

# Ringwood Town Council

Ringwood Gateway, The Furlong, Ringwood, Hampshire BH24 1AT  
Tel: 01425 473883  
www.ringwood.gov.uk

## SUMMONS

Dear Member

20<sup>th</sup> June 2019

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Town Council at the Forest Suite, Ringwood Gateway on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 7.00pm.

Mr C Wilkins  
Town Clerk

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## AGENDA

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION  
There will be an opportunity for public participation for a period of up to 15 minutes at the start of the meeting
2. To receive Apologies for Absence
3. To receive Declarations of Interest
4. Presentation of Grant Aid cheque
5. To receive a presentation from Taylor Wimpey in relation to land north of Hightown Road
6. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019
7. To receive Minutes of Committees and approve recommendations contained therein:

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces | DATE:- 15 <sup>th</sup> May & 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2019  |
| Planning, Town & Environment      | DATE:- 15 <sup>th</sup> May & 7 <sup>th</sup> June 2019  |
| Staffing Committee                | DATE:- 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2019                        |
| RECOMMENDATION: S/0017 Pay Policy |  |
| Policy & Finance                  | DATE:- 15 <sup>th</sup> May & 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2019 |
8. ANNUAL RETURN (*Report A*)
  - i) To receive and note the Internal Audit Report
  - ii) To approve the Annual Governance Statement
  - iii) To approve the Financial Statements
9. ANNUAL TOWN ASSEMBLY  
To consider the Deputy Town Clerk's report (*Report B*)
10. NEW FOREST BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP  
To consider appointing two Councillors to represent the Council at a meeting of the New Forest Business Partnership at Greyfriars on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2019 (3:30-5:30pm)

11. To receive such communications as the Town Mayor may desire to lay before the Council(Councillors are reminded that no decision taking may take place as a result of this item)
12. To Receive Reports from Ringwood Town Councillors and Student Advisors  
(Councillors are reminded that no decision taking may take place as a result of this item)
13. To receive Reports from County and District Councillors(Councillors are reminded that no decision taking may take place as a result of this item)
14. Forthcoming Meetings – to note the following dates:

|                                   |         |                                      |
|-----------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------|
| Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces | 7.00pm  | Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2019  |
| Planning, Town & Environment      | 10.00am | Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> July 2019     |
| Policy & Finance                  | 7.00pm  | Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2019 |
| Full Council                      | 7.00pm  | Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2019 |

If you would like further information on any of the agenda items, please contact Mr Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk, on 01425 484720 or [chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk](mailto:chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk)

Council Members:

Chairman: Cllr Tony Ring, Town Mayor  
 Vice-Chairman: Cllr Philip Day, Deputy Mayor  
 Cllr Andy Briers  
 Cllr Gareth Deboos  
 Cllr Hilary Edge  
 Cllr Christine Ford  
 Cllr Rae Frederick  
 Cllr John Haywood  
 Cllr Jeremy Heron  
 Cllr Peter Kelleher  
 Cllr Darren Loose  
 Cllr Gloria O'Reilly  
 Cllr Steve Rippon-Swaine  
 Cllr Glenys Turner

Student Advisors:

Tom Weetman  
 Finn Rowden

## To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities\*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but:
  - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
  - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

## Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2018/19

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with Proper Practices.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
  - The **annual internal audit report** is completed by the authority's internal auditor.
  - **Sections 1 and 2** are to be completed and approved by the authority.
  - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published **before 1 July 2019**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both):
  - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
  - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2019
  - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
  - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
  - Annual Internal Audit Report 2018/19

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the review and is able to give an opinion on the limited assurance review, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

## Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on a publicly accessible website:

Before 1 July 2019 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2018/19**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2018/19**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2019 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 & 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*\*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.*

# A

## Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2018/19

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this Annual Governance and Accountability Return. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide\** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is complete (i.e. no empty highlighted boxes), and is properly signed and dated. Where amendments are made by the authority to the AGAR after it has been approved by the authority and before it has been reviewed by the external auditor, the Chairman and RFO should initial the amendments and if necessary republish the amended AGAR and recommence the period for the exercise of public rights. If the Annual Governance and Accountability Return contains unapproved or unexplained amendments, it may be returned and additional costs will be incurred.
- The authority **should** receive and note the annual internal audit report if possible prior to approving the annual governance statement and before approving the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both).
- Do not send the external auditor any information not specifically requested. However, **you must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide\**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the external auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or variances are not fully explained, additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2018) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2019).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the period for the exercise of public rights. From the commencement date for a single period of 30 consecutive working days, the approved accounts and accounting records can be inspected. Whatever period the RFO sets it **must** include a common inspection period – during which the accounts and accounting records of all smaller authorities must be available for public inspection – of the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2019**.

| Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements |  | Yes | No |
|--|--|-----|----|
| All sections   | Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?  | ✓   |    |
|  | Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights, been provided for the external auditor?                        |     |    |
| Internal Audit Report  | Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?   | ✓   |    |
| Section 1  | For any statement to which the response is 'no', is an explanation provided?   | ✓   |    |
| Section 2  | Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?   |     |    |
|  | Has an explanation of significant variations from last year to this year been provided?  | ✓   |    |
|  | Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2019 been reconciled to Box 8?  | ✓   |    |
|  | Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?  | ✓   |    |
| Sections 1 and 2   | Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? <b>NB:</b> do not send trust accounting statements unless requested. | ✓   |    |

*\*Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk) or from [www.ada.org.uk](http://www.ada.org.uk)

# Annual Internal Audit Report 2018/19

# A

RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation **during** the financial year ended 31 March 2019.

The internal audit for 2018/19 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

| Internal control objective   | Agreed? Please choose one of the following |     |                     |
|--|--|-----|---------------------|
|  | Yes  | No* | Not covered**       |
| A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.   | ✓  |     |                     |
| B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.  | ✓  |     |                     |
| C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.  | ✓  |     |                     |
| D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.   | ✓  |     |                     |
| E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.  | ✓  |     |                     |
| F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.   | ✓  |     |                     |
| G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.  | ✓  |     |                     |
| H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.   | ✓  |     |                     |
| I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.   | ✓  |     |                     |
| J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded. | ✓  |     |                     |
| K. IF the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2017/18, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. ("Not Covered" should only be ticked where the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2017/18 AGAR)                                  |  |     | ✓                   |
| L. During summer 2018 this authority has correctly provided the proper opportunity for the exercise of public rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.  |  |     | Not applicable<br>✓ |
| <b>M. (For local councils only)</b><br>Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.   | Yes  | No  | Not applicable      |
|  | ✓  |     |                     |

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

07 05 19    08 05 19    09 05 19

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

NIGEL SPRINGS

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

*Nigel Springs*

Date

30 05 19

\*If the response is 'no' you must include a note to state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

\*\*Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

## Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2018/19

We acknowledge as the members of:

Ringwood Town Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2019, that:

|   | Agreed |     |  |
|---|--------|-----|--|
|   | Yes    | No* |  |
| 1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.  | ✓      |     | <i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>   |
| 2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.  | ✓      |     | <i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>   |
| 3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances. | ✓      |     | <i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>   |
| 4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.   | ✓      |     | <i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>   |
| 5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.  | ✓      |     | <i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>  |
| 6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.  | ✓      |     | <i>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 this smaller authority.</i> |
| 7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.  | ✓      |     | <i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>   |
| 8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.                                  | ✓      |     | <i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>   |
| 9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.                         | Yes    | No  | N/A <i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>   |
|   |        | ✓   |  |

\*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets should be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

and recorded as minute reference:

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

Clerk

### Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)

Authority web address

## Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2018/19 for

## Ringwood Town Council

|   | Year ending                         |                          | Notes and guidance  |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
|   | 31 March 2018<br>£                  | 31 March 2019<br>£       |   |
| 1. Balances brought forward   | 423,196                             | 496,936                  | Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.  |
| 2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies  | 468,223                             | 485,196                  | Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.   |
| 3. (+) Total other receipts   | 232,024                             | 264,272                  | Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.   |
| 4. (-) Staff costs  | -385,755                            | -421,779                 | Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses. |
| 5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments   | -31,546                             | -31,546                  | Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).  |
| 6. (-) All other payments   | -209,207                            | -299,544                 | Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).  |
| 7. (=) Balances carried forward   | 496,936                             | 493,535                  | Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).   |
| 8. Total value of cash and short term investments                                   | 533,409                             | 536,019                  | The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – <b>To agree with bank reconciliation.</b>                              |
| 9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets                         | 3,667,439                           | 3,718,186                | The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.  |
| 10. Total borrowings  | 407,260                             | 388,754                  | The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).  |
| 11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable) | Yes                                 | No                       | The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.   |
|   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.  |

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2019 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

Date

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

## Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2018/19

In respect of Ringwood Town Council

### 1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2019; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

### 2 External auditor report 2018/19

(Except for the matters reported below)\* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (\*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

### 3 External auditor certificate 2018/19

We certify/do not certify\* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2019.

\*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

External Auditor Signature

Date

\*Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website ([www.nao.org.uk](http://www.nao.org.uk))



**RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL**

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2019**

| YEAR ENDED<br>31/03/2018 |                |  | YEAR ENDED<br>31/03/2019 |                |
|--------------------------|----------------|--|--------------------------|----------------|
| £                        | £              |  | £                        | £              |
|                          |                | <b><u>CURRENT ASSETS</u></b>           |                          |                |
| 8,667                    |                | Prepayments                            | 9,101                    |                |
| 31,285                   |                | Trade Debtors                          | 23,311                   |                |
| 0                        |                | VAT Reimbursable                       | 3,409                    |                |
| 0                        |                | Short Term Investments                 | 350,000                  |                |
| 533,409                  |                | Cash in Hand and at Bank               | 186,019                  |                |
| 0                        |                | Purchase Tax                           | 0                        |                |
|                          | 573,362        | <b>Total Assets</b>                    |                          | 571,839        |
|                          |                | <b><u>LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</u></b> |                          |                |
| 6,278                    |                | Receipts In Advance                    | 8,018                    |                |
| 57,977                   |                | Trade Creditors                        | 56,331                   |                |
| -337                     |                | Trade Creditors Control Account        | -185                     |                |
| 0                        |                | VAT Payable                            | 0                        |                |
| 12,508                   |                | Deposits                               | 14,141                   |                |
|                          | 76,426         | <b>Total Liabilities</b>               |                          | 78,304         |
|                          |                | <b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>                |                          | 493,535        |
|                          | 496,936        | <b>REPRESENTED BY:</b>                 |                          |                |
|                          | 299,240        | Balance - General Fund                 |                          | 280,955        |
|                          | 197,695        | Earmarked Reserves & Provisions        |                          | 212,580        |
|                          | <b>496,936</b> | <b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>                    |                          | <b>493,535</b> |

I certify that the above balance sheet, and the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31 March 2019, presents fairly the financial position of this Council.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Responsible Finance Officer

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Town Mayor

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNUAL TOWN ASSEMBLY**

1. The Annual Town Assembly is a meeting of the electorate and not a meeting of the Town Council, and must take place between 1 March and 1 June each year.
2. The Annual Meeting of the Council must take place in May.
3. For the past few years the Annual Town Assembly and the Annual Council Meeting have been held on the same evening. This has meant that the Town Assembly has been a bit of a non-event; little more than a run through of the Mayor's and Committee Chairmen's Annual Reports and an update on the financial status of the Ringwood United Charities. These meetings have been poorly attended by members of the public.
4. Up until 2007, the Annual Town Assembly always included a presentation from a guest speaker. Previous speakers have included students from Ringwood School speaking about Fair Trade and the Future of Ringwood; a representative from the Environment Agency speaking about the Flood Defence Scheme; and the Reserves Officer from Blashford Lakes. Refreshments were then served at the end of the meeting.
5. Agendas for previous meetings have also included Community Awards (bi-annually). Nominations were sought from the local community through the local press, with awards being agreed by the Council and then presented by the Town Mayor at the Annual Town Assembly.
6. The current schedule of meetings, agreed by Policy & Finance Committee (*F/5650 – 16/01/2019 refers*), shows both meetings being held on 20 May 2020. However, it is proposed that these meetings should be held on separate dates in future, to allow more to be made of the Annual Town Assembly, as has happened in the past.
7. There are four Wednesday evenings within the period outlined in paragraph 1 when no other meeting is planned. If members agree to separate the two meetings, the Annual Town Assembly could therefore be held on either 11 March, 8 or 22 April or 13 May 2020, with the Annual Council Meeting being held on 20 May 2020 as planned.
8. **Issues for Decision**
  - 8.1 ***Should the Annual Town Assembly and Annual Council Meeting be held on two separate dates in future?***
  - 8.2 ***If so, which date should the Annual Town Assembly be held on in 2020 – 11 March, 8 or 22 April, or 13 May?***
  - 8.3 ***Should Community Awards be re-introduced to the Annual Town Assembly, with nominations invited from local residents?***
  - 8.4 ***Should a guest speaker be invited to make a presentation at the Annual Town Assembly and, if so, do Members have any suggestions?***

For further information, please contact:

Mrs Jo Hurd  
Deputy Town Clerk  
0125 484721  
jo.hurd@ringwood.gov.uk