



# MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 8 DECEMBER 2020 AT 7.30 PM

a Remote, Virtual Meeting via "Zoom", streamed live on the MTC Facebook page

*The Meeting was digitally recorded*

*Members are reminded that Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety, Human Rights and Biodiversity*

**Present:** Chair: Cllr T Bloomfield  
Councillors: Cllr O Harvey, Cllr A Kingston-James, Cllr C Palmer\*, Cllr M Palmer  
(\* denotes Somerset West and Taunton District "SWaT" Councillor)

**Absent:** Cllr H Rose

**Officers in Attendance:** Ms S Rawle - Clerk  
Mr B Howe – Deputy Clerk

**Members of the Public and Press:** 1 member of the Public  
0 members of the Press

899 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [LGA 1972 s 85 \(1\)](#)

Apologies were received from Cllr P Bolton\* (Mayor), Cllr B Mandley, Cllr D Prosser (Deputy Chair) and Cllr T Venner\*.

900 TO RECEIVE COUNCILLORS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY DISPENSATIONS  
[In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members](#)

To receive and record any Declarations of Interest in respect of any matters included on the Agenda for consideration at this Meeting.

Member	Item	Interest	Time Period	Speak/Vote
Cllr C Palmer	All	SWaT Councillor	2020	Remained present, spoke and voted

DISPENSATIONS

None.

901 TO ADJOURN THE MEETING FOR PUBLIC INCLUSION *Standing Order No 3e*

Mrs R Tremain had requested to speak at the Meeting in relation to the derelict Parks Walk Public Conveniences.

902 TO RECEIVE THE CHAIR'S VERBAL REPORT

902.1 *The current Government Covid-19 Rules and Regulations affecting the Multi-Use Games Area "MUGA" and Adult Gym*

Cllr Bloomfield reported that the MUGA, Adult Gym and Tennis Courts had now re-opened.

902.2 *An update on the Half-Pipe Skateboard Ramp and proposed Skate Park*

Cllr Bloomfield reported that she had spoken to the company and they would be coming down in the New Year.

903 TO DISCUSS A COMPLAINT RECEIVED FROM RESIDENTS REGARDING THE DERELICT PARKS WALK PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

Mrs Rita Tremain addressed the Committee about the Parks Walk Public Conveniences.

She was aware that Minehead Town Council ("MTC") was not the owner of the Public Conveniences but was requesting its support in a recent complaint that had been made to SWaT by herself and other residents in the Parks area.

She said that the Public Conveniences had been closed for several years and over that time had become derelict and were very much an eyesore. Car drivers not local to the area still pulled up to use the facility and on finding it closed would urinate outside the building. There was evidence that rats were coming from the building and invading residents' gardens and that the surrounding area was often underwater after a period of heavy rain. She had brought the matter to the attention of Environment Health at SWaT and she had received a reply informing her that the building had been inspected following her complaint and that SWaT intended to secure the gaps in the fabric of the building and would inspect the interior of the building. She and other residents believed that, should the District Council not be minded to re-open the facility, it should be demolished. She said that as West Somerset moved more towards a Unitary Authority the issue moved further away from the locality and local decision-makers.

Cllr Bloomfield said that she did think the building presented a health issue and that it should be looked at.

Cllr M Palmer suggested that Mrs Tremain also contact her District Councillor, Cllr Benet Allen, to make him aware of the matter.

The Clerk was requested to furnish Mrs Tremain with Cllr Allen's contact details after the Meeting.

Cllr Harvey agreed that it was bad enough looking at the building from a distance and that the District Council should do something about the situation.

**Proposed:** Cllr Bloomfield

**Seconded:** Cllr M Palmer

***Recommend to Full Council that a letter be sent to SWaT, copying in Cllr Allen, requesting that following complaints the Parks Walk Public Conveniences either be made use of or demolished.***

**Agreed with all in favour.**

Cllr Kingston-James arrived in the Meeting at 7.40 pm.

904 TO DISCUSS A REQUEST FROM A RESIDENT TO SUPPORT A SUBMISSION TO SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL TO REVIEW SPEED LIMITS ALONG SEAWARD WAY

The Clerk informed the Committee that correspondence had been received from a resident requesting that MTC make a submission to SCC Traffic Management for a variation to the speed limits along Seaward Way. The suggestion was that the change from 30mph to 40mph be moved towards the A39 roundabout so that the entrance to the Hospital and the Premier Inn is included within the lower speed limit. Additionally, the approach to Tesco would also be included.

Cllr M Palmer agreed and felt that the speed limit did need to be reduced on this stretch of road.

**Cllr Kingston-James proposed that the Clerk write to SCC Traffic Management requesting that the 40mph speed signs be moved towards the A39 roundabout.**

Cllr C Palmer proposed an amendment:

**Proposed:** Cllr C Palmer

**Seconded:** Cllr Kingston-James

***That the Clerk write to SCC Traffic Management requesting that the speed limit for the whole length of Seaward Way be changed to 30mph.***

**Agreed with all in favour.**

905 TO DISCUSS ARRANGING A MEETING OF THE PARTNERSHIP ADVISORY GROUP TO IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVING COMMUNICATION WITH PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

Cllr Bloomfield said that she would like to convene a meeting of the Partnership Advisory Group so that a list of organisations in the town could be identified in order for MTC to improve communication with these groups and for there to be a better understanding of what the different organisations were working on and how MTC could help.

The Deputy Clerk advised that the Council had nominated Councillors on outside bodies and they could feed into the discussion with the Partnership Advisory Group as well. It was all part of trying to have a more joined up approach.

- 906 TO DISCUSS THE HEADS OF TERMS LEASE REGARDING THE ALEXANDRA ROAD CAR PARK (*RE-REFERRED TO THIS COMMITTEE BY THE FULL COUNCIL AT THEIR NOVEMBER MEETING*)

The Deputy Clerk advised that he had been in discussions with SWaT about possibly leasing a part of the Alexander Road Car Park for the benefit of users to the Community Building.

SWaT have come back with Heads of Terms which are different from those anticipated and the amount of money is more than expected. The Deputy Clerk advised that it would be better to look at alternative solutions using MTC's own land.

Cllr Bloomfield said she felt that the Council should not go ahead with terms being proposed. Cllr C Palmer agreed and said that MTC should not be spending money on transferring assets when there was a likelihood the car park could come into the Town Council's ownership anyway given that there was the move towards a Unitary Authority.

**Proposed:** Cllr Bloomfield

**Seconded:** Cllr C Palmer

***Recommend to Full Council that MTC does not follow through with the Heads of Terms and look at other alternatives.***

***Agreed with all in favour.***

- 907 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE DEPUTY CLERK REGARDING THE SUMMERLAND ROAD PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

The Deputy Clerk advised that a specification had been drawn up for refurbishment of the Summerland Road Public Conveniences. There would be a complete upgrade with the toilets made bigger and disabled cubicles incorporated into the main building. Planning permission had been submitted and it was planned to go out to tender in the New Year. Part of the specification will be that temporary toilets will need to be provided by the company while the work is carried out.

- 908 TO RECOMMEND THE DRAFT BUDGET FOR 2021/22

The Deputy Clerk advised that the Budget for 2021/22 had been informally discussed with Councillors at various times in the last month. At the Meeting of Finance and Staffing on 7 December a 5% increase in the precept had been recommended to Full Council. Included in the budget was a new staffing structure.

Cllr Bloomfield said that the 5% increase equated to £8.13 a year on a Band D property.

Cllr C Palmer added that to retain the same level of income as last year the Council would have to increase the precept by the equivalent of roughly £4.06 a year on a Band D property. Should the Council leave the precept at the current rate for a Band D property there would be less money available with which to deliver services.

**Proposed:** Cllr C Palmer

**Seconded:** Cllr Bloomfield

***Recommend to Full Council a 5% rise in the Precept for 2021/22.***

909 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE DEPUTY CLERK REGARDING THE TOWN'S CHRISTMAS TREES

The Deputy Clerk explained that it had been a challenging few weeks putting up the Town's Christmas Trees and lights due to reduced staffing levels through the lockdown period. The Amenities Team were working flat out and there would be a virtual switch on at 5pm on Thursday 10 December.

Cllr Bloomfield said how good the trees in Wellington Square and Alcombe looked this year.

910 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

**Proposed:** Cllr Bloomfield

**Seconded:** Cllr Bloomfield

**Agreed that the Meeting continue *in camera*.**

911 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

The Meeting ended at 8.46 pm.