

ANNUAL REPORT

2009—2010

Town Council Meetings and Committee Meetings are held at Dewey House 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.

Times of meetings and agendas are listed on our website www.warminstergov.co.uk and are also posted on the notice boards at Dewey House and the Assembly Rooms. Our new website address—www.warminster.uk.com—will be online during 2010.

Meetings are also listed in the Warminster Journal.

Minutes of Council Meetings can also be found on our website, or requested from Dewey House.

Dewey House is open Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm and the public are welcome to call in during those hours.

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I started this year as Chairman shortly after the formation of the new Unitary Authority known as Wiltshire Council. The elections for new unitary members brought success to three Town Council members, Pip Ridout, Keith Humphries and Andrew Davis. During my municipal year I have attended 107 engagements and met some wonderful people.

A full review of our committees took place shortly before the start of the year and we created an additional Communications Committee whose brief it has been to promote the activities of the Council through the media.

We try and use a variety of methods to help the Council improve its communication with our residents. Our newsletter *engage* comes out three times a year to keep you informed about community activities. In addition there are contact details for your councillors, who can help you with local issues and dates of all council meetings open to the public. We also advertise all our meetings in the weekly *Warminster Journal* so that members of our community can attend any meeting in which they are interested.

Our website has caused us problems in the last year and we decided that a new, more community focused, website was essential for us to keep up to date and ensure that we bring together many organisations who can display their services. This is being constructed at the moment and should be up and running later in the year.

One of the largest projects that the Council has continued to work on in the last 12 months has been the Vision & Scoping Study, the start of the development of a Town Plan for Warminster. With 50% of the funding secured from Wiltshire Council, work is very well established to go alongside the Unitary Authority's core strategy, with the hope our own plan will become a Supplementary Planning Document.



WARMINSTER EAST

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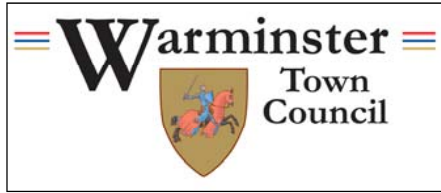
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Warminster Town Council is made up of 12 Councillors. The town is divided into two wards, Warminster East and Warminster West, and six members represent each ward. The Council is led by the Mayor, Councillor Tony Nicklin, and the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Sue Fraser

WARMINSTER WEST

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I introduced my Mayor's Initiative and Business Plan at the start of the year in the hope that the documents produced could become a real business plan for the Council but, as it is not always possible to determine Council business in this way, it has eventually become an expression of my hopes and aspirations. I hope that my 'one man mission' has been able to identify a strategy for good future planning.

Work has been taking place within the Council with our preferred architects BTA on the Assembly Rooms, which is of a serious nature and a dedicated attempt to identify a stable future for the Assembly Rooms. Planning permission has been granted by Wiltshire Council for a change of use and the tender process for the contractors is well underway.

Should the Town Council decide to go ahead with the refurbishment the proposed layout of the rooms will be to have a new Council Chamber using the stage area, a full council office for staff and a more flexible arrangement for letting the remaining space. Overall the only space taken out of public hire will be the ante room but the conversion of the stage space to a Council Chamber will make up for this and will be available to the public when the Council are not using it. We hope to be able to finalise quotations by the end of July.

On 5th March I accepted a petition calling for a Parish Meeting to discuss the financial costs of the refurbishment and this meeting was set for 31st March at the Assembly Rooms. The outcome was that a Parish Poll was requested by 10 electors of the Parish and has been forwarded to Democratic Services at Wiltshire Council, who have responsibility for this process.

I was very pleased to have held the Mayor's Community Day on 27th February, which went very well. The Assembly Rooms was packed with an estimated 500 visitors on the day. The many stalls were well prepared by the voluntary groups. The Town Council stand was so busy that at times that it was difficult to hear and speak. My thanks go to all of you who helped on the day and visited the stands which made the day such a success.

The Town Council was pleased to be a part of the first ever Christmas Market held in Market Place at the end of November to celebrate the switch-on of our magnificent Christmas Lights. Well done to the Christmas Lights Committee, a sterling group of volunteers who make sure the display each year is excellent. Look out for notice of the second market, already booked for 27th November 2010.

It is unfortunate that the two-hour free parking that has been paid for by the Council for four years cannot continue. Town Council members debated the offers put by Wiltshire Council recently and decided that it could not afford the increase from £36,000 to £150,000 to continue the two-hour free parking, nor could it justify £36,000 towards a reduction of 20p in the first hour cost to be introduced of 40p. It is anticipated that the charges will come into force from 1st June 2010.

We saw the finish of the Town Centre works which have produced a brand new street scene for us all to enjoy, with wide pavements and new street lighting and furniture.



The CCTV committee goes from strength to strength and equipment has been upgraded to digital this year. This has improved the time spent on completing reviews for the police and freeing up staff time to concentrate on more productive activities. A new camera in Portway will be installed in the next month. There have been unavoidable delays on this project but we have now overcome the final hurdles. We are very pleased to support the police in their efforts to keep the town safe.

SUMMARY OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE TO 28th February 2010 (continued)

	Actual YTD £	Annual budget £
Transport and Environment		
Expenditure	1,989	24,000
Income	995	0
Assembly Rooms		
Expenditure	126,381	112,275
Income	54,986	61,007
CCTV		
Expenditure	60,342	59,859
Income	56,862	59,859
TOTALS		
Expenditure	507,189	533,502
Income	541,021	533,502

**SUMMARY OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE
TO 28th February 2010**

Due to the timing of the Annual Parish Meeting figures are only available for 11 months. Full accounts will be produced by May

	Actual YTD £	Annual budget £
General Administration		
Expenditure	168,361	166,930
Income	426,006	410,745
Grants & Projects		
Expenditure	67,981	81,000
Income	5	0
Leisure and Tourism		
Expenditure	23,886	23,905
Cemetery/Churchyards		
Expenditure	12,611	15,043
Income	2,167	1,891
Capital Expenditure		
	39,000	39,000
Civic and Democratic		
Expenditure	6,638	11,490

The Council has spent three years working on plans to support those people affected by flooding in certain areas of the town and we have worked with experts from Wiltshire Council, Wessex Water and the Environment Agency. Three volunteers have come forward to be the town's flood wardens and this will now help us to create our own town flood plan. The emphasis these days is on self help and ensuring that those vulnerable in our community can be supported when the likelihood of flooding is evident.

The Town Development Committee has continued to support various projects this year and is as busy as ever. Plans to put something in place to reduce speeding traffic coming from the by-pass into Deverill Road have finally been completed after three years planning and consultation. The speed limit has been moved further back towards the by-pass and red surfacing laid as a warning to drivers to slow down. The residents of Ludlow Close and Ashley Place first raised this as an issue and the Council have been pleased to support this work.

A working group was set up to work on the five entrances into the town and review if further amenity trees could be planted and maintenance work could be carried out to ensure that those coming into the town would get a strong and pleasant welcome. Over the last 12 months a review of Westbury Road, Bath Road, Victoria Road, Boreham Road and Deverill Road has taken place. A maintenance programme for cutting grass and keeping signs upright and clean has been put together and it is hoped that working with Wiltshire Council's Parish Steward Programme will mean that these entrances look inviting to visitors. There are plans to add trees at Deverill Road, Victoria Road and Boreham Road.

The Council is involved with the new Trans Wilts Community Rail Partnership which will look at rail services and supporting new and more efficient connections within the Warminster – Swindon services.

We were able to install a new bus stop at Woodcock Road after a request from local residents. This was supported by a 50% grant from Wiltshire Council passenger transport. We are working with Wiltshire Council on a feasibility study which is currently being carried out on the possibility of a mini-roundabout at the junction of Copheap and Portway to assist traffic flow.

We were able to influence Wiltshire Council Highways to improve the signage at Beech Avenue and Pound Street for exiting lorries, which we hope has improved a difficult situation within the area. White lines were painted at the junction of Smallbrook Road and Boreham Road to assist with visibility on exiting the junction. By way status applied for last year was achieved for Carsons Yard.

Two projects which the members would like to review are parking restrictions throughout the town and cycle routes.

After the awful winter we all experienced, a full review of our grit bins in the town was undertaken and 10 new bins requested from Wiltshire Council. Members of the public should let the Town Council know when the grit is running low so that we can arrange for it to be topped up.

Queensway Park was highlighted by two of our younger residents as not having enough decent play equipment for the local children to enjoy and there is now to be new play equipment installed under the Playbuilder Scheme. Funds have been granted to provide two benches at Warminster Common to replace two that have deteriorated. Work is continuing to supply signage to alert people to the Copheap Memorial and an information board to be put at the site to inform people of its existence.

Our Planning Committee meet every three weeks to review all planning applications that have been submitted. There are always some contentious applications and it is pleasing to see many local residents attending meetings to voice their concerns. This year saw the application regarding the development of the Central Car Park turned down which was as a result of public opinion.



During the year, Mayor Cllr Tony Nicklin judged the Gardens Competition (top left), led the Warminster Wobble (above), and added a stitch to the St Lawrence kneelers (left), one of the recipients of a Town Council grant.



Warminster's first Christmas Market was held to celebrate the Christmas Lights Switch-On.

Consultation was held on the draft Town Plan for Warminster



The Precept amounted to	£434,245
Total Current Assets amount to	£432,586
Creditors	£ 505
Net Current Assets	£432,081
Represented by:-	
Current Year Fund	£ 33,832
General Reserve	£227,279
Ear Marked Reserves:	
Capital Projects	£ 75,948
Finance & Resources	£ 8,991
Transport & Environmental	£ 22,850
CCTV	£ 45,122
Town Plan	£ 15,319
Office Equipment	£ 2,464
Youth Fund	£ 276
Total Equity	£432,081

Help and grant funding from the Council helped to get a local Foodbank up and running, which is greatly needed. The group are looking for permanent premises but still manage to support those in need.

Fairtrade Town status was renewed for another year – Warminster has held this status since March 2008.

Do look out for and support the many events that the Warminster Festival has planned for 3rd – 10th July in the town. The Festival starts with our second Town Crier Competition which will be held in the Park, commencing at 10am with a procession through the town. It is quite a sight to see 25 Criars and their escorts in regal dress. All events will be published in a programme which will be available from late May.

The West Wilts Show was a tremendous success once again, but sadly for its final year. I was very privileged to meet the Duchess of Cornwall and show her around our Marquee. She was presented with a gift from Dents and showed particular interest in our efforts to create our own Town Plan. In that conversation she said “let me know what happens”. We would welcome her back to Warminster to open a function or building – surely!

Finally, may I record my thanks to Heather Abernethie our Town Clerk and to all her staff at Dewey House, CCTV and Warminster Assembly Rooms, for the support that I have received over this past year. It has been a great help to know that they are always there when events like the West Wilts Show, the Civic Reception and Service and the Mayor’s Community Day need to be planned.

May I also record my thanks to my fellow Councillors for their support in trying to guide the Town through a difficult and challenging economic cycle.



Councillor Tony Nicklin
Mayor of Warminster
31st May 2010



FINANCIAL REPORT

2009/2010

The Annual Return summarising the Council's activities is in the process of being completed. It will be ready in June 2010 and submitted to the Independent Auditors appointed by the government. The company currently appointed are Mazars.

The end of the Council's financial year is 31st March and shut-down of the accounts will take place on 30th April, to account for all expenditure. Recorded in this report are details of Income and Expenditure to 28th February 2010, which gives a breakdown of our current situation. Once the accounts are completed some of these figures will have changed. Copies of the accounts are available to the public on request.

Warminster Town Council has made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge. The Town Council has only carried out things that it has the legal power to do and has conformed to codes of practice and standards in the way that it has done so.

I have given all interested persons the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the Council's accounts, considered the financial and other risks the Council faces in its business and dealt with them properly, and disclosed everything I should have about Council business during the year, including events taking place after the year-end, if relevant.

The annual accounts once completed are available to the public and this is advertised on completion of that process.

The Council's activities are audited on an internal basis with an Auditor appointed by the Council and externally by Mazars for the Audit Commission.

The Council has taken appropriate action in response to matters brought to its attention by the Auditors.

Last year's Audit was signed off and showed that Warminster Town Council kept appropriate books of accounts throughout the year. The financial regulations have been met, payments supported by invoices and expenditure approved; VAT was appropriately accounted for.

The Council assessed significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these. This includes internal controls and additional insurance cover where appropriate. A Health and Safety policy is in place and reviewed each year in May.

The annual precept requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget was regularly monitored and reserves were appropriate to the projects in hand.

Expected income was fully received, based on correct process, properly recorded and promptly banked: VAT was appropriately accounted for. Petty Cash payments were properly supported by receipts, expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with Council approval and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied. Asset and Investments registers were completed and accurately and properly maintained. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations are carried out.

The Council runs an internal audit of its own which is carried out during the financial year by appointed members of the Finance and Assets Committee with a final executive check by the Mayor.

Heather Abernethie
Town Clerk
31st March 2010