

Minutes of the **Town Council Meeting** held in the Council Chamber, North Street, Ilminster on Tuesday 21st June 2016 at 19:30hrs.

Present:

Chair: Cllr Valerie Keitch

Councillors: Cllr F Albin, Cllr P Burton, Cllr R Drayton, Cllr J Fagan, Cllr J Fowler, Cllr D Kinder, Cllr A Shearman, Cllr S Shepherd, Cllr J Sothem, and Cllr T Walker.

In Attendance

Officers Mrs T Loveless (Administration Officer), Miss J Norris (Town Clerk)

4 members of the public attended the meeting, 1 of whom spoke during the public participation session.

Prior to the start of the formal meeting Mr Julian Wooster, Director of Children's Services at Somerset County Council, gave a presentation, a copy of which is attached to the minutes as Appendix.

Speaker 1, Mr Jim Sainsbury

Mr Sainsbury said he was surprised to see the future of the grandstand on the agenda. The Town Council, on behalf of the Cricket Club, had applied for and been granted planning permission for work to The Shed including demolition of the grandstand and existing changing rooms. The Cricket Club wish to progress as quickly as they can with their improvement plans and would be concerned about any delay.

21. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Swann

22. Declarations of Interest

The declarations of interest outlined in the table below were made:

Name	Agenda Item	Minute No	Interest	Nature of Interest	Action
Cllr Shearman	Agenda 10 Recommendations from eth Resources Committee	30B	Member of the Peninsula Pension Fund	Personal	Abstained
Cllr Shepherd	Agenda item 13 Grandstand on the Wharf Lane Recreation Ground	33	President of the Cricket Club	Personal	Spoke and voted

23. Minutes

RESOLVED

- (i) to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 17th May 2016 as a correct record subject to minute 9, note (iii) being amended to include the Deputy Mayor as an ex officio appointment on the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group
- (ii) to note the office Action Plan relating to the Town Council Meetings:

Issues discussed during consideration of the action plan included:

- Item 1 – Queen's 90th Birthday Celebrations – The need to be more prepared in the future
- Item 5 – Dog policy – the impact of the change of the law is still unclear
- Item 6 – Land around Herne Hill - Letter was sent to Somerset County Council; the town Council now needs to discuss how it could use the land for the benefit of the community this will be added to the next Open Spaces Committee agenda
- Item 9 – District Councillor's Report - more news is expected shortly regarding Superfast broadband
- Item 12 – Internal Audit Report Financial Controls - Internal audit updates will form part of audit report in July
- Item 21 – Winterhay Lane Footpath – No further updates at present

24. Mayor's Announcements/Engagements

A) The Mayor made announcements relevant to Town Council and Mayoral activities and engagements:

- Cllr Keitch reported that she been reasonably busy since being elected as Mayor. in particular it had been lovely to attend the youth football presentations where she had met a lot of people. The Literary Festival was a superb event for Ilminster and the Midsummer Experience had been as popular as ever. The winners of the Town Council's scarecrow competition were being invited to the Open Spaces Meeting in June to receive their prizes.
- Thursday 18th August is the provisional date for the election of 3 Town Councillors. A more detailed timetable is not yet available but the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Clerk will be hosting an evening for potential delegates to provide background information about the town Council and life as a Town Councillor.

B) The Mayor's engagements between 17th May 2016 and 21st June 2016 had been published on the agenda for the meeting.

25. Police Report

An oral report was given by PCSO Karen Pack and a written report was provided at the start of the meeting.

Issues discussed included:

- 6 assaults – most related to the same family
- There was an assault on 2 police officers in Crewkerne
- St Marys Church in Ilminster had some audio equipment stolen
- A gentleman was arrested in Ilminster whilst out in public naked and been detained his own and public safety

26. Reports from District Councillors

Cllr Keitch reported that all boards are sitting and as yet it is very early days for the transformation project so there is nothing specific to report at present.

27. Report from County Councillor for Ilminster

County Councillor Vjeh's written report had been circulated with the agenda; Councillor Vjeh was unable to attend the meeting and had sent her apologies.

Issues discussed included:

- the comment in the report regarding County Farms Land was highlighted
- Fracking – no sites currently known in South Somerset at present

28. Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

The Council received the following report:

Chamber of Commerce (Cllr Kinder)

- Love Lane was a typo in the report and should read Frog Lane
- The volunteers involved in cutting back the overgrowth on Frog Lane were thanked

Ilminster Entertainment Society (Cllr Walker)

A large part of the meeting was of a financial nature so no report issued.

Literary Festival (Cllr Fowler)

- the Town Council's support which included the Mayor attending many events was much appreciated. Following the success of this year's inaugural event it is the intention that there will be another festival next year.

Greenfylde School Liaison (Cllr Fagan)

Cllr Fagan had been on a tour of the school and presented certificates for a poetry competition.

29. Open Spaces Committee Recommendation

The Chair of Open Spaces Committee presented the recommendation from the Committee meeting held on 24th May 2016 regarding the removal of stone and soil from the Cemetery.

RESOLVED that £1,500 is taken from unearmarked reserves to move stone and soil from cemetery

A Councillor raised a concern that the grass in the lower part of the cemetery and on the banks was once again getting very long which gave a less than ideal impression. The Town Clerk said this matter would be added to the agenda for the next Open Spaces Committee.

30. **Resources Committee Recommendation**

A) The Chair of Resources Committee presented the recommendations from the Committee meeting held on 5th April 2016 regarding the Recruitment and Whistleblowing Policies and Procedures.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the existing Recruitment Policy and Procedure and Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure are retained.
- (ii) That the policies and procedures are reviewed in 3 years i.e. 2019 unless legislation or best practice requires an earlier review

B) The Chair of Resources Committee presented the recommendations from the Committee meeting held on 14 June 2016 regarding the pensions Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure, implementing the nationally agreed salary wards and changes to the staffing structure.

Pensions Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Town Council adopts the Peninsula Pensions Employers Guide to the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure as it's procedure for dealing with appeals regarding pension matters
- (ii) That the Appeals Committee is designated as the adjudicator for Stage 1 appeals made under the Employers Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure
- (iii) That the Appeals Committee Terms of Reference are amended to include the following:
 - Overall Purpose & / Scope "To determine appeals relating to grievance, discipline or capability proceedings and **adjudicate stage 1 pension appeals**"
 - Specific Responsibilities
 - "2. To adjudicate Stage 1 appeals regarding pensions as set out in the Peninsula Pensions Employers Guide to the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure"**

Note: Cllr Shearman declared a personal interest in this matter as a member of the pension fund

National Salary Award, Authorisation and Payment of Salary Changes

RESOLVED

- (i) To implement the 2016-2018 pay award
- (ii) To amend Standing Order 15 to include **"xix Implement any nationally agreed Pay Awards where sufficient budget allowance has been made xx Implement any salary scale increments that are conditions within employment contracts"**
- (iii) That Financial Regulation 7.3 is amended to read "No changes shall be made to any employee's ~~pay~~ **Salary Scale**, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Resources Committee

Staffing Structure

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Town Clerk's contracted hours are increased to 35 per week (to include evening meetings) with effect from 1 July 2016
- (ii) That the staffing structure depicted in Appendix B to these minutes is implemented
- (iii) That Mrs Deborah Speed (currently employed as Administration Officer (Finance) is offered the position of Deputy Clerk as shown in Appendix B with effect from 1 July 2016.

31. Standing Orders

The Council considered adopting revised Standing Orders which have been amended to complement the Financial Regulations adopted in February 2016 and has updated cross-referencing.

Issues discussed during consideration of the item included:

- Standing Order 21 - Requests for information –
 - that any correspondence from the Information Commissioner should be referred to the Council
 - the possibility of Council receiving a report regarding the receipt of FOI requests

RESOLVED that the Standing Orders as attached to these minutes as Appendix C be adopted.

32. Local Council Award Scheme

The Council considered the report regarding the Town Council's progress towards meeting the criteria for The Foundation Award.

Issues discussed during consideration of the item included:

- Councillors Fowler and Kinder were thanked for their work
- The difference between bullet points, notes and minutes
- The recommendation that public consultation be undertaken for all expenditure above £50000

RESOLVED

- (I) That the Town Council meets the criteria for the Foundation Award
- (II) That the Town Council should now work towards the Quality Award
- (III) That Councillors Kinder and Fowler undertake the assessment of readiness for the Foundation Award
- (IV) That the consideration of a policy regarding undertaking public consultation for all expenditure above £50000 be referred to the Resources Committee for consideration and agreement of a recommendation to full Council.

33. Grandstand on the Wharf Lane Recreation Ground

The Council considered the future of the Grandstand on the Wharf Lane Recreation Ground.

Issues discussed during consideration of the item included:

- Going into closed session if legal advice is to be discussed.
- The planning application was discussed in detail before submission
- The Cricket Club would strongly oppose a decision for the grandstand to remain
- The football club are asking for storage after building the new facility which one would have thought would have included adequate storage.
- The request to retain the grandstand is very late coming after the planning permission has been received
- It would be fair to the cricket club to support the planning application.

RESOLVED to take agenda items 13 – Grandstand On Wharf Lane Recreation Ground, 18 Ilminster Cemetery and 19 Hammerhead Land without members of the public and press present due to the confidential nature (i.e. legal advice and commercial interest) of the business to be transacted.

NB – Members of press and public left the meeting (9.30pm)

Further discussions of this item included:

- The principle of demolishing the grandstand seems to be supported
- The legal advice is that the existing licence can be terminated on 1 June in any year
- Potential health and safety issues associated with the grandstand
- The amount of time the Open Spaces Wardens have to spend clearing the grandstand and adjacent area of broken glass, cans etc
- The Cricket Club proposal to have storage space at the end of The Shed would free up storage space for our wardens.
- The original drawings for the rec indicated that all the buildings in the line from the Warden's Workshop to The Shed would be removed
- The tenant of the grandstand is responsible for its removal including the cost
- The 2016/17 budget included some monies allocated for demolition of the grandstand
- The potential cost of the demolition may exceed the amount the Town Council has budgeted
- Many football clubs have to walk some way from the pitches to reach amenities e.g. toilets
- The effective date of a) the licence termination and b) the date by which any structure should be removed – they may not be the same
- The need to tell the football and cricket clubs of any decision before the information is generally in the public domain
- Grandstand contains the sub-standard shower and changing rooms

- The possibility of imposing financial penalties if the building is not demolished in accordance with the legal timescale
- The financial impact on the football club if demolition is required

RESOLVED

- (i) that the grandstand should be demolished and the football club's request to retain it for storage purposes declined.
- (ii) That further legal advice is sought regarding the completion date for demolition and removal of the grandstand and whether or not that is the same as the date the licence terminates

NB Cllr Sothern left the meeting at 10pm

- 34 **RESOLVED** in accordance with Standing Order 3w to extend the duration of the meeting beyond 2 ½ hours.

35. **Iminster Cemetery**

The Council considered a report provided by the Town Clerk reporting on the Iminster Cemetery including usage and management and a possible way forward.

Issues discussed during consideration of the item included:

- The cost of hiring the independent specialist could be met from the £5,00 set aside for cemetery mapping and £5,000 from the savings on the staffing structure
- Memorial safety inspections should be carried out every 5 years
- Appointing the consultant to investigate any existing space would enable us time to explore options for a new cemetery

RESOLVED

- (i) to appoint Ian Quance, Independent Bereavement Services Consultant, to undertake the work detailed in his bid document received on 2 June 2016 which includes ensuring burial records compliance (including mapping), identifying immediately available space and investigating other possibilities for future use
- (ii) that the cost of the work outlined in (i) above is approved subject to a limit of £10,000 to be met £5,000 from the budget for cemetery mapping and £5,000 from the staffing budget
- (iii) that options for a new cemetery are vigorously investigated

36 **Hammerhead Land**

The Town Clerk provided an oral update on progress with implementing the Council's instructions regarding the Hammerhead Land.

The report included the following information:

- The Town Council's offer for the land had been accepted in August 2014
- Solicitors had been appointed and searches undertaken
- Despite chasing there had been little activity since spring 2015, it was understood that this was due to concerns that the new football and community facility would not go ahead

- The Town Clerk had recently received an email from the vendor's agent saying that a higher, unsolicited offer had been received and he was duty bound to inform his client but would the Town Council be prepared to increase their bid
- The initiator of the new bid had contacted the Town Council and spoken on the telephone with the Mayor and the Town Clerk to explain why he was interested in purchasing the land.
- The Town Council had a legal agreement in place granting the right to pass and re-pass over the land

Issues discussed during consideration of the item included:

- The value of the accepted offer
- The advantages of the land being in the Town Council's ownership

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk is authorised to increase the offer to the limit set by the Town Council

37. **RESOLVED** to re-admit the press and public to the meeting (10.35pm)

38. **Project Plan**

The Council were asked to consider progress on the project plan and whether any changes are necessary.

Issues raised during consideration of the item included:

- Item 2 Additional land for recreational space – the letter has been sent to Somerset County Council registering the Town Council interest in various parcels of land around Herne Hill
- Item 5 Canal Banks – Cllr Swann had informed Councillors that he is looking to remove weeds from the canal
- Item 6 Strategic Vision – to be amended to read 'Mayor'
- Item 8 Drain Infrastructure – Station road flooding seems to have been resolved but drains and gullies throughout Ilminster still require cleaning

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

The Schedule of Payments for authorisation is attached for Council's approval.

RESOLVED that the accounts listed in the schedule presented to the Council totalling £98,761.15 be approved.

40. **Clerk's Update**

The updates, sent by email since the last Town Council agenda was published, were listed on the Agenda and no matters pertaining to the updates were raised.

The meeting closed at 10.45pm.

Chair's Signature and Date