

Assistant to the Town Clerk’s Report September/October2023

For Council Meeting 7th November 2023

1. Key Dates for all Councillors’ diaries;

Sunday 12 th November 2023	Remembrance Sunday Service
Sunday 19 th November 2023	Civic Service
Monday 4 th December 2023	Mayor’s Christmas Event
Monday 15 th April 2024	Mayor’s End of Term Event
Friday 26 th April 2024	Civic Ball 2024
Thursday 2 nd May 2024	Grants Presentation Evening (Grants Panel members only)

2. The closure of NatWest plc, Tavistock

Following the announcement of the closure of the local NatWest branch, a letter was written conveying the Council’s disappointment that the Bank had made this decision, and inviting communication between the two parties with regard to the possibility of providing meaningful legacy Services in the Town. A further update is enclosed elsewhere on the Agenda (B&PC Minute No. 213 refers).

The matter is being progressed by the Town Clerk, in partnership with Tavistock BID.

3. Activity Log

CONFERENCE & TRAINING ACTIVITY LOG

CIVIC YEAR 2023-2024

COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE between 19th September – 6th November 2023;

DATE OF MEETING or TRAINING SESSION	SUBJECT	LOCATION	ORGANISER	COUNCILLORS BOOKED TO ATTEND
				<i>N.B. Councillors’ names in italics indicate that these were a ‘no show’</i>
Booked 5 th June 2023	Cyber Awareness Training	Virtual	SW Councils via DALC	Cllrs Ms M Ewings, A Hutton, J Irvine, T Munro, B Smith, P Ward - booked Cllrs J Irvine, Mrs A Johnson, T Munro, B Smith, P Ward – completed

				N.B. To be completed within 3 months of booking
Booked 5 th June 2023 Cllr B Smith booked 7 th August 2023	Personal Safety Essentials	Virtual	SW Councils via DALC	Cllrs Ms M Ewings, B Smith & P Ward - booked Cllrs B Smith, P Ward - completed N.B. To be completed within 3 months of booking
20 th September 2023 6.00pm – 8.30pm	Being a Good Employer	Virtual	DALC	None
25 th September 2023 6.00pm – 8.00pm	Chairing Local Council Meetings	Virtual	DALC	None
2 nd October 2023 6.00pm – 8.30pm	Being a Good Employer	Virtual	DALC	Cllrs Mrs B Moody, J Moody, B Smith
9 th October 2023 6.00pm – 8.00pm	Chairing Local Council Meetings	Virtual	DALC	Cllrs Mrs B Moody, J Moody, B Smith
31 st October 2023 6.00pm – 8.45pm	Being a Good Councillor (mandatory training)	Council Chamber	DALC	Apologies received from Cllrs J Irvine, P Ward

4. Council Chamber Bookings

Chamber bookings (not including Council Meetings), from 19th September – 6th November 2023:

- 25 non-chargeable meetings (internal meetings, or a TTC representative attending on behalf of TTC, partner organisations or Mayoral events)
- 0 chargeable meeting/training session
- 1 training session (non-chargeable)

5. Property Units Update

Residential – there is currently only one vacant residential property:

- 1 Market Road – as previously reported, this property is currently being used as a welfare facility during the Town Hall works period. It is anticipated that this will extend into the New Year, in view of the additional works being undertaken on the Town Hall.

Commercial - there are currently no vacant commercial properties, however the Break Clause

on one of the shops has been invoked, with the property becoming available at the end of January 2024. Active marketing of the unit will commence shortly.

6. General including ongoing activities in the Admin Office

The Office continues to support the organisation across the range of Civic, administrative, financial and corporate activities.

Pay Award 2023/2024 - as previously advised, the Employer Side had made a full and final offer to the staff side in connection with the 2023-24 pay settlement. This amounted to an award of £1,925 (pro rata as appropriate) to those posts on SCPs 2-43, and an increase of 3.88% to those posts on SCPs 44 and above. This offer was rejected by Unison. However, it has subsequently advised members to accept the original offer. We have been advised that following further meetings between the Unison, Unite and GMB unions an update will be provided in mid-November. Further updates will be provided, when available.

7. Website & Accessibility update

Booking forms/schedules of charges for various Council activities are assessed on an ongoing basis and will be updated, where necessary, to ensure compliance with the regulations. Overall site compliance is reviewed annually.

The Council has been advised that the current host platform service for our website is being upgraded in January, 2025. Therefore, we have transferred our service to JISC Domain Services in anticipation of this change and will be actively tendering website replacement prior to then.

8. Legal Services

In the early part of 2024 arrangements will need to be made to either re-tender or renegotiate legal services for the Council, in view of the timeframe for current arrangements. A review of present arrangements, including with our provider, will be undertaken in the New Year to help inform next steps.

9. Lettable Properties and Energy Performance

Energy Performance Certificates (EPC's) and Display Performance Certificates (DPC's) are in certain circumstances a requirement for the letting of properties. However, the position lacks clarity regarding certain classes of Listed premises and further information is being sought prior to upcoming changes in minimum thresholds for eligible premises in light of recent Government announcements.

Report prepared by
Jan Smallacombe (Assistant to the Town Clerk)