



# MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 7.30 PM Remote Virtual Meeting via Zoom

*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**

**Chair:** Cllr P Bolton\* (Mayor)

**Councillors Present:** Cllr T Bloomfield, Cllr O Harvey, Cllr A Kingston-James (Deputy Mayor), Cllr A Lawton, Cllr C Palmer\*, Cllr M Palmer, Cllr T Venner\*

**Councillors in Attendance:** Cllr C Lawrence\*\*  
Cllr M Chilcott\*\*  
Cllr B Allen\*

*(\*denotes Somerset West and Taunton "SWaT" Councillor  
\*\*denotes Somerset County Councillor "SCC")*

**Councillors Absent:** Cllr N Hercock, Cllr H Rose

**Officers in Attendance:** Ms S Rawle (Clerk)  
Mr B Howe (Deputy Clerk)  
Mrs J Notley (Note-taker)

**Members of the Press and Public:** 2 members of the Public  
0 members of the Press

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the Meeting as host on Zoom and told the Meeting that all participants would be kept muted until they wished to speak. He welcomed members of the public watching on Facebook.

1006 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [LGA 1972 s 85 \(1\)](#)

Apologies had been received from Cllr J Malin.

1007 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN RESPECT OF ANY AGENDA ITEMS (Localism Act 2011)

Member	Item	Interest	Time Period	Speak/Vote
CLlr P Bolton	All	SWaT Councillor	2021	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
CLlr A Kingston-James	1013.1 1015.2	Personal	22.02.2021	Stayed in the room; did not speak or vote
CLlr C Palmer	All	SWaT Councillor SWaT Planning Cttee	2021 2021	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
CLlr T Venner	All All	SWaT Councillor Director of Minehead BID	2021	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted

DISPENSATIONS (Localism Act 2011)

No-one had requested any dispensations.

1008 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM:

- **Somerset County Council (“SCC”)**

CLlr Christine Lawrence wanted to give her sincere thanks to all the volunteers helping with COVID vaccinations and said 172,000 people in Somerset had had their first vaccination, with 10,000 having had the second dose.

CLlr Lawrence stressed the value of County Councillors and Town Councillors being able to meet and talk. She asked if those listening would consider becoming digital customer volunteers. They would support testing of online services looking at digital solutions, to ensure that members of the community can understand and are able to use these applications. Volunteers were needed in every area of the county. Details could be found on-line at [volunteer@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:volunteer@somerset.gov.uk).

CLlr Lawrence said she would have to leave the Meeting to attend a Parish Council Meeting.

- **Somerset West and Taunton Council (“SWaT”)**

CLlr Allen apologised for a short attendance as he had another Meeting also to attend. He reiterated CLlr Lawrence’s thanks to all the COVID vaccination volunteers.

He said a new Youth Employment Hub would be opening at Minehead Eye and was still hopeful that Minehead would be connected to the main railway line via a link being negotiated between Bishops Lydeard and Taunton.

SWaT business grants were continuing, and he urged local business owners to find all the necessary information on the SWaT website and to register their business. SWaT would then come to businesses with what grants were available to them.

Cllr Allen was pleased to report that new ornamental trees were presently being planted in The Parks to bring them back up to standard and there was a specific tree-planting line in the Budget.

Cllr Allen asked that anyone who wanted to bid for the disused toilets in The Parks should approach Cllr Marcus Kravis. If no-one does so the District Council will be looking to demolish the toilet block.

*Cllr Allen left at 7.40 pm.*

- **Somerset County Council (“SCC”)**

Cllr Chilcott had been able to join the Meeting following technical issues.

She reported that SCC was working with bus operators to make it as easy as possible for residents to get to appointments and were trying to lift the present restrictions on bus passes.

The Census would take place on 21 March, the first one to be carried out predominantly on-line.

The SCC Budget had been delivered with cross-party support and included capital spending for specialist education provision in West Somerset and funding to keep the carbon footprint down of Minehead Library after the refurbishment.

The member of staff responsible for the Parking Review was currently covering other roles and Cllr Chilcott apologised for the delay in the Review.

- **Police**

Councillors had seen the Police Report for February 2021. The Mayor read out the crime statistics for the benefit of members of the public and those present on Facebook.

- **Councillors attending Meetings on behalf of Minehead Town Council (“MTC”)**

Cllr Lawton said she had attended three Minehead BID Meetings in the previous month.

On 9 February she had been to the Public Realm Meeting, which had centred on an update on Plastic-Free Minehead as it was getting close to having blue flag status for Minehead beach, the future budget and projects. Bus shelters in the town would hopefully be upgraded and there was discussion about seagulls – action would be taken to discourage nesting.

On 16 February she had attended two Meetings – a Board Meeting and a presentation from a Defra-funded project looking at local perspective on experience of Market Towns and Rural Communities. Eight towns had been selected and Minehead was one of four in the south and research was ongoing. Events planned

included Thundercats, which were expected to come in 2021, and also a large new project to launch a running festival in mid-November which would hopefully become an annual event. Plans were still going ahead with a Minehead Gift Card and a Town Guide.

- **Advisory and Working Groups**

None.

1009 TO ADJOURN THE MEETING FOR PUBLIC INCLUSION [Standing Order No 3e](#)

No-one had asked to speak.

1010 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Bolton said he unfortunately had to report that Cllr B Mandley and Cllr D Prosser had tendered their resignations with immediate effect, for personal reasons. He thanked them for their work over the previous eighteen months and wished them well for the future. He also asked Councillors, when voting, to use the "hands up" facility for ease of counting votes.

1011 TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 26 JANUARY 2021 – *MINUTES TO BE AGREED BY COUNCILLORS WHO WERE IN ATTENDANCE*

**Proposed: Cllr Bolton**                      **Seconded: Cllr Kingston-James**  
**Agreed** with all who had attended in favour.

1012 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, FINANCE & STAFFING AND AMENITIES & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD IN FEBRUARY

Cllr Bolton said that in future Committees would agree their own Minutes. Councillors had seen all the draft Minutes, which were noted.

1013 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2021 - *TO RATIFY THAT ALL HAS BEEN AGREED*

1013.1 *To agree the revised Cemetery Regulations and a 3% rise in Cemetery Fees from 1 April 2021*

**Proposed: Cllr C Palmer**                      **Seconded: Cllr Venner**  
**Agreed** with 7 in favour and 1 abstention that Council accept the Finance & Staffing Committee's recommendation to accept revised Cemetery Regulations and a 3% rise in Cemetery fees.

1014 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AMENITIES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2021 - *TO RATIFY THAT ALL HAS BEEN AGREED*

1014.1 *To agree and adopt the amended MTC Plastic-Free Motion*

The Clerk said that Plastic-Free Minehead was a whisker away from achieving plastic-free status for Minehead but MTC's Plastic-Free Motion needed to be minuted word for word in Full Council Minutes. The motion read:

- " 1 MTC will lead by example and remove single use plastic items from its premises and operations.
- 2 MTC will encourage plastic-free initiatives in the area, promoting the campaign and supporting events.
- 3 Cllr O Harvey and Cllr A Kingston-James are representatives of Minehead Town Council to sit on the Plastic-Free Minehead Community Steering Group."

**Proposed: Cllr Bloomfield**  
**Agreed** with all in favour.

**Seconded: Cllr Venner**

#### 1015 FINANCE MATTERS

##### 1015.1 *To discuss and approve urgent payments for January and February 2021*

Payments numbered 1-5 on the payments list, totalling £55,493.63

**Proposed: Cllr C Palmer**  
**Agreed** with all in favour.

**Seconded: Cllr Lawton**

##### 1015.2 *To discuss and approve payments for January and February 2021 under £1,000*

Payments numbered 6-33 on the payments list, totalling £6,002.17

**Proposed: Cllr C Palmer**  
**Agreed** with 7 in favour and 1 abstention.

**Seconded: Cllr Lawton**

##### 1015.3 *To discuss and approve payments for January and February 2021 over £1,000*

Cllr Palmer proposed acceptance of payments numbered 34, 35 and 37 on the payments list, totalling £8,984.27. He wished to discuss the process for handling item 36 in the confidential part of the Meeting.

**Proposed: Cllr C Palmer**  
**Agreed** with 7 in favour and 1 abstention.

**Seconded: Cllr Venner**

##### 1015.4 *To discuss and approve Regular Payments for January 2021*

Payments numbered 1-24, totalling £6,058.72

Cllr Lawton had queried payments 7-11 and 18. The Deputy Clerk said these had already been paid and were direct debits. They were quarterly payments and he would obtain a breakdown of them and come back to her with more detail.

**Proposed: Cllr C Palmer**  
**Agreed** with all in favour.

**Seconded: Cllr Bolton**

1015.5 *To discuss and approve Income Report for January*

Income totalling £30,469.34

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

**Seconded: Cllr Venner**

1016 TO RECEIVE THE MTC SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

The Deputy Clerk told the Meeting that MTC had never had a Safeguarding Statement. Colin Johnson had pointed out that Council ought to have one in place because it had the MUGA and several play areas. Councillors had seen the proposed Safeguarding Statement which was in a standard form. In response to a question from Cllr Lawton, the Deputy Clerk said the Statement would be displayed on the noticeboards at Irnham Road Recreation Ground. He confirmed to Cllr Venner that it would also be displayed on the Council's website.

**Proposed: Cllr Bolton**

**Seconded: Cllr Kingston-James**

**Agreed** with all in favour that MTC adopts the proposed Safeguarding Statement.

1017 TO DISCUSS A LETTER RECEIVED FROM STOGURSEY PARISH COUNCIL

Councillors had seen a letter from Stogursey Parish Council seeking support in asking for change in how Section 106 settlements are made.

Planning policy in the West Somerset area of SWaT forced Councils to accept S106 settlements by developers, whereas in the Taunton Deane area of SWaT a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was used for dealing with settlements. This was not so restricted. In Stogursey's case a lot of money was available, but it could only be used for children's play provision of which there was an excess. A CIL would enable different work to be carried out in the community.

Stogursey Parish Council was asking for support in lobbying for a change of planning policy at SWaT by lobbying District Councillors and supporting a proposal from the Quantock Vale Councillor, Chris Morgan.

The Deputy Clerk added that CIL monies would be automatically paid to Town/Parish Councils and did not need to be applied for. Cllr C Palmer confirmed there were two separate sets of rules for planning even after two years of the combined Council. Cllr Venner said he would support the recommendation from Stogursey and thought Councils should have more say on how they used monies rather than having the District Council dictating how it should be spent. The trouble was that no-one knew where they were as far as the new Authority was concerned. Cllr Bolton was concerned about smaller parishes losing out on money because they did not have large developments.

**Proposed: Cllr Venner**

**Seconded: Cllr Bolton**

**Agreed** with all in favour that Minehead Town Council sends a letter of support to Stogursey Parish Council.

1018 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE MERGER OF MINEHEAD DEVELOPMENT TRUST AND MINEHEAD COASTAL COMMUNITY TEAM

The Clerk reported that MTC had been contacted by Ray Tew, the Chairman of MCDT about the merger.

There were plans to refresh the Minehead Coastal Community Plan put together in 2016 in which MTC had been a key stakeholder. MTC was still considered as such. The Clerk asked if the present representatives, Cllr M Palmer and Cllr Kingston-James, would be content to carry on. Cllr M Palmer said she had had no communication for the past year but would be happy to continue. Cllr Kingston-James confirmed he was still happy to represent MTC.

Councillors confirmed that lack of communication had been a problem with the groups. Cllr Bolton understood the public considered that the two groups had failed in what they had delivered. He proposed that Minehead Town Council should take on the lead role. Cllr M Palmer agreed and said it was time MTC led rather than followed.

Cllr Lawton there had been a history of unsatisfactory and unsuitable planting on the seafront. Cllr Venner said MTC should have more say in what went on in the town. Cllr Bolton said MTC should take the lead because neither the Council nor the town had been properly represented on the two separate bodies.

**Proposed: Cllr Bolton**

**Seconded: Cllr M Palmer**

That MTC take a lead role in the new merged body and also re-engage with tourism.

The Deputy Clerk suggested that in the past MTC had not been interested in tourism and possibly this should change. Cllr Venner said this was not in the agenda for this Meeting. Tourism could be put on the list of priorities but should not be decided at this point. His main complaint was that no information had been fed back to the Council from the MCCT or the MDT. Cllr Kingston-James said the policy of not being involved with tourism had caused awkwardness when he had been representing MTC on the Coastal Communities Team. Cllr Lawson thought that MTC would be letting residents down if it did not involve itself in how the town was presented – it was not just good for tourists but also for residents. Cllr Venner said MDT had come in and taken on the Tourist Information Centre when MTC stopped funding it; MTC ought to be constructive and be more involved.

**Proposed: Cllr Venner**

**Seconded: Cllr Harvey**

To support the merger between MDT and MCCT but with a caveat that MTC wanted to play a leading role in the new organisation

Cllr M Palmer objected to the new proposal saying Cllr Bolton's proposal was already on the table. After some discussion Cllr Bolton withdrew his proposal.

**Not agreed:** with 4 in favour and 4 against; the Chair's casting vote was against.

1019 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON QUAY WEST PARKING

The report on parking at Quay West had been seen by Councillors and had been discussed at the Amenities and Environment Committee Meeting.

Cllr Venner was concerned that nothing had been done to address the overnight parking of motorhomes between the hours of 6.00 pm and 10.00 am especially as enforcement officers lived outside the area and finished work at 5.00 pm. He suggested writing to thank SCC for a step forward in improving the signage. Cllr Bolton understood that COVID had delayed the parking review, but it should have been completed before COVID had even started and he considered that Traffic Regulation Orders should be used to stop motorhomes stopping anywhere along the seafront area as had been done in many coastal towns. Cllr Venner wanted a proper timetable for the parking review because the matter had been going on for so long and MTC needed certainty that the matter was being dealt with. Cllr Lawton wondered if Council needed to also have a strategy about the Quay West toilets, but the Deputy Clerk said this would need to be dealt with on a later Meeting agenda.

**Proposed: Cllr Venner**

**Seconded: Cllr Kingston-James**

**Agreed** with all in favour that MTC writes to SCC thanking them for the improved signage in the Quay West area but (a) requesting a formal timetable for the parking review including consultation times and (b) asking that SCC considers imposing a Traffic Regulation Order banning motorhomes from parking overnight in the sea front area.

1020 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE REFUND BY MINEHEAD BID OF THE SOCIAL DISTANCE SIGNAGE FUNDED BY MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

The Clerk said she had recently been contacted by Minehead BID concerning the monies contributed by MTC at the beginning of Summer 2020 – a payment of £5,000 from the Community Grant budget. BID had received further Government funding for signage, but covering only the town centre, not The Esplanade, the Harbour or Alcombe. BID is happy to refund the £5,000 as a gesture of goodwill and working in partnership. The Clerk said it had to be agreed by Council whether it wished to accept the refund. Cllr Bolton said Minehead BID had received European funding plus income from SWaT and thought that MTC was only expecting money back if BID had any left over. Cllr Venner hoped that any cash refunded could be used in any future project with BID. Cllr M Palmer said the money should be returned to the COVID budget or, if not needed, a similar emergency budget.

**Proposed: Cllr M Palmer**

**Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield**

**Agreed** with 5 in favour and 3 against that Council accepts the refund of its £5,000 contribution to Minehead BID for COVID signage and restore it to the COVID Emergency Budget (or similar budget if the latter was no longer needed).

1021 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

(Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960)

**Proposed: Cllr Bolton**

**Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield**

**Agreed** with all in favour to conduct the rest of the Meeting *in camera*.

The Public Meeting closed at 9.09 pm.