



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON MONDAY 8 MARCH 2021 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 T Bloomfield, Cllr A Lawton, Cllr J Malin, Cllr M Palmer,
Cllr T Venner*
(denotes Somerset West and Taunton District "SWaT" Councillor)*

Officers in Attendance: Ms S Rawle – Clerk
Mr B Howe – Deputy Clerk
Mrs J Notley – Notetaker

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

Councillors Absent: Cllr N Hercock

Cllr C Palmer welcomed Councillors, Officers and members of the public watching on Facebook.

1029 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [LGA 1972 s 85 \(1\)](#)

Apologies had been received from Cllr P Bolton and Cllr A Kingston-James.

1030 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 | 2021 | Stayed in the room, spoke and voted |
| Cllr T Venner | All | SWaT Councillor | 2021 | Stayed in the room, spoke and voted |

DISPENSATIONS [Localism Act 2011](#)

There were no dispensations.

- 1031 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2021 - *MINUTES TO BE AGREED BY COUNCILLORS WHO WERE IN ATTENDANCE*

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer
Agreed with all in favour.

Seconded: Cllr T Bloomfield

- 1032 TO ADJOURN The Meeting for Public Inclusion [Standing Order No 3e](#)

There were no members of the public present.

- 1033 FINANCE

- 1033.1 *To approve Urgent payments for February 2021*

Payments 1-6 on the Payments List, totalling £46,239.89 and including Staff Wages for March 2021. The Deputy Clerk told the Meeting that item 6 was a cheque cashed to pay traders for the electricity consumed for the Christmas lights. It had been listed as cheque payments on the previous payment list but would have to be paid in cash and the previous payment approval cancelled.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer
Approved with all in favour.

Seconded: Cllr T Bloomfield

- 1033.2 *To approve payments under £1,000*

Payments 7-17 on the Payments List, totalling £1,814.73.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer
Approved with all in favour.

Seconded: Cllr M Palmer

- 1033.3 *To recommend to Full Council payments over £1,000*

Payments 18-21 on the Payments List, totalling £21,473.33. In response to a query from Cllr Lawton Bryan Howe told the meeting that the insurance payment covered all Council's insurance including buildings, vehicles, etc. for a full year.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer
Approved with all in favour.

Seconded: Cllr M Palmer

- 1033.4 *To approve Regular Payments for February 2021*

Payments 1-15, totalling £3,095.14.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr A Lawton**
Approved with all in favour.

1033.5 *To approve the Wages for March 2021*

Wages had been approved under item 1033.1.

1033.6 *To receive the Income Report for February 2021*

Income reported totalled £35, 857.25. The Committee acknowledged the Report.

1034 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT REGARDING BANK RECONCILIATIONS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED FEBRUARY 2021

Cllr Palmer reported that the bank reconciliations had been carried out and would be signed before the Full Council Meeting at the end of March.

1035 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT REGARDING THE "ACTIONS LOG"

The Actions Log had been circulated before the Meeting. The Clerk said she had re-assigned to other personnel any outstanding actions in the name of the previous Finance Assistant. Cllr C Palmer requested that in future the Actions Log be presented in pdf form which would make it easier for Councillors to read or download.

1036 TO CONSIDER A GRANT APPLICATION FROM MINEHEAD MUSEUM

Councillors had seen the Grant application from Minehead Museum and accompanying documents. Councillors were in agreement that helping Minehead Museum was a worthy cause. However, several Councillors observed that the application was not for a specified project and appeared to be for help with running costs. This did not fulfil the criteria for an MTC Small Grant. Cllr C Palmer felt that it would be more appropriate to help the Museum by means of an SLA.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr Malin**

Agreed with all in favour to refuse Minehead Museum's application for a Small Grant but suggest that Minehead Museum has a discussion with Council to find a way forward for MTC to help with the Museum's running costs.

1037 TO DISCUSS A SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT WITH THE WEST SOMERSET ADVICE BUREAU

The Clerk said the proposed SLA with West Somerset Advice Bureau had been pending since 2020, following its unsuccessful grant application, refused because it did not fit with the Small Grants policy. She told the Committee that she had held a Meeting with the CEO and Trustees of the Advice Bureau and the Chairs of the Amenities & Environment and Finance & Staffing Committees. The WSAB had sent through their paperwork, which Councillors had been able to see, including a presentation. Since the lockdown last March the Bureau had had to re-design its service from mainly face-to-face contact with users to communication by telephone, webchat, email and letters. Poor connectivity had added

to concerns that people who needed their services had slipped through the net and weren't being reached. The main priority once lockdown was eased was getting their office opened and reinstating face-to-face contact. It would be important to retain the physical presence. A template SLA was included with the paperwork but there were perhaps other ways in which MTC could help, apart from purely financial ones, eg offering a referral service and possibly through the use of the Summerland Room.

In reply to a question from Cllr Malin she told the Committee that WSAB still get funding from SCC and SWaT. There was also some funding from HPC which funds a housing worker. The Clerk confirmed to Cllr Malin that she could go back to WSAB and ask for further information about their financial position. In response to questions from Cllr Lawton the Clerk said that the WSAB was also having conversations with Watchet Town Council and Williton Parish Council to develop SLAs.

After discussion Cllr C Palmer said it was clear no decision could be made at the present Meeting and he would propose deferring further discussion to the next Meeting when hopefully there would be more information available about the income, outgoings and projected spending of the WSAB.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr T Bloomfield

Agreed with all in favour that any decision about ways Council can help WSAB be deferred to the next Meeting when further information about the Bureau's finances would be available.

1038 TO AGREE THE 2021/2022 SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT BETWEEN MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL AND MINEHEAD YOUTH CLUB

The Deputy Clerk said the proposed SLA would be for a 3-year period from 2021 to 2024. Previously they had been rolling one-year SLAs. Cllr Bloomfield said she was happy to support this because Minehead Youth Club had proved invaluable to the younger generation in Minehead with their outreach service plus social media platforms and had done a fantastic job in a really difficult year. They also did a fantastic job for youngsters in normal times down at Minehead Eye.

In response to a question from Cllr Malin the Deputy Clerk said MTC had a budget to contribute £5,000 again this year, although the Youth Club had asked for £6,000. He was unsure whether SCC contributed but would be able to find this out. Cllr Lawton thought it would be preferable to give a longer-term promise to the Youth Club rather than for one year. The Deputy Clerk said it was possible to offer an SLA which would run into the next Council term. Cllr M Palmer gave the Committee a brief summary of the multiple providers from where the Youth Club's funding was sourced, which included SCC.

The Deputy Clerk reminded the Committee that MTC had upgraded the tennis courts and MUGA and the Youth Club was in talks with Colin Johnson about using these facilities. They would be supporting MTC by giving back money in income.

Proposed: Cllr Bloomfield

Seconded: Cllr M Palmer

Agreed with all in favour to recommend to Full Council that MTC enter into a Service Level Agreement with Minehead Youth Club for a 3-year term, contributing £6,000 per annum

The Deputy Clerk said he would ask Paul Matcham from the Youth Club to come and talk to Full Council about the recommendation.

1039 TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE ENHANCEMENT OF PLAY EQUIPMENT AT CROSS FARM PARK AND KING GEORGE V PLAYING FIELD WITH S106 FUNDS

Cllr Bloomfield had been made aware of S106 funds which needed using otherwise they would revert to the developer. They would need to be awarded by 6 January 2022 and arose from the Ellicombe build, to be used for community sports and recreation. Cllr Bloomfield said there were persistent problems with the roundabout at Cross Farm Park and the area could do with some benches. King George V Playing Field had very little play equipment – a swing, a slide, some “pencils” and a wobble board and the area needed enhancement, particularly as it was used by the nursery and she suggested more sensory equipment for younger children. She asked for the Committee’s agreement to survey this and present a report on both play areas, working alongside the Amenities Team. The Deputy Clerk reminded the Committee that S106 funds could not be used for refurbishment or like-for-like replacement of equipment – it had to be in addition to what was there. The amount available was £41,124.97. Cllr Malin said it was common sense to spend this, particularly on King George Playing Field rather than giving it back to the developer. Cllr Bloomfield told the Committee it was not essential to match fund the proposals, although this may help. Cllr C Palmer thought Council could contribute time and labour to the proposition. He said no vote was necessary and Cllr Bloomfield said she would move on with the report.

1040 TO DISCUSS THE FINANCIAL APPRAISAL REPORT AND FORWARD PLAN AND VISION FOR THE COUNCIL

See Minute 1041.

1041 TO REVIEW THE TOP TEN PRIORITIES FOR 2021

The Deputy Clerk said he would like Item 1040 and 1041 to be discussed as one item as they were essentially the same. A new Clerk and Deputy Clerk would need to know what Council was thinking and planning. He suggested a meeting in the Community Centre as soon as physical meetings were permitted for a general discussion with all Councillors. Cllr C Palmer said he would encourage residents to contribute their ideas for what this Council should prioritise over the next few years and he wanted to see them joining in with the discussion.

Cllr Venner was admitted to the Meeting at 8.20 pm.

Cllr Malin suggested the ideal vehicle for this discussion was the Annual Town Meeting. Cllr Bloomfield hoped that, alongside the purchase of additional land for the Cemetery, Council could include in its priorities suggested improvements to the existing Cemetery. The Deputy Clerk said this was an example of why Council needed to have a longer-term rolling plan, say over 3 years. He agreed that the public should have its say on where it wanted to see improvements and Cllr Bloomfield suggested setting up a Survey Monkey. The Deputy Clerk said it would be necessary to let residents know what budget was available and what projects Council was able to consider.

Cllr C Palmer said these two items would be deferred for discussion at a later stage.

1042 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer
Agreed with all in favour.

Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield

The Public Meeting ended at 20.26 pm.