



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 12 JANUARY 2021 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 P Bolton* (Mayor), Cllr O Harvey, Cllr C Palmer*, Cllr M Palmer, Cllr D Prosser (Deputy Chair), Cllr H Rose, Cllr T Venner*
(denotes Somerset West and Taunton District "SWaT" Councillor)*

Absent: Cllr B Mandley

Officers in Attendance: Ms S Rawle - Clerk
Mr B Howe – Deputy Clerk
Mrs M Swallow - Notetaker

Members of the Public and Press: 0 members of the Public
0 members of the Press

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

Apologies were received from Cllr A Kingston-James.

946 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 Bolton	All	SWaT Councillor	2021	Remained present, spoke and voted
Cllr C Palmer	All	SWaT Councillor	2021	Remained present, spoke and voted
Cllr Venner	All	SWaT Councillor	2021	Remained present, spoke and voted

DISPENSATIONS

None.

947 TO ADJOURN THE MEETING FOR PUBLIC INCLUSION [Standing Order No 3e](#)

There had been no requests to speak at the Meeting.

948 TO RECEIVE THE CHAIR'S VERBAL REPORT

Cllr Bloomfield had nothing specific to report but wished all viewing via the Facebook streaming service a Happy New Year.

949 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE CLERK ON MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL'S ("MTC") SERVICE DELIVERY THROUGH THE NATIONAL LOCKDOWN

The Clerk outlined the current situation regarding MTC's service provision:

- The outside staff (Amenities Team) remain working in a socially distanced fashion, albeit as a reduced Team due to some staff shielding for medical reasons. They are endeavouring to continue with their usual duties as far as possible, including litter-picking.
- The Public Conveniences and Play Areas remain open as per Government guidelines.
- The Community Building, Multi-Use Games Area ("MUGA"), Outdoor Gym and Tennis Courts will remain closed until Government restrictions are lifted and it is deemed safe to re-open.
- The MTC Office in Summerland Road remains closed to the public but is continuing to be staffed daily on a rotation basis - therefore telephone calls and emails will be attended to.
- The Cemetery is functioning as normal and Allotments remain open.

Cllr Bloomfield wished to thank all MTC staff for their continuing work in very difficult circumstances.

950 TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM A RESIDENT TO SUPPORT THEIR APPROACH TO SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL CONCERNING A REVIEW OF ROAD SAFETY ALONG BRATTON LANE

The Clerk referred Councillors to the correspondence shared with them prior to the Meeting.

A member of the public had contacted MTC, following referral by Somerset County Council ("SCC"), to request that the speed limit of 30mph along Bratton Lane is reduced: this request made after three occasions where vehicles have collided with his bicycle. He also reported land slippage along Bratton Lane where part of a bank has collapsed due to wet weather conditions.

There followed discussion by Councillors as to where MTC's land in that area extends before becoming the responsibility of Selworthy and Minehead Without Parish Council. Cllr C Palmer understood MTC's land to be roughly to the location of the 30mph road sign. Cllr Bolton added that he believed the Porlock Road past the Cemetery towards the junction with the main road to Porlock to be the boundary - one side MTC, the opposite within the jurisdiction of Selworthy and Minehead Without.

The Clerk confirmed that she had emailed Selworthy and Minehead Without Parish Council requesting map details to clearly show the land boundaries. She stated that if Councillors wished her to do so she would ask the Parish Council to join MTC in submitting a joint letter to SCC Highways to request action on this issue.

Cllr Bolton, although aware this was slightly deviating from the agenda item, requested that SCC should also be made aware of land slippage on a bank area in Combeland Road in Alcombe.

Cllr Venner reminded those present that the land slippage issues should be reported following the proper channel, by contacting the relevant County Councillors: Cllr Frances Nicholson, Porlock Division, was the appropriate Councillor for Bratton Lane and Cllr Christine Lawrence, Alcombe and Dunster, would need to be notified about Combeland Road. The Clerk confirmed that she would contact both County Councillors.

It was proposed that it be recommended to Full Council that the Clerk be authorised to ask Selworthy and Minehead Without Parish Council to join with MTC in writing to SCC to request the lowering of the speed limit along Bratton Lane - in light of public concern.

Proposed by: Cllr Bloomfield
Unanimously agreed.

Seconded by: Cllr M Palmer

951 TO DISCUSS THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION FOR THE PROPOSED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AT RAINBOW WAY (ADJACENT TO SEAWARD WAY), MINEHEAD

The Deputy Clerk confirmed to Councillors that this item was included on the Agenda as there was insufficient time for consultation before the next MTC Full Council Meeting on Tuesday 26 January. The proposed development plan is included on MTC's Facebook page and it is in the public domain. The Deputy Clerk reminded Councillors that as individuals they are entitled to register their personal views on this proposal. It was emphasised that once the planning application is made available to MTC, Councillors will have the opportunity to attend the relevant MTC Planning Meeting to scrutinise the application and can air their views at that time - but meanwhile perhaps Full Council should consider the current stage of this proposed development at their Meeting on 26 January. It is hoped that SWaT Planning Committee would then accept MTC's view on the initiative if submitted on 27 January - so this would have to be clarified.

Cllr Venner stated he had registered his personal view that green issues being factored into every stage of the development are of paramount importance, but it was for other Councillors to individually register their views. Cllr Bloomfield confirmed that she too had registered a view.

The Director of the Group, David Inman, had been invited to attend the next MTC Full Council Meeting on Tuesday 26 January to give a detailed presentation.

Cllr Rose felt this was a positive project which warranted further consideration by all MTC Councillors. The Clerk confirmed that the Group is passionate about 'pushing' the rural agenda to ensure fair recognition and to drive a rural strategy - potentially more important following the UK's departure from the EU.

Cllr C Palmer requested that the Clerk research the total number of rural Councils fully signed-up to membership of this Group before MTC makes any commitment. The Clerk agreed to undertake this before the Full Council Meeting on 26 January.

Cllr Venner wished to know the financial commitment of membership for MTC following the free-trial period. The Clerk confirmed that annual membership would cost £150.

953 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE DEPUTY CLERK ON THE SITUATION REGARDING THE SUMMERLAND ROAD PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

The Deputy Clerk confirmed that the Tender Specification document had been made available online for Councillors to view. He confirmed that he had worked closely with Cllr M Palmer to complete this, with a view to, as soon as possible, acquiring tender bids from local firms to undertake the work.

Cllr Bolton felt it was crucial for the work to be completed before Summer, should Covid restrictions be lifted and tourists are once again welcome. The Deputy Clerk clarified that temporary public conveniences will be in situ for the duration of the work - so facilities will be available.

It was agreed and proposed that the Deputy Clerk go ahead with advertising the Tender Specification in local media, with a deadline of the end of January for the receipt of quotations from local building firms.

Proposed by: Cllr Bloomfield
Unanimously agreed.

Seconded by: Cllr M Palmer

954 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE DEPUTY CLERK REGARDING THE COMMUNITY BUILDING

The Deputy Clerk reported the following:

- The Community Building was partly re-opened following the lifting of the November lockdown, but in light of the current stringent lockdown is once again closed.
- As stated earlier by the Clerk, the MUGA, Tennis Courts and Adult Gym are also closed.
- The Public Conveniences and Play Areas are currently open, but it may be necessary to close these if the Government tightens lockdown restrictions.

- The demolition of the old building has been progressing well: foundations have been partly removed, as has the structure of the main building which has been dismantled and taken from site together with the old lighting pylons.
- MTC has one instalment remaining due to contractor Qube Construction, but 5% of this amount will be held in retention for the time being. Negotiation will continue on the last valuation given, and the Deputy Clerk confirmed an estimation of £10,000 - £15,000 as the last 2.5% - plus the other 2.5% to be held in retention should there be any 'snagging issues' to rectify when the work schedule is due to end in September 2021. The Deputy Clerk asked Councillors to be vigilant and report to him anything they deem unsatisfactory during the work's completion.
- The Deputy Clerk confirmed that the outside area of the Community Building will become an aesthetically pleasing green space, which could possibly accommodate functions within a marquee-type structure.

The Clerk continued by reporting that MTC had been approached by the NHS' Schools Vaccination Team urgently requiring a venue within which to undertake the usual school vaccination sessions: due to the Covid situation and requirements the administering of these vital vaccinations is behind schedule and the usual venue is unavailable. The Community Building has provisionally been booked for four dates, but a representative from the Vaccinations Team will be given a tour of the building to ensure that it meets requirements.

The Deputy Clerk and Clerk confirmed the necessity that it is thoroughly cleaned at the end of each of the four sessions: this will be undertaken by MTC staff and the cost charged to the NHS Team, if content to hire on that basis.

Cllr Venner felt that in the circumstances MTC should waive any fees, to be community-spirited during the Covid pandemic. He emphasised that the Community Building was being sought as a venue only because the Vaccinations Team were unable to use West Somerset College as normal.

It was agreed and proposed that the fees in this case should be waived.

Proposed by: Cllr Venner
Unanimously agreed.

Seconded by: Cllr Bolton

The Clerk agreed to communicate this decision to the School Vaccinations Team.

955 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Cllr Bloomfield concluded the Public Meeting by thanking those viewing via Facebook.

The Public Meeting ended at 8.15 pm.