

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of Ilminster Town Council held on
**Tuesday 16th November 2021 at 19:30 hrs, in the Ilminster Meeting House
and Arts Centre, East Street, Ilminster, TA19 0AN**

Chair: Cllr L Taylor

Councillors: Cllr M Gunn, Cllr B Hamilton, Cllr B Jenner-Hurford, Cllr V Keitch, Cllr H Lancaster, Cllr I MacKillop, Cllr A Shearman, Cllr S Shepherd, Cllr R Swann, Cllr N Tinson, Cllr L Wilcock

Officers: M Tredwin (Town Clerk), J Earp (Deputy Town Clerk and RFO), V Freeman (Administration Officer)

In attendance: Cllr L Vijeh, 37 members of the public

1065 Public Forum

The Meeting Chair advised that members of the public who wished to speak would be invited to do so before the agenda item was discussed.

1066 Apologies for Absence

Cllr F White – Personal reasons
Cllr M James – Work commitments
Cllr P Burton – Previous commitment

1067 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

1068 Dispensations

There were no dispensations requested or granted.

1069 Minutes – Town Council

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd November 2021 as a correct record

Proposer Cllr L Taylor **Seconded** Cllr A Shearman

1070 Town Council Consult on proposed A358 plans

Bob Burrough addressed Members outlining the proposals and the reasons why local parishes are against some of the proposals. Mr Burrough covered topics including the 3 roundabouts, the need for a rural dual carriageway not an expressway, that there may be a business case for a Henlade bypass, the areas of North Curry and Stoke St Gregory may benefit from the proposals, the project offers low value for money. Mr Burrough advised Members he was happy to answer any questions.

Comments from the public included after COP26 the proposals were 20th Century thinking, the impact on trees, there has been a lot of communication over the proposals but have the concerns raised been listened to, what can the public do to help.

The Town Clerk updated Members on some of the changes between V4 draft of the Community of Parishes' Response and the final response, and a lot of thought and work has gone into their response.

Members and the public were advised that, if they were interested in finding out more about the A358 dualling proposals, they could go online to see the full plans and make their own comments/submissions as individuals before the closing date of 22nd November 2021.

Members discussed the proposals including concerns over the last 4 years regarding the whole project, concerns the Ilminster bypass not being made into a dual carriageway, there will be more accidents on the Ilminster bypass as traffic will be routed through the town and the infrastructure is not fit for the increased traffic flow. Ilminster will become a bottleneck as the only part not dualled. Whether the road will be suitable for the lorries coming in and out of Ilton Business Parks. Whether there is a need for a dual carriageway and not an expressway. Whether an expressway is in keeping with the local area, the travel time between Ilminster and Taunton should decrease by around 4 minutes, and if a report of the meeting should be sent to our local MP.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to send a copy of the minutes of this meeting to the local MP

Proposer Cllr MacKillop **Seconded** Cllr Hamilton

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously that Officers be delegated authority to formulate a response for council and submit it on behalf of Ilminster Town Council

Proposer Cllr Taylor **Seconded** Cllr Shearman

1071

Flooding in Ilminster

Mike Woodhead of Green Ilminster expressed his sympathy to all the people who have been flooded. They have written to various agencies including the County Council, District Council, and the Environment Agency to suggest the impact of flooding. They would like the role of the Council to be putting pressure on the Governments re spending as agencies are underfunded. They would like to see a community resilience and a flood coordination group to be set up. Climate change is also about severe heat and not just floods.

Cllr Wilcock arrived and joined the meeting at 20.03

Angus Murdoch advised members that he has lived in Ilminster for 43 flood free years until October 2021. Mr Murdoch advised Members that the earth bund protecting the park homes, put in around 2013, has fallen into disrepair and he would like to see swift action to repair the park bund to protect the residents again.

Ian Ryall asked Members to think about how frightening it would be for an elderly resident in one of the park homes when its dark, when there is no electric, and water is gushing around you.

Darren Duffield lives down stream from Home Park, and over the last 12 years he has watched the stream levels going up and down and he has seen them getting worse. Mr Duffield questioned why the Shudrick stream didn't have the same issues that night. He talked about the new drainage put in place 4 or 5 years ago, the effect the new houses on Green Lane are having on the drainage/culverts and that something needs to be done to get the water away.

Peter Jeeps advised members that his property in the Ditton Street area was affected by flooding, and updated members that he has contacted Somerset County Council regarding flooding and has requested information on when the drains were last cleared. Mr Jeeps feels he has been ignored as an individual and has asked the Town Council to champion the cause. Mr Jeeps provided a photograph of the drain outside his property with weeds growing in it.

The Town Clerk updated the members and the public that officers have contacted Highways on a number of occasions to request that the gullies/drains are cleared and that officers don't have a hotline number they can use and have to use the same reporting process as members of the public. The information from members of the public who have expressed concerns will be reported back to SCC and SSDC.

Andy who lives in the Winterhay Lane area advised members that he had a small flood, he has a construction company and a digger and clears the ditch by his property himself. Andy offered his help as part of a community effort.

The meeting Chair thanked Andy and asked him to contact the Town Council office.

Members discussed the recent flooding including how concerns were raised 4 years ago after the Ditton Street flooding and a report was compiled with 7 or 8 recommendations and none of them have been acted upon, that the Environment Agency has a duty of care, the time it took various agencies to respond, and that no one has taken responsibility for the earth bund.

Cllr Vjeh left the meeting at 20:20

The representative from the Environment Agency advised members that the earth bund was not put in by the Environment Agency and they were unaware of it until the recent flooding event.

A Member of the public recalled that the bund was put in after a grant was obtained. The grant was to build an earth bund and a cattle gate.

The earth bund has worked well until now but the cattle gate has never worked. The earth bund is important to the residents of Holway Farm Park. 5 people are unable to return to their homes.

Members discussed the 2012 and 2017 flood reports and how no action has been taken, that Ditton Street floods regularly and whether the information that agencies use is accurate. Only the traps are cleared, and the clays pipes can't be dug up or jet washed. Under the new unitary authority will Ilminster Town Council be responsible for our own drains? The Environment Agency budget has been cut by 63% since 2010 so they are not proactive but reactive.

Emily Pearlstone thanked Cllr Shearman for his help on the evening of 20th October. She asked why the clay pipes can't be cleaned now as they have been in the past. It was suggested that if everyone works together as a community, we can achieve things locally.

Members and members of the public were reminded of the multi-agency drop in session that was due to be held on 17th November at the Shrubbery Hotel in Ilminster and encouraged everyone to go along to help the agencies record people's stories of how they were impacted by the flooding.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to put together a Community Flood Plan for Ilminster to be in place as soon as is practicable.

Proposer Cllr Shearman **Seconded** Cllr Gunn

1072

Exempt business

There was no exempt business

Meeting ended at 20.29

