

# ILMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, North Street, Ilminster on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at 19:30hrs

## Present

**Chairman:** Cllr E J Taylor

**Councillors:** Cllr S Austin, Cllr P Burton, C Goodall, Cllr V Keitch, Cllr V Higgins, Cllr A Lawson, Cllr D Miller, Cllr J Pallister, Cllr A Shearman, Cllr S Shepherd, Cllr S Storey, Cllr Swann and Cllr L Vijeh.

**In Attendance:** Mrs M Clayton (Senior Administrator), Miss J Norris (Town Clerk) and Mrs M Shelley (Deputy Town Clerk)

**Members of the Public:** One member of the public attended.

The concerns brought to the attention of the Council were regarding the road closure at North Street.

Discussions included the following:

- Due to the lack of diversion signs, heavy goods vehicles are having to travel to the South Petherton roundabout to turn round as they cannot turn right into East Street.
- The County Council signs are not sufficient and some are pointing down driveways to private dwellings.
- The Chamber of Commerce has discussed this problem. They sent a letter to County Highways regarding their concerns to buses routes before the work had started, but did not receive a reply.
- The work has now finished in North Street but some of the diversion signs have not been removed.
- The sign to Kingston/Crewkerne has been turned and it now points to Dillington Drive.
- Information need to be sought from County Highways regarding weight restriction in East Street.

The Town Clerk will write a letter to the County Highways highlighting the above concerns.

## 100. Apologies for absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Sothern.

## 101. Declarations of Interest

| Name             | Agenda No | Topic                                       | Type of Interest | Nature of Interest   |
|------------------|-----------|---|------------------|--|
| Cllr A Shearman  | 10b & 10c | Report from Greenfylde and Swanmead Schools | Personal         | Governor at Swanmead, Daughter works at Greenfylde School and works for County Council and Southwest One |
| Cllr V Higgins   | 10b & 10c | Report from Greenfylde school               | Personal         | Works at Greenfylde School   |
| Cllr J Pallister | 11        | Budget and precept 2-14/15                  | Personal         | Member of the Christmas Lights Committee   |

Chair's Initials

# ILMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

## 102. Minutes

### RESOLVED that:

- i. The minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2013 be confirmed as a correct record
- ii. The minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2013 be confirmed as a correct record subject to minute number 87 being reworded, cross reference to the meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2014 and taken back to the Town Council meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2014 for confirmation.
- iii. The minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2014 be confirmed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:
  - Cllr A Lawson's name is removed from the 'In Attendance' section, as he gave his apology for this meeting.
  - Under the declarations of interest, Cllr Vijeh is a District Councillor for the neighbouring 'ward' not 'village' of Neroche.
  - On minute no.96 on the penultimate paragraph for item (i) it should read 'has resulted 'in' misleading scores.
- iv. The minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2014 be confirmed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:
  - Under minute no.98 'Declarations of Interest' by Councillor L Vijeh, it should read 'Somerset County Council Representative to the Ilminster Education Foundation' not 'Member of the Ilminster Education Foundation'.
- v. The Office Action Plan relating to the Town Council Meetings is noted.  
Items discussed regarding the Action Plan included:
  - Members were updated on the flood plan. The Council have been offered three potential contingency stores. One has been visited, which is not ideal but could be workable. The Staff are waiting to view the other two.
  - The Deputy Clerk has had a meeting with Mr Raffell from the Residents Flooding Group. The meeting was very useful and has highlighted that there is a dispute over the ownership of the surrounding land.
  - Berkley Homes have been contacted about the contingency store
  - Bye-laws Update – Approval in principal has been received from the DCLG on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2014. The bye-laws will be taken to Full Council on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2014 to formally agree to adopt them. If the Council agree to adopt, they will then be signed and sealed with a personal stamp, coin or thumb print. and advertised in the local newspaper. Once the period of time to comment has lapsed the DCLG will then write to the Town Council to confirm their adoption.

## 103. Mayor's Announcements/Engagements

- a) The Mayor made announcements relating to the Town Council and Mayoral activities and engagements which included the following:
  - The Ilminster Mayor and the Mayor of Chard have been asked to write a column in the Chard and Ilminster newspaper. Both Officials have submitted test columns. The first entry will be published on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2014. It is an opportunity to highlight groups in the town and advertise planned events.
  - An E-petition has been posted on the No10 website regarding loopholes in Planning. The Clerk will forward this to members.
- b) The Mayor's engagements between 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2013 and 28<sup>th</sup> January 2014 were reported and circulated with the agenda.

Chair's Initials

# ILMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

## 104. Police Report

The Council members received a written report with the agenda from Ilminster Police Station and an updated version was handed out before the meeting.

Discussion included the following:

- Councillors requested that the police report should be written in a more formal manner and it should state who it has written it.
- There are major changes happening to funding for the police. More information on this matter can be found on the Police and Crime Commissioner's Website.

## 105. Report from the County Councillor for the Ilminster Division

The members received December's report with the agenda and January's report was circulated before the meeting, both provided by Councillor Vijeh the County Councillor for the Ilminster Division.

Items that were raised as a result of these reports included the following:

- A decision on the parking restrictions at Breowan Close should not be made until the matter has been brought back to The Town Council for a discussion.
- The County Councillor will send all future reports electronically to staff and Councillors when they are available.

## 106. Reports from District Councillors

Councillor Goodall provided an oral report, the key points which were as follows:

- The Government announced that they would provide additional grant funding to support councils that freeze council tax in both 2014-15 and 2015-16. However details of how this would impact on Town and Parish councils were not given, but the District Council have stated that when they hear anything they will ensure that any Town or Parish that is affected can reconsider their precept.
- South Somerset District Council's Building Control team will be holding a surgery session at Bradfords Building Supplies in Ilminster on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January to assist customers with technical guidance, methods of demonstrating compliance in requirement to building regulations; overview of approved documents; Local Authority Building Control service and warranty and thermal and acoustic testing.
- With regards to flooding, the District Council's policy is to issue gel bags and sand bags free of charge (six per doorway), to residential properties only, if they are in immediate danger of flooding. Additional bags can be purchased at a cost of £3.20 subject to availability.
- The District Council has been named 'Best in the West' for dealing with empty properties.
- The District Council received 500 responses as a result of the recent consultation process on the Local Plan. These responses will be collated, and each one checked and considered. The Project Management Board will then consider the evidence and make recommendations. These recommendations will go to the District Executive and then to Full Council, and if and when they are approved they will go before the Inspector about March 2014.

Chair's Initials

# ILMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

## 107. Open Spaces Committee

The Chair of the Open Spaces Committee presented the recommendation made by the Committee meeting held on 21st January 2014.

**RESOLVED** that electrical work is carried out to the toilet block, as per the electrical inspection report dated 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2013, at a cost not exceeding £650 + vat.

## 108. Resources Committee

The Chair of the Resources Committee presented the recommendation made by the Committee meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2014.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the specification for the laptops is sufficient for the office needs, a memory upgrade to 8GB would be required and negotiations were successful to reduce the costs for the installation/training.

**RESOLVED** that

- a) The Town Council upgrades the broadband contract to a 'Fast ' connection at a cost not exceeding £38 per month
- b) The Town Council accepts the proposal received from Company B for the purchase of four laptops, using office 365, Windows 7 or 8, including installation and training at a cost not exceeding £3520+vat funded from the following:

|       |                                       |
|-------|---------------------------------------|
| £2572 | from Reserves/Renewals and Provisions |
| £ 200 | from computer maintenance 361/2       |
| £ 257 | from Rents 358/1                      |
| £ 400 | from presentation of awards 357       |
| £ 22  | from software 361/4                   |
| £ 69  | from Office Maintenance 361/1         |

## 109. Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

The Council received reports from the following representatives on Outside Bodies.

- a) SALC - a written report was submitted and circulated with the agenda.
- b) Greenfylde School - an oral report was given by Councillor Storey which included the following:
  - The academic year has started well with 5 new teachers and a new Head teacher.
  - This year the school is concentrating on literacy and maths.
  - The school has stronger sporting provisions this year, where they will be bringing in sports coaches and they have plans to use the pitches on the recreation ground.
  - The school will also be having more outdoor sessions in the form of a forest school, which will include visits to Herne Hill
- c) Swanmead Community School – an oral report was given by Councillor Storey which included the following information:
  - The school reported the high achievements its pupils have made.
  - The school received an award for Art.
  - There are pupils at the school who are representing the County in cross country.

Chair's Initials

# ILMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Other items reported included the following:

- The Christmas Lights Committee would like to thank the Town Council for removing and disposing of the town's Christmas trees.
- The PACT meeting was attended by the Head teachers of all the Ilminster Schools along with representatives from Yarlinton, Sanctuary Housing and Speed Watch. The meeting addressed problems for the young people of Ilminster such as underage drinking on the recreation ground.  
Councillor Storey informed Members that she would be stepping down as the PACT representative for the Council with immediate effect.
- An oral report from the Chamber of Commerce was given by Councillor Taylor which included the following points of interest:  
At the recent AGM the Chamber of Commerce reported it was financial sound. The main high lights of their year have been the installation of a Town Crier and the decision to have monthly hour long meetings.  
The Chamber of Commerce's plans for 2014 include breakfast and evening events and updates on the flooding, local plan and market.  
The group are also writing a letter to the County Highways to complain about the lack of signage that was placed around the town during the recent road closure, at North Street and the effects that this closure had on deliveries for businesses in Ilminster directions for large lorries and bus routes.  
It was suggested that the Town Council also send a letter reiterating this issue and the concerns of local people.

## 110. Budget & Precept for 2014/15

The Council was asked to consider the Town Council's budget and precept for 2014/15.

Topics discussed during the consideration of this item included the following:

- The grants budget has been reduced to £5,000, but is still an increase of £900 from last year. Due to the financial position this year an option would be to remove grants from the 2014/15 budget and just have the budget for the Revenue Subsidy grants.
- The contingency figure of £33,957 is to cover running costs for three months. This amount has been included following guidance from SALC and is considered 'good practice' for any business.
- The burial fees have been increased by 10% on 2013/14 charges.
- The match funding for the MUGA can only be included in the budget for 2014/15 if it does not affected the precept considerably.

### **RESOLVED** to

- a) Remove the budget for grants for 2014/15, leaving only the budget for the Revenue Subsidy grants of £2,900
- b) Remove the match funding for the MUGA from the 2014/15 budget
- c) The budget for 2014/15 will be £252,081 as set out on the sheet attached to these minutes.

The Council then consider the proposed budget and made recommendation for the Town Council's precept figure for 2014/15.

**RESOLVED** that the precept for 2014/14 will be £252,081

**NB this was a recorded vote:**

|                  |
|------------------|
| Chair's Initials |
|------------------|

**ILMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES**

Councillors voting for the motion: S Austin, P Burton, C Goodall, V Keitch, V Higgins,  
A Lawson, R Swann, E Taylor and L Vijeh.  
Councillors voting against the motion: D Miller, J Pallister, A Shearman, S Shepherd and  
S Storey

**111. Change of Meeting Date**

The members discussed changing the date of the Annual Council Meeting from 20<sup>th</sup> May 2014.

**RESOLVED** that the Annual Council meeting be held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014, replacing the scheduled Town Council meeting.

**112. Authorisation of Payments and Notification of Virements**

The Schedule of Payments for authorisation was circulated with the agenda for Council's approval.

**RESOLVED** that the accounts listed in the schedules presented to the Council totalling £41,732.84 be approved.

**113. Project Plan** (as attached, agenda item 14)

The Council considered the progress on the project plan and whether any changes are necessary.

Issue discussed during the consideration of this item included:

- Item 7 – Canal banks - change the review date to October 2014
- Item 10 – Website – delete this from the list.

**114. Website**

The Councillors gave their feedback regarding new website.

Comments included the following:

- The website looks very nice
- The site is user friendly.
- The Mayor could promote the new website in the Mayor's column of the Chard and Iminster newspaper.

**115. Clerk's Updates**

The following Clerk's Updates have been sent by email since the last Council agenda was published.

| <b>Number</b> | <b>Date</b>        | <b>Topics</b>   |
|---------------|--------------------|---|
| 24/13         | 24th December 2013 | Local Plan<br>Thursday Market<br>Office opening hours - Christmas period<br>Declaration of Interests<br>Somerset Community Foundation |
| 1/14          | 13th January 2014  | Local Plan Submission<br>Declaration of Interests   |

There were no further comments nor questions raised regarding the above.

Chair's Initials

**ILMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES**

**116.** The Council was asked to consider excluding the press and public for the following item which should be treated as confidential because it relates to the business affairs of the Town Council and contains legal advice

**RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting so that Councillors could receive confidential information and legal advice which relates to the Town Council's business affairs.

**117. Payment Request.**

The Council was asked to consider a payments request of £2675.

**RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk is given delegated authority to issue a counter claim and represent the Town Council in court.

The meeting closed at 22:06 hrs.

Chair's Signature & Date