



# MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 27 APRIL 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 M Kingston-James, Cllr A Lawton, Cllr J Malin, Cllr C Palmer\*, Cllr M Palmer, Cllr H Rose, Cllr T Venner\*

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

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

**Councillors Absent:** Cllr N Hercock

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

**Members of the Press and Public:** 0 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.

1086 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [LGA 1972 s 85 \(1\)](#)

There were no apologies.

1087 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	1095.2 & 1102	Personal	27.04.2021	Stayed in the room; did not speak or vote
Cllr C Palmer	All	SWaT Councillor	2021	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr T Venner	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.

### 1088 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM

- **Somerset County Council (“SCC”)**

Cllr Mandy Chilcott reported that work on the crossing by the Community College was programmed to start on 4 May 2021 and would take 5 weeks. There would be two-way traffic lights during the works and a safe route for pedestrians. The safety order for the crossing in Townsend Road had been completed and the contractor would be asked to fit the work plan into the school holidays.

Cllr Christine Lawrence said the COVID helpline was still in use and had done an amazing job in keeping people safe. It had taken over 13,600 calls, 7,780 of which had been followed up with welfare checks. There had already been 50,000 vaccinations carried out with another 25,000 to be done in the following 2 months. Spark Somerset had named 100 COVID champions throughout the county. She also reported that 2 large flags had been purchased for Somerset Day on 11 May, one to fly at the harbour and the other further round the bay. Local children had been learning a new Somerset song and children’s competitions and prize-givings would also mark the day.

In response to a question from Cllr Malin as to when the work on the barrier for the railway level crossing was going to start and why had it not taken place during lockdown, Cllr Chilcott explained that while the crossing was in Cllr Lawrence’s ward the station was in her own ward. She told the meeting that this was a long piece of work where a long agreement journey had had to take place nationally because this was classed as national infrastructure. Cllr Chilcott said that the work was being managed by the railway who gave regular updates on its progress and said she would be happy to talk to anyone with questions about the process.

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

There was no report this month.

- **Police**

The Mayor read out the statistics from the April Police Report for the benefit of those watching on Facebook.

Cllr Venner asked if it would be possible to obtain conviction rates for the crimes reported. Cllr Bolton said he would ask the Police about this. He was hopeful they would attend future face-to-face meetings and understood police officers were not allowed to attend Zoom meetings.

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

Cllr Lawton had attended one Minehead BID meeting where Ray Tew had given his presentation about the Minehead Coastal Development Team and Lisa from SWaT had given her presentation about the Enterprising Minehead project which links up to MCDT. This was a new initiative going on across the town with the aim of involving as many different agencies as possible. There were updates on the Emergency Town Centre Funding. The Minehead gift card had now launched, the Visitors’ Guide was ready and some businesses were taking up free mentoring sessions with a retail specialist.

- **Advisory and Working Groups**

There had been no meetings.

1089 TO ADJOURN THE MEETING FOR PUBLIC INCLUSION [Standing Order No 3e](#)

No-one had asked to speak.

1090 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Bolton said it had been noted that the town was suffering a lot of vandalism – he said that if anyone saw any vandalism or antisocial behaviour of any kind it was vitally important that people did report each and every occurrence to the Police. The more reports they received, the more back-up they could ask for.

1091 TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 29 MARCH 2021 – *MINUTES TO BE AGREED BY COUNCILLORS WHO WERE IN ATTENDANCE*

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

**Seconded: Cllr A Kingston-James**

1092 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6 APRIL 2021

The Minutes were noted and would be agreed at the next Planning Committee meeting.

1093 TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 MARCH 2021 - *MINUTES TO BE AGREED BY COUNCILLORS WHO WERE IN ATTENDANCE*

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

**Seconded: Cllr Lawton**

1094 TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9 MARCH 2021 - *MINUTES TO BE AGREED BY COUNCILLORS WHO WERE IN ATTENDANCE*

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

**Seconded: Cllr Venner**

1095 FINANCE MATTERS

1095.1 *To approve urgent payments for April 2021*

Four items, totalling £19,026.67.

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

**Seconded: Cllr P Bolton**

1095.2 *To approve payments for April 2021 under £1,000*

Items 5-12 and 18-39 on the Payments List, totalling £6,208.41.

(Cllr T Bloomfield lost connection with the meeting)

**Proposed: Cllr C Palmer**  
**Approved** with 2 abstentions and the rest in favour.

**Seconded: Cllr M Palmer**

1095.3 *To approve payments for April 2021 over £1,000*

Items 13-17 and 40 on the Payments List, totalling £26,780.08.

**Proposed: Cllr C Palmer**                      **Seconded: Cllr A Kingston-James**  
**Approved** with 1 abstention and the rest in favour.

1095.4 *To approve Regular Payments for March 2021*

Items 1-22 on the Regular Payments List, totalling £3,863.73.

Cllr Malin queried what period was covered by the electricity charge of £671.57 for Summerland and Quay West toilets. The Deputy Clerk said he thought it was for a quarter but would check and let Cllr Malin know.

**Proposed: Cllr C Palmer**                      **Seconded: Cllr J Malin**  
**Approved** with 1 abstention and the rest in favour.

1095.5 *To approve payments by Procurement Card for March 2021*

This was the first set of payments by this method.

**Proposed: Cllr C Palmer**                      **Seconded: Cllr Venner**  
**Approved** with 1 abstention and the rest in favour.

1095.6 *To approve Income Report for March 2021*

Income reported of £53,899.70.

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

(Cllr Bloomfield returned to the meeting)

1096 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT REGARDING BANK RECONCILIATIONS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED MARCH 2021

Cllr M Palmer confirmed that the bank reconciliations had been carried out up to the end of March with several months backdated.

1097 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT REGARDING THE "ACTIONS LOG"

The Clerk told the meeting that the Actions Log was for information and noting, and that it was as up to date as it could be from previous meetings.

**Proposed: Cllr Bolton**                      **Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield**  
**Agreed** with all in favour to note the Actions Log.

1098 TO CONSIDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY CODE 2015 – PUBLICATION OF ITEMS OF EXPENDITURE OVER £500

Councillors had seen the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 and the Clerk's summary of it. The Clerk said this requires publication of certain categories of expenditure and some areas in it were relevant to MTC but were not currently publicised. One requirement was the publication of individual payments exceeding £500. This needed to be done quarterly. She recommended that she and the RFO reviewed the requirements and came back to the next Full Council meeting with a format

for publication. The Clerk recommended this as a first step and the first publication would need to be by the beginning of July of data from April to June 2021. This would not be too onerous and would be put on the Council's website. The code was all about transparency and showing where the Council Tax spend went.

Cllr C Palmer wanted quarterly publication to start with and monthly publication later. He said that the legislation came in in 2015 so MTC needed to backdate publication of payments to 2015, publishing all data that Council had not yet done. Cllr Venner agreed that transparency was essential but pointed out that this Council had been elected on 5 May 2019 and could be held responsible only for actions since 2019. He disagreed with publishing data pre-dating the present Council. Cllr C Palmer said this was irrelevant and MTC should publish data going back to 2015. The Deputy Clerk said all personal data would be removed from individual payments.

**Proposed: Cllr Bolton**

**Seconded: Cllr C Palmer**

**Agreed** with all in favour that Council accepted the Clerk's recommendation that she and the RFO review the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code and come back to the next Full Council meeting with a format for publication.

1099 TO RECEIVE DRAFT INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Councillors had seen the draft Report and the Deputy Clerk said it was a good one which gave MTC a clean bill of health. The draft Internal Audit Report was noted as being received.

1100 TO RECEIVE A RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT FROM THE RFO

Councillors had seen the Risk Management Report with its recommendations, which the Deputy Clerk said needed to be noted. He said it needed to be minuted that Councillors had looked at the Report and agreed the recommendations.

**Proposed: Cllr Bolton**

**Seconded: Cllr Venner**

**Agreed** with all in favour that Council accept the Risk Management Report and agree the recommendations in it.

1101 TO CONSIDER SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT WITH WEST SOMERSET ADVICE BUREAU

The Clerk reminded the meeting that at the previous Full Council meeting Councillors had wished to defer a decision about the SLA with West Somerset Advice Bureau until they had more information about the Bureau's financial position. She said Councillors had now seen the Bureau's accounts and also a projected Budget for the current year, along with details about other funding providers. There was a projected loss of approximately £47,000 for the financial year 2021/2022. Cllr A Kingston-James asked if the SLA was to be used to plug the depletion in reserves of the £47,000 and said he was concerned about the large deficit.

The Clerk said the SLA was "to provide advice services for Alcombe and Minehead". Cllr A Kingston-James said there had been funding of £200,000 per annum from SCC to deliver a core advice service across Somerset rather than locally. Both he and Cllr Malin agreed that WSAB gave a wonderful service and Cllr Malin observed that on going through WSAB's accounts it appeared that SCC had withdrawn core funding the previous year and also reduced the local assistance scheme. He said a large sum was spent on salaries and it was the policy of MTC that it did not support salaries. He thought SCC should be contributing its share. Cllr Lawton observed that this was the third SLA request in recent months and wondered whether MTC should set up a criteria system by which it could structure responses and also have a budget for such requests. She did not want to see Council burden residents with future rises in the precept as a result of funding other organisations. Cllr Venner said it would be useful to have requests for funding before MTC's annual budget was set. He considered that any funding should not be for more than the term of this Council.

The Clerk said she had spoken to the Chief Officer of WSAB and made it clear that any grant made should be specifically for the residents of Alcombe and Minehead and that a quarterly report would be expected to back up this requirement with statistics showing the number of residents helped in the town.

Cllr Bloomfield offered, as Council's representative on WSAB, to attend meetings and bring information back to Council.

**Proposed: Cllr Venner**

**Seconded: Cllr Bolton**

**Agreed** with 9 in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention that an SLA should be made with the WSAB in the sum of £2,000 per annum for two years.

- 1102 TO AGREE SUPPORT FOR C.L.O.W.N.S' CHILDREN IN NEED FUNDING APPLICATION AND TO PROVIDE A REFERENCE TO THAT EFFECT

**Proposed: Cllr Malin**

**Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield**

**Agreed** with all in favour that Council send a letter in support of C.L.O.W.N.S' Children in Need funding application.

- 1103 TO RECEIVE THE AMENITIES & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR'S VERBAL REPORT

The Chair had no report to make.

- 1104 TO CONSIDER A SECTION 106 APPLICATION FOR GRINDING RAILS IN THE IRNHAM RECREATION GROUND, NEW PLAY EQUIPMENT FOR KING GEORGE V PLAYING FIELD AND UPDATING PLAY EQUIPMENT AT CROSS FARM PARK

Cllr Bloomfield described proposals to apply for available Section 106 funding for new play equipment in both King George Playing Field and Cross Farm Park. She added that children were using the slate steps on the front of the new Community Building to grind their scooters and skateboards along which was damaging the steps. She was asking for approval to apply for funding which was also include grinding rails, probably to be installed near the toilet block, to encourage children away from damaging the steps.

The Deputy Clerk suggested that if Council applied for £50,000 to fund these schemes it should pledge £10,000, which was in the budget for play areas. It was important to get the application in as soon as possible. Cllr Bloomfield said Council could also pledge labour as an additional contribution towards the application.

**Proposed: Cllr Venner**

**Seconded: Cllr Malin**

**Agreed** with all in favour that power be delegated to Officers and members of the Amenities and Environment Committee to (a) move an application for S106 funding for play equipment and grinding rails forward as soon as possible; (b) ringfence the sum of £10,000 as Council's monetary contribution and (c) pledge a contribution in kind towards the scheme.

- 1105 TO DISCUSS THE CREATION OF A VISION STATEMENT FOR THE COUNCIL AND REVIEW OF THE TOP TEN PRIORITIES

The Mayor said discussion of this item would be deferred to the Annual Meeting.

- 1106 TO AGREE MEETING ARRANGEMENTS AFTER 7 MAY 2021 AND TO RECEIVE ANNUAL RETURN TIMETABLE

The Clerk told the meeting that legislation permitting remote meetings came to an end on 7 May 2021 after which date all meetings would have to be physical meetings. She confirmed that this item included discussion of the final accounts timetable. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk had

discussed the possibility of physical meetings of after 17 May in accordance with Government guidance.

The Annual Return must be made to the external auditor by 13 June. The AGAR would have to be signed off by Full Council. The Clerk suggested meetings should be at the Community Hall after 17 May with social distancing and to continue to stream meetings live to the public.

The Deputy Clerk suggested rolling all May meetings into a Full Council meeting on 25 May. He confirmed that the Annual Meeting of Council would be on 4 May by Zoom.

After much discussion the current Chairs of Finance & Staffing and Amenities & Environment Committees agreed to roll their meetings into a Full Council meeting on 25 May 2021.

**Proposed: Cllr Bolton**

**Seconded: Cllr C Palmer**

Agreed with 1 abstention and the rest in favour that the Finance & Staffing and Amenities & Environment Committee meetings would be incorporated into a Full Council meeting on 25 May 2021.

**Proposed: Cllr Bolton**

**Seconded: Cllr Venner**

**Agreed** with 7 in favour, 1 against and 3 abstentions that the Annual Town Meeting would be held on 18 May 2021 at the Community Building at 6.00 pm.

The Clerk said a risk assessment would need to be carried out before the meetings.

1107 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC  
(Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

**Proposed: Cllr Bolton**

**Seconded: Cllr Malin**

**Agreed** with all in favour to continue the meeting *in camera*.

The Mayor thanked the public watching on Facebook.

The public meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

1108 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

The meeting resumed *in camera* at 9.05pm.

(Cllrs Venner and Harvey left the meeting at 9.05 pm).