

Town Clerk Report 07.02.23

Westgate NDP

The independent examination for the Westgate NDP is now underway and the Examiner has raised a few queries and questions; there is a report in relation to this on the Agenda this evening. The deadline for submission to the Examiner is 20th February and the cost for the consultant support is below £1,000 which is within my delegated authority. The Town Council has resolved to progress the Westgate NDP to Referendum, this will now not be possible to coincide with the May elections but will take place as soon as is practically possible afterwards with Thanet District Council who organise and fund the conclusion to progress to a Made NDP.

Town Council Magazine

The next issue of the Town Council magazine is currently being worked on, the next issue should be out in March.

Town Council Office Update

I would like to welcome Ruzina who has joined the office team, she will be on Reception to greet the residents and working behind the scenes to support projects and initiatives as well as input on the finance system.

We have been overwhelmed in response to the Jigsaw puzzle exchange and this is proving very popular with all ages, a nice addition to the front space.

We have welcomed back groups after the Christmas break including Sewing Bees, Spanish classes, and Hearing Voices. Also nice to have the Barclays Hub on a Friday for which the Town Council has received a few compliments from residents who are pleased to have this facility in the town.

Budget for 2023/2024

The budget was an item of debate at the last Full Council meeting and following that the Finance and General Purposes Committee met in January. The Precept figure that is submitted to Thanet District Council must be divisible by 9 for the purposes of apportioning correctly to residents of Westgate. Therefore, following the confirmation that the Tax Base figure of 2,527.89 was approved by Cabinet at TDC on 12th January the following figure has now been confirmed to TDC as the Precept request for the Town Council. The proposed Precept figure for 2023/2024 is £186,560.00 which equates to a Band D equivalent of £73.80 – an increase of 15.01% and £9.63 per household. The overall budget figure for the Town Council for 2023/2024 is £204,069.00.

Play Area Update

The ropes on the multi play unit are now all installed and this now concludes all the works from the play area inspections report from last year. We now need to focus on funding opportunities for the play area surface and look at ways to improve access for all.

Number 35 Bus Service

Following the December Full Council there has been contact with KCC officers to enquire about the potential to review the timetable with the operator; an update is expected very soon. There has been a lot of information gathered by officers at the Town Council which has all been shared with Members to seek solutions for individual residents with ongoing challenges and I would urge any

resident who is experiencing difficulty to contact the Town Council office and although we cannot promise an answer we will work hard to help you as an individual.

Elections May 2023

Last but not least please ensure you are registered to vote at the local Elections on Thursday 4th May and be advised that you will be required to show photographic ID at the polling station before you are given your ballot paper. If this presents a problem and you do not have a suitable photo ID you can request a postal vote as photo ID is currently not required for postal votes.