



WARE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 20th May 2024

in The Council Chamber, The Priory, Ware, starting at 7.30pm

Cllr Hill (Chair) Day, Scully, J Taylor-Moran, K Taylor-Moran Williams, Zsibrita

Cllr Mowbray from WTC761

Officer present: Terry Philpott Town Clerk, Sarah Fenton (left after WTC763) , Kat Harter (left after WTC770) , Heidi Pateman (left after WTC765).

Members of the public: nil

MINUTES

WTC756: To receive and accept Apologies for Absence

- Cllr Butcher, Bryant, Shaw.

WTC757: To receive any Declarations of Interest and review any requests for Dispensation submitted to the Clerk.

- None declared

WTC758: Minutes from the previous meeting: to receive and sign the minutes of the last Town Council meeting held on 13th May 2024

Resolved: The minutes are an accurate record

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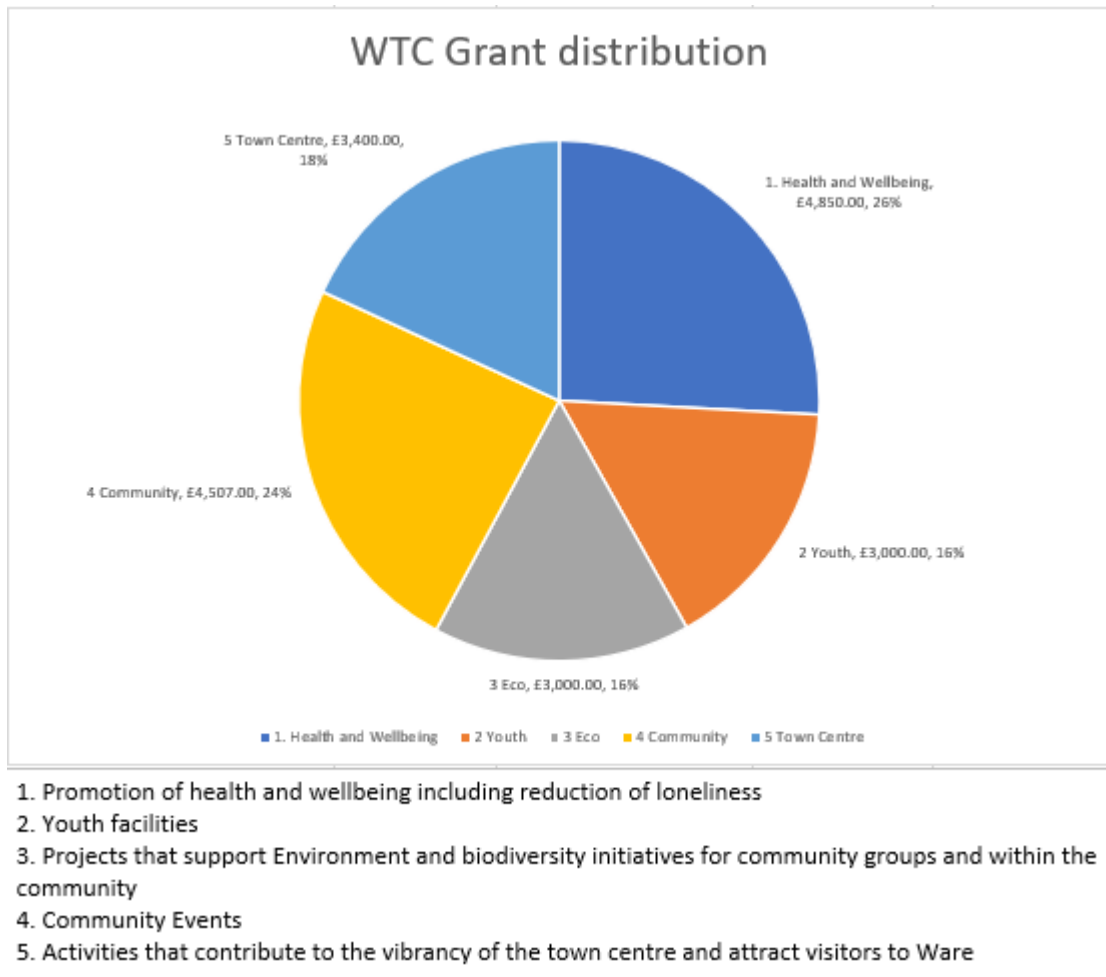
WTC759: Correspondence and Clerks report (TP)

Green Flag award, work continuing.

WTC760: Grant applications

To receive an update on grants allocated by officers and review any grants for consideration by Full Council.

Date	Organisation	Where are they based	Purpose of grant	Grant awarded/financial assistance	When will it be used
15.04.24	Mens Shed	Ware	Mens Shed 24/25	£ 2,400.00	24/25
15.04.24	Book Festival	Ware	Book Festival	£ 1,000.00	May-24
15.04.24	Great Amwell Scout Group	Ware	Improvements to Facilities	£ 1,500.00	Apr-24
15.04.24	Hearts for Hearts	Ware	Heartstart Lifesaver	£ 450.00	24/25
15.04.24	St Marys Church	Ware	Church Lighting	£ 1,000.00	24/25
15.04.24	Ware 10s	Ware	First Aid provision - 07.07.24	£ 882.00	24/25
15.04.24	5th Ware Scouts	Ware	Contribution to Norway trip	£ 500.00	24/25
15.04.24	Ware & District Photographic Society	Ware	60th Anniversary Fundraiser	£ 300.00	24/25
15.04.24	Ware District Scout Council	Ware	St Georges Day Parade 21.04.24	£ 400.00	24/25
15.04.24	Ware Youth Football Club	Ware	Community Area refurb	£ 1,000.00	24/25
01.04.24	Ware Girl Guides	Ware	Contribution to trip	£ 500.00	2024
01.04.24	Ware Town Partnership	Ware	Dickensian Evening	£ 3,400.00	24/25
01.04.24	Herts Cycle Hub CIC	Ware	Free Cycles for Ware Residents	£ 2,000.00	24/25
12.04.24	Flip Theatre	Ware	Larkspur Mindfulness	£ 500.00	24/25
30.04.24	All Sorts	Ware	Community Choir	£ 1,000.00	24/25
30.04.24	The Ware Society	Ware	Data Projector	£ 350.00	24/25
30.04.24	Herts Festival of Music	Ware	St Marys - 15.06.24	£ 500.00	Jun-25
01.04.24	Ware Poets	Ware	08.11.24 - Poetry Day at SM	£ 500.00	YES PART CONTRIBUTION
15.05.24	Yarn Bombers	Ware	12 Post boxes - Yarn Bombers	£ 175.00	24/25
15.05.24	Community Alliance	Ware	Digital Champions	£ 400.00	24/25
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			Total 2024/25	£ 16,357.00	
			Grant Pot £38k	£ 38,000.00	
			Remaining 2024/25	£ 21,643.00	
			Loneliness Budget £5k	£ 5,000.00	
			Spent 2024/25	£ 2,400.00	
			Remaining 2024/25	£ 2,600.00	



The grant expenditure was noted.

WTC761: Town Centre Report (SF)

The report was noted

Tudor Square Sunday Market

The market now has its own Facebook page, run by Southern Maltings, which allows them to promote more frequently and focus on stallholders throughout the month.

Traders Association

We built a digital survey in April for group members using software on the town council website to help the group establish their priorities. The group are spending some of their funding on a marketing specialist to use online testing strategies to shop fronts and signage to drive increased customers into shops.

Banking Hub

A temporary banking hub location is currently being constructed and should be open in June for a period of approx. 6 months. This is while a permanent location is being agreed.

WTC762: Communications Report (SF)

The report was noted

Ware Town Council Website

Stats unavailable

Social Media

Across our social media pages for Feb/Mar/Apr (since the last report) on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for Ware Town Centre, Ware Town Council, Ware Priory & Ware Lido:

411 posts

425,061 post impressions (the number of times the posts appeared on someone's screens)

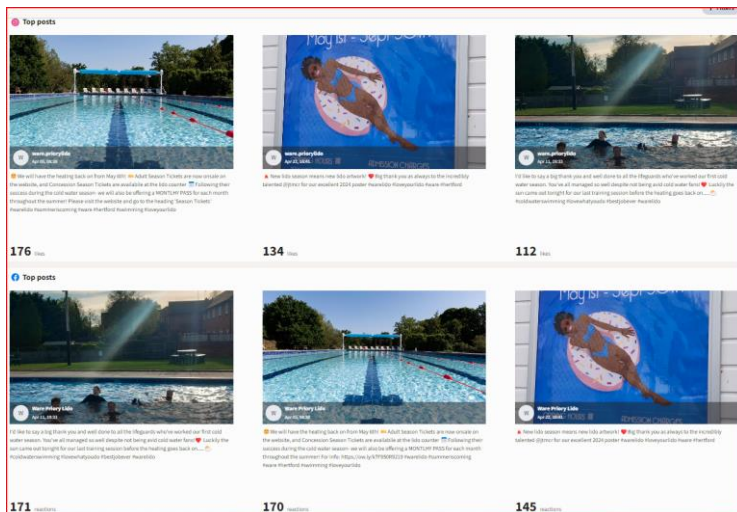
396,838 users (the number of people who saw our social content – page & reach profile)

5.03% post engagement rate across networks (average engagement rate)

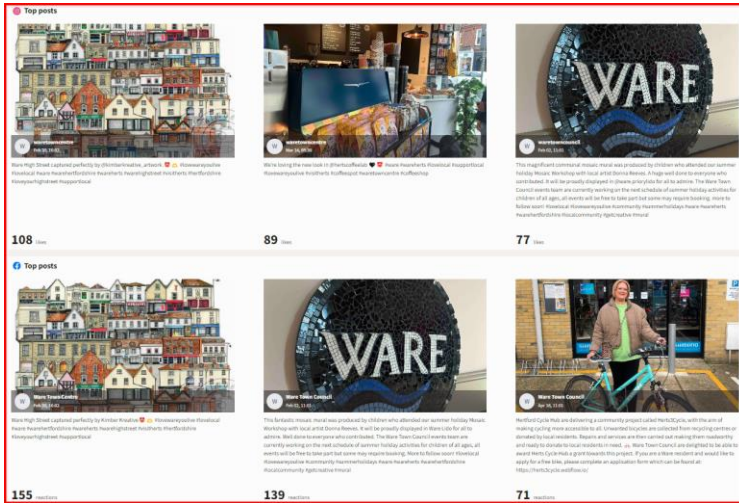
6256 post reactions & likes

25,759 Fans/Followers across networks

1060 New Fans/Followers



Lido Facebook & Instagram Highlights



Town Council/Centre Facebook & Instagram Highlights

WTC763: Communications Strategy and Consultation re Christmas Lights (SF)

To receive and note the report.

Christmas 2024 Alternative Lighting/Illumination Scheme

Further to the report from the Full Council meeting in March (which outlined challenges and costs of replacing the lanterns) we undertook an exploratory visit in April - with the incumbent festive decoration contractor - of the town centre. This was to establish the feasibility of extra decoration for 2024 and to gain another opinion on whether a replacement lantern scheme was achievable.

It was further reiterated to us that power cannot be fed from inside shops to an outside adapter to power the lanterns. Therefore, the existing power supply used for lanterns is unsafe and not permitted under festive lighting regulations. A Stage 1 Licence would not be granted to enable the lanterns (as they are) to be installed on shop fronts.

As per the contractor's advice, the only alternative is to invest in power sources throughout the town that would support the lanterns on the front of shops. These would be feeder pillars that require permission from UKPN to be installed on Highways land (pavements). Each pillar would require individual permission to dig up the pavement. With the necessary permits, approximately 30 pillars would be needed, a rough cost of £3k per pillar.



Example of feeder pillar on Ware High Street

We have also obtained a quote for 2-sided injection moulded lantern cases. These are the same style as the current lanterns and would need to be placed over strings of LED lights which would be purchased separately. 1,900 metres of string lighting is needed with one lantern per metre. The quote for the lantern cases was £9/each set with a tie wrap and 1 black clip. Total cost just for the 1900 lantern cases would be approx. £17,000. This does not include the cost of the 1900 metres of led lights, it is just the lanterns.

The lanterns would also require permission of each building owner before they are installed, and each anchor bolt would need to be tested annually and a certificate provided.

Following the survey, the proposed alternative scheme is as follows:

- Icicle lights at roof gutter level (that stay up all year) with power from street lights (on selected buildings to provide extra illumination throughout town). Around 10 – 12 key buildings completed for this year and add more in future years. Possible locations: Ware Coffee Lab all sides icicles, Card Factory to Opal and Iris buildings, Parkers Jewellers to Truly Scrumptious Café, Curve of buildings on Post Office Corner, any other that are suitable. Permissions are required from these shops.



Example of icicle lights in Poole

- 12 or 16 foot Christmas tree for Tudor Square or Priory grounds (homage to the lanterns as the tree would be lit using the existing ones)
- Possible walk through 'Christmas present' set piece in same colour scheme as Ware Bear outside War Memorial
- Restore lights in tree that are near Ladbrokes and get power from street light there

- On Amwell End, put two poles from near Jennings bookmakers (with power from street light on wall there). Run poles down Amwell End to Costcutter and put a second Ware bear there. Possibly put festoon lights on those poles too.
- A third Ware Bear to be placed outside old Library (need permission for a new Anchor bolt) or at the corner of Burgage Lane (beside Brewery Tap wall)
- Tree at Ware Museum to have new 24 volt lights and IP66 rated
- Possible unlit glass Fibre structure near Welcome Hut on Amwell End bridge (no power available)
- As usual, original Ware Bear near Keith Ian Estate agents
- 3 x cross streets (2 on High Street and one on Baldock Street)

Christmas 2024 Consultation/Communication

A public consultation on replacing lanterns is difficult if we ultimately are unable to deliver on results that favour this approach. A like-for-like lantern scheme is unfeasible due to time, resource, expense, Highways permits and roadworks. There are limited options as to what we can deliver. The proposed scheme is the most viable to have ready in time for 2024. In the 2025 residents survey we can include questions on what residents opinions are of the 2024 scheme and ideas/preferences for what they would like added/removed.

Resolved: To support the scheme for 2024 as described.

Resolved: To publish the details of the 2024 scheme in August / September

Resolved: To seek feedback on the 2024 scheme and consult on options for 2025 in January/February 2025.

WTC764: ESG Report (Environment, Social and Governance) (HP)

The report was noted, Heidi Pateman was congratulated on the quality of the report and direction of work being completed.

WTC765: Ripple Energy (JTM)

To consider the report and agree the next steps.

Summary

Ware Town Council has aspirations for Net Zero, indeed it has made a commitment to achieve this. The Priory estate, due to the listed building and conservation area limiting the retrofit possibilities, makes this difficult to achieve without offsetting. Ripple energy is a scheme that facilitates direct investment in renewable energy projects, allowing WTC to invest in the infrastructure that would supply renewable energy to WTC for the next 30 years.

Background

Ripple Energy offers a unique approach to financing and developing renewable energy projects. This report delves into the workings and benefits of Ripple Energy, examining its core principles, operational mechanisms, and the advantages it presents to WTC for energy hedging and sustainable energy generation.

Core Principles

Ripple Energy democratises access to clean energy with a low barrier to entry, unlike traditional means of energy generation. Ripple Energy introduces a novel approach to financing renewable energy projects, enabling individuals and businesses to directly invest in, and benefit from, the generation of clean electricity.

Their platform facilitates the formation of energy communities, wherein individuals come together to collectively finance the construction of renewable energy assets such as wind and solar farms. This decentralised approach empowers communities to take ownership of their energy future.

Operational Mechanisms

Project Identification: Ripple Energy identifies suitable locations for renewable energy projects, considering factors such as wind resource potential, grid connectivity, and community engagement.

Financing

Through its innovative model, Ripple Energy allows individuals to invest directly in specific renewable energy projects. Participants contribute funds towards the construction of the project in exchange for a share of the electricity generated, typically through a power purchase agreement (PPA) or a similar arrangement.

Construction and Operation

Once sufficient funding is secured, Ripple Energy oversees the construction and commissioning of the renewable energy facility. The generated electricity is then supplied to the grid, with investors receiving returns based on their contribution and the project's performance.

Ware Town Council

WTC is unable to install solar or other ways of producing renewable energy on its buildings for historic or practical reasons. It is hoped that we can make changes where possible, notably the Lido.

According to the Eco audit last year, WTC’s buildings consumed 229,00 KWH in 2021 and 108,000 KWH in 2023, with it likely to increase with the addition of aircon to Fletchers Lea, lido refurbishment and the cafe project.

The Proposal

Ripple allows WTC to have the benefits of self-generated energy without the logistical and planning headaches. Ripple also allows WTC to choose how much investment it wishes to allocate, making it potentially more affordable than rooftop solar, especially given the economies of scale that come with projects this size. WTC can buy a stake in the Whitelaw Brae Wind Farm project in Scotland. The closing date for this project is May 2024.



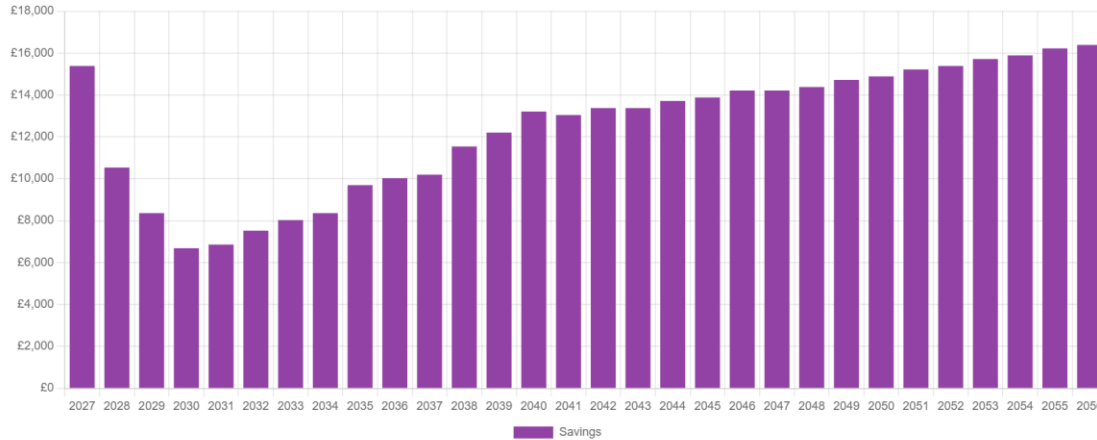
WTC energy bills will be reduced through investment in clean energy. WTC has the opportunity to hedge against future energy prices by effectively purchasing energy now and receiving more energy over the 30-year life span of the project. Ripple states the “payback period” could be between 13-21 years depending on the future price of electricity.

Your savings depend on the electricity price. Nobody knows for sure what the price will be going forward. The graph below illustrates potential savings based on recent Government forecasts up to 2040.

High estimate ▾

13 years
Estimated payback period

£373,259
Estimated 30 year savings



Ripple has a 120% annual energy cap on investment. Given WTC’s large electricity consumption, this would be quite a high number in the hundreds of thousands. However, Ripple has a 139,358.90 KWH cap per investor, so WTC would have the opportunity to invest between £25 - £119,102. Given the cap, WTC has projected savings of £373,259 over the lifetime of the project at the highest investable amount, with £15,385 coming from the first year of operation. There is the possibility to pay in instalments.

Input your consumption:

kWh 139358.90

Calculate

Your ownership quote

£373,259

Estimated savings over
your project's lifetime

£121,924

Total indicative cost if
paying in instalments

120%

of your
electricity

How much of the project would you like to own?

(minimum of £25)



[Or set your own budget](#)

All savings are estimates and will depend on future electricity prices and the level of generation.

If you have a reservation, it will be deducted on the payment page.

If you purchased:

69,096 Watts, this would
generate:

167,231 kWh of electricity per
year

You can choose to pay in **12 x**
£10,160 monthly instalments
or in one single **£119,102**
payment

You could save an estimated:

£15,385 in your first full year
of generation

£373,259 over the lifespan of
the project

88,799 kg of CO₂ each year

[View more potential saving
scenarios](#)

Recommendation

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WTC invests £119k in Ripple, paying by instalment if necessary. This level of investment gives WTC savings of £373,259 over the course of the project and helps WTC meet its' Net Zero goal.

Resolved: Not to support this scheme at the current time.

The decision was based on the uncertainty of the forecast and the lack of available budget of £119K to support the project at this time. Consideration for future inclusion in a Ripple scheme could be considered by WTC.

WTC766: Audit 2023/24 Management Replies

Noted and approved, the responses to the internal audit report.

WTC767: Financial Report (TP)

The Finance reports to April 2024 was discussed and noted.

- Reserve, earmarked funds.
- Debtor's report
- Profit and Loss

WTC768: Ware Town Council Bank Reconciliations 01.04.24 – 30.04.24 (TP)

Resolved: The above Bank Reconciliations are an accurate record, approved by Cllr Day and Zsbrista.

WTC769: Ware Town Council Financial Regulations 30.04.24 (TP)

Resolved: To adopt the updated Financial Regulations based on the NALC model 2024, with minor amendments related to the supply of invoices at meetings.

WTC770: Feedback from members of Ware Lido Project group (TP/TD)

To receive verbal feedback from the LPG following their meeting on 20th May 2024.

The Lido Project Group (LPG) working with the project manager created three options for consideration based on the specification approved at the March Full Council meeting (Minute reference WTC723)

Resolved: To approve the outline specification, to be managed by the Clerks Office/ Single storey refurbishment.

- *There is a need for Improved drainage across whole site - all of the drains/toilets are easily blocked*
- *Higher roof/ shape that is less easy to break into/get over for trespassers*

- *Increased Access to poolside – there currently isn't any which means its difficult to get plant equipment/machinery to the pool if needed*
- *Changing Village / Mixed sex changing with Cubicles and cubicled showers*
- *More showers*
- *Sauna*
- *Smaller front office*
- *Need for toilets separate to changing rooms to facilitate whatever else goes into the building*
- *Cleaning cupboard(s)*
- *Storage facilities*
- *Function room/mixed use room about the same size as the current*
- *Treatment rooms – e.g. sports massage, physiotherapy*
- *Vending Machines- coffee?*
- *Solar Panels- potentially to help with power/utilities*
- *Whatever we do must be eco friendly - we do not want to use Gas in the new building, all the walls must be insulated, if we use electricity it must be subsidised by ASHP and Solar PV.*
- *Building should be able to achieve a B rating (excluding existing plant room)*
- *Potential for a gym*
- *Reduced circulation- lots of dead space/corridors*

The options based around the provision of Changing Village / Mixed sex changing with Cubicles and cubicled showers plus one of three options detailed below

- Treatment rooms
- Studio space (for exercise or social events)
- Gym

Drawings were created by the project manager / architect and were used as the basis for the public consultation online and onsite 9th May 2024.

Survey results

The survey produced the following results which were considered by the LPG.

Question 1: Do you support Ware Town Council making further investment in the future of the lido ?
Yes= 333 , No = 4

Question 2 : Do you support our plans to expand what services are on offer at the lido to help cover its operating costs?
Yes = 331 No = 6

Question 3: One of our proposed plans is for private cubicles for showering and changing, within a mixed sex changing village. Do you support this new way of operating?

Yes =232 No= 103

Question 4: Would the lack of a single sex changing area stop you visiting the lido?

No = 254, Yes= 79

Question 5: Do you think we should consider having a sauna?

Yes = 220 , No = 112

Question 6: How much would you pay to visit a sauna as a standalone facility?

£6-£10 = 101 , Less than £5 =90 , £11+ = 3

Question 7: Do you think we should consider having a gym?

No = 236 , Yes = 98

Question 8 =If we had a gym, what equipment would you like to see in there? Freetext

Question 9 = If we had a gym what monthly fee do you think would be an acceptable charge?

Less than £25 = 89 , £25-£30 = 67 , £36-£40 = 43 , Over £40 = 5

Question 10= Do you think we should consider having a multi use studio type space?

Yes = 208 , No = 124

Question 11= What activities would you like to see us offer in a studio space? Freetext

Question 12= Do you think we should have some treatment rooms which could be hired out by practitioners for sports therapy/physiotherapy/sports massage?

Yes = 207 , No = 122

Question 13 =What kind of treatment rooms do you think we should explore? Freetext

Question 14 =Please rate the below options in order of your favourite proposal?

Sauna 1st = 160 , Studio 1st = 75 , Treatment 1st = 54 , Gym 1st = 38

Question 15 = How do you normally travel to the lido?

Car = 179 , Foot = 116 , Bike = 29 , Bus = 4

Question 16 = If you drive, where do you normally park?

Free text analysis by AI: Common Themes:

- Strong desire to maintain the core swimming pool/lido experience and community feel, without losing the charm and affordability

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- Improving changing rooms, showers, and bathroom facilities is a top priority
- Mixed views on mixed gender vs single-sex changing areas, but many want single-sex options preserved
- Interest in adding a sauna/steam room, especially for winter/cold water swimming
- Some support for a basic cafe/snack bar, but differing opinions on having a full restaurant
- Parking and accessibility are important considerations
- Various suggestions for kid/family friendly additions like splash areas, soft play, etc.
- Both support and opposition towards adding a gym - some see it as redundant with nearby gyms

Other Notable Suggestions:

- Studio spaces for classes like yoga, aerobics
- Therapy/treatment rooms
- Heated pool for winter months
- Open later in evenings during summer
- Events, fun activities like aqua aerobics, races
- Partnerships with groups like swim clubs
- Environmentally-friendly initiatives

Overall, there seems to be an eagerness to enhance amenities in a thoughtful way that complements rather than overshadows the core lido experience. Modernise changing areas and adding opt-in extras like saunas appears broadly supported, but there are differing views on larger additions like gyms. Maintaining affordability and accessibility emerges as important considerations as well.

Feedback from the LPG

Key points:

Focus on changing village rather than single sex changing

Focus on inclusion of studio space

Introduce a sauna

Do not include Café / Gym / Treatment rooms

Decisions based on the feedback

Decisions to be communicated to the project manager / architect

A debate on the changing room set up took place.

Options:

1x Changing Village

Or 1 x Male 1x Female changing

Or 1 x Male 1x Female changing plus family changing

Proposed to discard 1 x Male 1x Female changing

Supported Cllr Day, Hill, Mowbray, Scully, J Taylor-Moran, K Taylor-Moran. Williams, Zsibrita

Proposed 1 x Male 1x Female changing plus family changing be adopted.

Supported GW, KTM, DS

Against GH, AZ

Abstain TD, RM, JTM

Resolved: To instruct the architect to work on 1 x Male 1x Female changing plus family changing be adopted.

Proposed to have a sauna at the Lido, options to site to be agreed with the project manager.

Resolved: To have a sauna at the Lido site

Proposed: To include a studio / function room

Resolved: To brief the architect to include a studio / function room

Proposed: To include treatment rooms

Resolved: To brief the architect to include treatment rooms

Proposed to not include a café and gym

Resolved: to not include a café and gym

WTC771: Feedback from members of external groups (Cllrs)

All external groups have been written to and advised on the membership following the 13th May 2024 Full Council meeting.

- Town Twinning, proposed dates for 2025 agreed, invitations to Wulfrath to be sent.

WTC772: Councillor allowances (Cllrs)

To review the report from the Independent Remuneration committee related to the WTC request for an annual Councillor allowance of £1750 and agree the next steps.

A broad discussion based on the reports from the remuneration panel were discussed.

Core options include:

- Not to have an allowance
- To pay the recommended amount of £710
- To pay the original amount of £1750

Proposal: Given due regard to the comments of the remuneration panel the council considered that the £710 did not meet the increased diversity aspirations of the council, therefore the proposal was to support the implementation of the optional £1750 annual allowance.

Resolved: To support the proposal to implement an optional allowance of £1750 pa

For x 6 against x 1 abstain x 1.

WTC773: Agenda items for next meeting

AGAR / Annual Accounts (SH)

Resident Parking Zones (GW)

Wellbeing / Fitness proposal (GH) July meeting

Encouraging Councillor Diversity plan (KTM)

The Council meeting will be followed by The Priory Charity AGM

WTC772: Mayor's Closing Remarks

With no further business the meeting closed at 10.10pm

Signed

Dated