



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 7.30 PM

Remote Virtual Meeting via Zoom, streamed live on 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 C Palmer*
Councillors: Cllr P Bolton*(Mayor), Cllr M Palmer, Cllr T Bloomfield,
Cllr A Kingston-James,
(denotes Somerset West and Taunton District "SWaT" Councillor)*

Officers in Attendance: Mr A Giles – Acting Responsible Finance Officer ("RFO")
Mr B Howe – Acting Clerk
Mrs L Thornton – Finance Administrator and Notetaker

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

720 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [LGA 1972 s 85 \(1\)](#)

Apologies were submitted for Cllr A Lawton, Cllr J Malin, Cllr B Mandley and Cllr T Venner* and approved by Councillors.

721 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 C Palmer	All	SWaT Councillor	2020	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr P Bolton	All	SWaT Councillor	2020	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
	11	Personal interest	2020	Stayed in the room, did not speak or vote
Cllr T Bloomfield	11	Personal payment	2020	Stayed in the room, did not speak or vote

DISPENSATIONS [Localism Act 2011](#)

No dispensations were requested.

722 TO ADJOURN THE MEETING FOR PUBLIC INCLUSION

No members of the public were in attendance. Cllr C Palmer welcomed those watching on Facebook.

723 TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS

723.1 **To approve Regular Payments between 1 August 2020 and 31 August 2020**

There were no questions.

Approval of the Regular Payments, items 1 to 23 on the listing, was Proposed by Cllr C Palmer – this was Seconded by Cllr Bloomfield and unanimously agreed.

723.2 **To approve payments under £1,000**

Cllr C Palmer noted the three urgent payments. There were no questions.

Approval of payments under £1,000 items 4 to 16 on the listing, was Proposed by Cllr C Palmer – this was Seconded by Cllr Bolton and unanimously agreed.

723.3 **To recommend to Full Council payments over £1,000**

This included three urgent payments, item 1 to 3 over £1,000, paid under the provision of Financial regulation 5.1.1.

There were no questions.

Recommendation to Full Council of payments 17-23 over £1,000 was Proposed by Cllr C Palmer – this was Seconded by Cllr Kingston-James and unanimously agreed.

723.4 **To receive the Income Report for August 2020**

There were no questions.

Cllr C Palmer proposed receipt – this was seconded by Cllr M Palmer and unanimously agreed.

723.5 **To approve the wages for September 2020**

There were no questions.

Approval of wages for August 2020 was Proposed by Cllr C Palmer – this was Seconded by Cllr Bolton and unanimously agreed.

724 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT REGARDING BANK RECONCILIATIONS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 JULY 2020

Cllr M Palmer confirmed she had been into the office and had signed the reconciliations for the Current account and the Savings account. No further reconciliations were available as awaiting statements.

725 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON THE ACTIONS LOG

The Finance Administrator explained that the Actions Log was now up to date for all Committees. The Finance Administrator further explained that 'Action' emails had been sent out using the automated email facility and replies were coming back. It was reported that the Actions Log was working well.

726 TO RECEIVE THE CHAIRMAN'S MONTHLY REPORT

Cllr C Palmer said he had nothing to report this month other than one issue which he would like to raise in the Confidential section.

727 TO REVIEW THE DRAFT BUDGET TIMETABLE 2021/22 AND MAKE APPROPRIATE RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

The RFO explained that the budget would normally be approved in December and must be approved by January. He explained the Report highlighted what needs to be done and what needs to be done urgently.

The RFO explained that the Budget is a tool to deliver the outcomes. He said a big job would be the service plans, ie what resources are needed for the public toilet, weed killing, the Cemetery, etc.

The RFO suggested the Council needs to adopt a 5-year plan to provide a framework within which to set the budget. He felt this would be more important with a unitary authority likely to come into being in that time.

The RFO suggested a seminar may be needed. He also asked Councillors to consider the level of taxation rise or otherwise required when setting the budget. He advised that there would be a lot of work to do over the coming months to decide what the Council wants to do in the short term next year and in the longer term for up to five years.

It was suggested that a sub-committee meeting should be arranged.

728 TO REVIEW THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES AND MAKE APPROPRIATE RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

The Acting Clerk stated that some of the Priorities, such as 'The Community Hall/Sports changing rooms' and the 'larger depot', would have been achieved by April 2021. The RFO would discuss the Council Offices in the Confidential section.

The RFO stated that these Priorities were possibly more important now with the likelihood of a unitary authority and that they needed to be absolutely clear for Minehead and are not lost in the bigger picture. The Council needs to be sure their priorities can be delivered.

Cllr C Palmer asked Councillors to think about the priorities and the Acting Clerk suggested a statement be written that covers everything, that could be sent to a future unitary authority.

729 TO RECEIVE A REPORT REGARDING THE IT EQUIPMENT FOR USE BY COUNCILLORS AND MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL

Cllr C Palmer explained that he had contacted all Councillors to gauge their preference of paperwork or IT. Two Councillors had not replied, one preferred paperwork, one preferred a laptop, four preferred iPads and five were happy with one or the other.

Cllr C Palmer suggested that as the budget for the IT would be over £1000, it would need to be approved at Full Council. Whether the required budget would be in the current year or in 2021/22 may depend on how quick the need was and the Acting Clerk suggested it should be discussed at Full Council along with the need to continue with Zoom meetings. The Acting Clerk suggested the Modernisation Budget may cover the cost.

Cllr C Palmer advised that the current legislation did not allow meetings in person so Zoom meetings would have to continue for the near future which may influence the need and urgency for IT.

Cllr C Palmer proposed to recommend to Full Council to discuss the need for IT and to discuss a budget – this was Secoded by Cllr Bloomfield and unanimously agreed.

730 TO DISCUSS THE WAY THAT WE WILL CHARGE FOR THE USE OF LAND FOR THE FAIRGROUND THIS YEAR

Cllr C Palmer asked for comments. The Acting Clerk explained that the Fairground had not been charged last year but had made a generous donation and a fee for this year had been set at a daily rate.

Cllr C Palmer explained that this was before Covid-19 and that he wanted to propose to waive the fee for this one off event this year and discuss a possible donation as there would be no guarantee of the fairground's income with Covid-19 restrictions in place.

Cllr C Palmer proposed to waive the charge for this one-off event and accept a donation – this was Secoded by Cllr M Palmer and unanimously agreed.

731 TO CONSIDER A GRANT APPLICATION FROM MS J SHERWOOD

The Acting Clerk confirmed he had spoken to the provider of the defibrillator to the Community Building and they could advise how to raise funds, etc. He would be speaking to them again next Tuesday. Cllr Bolton did not feel the Grant Application met the Council's criteria as was from an individual. He suggested they should have applied through Shop Watch. The Acting Clerk said he would contact the applicant about other ways to apply for a Minehead Town Council grant.

Cllr C Palmer agreed the application did not meet the Council's grant application requirements.

Cllr C Palmer proposed not to accept the Grant Application and to ask the applicant to seek advice, through the Acting Clerk, from the supplier of the defibrillator to the Community Building – this was Seconded by Cllr M Palmer and unanimously agreed.

732 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

No press or public were present.

Cllr Bolton proposed to exclude the press and public and end the live Facebook feed – this was Seconded by Cllr Bloomfield and unanimously agreed.

(The live feed to Facebook ended)

The Meeting ended at 8.43pm.