



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING

held on Monday 19 August 2019

at the Council Offices: 3 Summerland Road, Minehead at 7.30pm

The Meeting was digitally recorded

Present: Chair: Cllr T Venner*
Councillors: Cllr T Bloomfield, Cllr P Bolton*, Cllr A Kingston-James,
Cllr A Lawton, Cllr J Malin, Cllr B Mandley, Cllr C Palmer*,
Cllr D Prosser, Cllr S Slade (Mayor)
(denotes Somerset West and Taunton District "SWaT" Councillor)*

Officers in Attendance: Ms J Bashford – Town Clerk
Mr A Giles – Finance Officer ("FO")
Mrs M Swallow – Notetaker

Councillor in Attendance: Cllr M Palmer

Absent: Cllr N Hercock

Members of the press and public: 5 members of the public
0 members of the press

135 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO APPROVE THE REASONS GIVEN

[LGA 1972 s 85 \(1\)](#)

There were no Councillor apologies submitted but apologies were noted from Mr B Howe (Deputy Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer).

136 TO RECEIVE COUNCILLORS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

[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 P Bolton	All	SWaT Councillor	2019	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr C Palmer	All	SWaT Councillor	2019	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr T Venner	All	SWaT Councillor	2019	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted

(a) **Dispensations**

None.

137 TO ADJOURN THE MEETING FOR PUBLIC INCLUSION

Richard Lillis addressed the Meeting, in his capacity as an ex District Councillor and now local Volunteer CCTV Operator, to speak regarding the Minehead CCTV programme.

He reported that there is a total of 19 CCTV cameras around the town, originally paid for and installed by Minehead Town Council (“MTC”), but now under the responsibility of Somerset West and Taunton Deane District Council (“SWaT”) – although MTC make an annual contribution of £3000 towards maintenance costs. Mr Lillis confirmed that ADT are contracted to perform any maintenance work necessary and as some cameras do currently have faults they have been requested to investigate.

Mr Lillis emphasised that the CCTV system is crucial for the town, and it has proved its worth in assisting with crime prevention and apprehension of at least one criminal. He implored MTC and SWaT to work together to ensure the system’s conservation as replacement would prove costly.

Following some general queries and questions by Councillors, Mr Lillis concluded by confirming that he will provide a copy of the Service Level Agreement (as previously requested by Cllr Venner), crime prevention statistics resulting from the CCTV use and details showing the breakdown of MTC’s annual £3000 during the past 10 years.

Cllr Venner thanked Mr Lillis for his presentation and dedicated voluntary work in this respect.

138 TO AUTHORISE CHEQUES

Firstly, Cllr Venner confirmed that item 1 on the cheque list, the payment to Qube Construction Ltd, had been agreed by himself as Chair of this Committee, Cllr Slade (Mayor) and Cllr Kingston-James (Chair of the Amenities and Environment Committee) and was therefore appropriately sanctioned for payment.

- (i) To approve payments under £1,000:

Following discussion on some of the items listed, it was agreed that payment of items 2 to 34 should be recommended for Full Council’s approval.

Proposed by Cllr Venner, Seconded by Cllr Bloomfield and unanimously agreed.

- (ii) To recommend payments over £1,000 to Full Council:

Item 35 on the Payments Schedule – After a query was raised by Cllr Prosser about the breakdown of the costs within this item, the breakdown of the invoice received was provided by the Finance Officer (“FO”). Councillors were also informed that these invoices were available for Councillors to view at the Office at any time.

It was also confirmed both by the Clerk and FO that there is an ongoing scheduled programme of work needed to update the public conveniences in addition to works already undertaken by MTC. The Councillors were reminded that MTC only took on the Toilets in October 2018 without a budget for the costs incurred. The Councillors were informed of an emerging substantial sewerage problem associated particularly with the Summerland Road and Blenheim Gardens unisex public conveniences. Emergency and investigative work carried out has indicated that further remedial work is necessary and inevitable. This is as a result of the current system being inadequate for the demand made of it, plus the ongoing problem of non-flushable items being dispensed. The Clerk further informed Councillors that the previously contracted usage survey at Summerland Toilets had been completed, an initial report recently received and passed to the Public Conveniences Advisory Group.

Item 36 on the Payments Schedule – The Clerk alerted Councillors that Full Council will need to resolve to allow a dispensation for this payment to be made.

It was Proposed by Cllr Venner, Seconded by Cllr Bolton and unanimously agreed that Items 35 – 37 on the Payments Schedule be referred to Full Council for their consideration.

139 TO APPROVE BANK RECONCILIATIONS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 JULY 2019

Cllr Venner explained the background to this item regarding financial controls on payments made by MTC. The bank reconciliation is the process of balancing all MTC transactions as shown on the bank statements reconciled to MTC's Accounting System. It was agreed that an independent Councillor will carry out this function.

It was Proposed by Cllr Bloomfield, Seconded by Cllr Slade and unanimously agreed that Cllr Bolton should be this Councillor signing the relevant documents. Cllr Prosser, as a new Councillor asked to be able to 'Shadow' Cllr Bolton, by way of experience, this was also agreed.

140 TO APPROVE THE LIST OF REGULAR PAYMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF FINANCIAL REGULATION 5.6

Regulation 5.6 states *"For each financial year the Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer ("RFO") shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively) Salaries, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like for which Council, or the Finance and Staffing Committee, may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Council or Finance and Staffing Committee"*.

Accordingly, the FO had circulated the list of regular payments to the Committee following general discussion and questions.

It was recommended that these payments be approved. Proposed by Cllr Venner, Seconded by Cllr Prosser and unanimously agreed.

- 141 TO APPROVE DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENTS BETWEEN 1 APRIL 2019 AND 30 JUNE 2019 (*THIS WAS INCORRECTLY STATED AS "1 APRIL 2019 AND 31 JULY 2019" ON THE AGENDA*)

Councillors discussed the supporting document. Cllr Malin queried the £35 bank charges to MTC and felt these were perhaps unjustified. It was agreed that this matter would be followed-up.

It was Proposed by Cllr Venner, Seconded by Cllr Malin and unanimously agreed that those direct debits over £1000 should be recommended to Full Council for acceptance.

- 142 TO RENEW BUDGET MONITORING INFORMATION FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL – 30 JUNE 2019

The Committee had been circulated with budget monitoring information for the period 1 April to the 30 June 2019 prior to the Meeting and were asked to note its content. Cllr Venner recommended that the Committee note the contents of the Report.

Cllr Venner thanked Mr Giles for his detailed work on this item.

- 143 TO RENEW THE DRAFT TIMETABLE FOR SETTING THE 2020/21 BUDGET

A draft Timetable had been supplied to Councillors for consideration prior to the meeting.

The FO explained that this would enable good planning to draw-up the future precept and provide awareness of what is necessary for a robust and detailed 2021 Revenue Budget. It was emphasised that this work must be completed by December.

Cllr Venner recommended that the timetable be adhered to and that this should be referred to Full Council for adoption.

Cllr Venner suggested that a Councillor Seminar should be held in September to examine priorities for MTC and Minehead itself. The Clerk and FO confirmed that this would be added to the next Full Council Meeting Agenda for diarising.

- 144 TO CONSIDER MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL'S FUTURE BORROWING REQUIREMENTS

The FO provided background information on this item.

At the October 2018 Meeting of the previous Full Council the principle of borrowing of £500,000 was approved. However, this facility is only open for one year before MTC would need to reapply. Therefore, confirmation of borrowing requirement is now required to meet this deadline. Councillors were reminded that there is a time-consuming process to meet the deadline. The FO explained to Councillors that borrowing at this time was a prudent measure designed to secure a better financial position and plan, enabling the Council to fulfil its goals and ambitions. A report detailing this will be provided to the Full Council.

The Public Works Loan Board will provide this funding at a very competitive interest rate but plans and due process must commence very soon.

It was agreed that this would be added to the next Full Council Meeting Agenda, with acceptance recommended of the process agreed by the previous administration continuing. This was Proposed by Cllr Venner, Seconded by Cllr Bloomfield and unanimously agreed.

The Meeting closed at 8:50 pm.