

Minutes of the Full Council meeting of Ilminster Town Council held on
**Tuesday 21st December 2021 at 19:30 hrs, in the Council Chamber, Council
Offices, North Street, Ilminster, TA19 0DG**

Chair: Cllr P Burton

Councillors: Cllr B Hamilton, Cllr M James, Cllr A Shearman, Cllr S Shepherd,
Cllr L Wilcock, Cllr V Keitch, Cllr B Jenner-Hurford, Cllr L Taylor

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

In attendance: Cllr Vijeh, 1 member of the public

1095 Public Forum

Tony Walker spoke on behalf of the Rotary Club who are proposing to install a clock to in the town centre as part of the Queens Platinum Jubilee celebrations. Mr Walker advised members that he has been working with the listing building and conservation officer and has submitted a planning application. This item was discussed by the members as part of the agenda under minute number 1104.

19.33 Cllr Wilcock arrived and joined the meeting.

1096 Apologies for Absence

Cllr M Gunn – Personal reasons

Cllr F White – Personal reasons

Cllr H Lancaster – Personal reasons

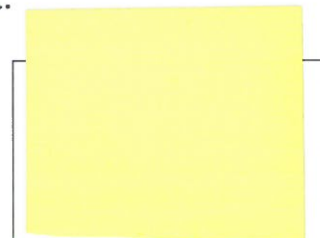
Cllr I MacKillop – Personal reasons

Cllr R Swann – Personal reasons

Cllr N Tinson – Personal reasons

1097 District and County Councillor Reports

Members **NOTED** Cllr Vijeh's District Councillor report.



The Town Council extended its thanks to Cllr Vijeh for her service to the town and community over the years.

Cllr Hamilton gave members a verbal District Councillors report.

SSDC have announced that grants of up to £5000 are available to the hospitality trade, applications open on 6th January and are open for 14 days.

Members were reminded about the SSDC great wildflower seed giveaway.

As part of National Tree Planting Week 750 trees have recently been planted at Pit Wood, Ham Hill by 22 volunteers and rangers.

Somerset Waste Partnership are monitoring collections, they are collecting 35% more cardboard meaning that the lorries reach capacity quicker so they have to return to base to unload, which can take up to an hour, which means they may not get all their collections done by the end of the day.

There is a new SSDC grant available, up to £15,000, called the Business Growth Grant.

SSDC welcomed guilty verdicts in Housing Act Offences trial.

SSDC have taken on 21 people under the Kickstart scheme, which is proving very successful.

Cllr Hamilton thanked Cllr Vijeh for her service.

Cllr Keitch advised members that an anonymous letter had been received last April by SSDC which made serious allegations, a full investigation was launched within 24 hours and following that investigation 2 people have left the Councils employment.

13 SSDC staff have volunteered, in their own time, to help out at vaccination centres.

It is going to be a tough few months at District, they have a lot of staff off either isolating, they have covid, or other illnesses, they will do their best to keep services running but may have to review this. Statutory Services will continue.

Cllr Keitch thanked Cllr Vijeh for her years of service.



20.01 Cllr Vjeh leaves the meeting

1098 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Shepherd declared an interest in Agenda item 12 as an honorary member of the Rotary Club.

Cllr Keitch and Cllr Hamilton both declared an interest in Agenda item 12 due to the possibility that the application may come before the Area West planning committee.

1099 Dispensations

There were no dispensations requested or granted

1100 Minutes – Town Council

Members **RESOLVED** by 8 votes for and 1 abstention that the minutes of the meeting held on 30th November 2021 as a correct record.

Proposer Cllr Shearman **Seconded** Cllr Wilcock

1101 Minutes – Planning, Highways and Transport

Members **NOTED** the minutes of the Planning, Highways and Transport meeting held on 7th December 2021. Cllr Shearman was missing from the list of attendees, this was **NOTED** and has been corrected.

1102 Minutes – Open Spaces

Members **NOTED** the minutes of the Open Spaces meeting held on 7th December 2021.

1103 Minutes – Council Offices Working Group

Members **NOTED** the minutes of the Council Offices Working Group meeting held on 2nd December 2021.

Agenda item 12 Queen’s Platinum Jubilee: Memorial Clock was moved to earlier in the meeting.

1104 Queen’s Platinum Jubilee: Memorial Clock

The members discussed the proposal for a Jubilee Memorial Clock. Discussions included who would be responsible for the



repair/maintenance of the clock, how would the clock be powered, who would pay for the electricity, if the clock would obstruct carnival floats.

Members **RESOLVED** by 8 votes for and 1 abstention to support, in principle, the Rotary Club installing a clock in the town.

Proposer Cllr Keitch **Seconded** Cllr James

1105

Budget for 2022-23

Members reviewed and discussed the Preliminary Budget setting report and Precept report. Members asked The Town Clerk and RFO to clarify various details contained in the budget setting report. Members discussed that due to the uncertainty surrounding Covid 19 restrictions going forward setting the budget and precept during this meeting and not in January. The Town Clerk advised members that there are significant funds available via Section 106 and the RFO is working with SSDC to identify projects these funds can be used for.

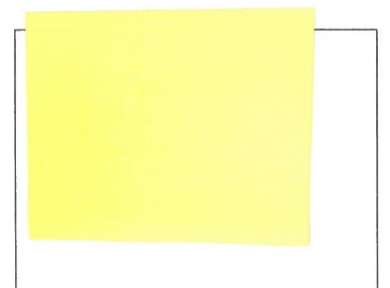
Members **RESOLVED** by 8 votes for to 1 against to approve the draft budget proposal, with no amendments, as the final budget for 2022/23.

Proposer Cllr Shearman **Seconded** Cllr Wilcock

Members discussed the precept for 2022/23. Discussions included whether there will be a cap in future years, residents' ability to afford any increased payments, the rate of inflation, any implications by not raising it.

Members **RESOLVED** by 8 for to 1 against to set the Precept for 2022/23 at £361,231.00 a rise of 8.16%.

Proposer Cllr Shepherd **Seconded** Cllr Jenner-Hurford



1106 Financial Monitoring

Members **NOTED** the financial monitoring report and thanked the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO for the informative report.

1107 Cemetery – Grass cutting Contract

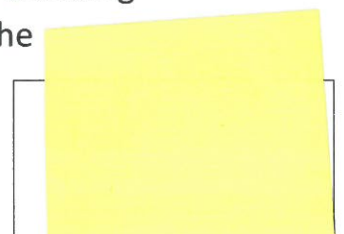
Members discussed bringing the Cemetery grass cutting contract in house to be carried out by the Town Councils ground staff. Discussions included if the grounds staff would need any new equipment, whether the costs of repairing/replacing the existing equipment if it breaks/needs replacing have been factored into the budget, if the Cemetery is maintained to a high standard it will be easier to maintain, it will give the Kickstart employee meaningful training, now the grounds staff don't need to cut the Wildflower meadow at West Crescent it will free up more time, the grounds team are confident they can complete the work and they already have the equipment needed, and whether it should be on a 6 month trial basis.

Members **RESOLVED** by 8 votes for to 1 against to bring the grass cutting at the Cemetery back in house to be carried out by the Town Councils grounds staff.

Proposer Cllr Shearman **Seconded** Cllr Jenner-Hurford

1108 Future of Local Government in Somerset

Cllr Keitch updated members on the latest information regarding the Unitary authority. Updates included the joint committee has been set up and has met twice, the Structural Change Order is expected to go through Parliament in late February/early March 2022, the elections will be held in May, there are currently 3 Local Community Networks in Exmoor, Frome, Bruton/Wincanton/Castle Cary. The finances/budgets are being looked into, but nothing has been agreed yet. They will be advertising for applications for the role of Chief Executive in due course. There are concerns that if the meetings for the Unitary authority are held during the day it will put people off standing and there will not be proper representation, there is the



possibility of an allowance, details are yet to be finalised. The joint committee are working well together, there will be 2 County Councillors for Ilminster, and Cllr Hamilton will be sitting on the scrutiny committee.

The Town Clerk updated members that the Town Clerks from Ilminster, Chard and Crewkerne along with the Mayors will be meeting in January to discuss the unitary authority and how we can work together.

1109 Exempt Business

There was no exempt business

Meeting ended 21.20

