

MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 21 August 2018 at 7.30 pm

at the Baptist Church Hall, Park Street, Minehead

Present:

Mayor: Cllr N Hercock

Councillors: Cllr P Bolton, Cllr L Culverhouse, Cllr R Dinnick, Cllr G Everett, Cllr O Harvey, Cllr A Kingston-James*, Cllr J Malin, Cllr A Parbrook, Cllr J Parbrook*, Cllr S Slade, Cllr L Smith, Cllr R Thomas*, Cllr T Venner*

(* denotes WSC Councillor)

Members of the Public

Cllr A Hadley *

26 members of the public

1 member of the press

Officers in Attendance:

Mr B Howe (Acting Clerk)

Mr A Giles (Acting Responsible Financial Officer)

Minute Taker (Mrs J Notley)

Mr Howe said that the meeting was being digitally recorded and asked that no filming should be made of the public in attendance. He apologised that it had not been possible to engage a sign language interpreter for the meeting and asked people, when speaking, to face the member of the public who had hearing difficulty. Mr Howe reminded the public that the only people permitted to speak were those who had asked in advance to do so. He said he had brought two microphones for the use of councillors to enable the public to hear what was being discussed

He said that there was a change to the Agenda and **Item 15** on the Agenda (**Committee Structure**) would be moved to **Item 5a**. At the end of the meeting Council would discuss Staffing Issues in camera (**Item 17**) because the discussion would involve personal details of staff which could not be aired in public

912. Apologies for absence LGA 1972 s 85 (1)

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Miele and M Smith

913. 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

<u>Member</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Speak/ Vote</u>	
Cllr P Bolton	8	Personal	2018	Yes	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr O Harvey	5	Personal	2018	Yes	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr A Kingston-James	All	WSC Councillor	2018	Yes	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr J Parbrook	All	WSC Councillor	2018	Yes	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr S Slade	5	Personal	2018	No	Stayed in the room
Cllr R Thomas	All	WSC Councillor	2018	Yes	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr T Venner	All	WSC Councillor	2018	Yes	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted

Cllr Harvey said that as he was an electrical contractor he had a potential conflict of interest in Item 5 on the Agenda but he wished to state that he had no intention whatsoever of undertaking any electrical work for the Council

(i) Dispensations In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members

None

914. To approve the Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting on 6 August 2018 and the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 24 July 2018 and for the Chair of Finance and Mayor/Chairman of the Town Council to sign them as a true and correct record LGA 1972, Sch12 para41 (1)

Proposed: Cllr Kingston-James Seconded: Cllr Bolton

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 24 July 2018 be signed as a true and correct record

Cllr Dinnick asked why the Finance Committee minutes were being approved at a Full Council meeting and Mr Howe told him this was the correct procedure and will be followed for future meetings

Proposed: Cllr A Parbrook Seconded: Cllr Everett

RESOLVED with 9 in favour and 5 abstentions (councillors absent) that the Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 6 August 2018 be signed as a true and correct record

915. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor said he had attended the Minehead Summer Festival on 4 and 5 August and had presented medals to winners in the Thundercats and jetski races. It had been an excellent weekend with a good turn out

The Deputy Mayor, Cllr Everett, said she had represented Council at the Minehead Flower Show at West Somerset College. She had been warmly welcomed to a lovely afternoon and said the flowers were magnificent. She thanked Derek Blay and his Committee for the invitation to present the prizes.

Cllr Everett added that, with the centenary of the armistice in mind, she had sourced a six foot, perspex "Tommy" figure which could be erected in flower beds in The Avenue then moved to the War Memorial after Remembrance Day. She would be asking council to agree to purchase this

916a. Committee Structure

To discuss and agree the recommendations in changes to the committee structure, Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.

It was proposed that council go back to the standard NALC recommended Financial Regulations and Standing Orders and build on those. Mr Howe said he was asking councillors to agree to the proposed committee structure which would see Full Council at the top with two main committees with eight councillors on each – the Environment and Amenities Committee and the Finances, Staffing and General Purposes Committee and then also the Planning Committee. This would mean three sub-committees under Full Council and each committee would meet every month. Minutes of all the committees would be agreed at the Full Council meeting. Below that would be created advisory committees, which would consist of selected people from councillors and including interested parties and outside persons such as Graham Sizer of the BID as an advisory organisation. Mr Giles said the structure must be supported by a detailed scheme of delegations so it makes it clear what powers stay with Full Council and what powers are delegated to each committee. Mr Howe and Mr Giles said they were asking councillors to agree both the structure and delegations. This would make it clear for all to understand where decisions are made and that ultimate power rests with Full Council.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr J Parbrook

RESOLVED with all in favour that council agrees the proposed new committee structure, Financial Regulations and Standing Orders

Cllr Venner wanted a copy of the new Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and Mr Howe said all councillors would receive copies

916b. Recommendations from the Finance Committee

To discuss and consider the recommendations from the Finance Committee meeting on held on 6 August 2018

- **Audit reports:** Recommended that all points in the auditor's report will be addressed in the modernisation plan.

Cllr Venner welcomed the audit report issued in May and that it had been recognised and understood by all councillors and that all points will be addressed in the modernisation plan. However he wanted to make it clear that he intended to object to the audit for 2017/18. He had already discussed his reasons with Mr Howe and Mr Giles, which were that he considered Minehead Town Council had breached its Standing Orders and Financial Regulations last year and had grave concerns Council could not move forward. Cllr Venner said all would become clear in due course. Mr Giles said he hoped that any issues would have been picked up in the modernisation plan. Cllr Malin said he would be joining Cllr Venner in that objection

- **Enhancement of central island in the parade:** Recommended that the Town Council become partners with the 'Minehead BID' organisation and fund the electrical supply at the parade at £6,789 plus VAT with 'Minehead BID' contributing £3,000 towards the work

Cllr A Parbrook said he recommended this particular proposal as it was a golden opportunity for Council to go forward and a wonderful opportunity for Minehead if Council entered into a partnership with Minehead BID

Proposed: Cllr A Parbrook

Seconded: Cllr P Bolton

- **RESOLVED** with all in favour that Minehead Town Council partner Minehead BID and fund the electrical supply at the parade at £6,789 plus VAT with 'Minehead BID' contributing £3,000 towards the work
- **Grants:** to approve grants to the Minehead Museum for £420 and the Minehead Male Voice Choir £500

Proposed: Cllr Dinnick

Seconded: Cllr Kingston-James

RESOLVED with all in favour that Council approve grants to the Minehead Museum of £420 and the Minehead Male Voice Choir of £500

- **Contract for litter and dog waste:** Recommended to retrospectively agree the contract

Cllr Venner said he had brought this up as the Finance Committee meeting was the first time Council had been informed that £13,000 has been spent on a contract for removal of litter and dog waste. Was this best value? Mr Howe said the contract had been signed by the clerk for the full year but he could see no competitive quotes. He and Mr Giles had met the contractor and were satisfied the contract was value for money. Cllr Venner agreed with the clearance of litter and dog waste but objected to not having been told about the contract. Mr Howe said Council would know about everything from now on as all payments would come to Council. In future all contracts would be signed by the council not the clerk. Cllr Harvey said this was something that happened in the past, does need looking into but all councillors were here and all collectively responsible for it. Cllr Venner disagreed.

Proposed: Cllr J Parbrook

Seconded: Cllr A Parbrook

RESOLVED with 8 in favour, 3 against and 3 abstentions that Council retrospectively agree the litter and dog waste removal contract

A member of the public wanted to make those present aware that West Somerset Council showed a cost of £23.52 for each individual clean-up of dog mess in the area. He collected 500 a month which would represent a cost of £11,760 per month which over 5 years would be £705,000. Mr Howe thanked him for his service and said he could speak to the WSC about it.

- **Councillors Allowances:** The clerk to make recommendations
Mr Howe recommended that councillors' allowances – probably £50-£100 per councillor - should be implemented from next April, to include travelling expenses and out of pocket expenses. Cllr Venner suggested this should happen next May, after the next election. Councillors were happy with this.
- **IT Upgrades:** To discuss the report
Mr Howe said he had put forward a proposal to use AR Computing to implement the upgrades of IT equipment at a cost of £3,500. He requested a waiver of Financial Regulations, meaning three quotes did not have to be obtained. AR Systems knew the office requirements and are the preferred supplier. Most of the cost would come from the flood insurance claim

- **Public Address System:** Mr Howe said the sound system he had brought in was his own and he would be requesting £500 to purchase a similar one for the Council to use at meetings, using a microphone on each table
- **Training:** Mr Howe had organised training for five councillors and the notetaker

Proposed: Cllr Malin Seconded: Cllr Bolton

RESOLVED with all in favour that Financial Regulations should be waived so far as upgrading the IT systems were concerned

Proposed: Cllr Dinnick Seconded: Cllr Thomas

RESOLVED with all in favour that Council approves Mr Howe's proposals for Councillors Allowances, IT Upgrades, Public Address System and Training

917. Boundary Commission Consultation – Cllr J Parbrook

To agree West Somerset Council's recommendations regarding the Warding Arrangements for Minehead Town Council

Cllr J Parbrook had circulated her précis of the West Somerset Council Report on the Local Government Boundary Commission for England Review which is happening in response to the merger of WSC and TDBC. All residents could make representations with the consultation period ending on 27 August. She explained the various proposed warding arrangements. The Commission have proposed having 59 councillors for the new council. West Somerset Council have proposed that under the new warding arrangements Town Council wards should be coterminous with those proposed for the District Council in Minehead because elections for both are usually held at the same time and that the names of wards should be the same for both.

Recommendations

1. Minehead Town Council accepts the warding arrangements of West Somerset Council as submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in their response to the public consultation.
2. Minehead Town Council endorses the change of name from "Minehead South" to "Periton & Woodcombe".
3. Minehead Town Council propose that the distribution of Town Councillors should be: Alcombe – 4, Minehead Central – 5, Minehead North – 4 & Periton & Woodcombe (formerly Minehead South) – 3

Cllr Slade said she thought the proposal to change the name of Minehead South to Periton & Woodcombe was pointless and purely cosmetic. She proposed an

amendment to the proposal to say that we accept this Report, apart from the change of name, but that we, as a Council, will be asking the Boundary Commission to look, in the future, at de-warding Minehead to bring us not only into line with other towns and parishes in West Somerset but also into the present rather than prolonging an outdated and antiquated system

She urged members of the public to contact the Boundary Commission direct if they agreed with this proposal.

RESOLVED with 7 for and 5 against that Minehead Town Council accepts this Report, apart from the change of name, but that it will be asking the Boundary Commission to look, in the future, at de-warding Minehead to bring it not only into line with other towns and parishes in West Somerset but also into the present rather than prolonging an outdated and antiquated system

918. Council Reports:

Somerset County Council: There was no Somerset County Council report as Cllr Chilcott was unable to attend and had sent her apologies

West Somerset Council: Cllr Andy Hadley of West Somerset Council said his was a limited report because it was the holiday season and not a lot had happened in the last month. Phase 1 of the District Council's transformation recruitment process was nearly completed with all applicants shortly finding out whether they were successful and phase 2 had just begun and was moving forward quickly. The District Council DC had just voted in favour of its proposals for the new warding arrangements and the decision would be made by the Boundary Commission itself. The Local Government Ombudsman had produced its annual report on complaints received regarding district councils, of which there were 5 in Somerset. West Somerset was the only district council which had received no complaints to the Ombudsman this year. Cllr Hadley said this was a testament to how the staff there were working very hard and deserved our thanks

919. Christmas Festivities – Bill Howard

Bill Howard introduced himself as part of the Old Hospital Project and the team that is driving forward with Minehead Connect there. He said after last year's disappointing Christmas celebrations he thought it would be a good idea to get people together to make sure they were better this year. A group of people came together to try and pull together various community groups in the town to provide resources for fund-raising and organising celebrations. Two days of festivities would be put together starting on 30 November with the Christmas lights switch-on and a raft of entertainment for younger people all down The Avenue. A great deal of effort was being put into it

920. Adjournment of Meeting for Public Inclusion in accordance with Standing Order No.1c Subject to standing order 1(c), members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business on the agenda

Two members of the public had asked to speak. Mr Mandley asked a number of questions about the cleaning of the public toilets which the Temporary Clerk answered. Mrs Lawson asked questions about payments of Human Resources consultancy fees and legal expenses in 2017/2018, and names of councillors who have received personal payments 2015/18. The Temporary Clerk answered the first two questions but said he could not answer the third as this would have to be a Freedom of Information request

921. Town Council's Priorities. To start the debate in creating the Council's top five priorities

Mr Giles explained that the priorities for the Council need to be set out for drawing up a longer term Financial Plan and setting the precept in the autumn. They also linked in to a source of funding gained through the planning process. Planners negotiate funds from developers where proposed developments put stress on services provided in the town. It will help to gain certain things for the town if planners know what is needed and can negotiate for these. The Planning Officer and probably Funding Officer are willing to come and explain process to councillors and enable the Council to establish priorities. He would like to set this meeting up

Proposed: Cllr J Parbrook

Seconded: Cllr Thomas

RESOLVED with all in favour that Mr Giles arrange a meeting with the Planning Officer and/or Funding Officer

922. Invoices for Payment over £1,000 and Direct Debits, BACS and Manual Payments for August 2018 - any invoice with an amount over £1,000 shall be presented to Full Council

Recommendation: A schedule of payments shall be presented to Council. If the schedule is in order it shall be proposed, seconded and authorised by resolution of the Council

Payee	Amount £	
Best Connection	1,153.80	Temp Grounds Staff
Coomber Security Systems Ltd	2,284.20	Replace cameras and intruder alarm
A Giles	2,953.50	Temp Finance Officer June and July
LBS Worldwide	1,714.47	Small tools, hoses, compost etc
Somerset County Council Pension Fund	<u>1,211.91</u>	Pension contributions for August
Total	<u>9,317.88</u>	

Cllr Venner queried a payment for an agency worker and said councillors should know exactly who worked for Minehead Town Council. Cllr J Parbrook told councillors the agency worker was supplied for two weeks until a properly advertised temporary vacancy was filled for an amenities team member. Mr Giles said Cllr Venner could be told the name of the temporary worker after the meeting

Proposed: Cllr J Parbrook

Seconded: Cllr A Parbrook

RESOLVED with 13 in favour and 1 abstention that the schedule of payments is authorised by Council

923. Public Toilets:

- To discuss the cleaning arrangements after 28 September 2018.
- To agree to sign the legal documents regarding freehold and lease of toilets at Blenheim Gardens, Summerland Place, Quay West and Warren Road, from West Somerset District Council.

Mr Howe said that the company presently cleaning all the toilets would finish at noon on 28 September. He initially intended to put the cleaning contract immediately out to tender but had changed his mind. The winter season started on 1 October and frequency of cleaning, and opening and closing of toilets had yet to be decided. Summerland Place toilets would probably be refurbished within the next six months and would not need cleaning over that time and hopefully soon leases and freeholds for the all the different toilets would be signed. He suggested that while decisions were made about usage, cleaning and renovation he recommended Council give him authority to put in place temporary measures. Cllr J Parbrook said she was not in favour of using current Council staff to look after the toilets as they were mainly trained horticulturists but not trained toilet cleaners; also tenders should be advertised for by next April at the latest and preferably sooner. Cllr Dinnick was against taking on extra staff and preferred a short-term contract arrangement

Proposed: Cllr Malin

Seconded: Cllr Bolton

RESOLVED with all in favour that the Temporary Clerk should arrange temporary cleaning and opening/closing for six months

Mr Howe said that, if agreed by councillors, Council will to be signing legal documents concerning the toilets: the freehold of Summerland Place toilets will be bought for £1.00 and also the two blocks in Blenheim Gardens; the Warren Road toilets will be taken on a three year lease and the Quay West toilets will be on a five year lease. Cllr J Parbrook explained that Cllr Trollope-Bellew had given her the £3.00 necessary to purchase the three blocks of toilets but there had, in the past, been uncertainty about the fate of the Quay West toilets. There had been a thought that West Somerset Council may decide to sell Quay West car park for flats. The arrangement, which would have to be clarified, was that should the toilets at Quay West be demolished WSC would rebuild them elsewhere nearby and give MTC the freehold. Cllr Parbrook added that two or three car parking spaces were initially to be included with Summerland Place toilets but WSC had reneged on this arrangement. This would have broadened the use of that building

Mr Howe said that Warren Road toilets produced an income of about £4,000 per year to subsidise cost of running them. He said that Council had run all the toilets for two years but councillors now needed to make a decision how to go ahead with the toilets. Cllr L Smith said agreements should be checked carefully to make sure nothing had changed in the two years council had been running them. Cllr Venner thought council should take on the freehold of Summerland Place toilets and make them excellent quality, maybe even charging for them, but had doubts about the others. He pointed out that toilets had been funded from reserves for the past two years but would now cause the precept to be raised

Mr Howe said looking back through the minutes council had agreed to take on the toilets and it would affect the public should the toilets be closed

Cllr Venner proposed an amendment that Minehead Town Council should proceed with the purchase of Summerland Place toilets and suspend any decision on the other blocks for six months

Seconded: Cllr Malin Votes: in favour 6, against 7
The amendment fell

Proposed: Cllr Dinnick Seconded: Cllr A Parbrook
RESOLVED with 8 in favour and 6 against that Council should sign the legal documents regarding freehold and lease of toilets at Blenheim Gardens, Summerland Place, Quay West and Warren Road, from West Somerset District Council

924. Community Building Project

Colin Johnson to clarify the following:

- How the project is funded, and where the grants will be held and released.
- How the building project is managed
- Ownership of the building and ongoing maintenance and running costs budgets
- Other options on the site regarding Council offices/public toilets.

Clerk to recommend that the £150,000 that was recommended as a Town Council contribution to the scheme be approved

Bryan Howe outlined the background of the project. He said there were amendments to be submitted to the planning permission. There was a possibility that Council could use an existing building on the plan to convert to offices and use what is presently a toilet for storage purposes. This could cost in the region of £100,000. Cllr L Smith brought up the covenant imposed by the Luttrell family on the use of the land and Mr Howe said this was presently being investigated. Colin Johnson, the fundraiser for the project, of SASP attended to answer councillors' questions. Cllr Venner queried the cost of the project to the ratepayers of Minehead and said that staffing and administration would be the biggest cost and that the Council and the ratepayers of Minehead would be paying for the Jean Parbrook Olympic Stadium. He was asked to withdraw the comment and refused. Mr Howe said the building could bring in a lot of money and Council should embrace it. Mr Giles said that the building will cost around £800,000 and Minehead Town Council will get the building for perhaps a quarter of that price but will address several issues and in the long term may save money. He asked councillors to look at the package as a whole and recognise there are several issues which need attention at Irnham Road and the project would address all of these. Cllr Parbrook said Cllr Venner had had plenty of opportunity to see the figures and it was outrageous to be flippant about such an excellent project which had happened after a lot of hard work

Proposed: Cllr Kingston-James

Seconded: Cllr L Smith

RESOLVED with all in favour that the £150,000 that was recommended as a Town Council contribution to the scheme be approved

Councillors were in favour of moving forward and looking at the possibility of putting offices with the Community Building

925. Heating and Air Conditioning in Offices

The clerk to report on water damage and replacement costs

Mr Howe proposed leaving this item as it was an ongoing insurance claim situation

926. To resolve to exclude members of the press and public - To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted [Public Bodies \[Admission to Meetings\] Act 1960](#)

Proposed: Cllr Venner

Seconded: Cllr Thomas

RESOLVED with all in favour that the meeting be closed and the next item dealt with in camera

927. Staffing Issues

Council discussed Staffing Issues in camera

