has the legal power to do so and has complied with proper practices in doing so.

The Council provided proper opportunities during the year for the exercise of elector's rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations. Members of the public have been given opportunities to inspect and ask questions about the Council's accounts.

The Council carried out an assessment of the risks facing the Council and took appropriate steps to manage those risks including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.

During the financial year the Council has carried out an effective system of internal audit of the Council's accounting records and control systems. It arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of the council. All matters raised in those independent reports from the internal and external auditor were responded to and corrected where necessary.

Members have considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end have a financial impact on the Council and where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.

The Council has disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant. These have been included in the financial statements.

The elected Members understand that they are responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of control in place relating to the preparation of the accounting statements.

Heather Abernethie MILCM
Town Clerk and RFO
31st March 2015

**SUMMARY OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
TO 28th FEBRUARY 2015**

Due to the timing of the Parish Meeting this set of figures represents 11 months Income and Expenditure. The final figures will be established following the closedown operation on 27th April 2015. Completed accounts are likely to be available in June 2015 and will be available for the public to inspect.

	Actual YTD £	Annual Budget £
General Administration		
Expenditure	159,500	182,163
Income	449,301	449,070
Civic and Democratic		
Expenditure	4,848	5,700
Income	0	0
Reserves	0	0
Policy and Communications		
Expenditure	1,470	3,500
Income	0	0
Grants and Projects		
Expenditure	104,718	76,200
Income	30,480	0
Events		
Expenditure	0	0
Income	236	0
CCTV		
Expenditure	52,265	66,238
Income	60,537	63,516
Dewey House		
Expenditure	7,663	17,149
Income	6,064	6,000
Churchyards and Open Spaces		
Expenditure	16,503	25,900
Income	3,750	1,500
Civic Centre		
Expenditure	59,118	73,767
Income	52,154	56,270
Total Expenditure	537,368	576,401
Total Income	607,785	576,401

	£
The Precept amounted to	454,802
Precept Support Grant	35,768
Long-term Liabilities	
Public Works Loan Board	434,771
General Reserve	175,048
Earmarked Reserves:	
Capital Projects	148,731
Devolved Services	47,182
Town Development	885
Enterprise Warminster	21,651
CCTV	0
Neighbourhood Plan	2,756
Dewey House	2,473
Churchyards	1,937
Catenary Cables	800
Training	2,427
Town Crier	450

Warminster Town Council is composed of 13 Councillors. The town is divided into four wards: Warminster West, Warminster East and Broadway, each with four Councillors, and Copheap with one Councillor. The Council is led by the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor, who are elected each May at the Annual Meeting.

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Town Council meetings and committee meetings are held at the Civic Centre and are open to the public. The public are welcome to attend the majority of Council meetings, either to listen or to speak in the public session.

Dates and times of meetings and agendas are posted on the notice boards at the Civic Centre, and are listed on our website at www.warminster.uk.com. Meetings are also listed in the *Warminster Journal*.

Minutes of Council Meetings can also be found on our website or requested from the Civic Centre.

The Town Council offices at the Civic Centre are open Monday–Friday, 9.00am–4.30pm, and the public are welcome to call in during those hours.

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