



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 27 OCTOBER 2020 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)

Present: Cllr T Bloomfield, Cllr O Harvey, Cllr A Kingston-James (Deputy Mayor), Cllr A Lawton, Cllr J Malin, Cllr C Palmer*, Cllr M Palmer, Cllr D Prosser, Cllr H Rose, Cllr T Venner
*(*denotes Somerset West and Taunton Councillor
**denotes Somerset County Councillor "SCC")*

Councillors Present: Cllr M Chilcott**, Cllr C Lawrence**

Officers in Attendance: Ms Sam 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 Deputy Clerk opened the Meeting as host on Zoom and told the Meeting that all participants would be kept muted until they wished to speak.

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

Apologies had been received from Cllr N Hercock and Cllr B Mandley.

808 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	2020	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr C Palmer	All	SWaT Councillor SWaT Planning Cttee	2020 2020	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr H Rose	Item 16	Pecuniary	2020	Stayed in the room
Cllr T Venner	All	SWaT Councillor	2020	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted

DISPENSATIONS (Localism Act 2011)

No-one had requested any dispensations.

809 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM:

- **Somerset County Council (“SCC”)**

Cllr Mandy Chilcott reported on current COVID-19 statistics for Somerset, which saw numbers of cases rising across the County and were currently 58.2 per 100,000 although case numbers in Minehead had dropped. Work in connection with the pedestrian crossing near the upper School was progressing; it would involve removal of two trees which would be replaced with a maple and a hornbeam. She looked forward to Council’s application for a grant from the Climate Emergency Fund of £1 million. The RAC had confirmed that Somerset and another county were top in the country for the number of miles of highways repaired this year.

Cllr Christine Lawrence reiterated Cllr Chilcott’s reminder about “Space – Hands - Face” as precautions against COVID-19 transmission and reminded the meeting that the 0300 790 6975 COVID helpline was still in use for anyone who needed help. Village agents had picked up 53,499 calls, 51 rough sleepers had been housed and she thanked all those in the community who had done so much to help others. She said 3,074 food parcels had been delivered through SWaT and 150 by local groups. She also thanked Cllr Prosser who had provided lunch packs for children who weren’t able to attend school. Work by the Bridges Department in Alcombe Combe near the sheep dip was on the list to be done but they were running behind schedule.

Cllr Bolton and Cllr Bloomfield thanked Cllr Chilcott in particular for all the PPE supplies which had been donated to the Coronavirus Support Group and helped the volunteers a lot. Cllr Lawton asked about the road closure in Hill Road for four weeks in November. Cllr Lawrence reported that this was to fit a new cattle grid which was a very big job and needed to be left without being driven over or walked on until it was completely finished.

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

There was no report from SWaT for October.

- **Police**

A written Police Report had been received and would be forwarded to Councillors following the meeting.

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

Cllrs Lawton and Venner had attended a Minehead BID meeting the previous week. An application had been made for funds from the Emergency Fund for helping the town centre regeneration after COVID. BID had provided detailed plans, SWaT was happy with the criteria and these had been signed off. The money would be released to BID who would hold the funds; there would be meetings with SWaT every eight

814 TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 OCTOBER 2020 - *MINUTES TO BE AGREED BY COUNCILLORS WHO WERE IN ATTENDANCE*

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer
Agreed with all in favour

Seconded: Cllr M Palmer

815 TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 OCTOBER 2020 - *MINUTES TO BE AGREED BY COUNCILLORS WHO WERE IN ATTENDANCE*

Proposed: Cllr Bloomfield
Agreed with all in favour

Seconded: Cllr M Palmer

816 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 12 OCTOBER 2020 - *TO RATIFY THAT ALL HAS BEEN AGREED*

These were discussed *in camera* under item 20.1.

817 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AMENITIES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 13 OCTOBER 2020 - *TO RATIFY THAT ALL HAS BEEN AGREED*

817.1 *Re the SWaT Carbon Neutral Initiative of the Free Trees offer to local Parish and Town Councils: That Cllr M Palmer liaises with the Amenities Team Manager to formulate a list of trees required by MTC*

Cllr M Palmer had compiled a list of trees as recommended.

Proposed: Cllr Bloomfield

Seconded: Cllr Bolton

Agreed with all in favour that Council should proceed with the scheme.

817.2 *Re the SCC "Somerset Climate Emergency Community Fund 2020-2021": That in the first round of applications MTC should apply for funding to purchase a new Electric Vehicle, trees and solar panels*

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr M Palmer

Agreed with all in favour

817.3 *Re Quay West Public Conveniences: To consider the return to normal opening hours*

Cllr Venner asked if Council had written to SWaT saying that MTC would terminate the lease of the Quay West toilets at the end of February. The Deputy Clerk confirmed a letter had been written saying Council was considering implementing the break clause in the Lease but no reply had been received. Cllr Bolton confirmed there were now far fewer motor homes during the week but some still parked there at weekends. He thought Council should have a conversation with SCC and try to work out a solution to the problem. Cllr Lawton confirmed that motor homes were parking more on the roads where parking was administered by SCC and making things worse for residents whose homes they parked outside. The latest complaints had been

about a very large German vehicle whose generator was running all night keeping residents awake. The Deputy Clerk advised that the subject of terminating the lease could be put on the agenda for the next Full Council Meeting, but this Meeting would deal merely with opening hours. Cllr Bloomfield proposed that opening hours were returned to normal on weekdays but had limited opening at weekends and holidays and that Council had a discussion with SCC about the problems in the Quay West area.

Proposed: Cllr Bloomfield

Seconded: Cllr Lawton

Agreed with 8 in favour and 2 abstentions that Quay West opening hours returned to normal on weekdays but were limited at weekends and holiday periods.

817.4 *Re the SWaT Seafront Improvements Project: That SWaT be contacted in respect of rectifying the drainage issue at the seafront, and to emphasise the need for this remedial work to be done on a regular basis - plus MTC be consulted in respect of the proposed new shelters*

The Clerk had been waiting for ratification of this proposal to write to SWaT and welcomed Cllr Bloomfield's offer of photographs of the effects of the poor drainage. Cllr Lawton commented on the very poor state of the sea front flower beds which were covered in sand and hoped that work time could be diverted from Blenheim Gardens to looking after the sea front planting. Cllr Malin hoped the sand would be returned to the beach as tons of sand had been brought at great expense from North Devon and this would not be repeated. Cllr Bolton believed that the Environment Agency proscribed the returning of sand to the beach because it was considered to be contaminated after having been on paths and roads.

Proposed: Cllr Bloomfield

Seconded: Cllr Kingston-James

Agreed with all in favour that the Clerk would write to SWaT putting to them all the points raised by Councillors.

Cllr Prosser sent apologies for the rest of the Meeting as her internet connection had dropped out.

The Deputy Clerk said the letter should include the condition that MTC be consulted by SWaT about proposed new shelters on the sea front.

818 FINANCE MATTERS

818.1 *To discuss and approve payments for October 2020 under £1,000*

Payments 5 – 16 totalling £4,135.25 already agreed and now noted.

Proposed: Cllr Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield

Agreed with all in favour that payments numbered 17-21 totalling £799.84 were approved for payment.

818.2 *To discuss and approve payments for October 2020 over £1,000*

Cllr M Palmer queried a payment to the Project Manager for the Community Centre but the Deputy Clerk confirmed that the payment was only up to 14 September and included a 50% reduction in the fee because of COVID delays.

Proposed: Cllr Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield

Agreed with all in favour that payments numbered 22-28 totalling £25,465.97 were approved for payment.

Items 1-4 were urgent payments, had been made and were now noted.

819 TO RATIFY THE APPOINTMENT OF MS SAM RAWLE AS TEMPORARY CLERK

Cllr Bolton wished to ratify for the benefit of the public that Council had appointed a new Temporary Clerk, Ms Sam Rawle, for a six-month period and she had commenced her employment on 21 September 2020. Until this time her appointment had been discussed only in the confidential part of Full Council Meetings.

820 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT ON THE COMMUNITY CENTRE AND IRNHAM ROAD RECREATION GROUND FROM THE DEPUTY CLERK

The Deputy Clerk reported that Minehead AFC had signed the Licence to occupy the changing rooms at the Community Centre on 14 September 2020 and were regularly using these. The function room had had regular use, albeit restricted due to Government COVID-19 restrictions. The bar was not yet quite finished and there were a few finishing touches such as landscaping around the building, tennis courts, MUGA and adult gym.

There had been a lot of interest in bookings and Colin Johnson had already secured several regular bookings and these had been increased from those already reported to the Amenities and Environment Committee earlier in the month.

The demolition work on the old building, which had stopped for 3-4 weeks because of additional asbestos found under the spectator stand, had re-started on 19 October and all demolition should be completed in early December. The land would be left level, then seeded and fenced and gated from the car park.

Council was still talking to SWaT regarding an arrangement to provide dedicated car parking spaces in Alexandra Car Park for users of the Community Centre and the electric charging point.

The Deputy Clerk thanked the existing Advisory Group for the construction period of the Community Centre and suggested the creation of a new group, to work with the proposed Friends of Irnham Road Recreation Ground in the running of the Centre and looking at how the Centre should be managed in the future.

An application had been made to Sport England before the earlier lockdown for funds towards the cost of refurbishing the MUGA. This had been turned down but Sport England had recently been in contact enquiring about the project and offering finance towards installing lighting in the MUGA. Discussions were ongoing and further information would follow.

821 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REMINDER FROM THE DEPUTY CLERK REGARDING THE THREE VACANT COUNCILLOR POSTS IN THREE WARDS

The Deputy Clerk reported that Elisa Day, Electoral Officer, had contacted him to say that more than 10 expressions of interest had been received for each of the 3 wards with Councillor vacancies. MTC could not therefore co-opt new Councillors: an election would be required which would take place in May 2021.

822 ALLOTMENTS

Cllr Rose was advised by the Clerk that she should not take part in the debate nor vote on any motions proposed under this item because she was considered, as a plotholder, to have a pecuniary interest in the matter, an allotment tenancy being considered a licence under these rules. Cllr Rose said she had declared an interest but should be permitted to speak. She asked to have a letter from the Monitoring Officer confirming the situation. Cllr Harvey said he would also like to see this letter.

822.1 *To consider and agree the new Allotment Agreement*

The proposed new Tenancy Agreement had been put on the Members' Area of the website that day. Cllr Venner said he had not had time to read it and asked if it was based on the National Allotment Society agreement. Cllr M Palmer said it was based on the NALC Allotment Agreement. Cllr Venner queried whether the Agreement would be coming into effect the following week and if it would be reviewed after a twelve-month period. Cllr Palmer said it would be used immediately.

Proposed: Cllr M Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Bolton

Agreed with 3 abstentions and the rest in favour that the new Tenancy Agreement be adopted and put into immediate effect.

822.2 *To review membership of the Allotments Advisory Group*

Two members of the Allotments Advisory Group were currently plotholders. Cllr Bolton said this had been raised by other plotholders and could be seen by the public as being a conflict of interests so it was felt that Cllrs Mandley and Rose should be stood down from the Allotments Advisory Group and two other Councillors appointed to it. The Deputy Clerk recommended it was also in their interests not to be seen to have a pecuniary interest in this matter.

Proposed: Cllr P Bolton

Seconded: Cllr C Palmer

Agreed with 3 abstentions and 6 in favour that Cllrs Mandley and Rose be removed from the Allotments Advisory Group.

Cllr Venner put his name forward to join the Group, saying he had been Chair of the Allotments Committee in the past. Cllr Bloomfield was also interested in joining it.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr M Palmer

Agreed with 8 in favour and 1 abstention that Cllrs Bloomfield and Venner join the Allotments Advisory Group.

823 TO AGREE THE MTC PREFERRED OPTION FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM IN SOMERSET

The Deputy Clerk reported that he had received various requests on Council's preferred option between One Somerset (SCC) and Stronger Somerset (SWaT). He said all Councillors had been invited to discussions with representatives about both business cases. He and the Clerk needed a steer on this subject so that they knew how to reply to requests. They would be putting together a paper on how MTC would like things to proceed generally, whichever option was adopted. Cllr Rose wanted to know how she could access recordings of any discussions and the Deputy Clerk told her the best way would be to access the information online. Cllr Venner said all Councillors had individual preferences – his own preferred option was the County Council one, One Somerset, but other Councillors would have a different preference. The decision would be made anyway by the Secretary of State. Cllr Bolton said he thought there was not much to choose between either option. Cllr Bloomfield asked if the three District Councillors on MTC would be able to vote on Council's preferred option. She said MTC needed to be prepared as a Council for whichever option the Secretary of State chose. There was an Advisory Group which included the Chairs of Committees plus the Mayor. Cllr Bloomfield recommended that the Advisory Group meet, compare both options and report back to the next Full Council Meeting.

824 TO AGREE THE DATE FOR THE BUDGET/LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM SEMINAR

It was agreed to hold the Budget/Local Government Reform Seminar by Zoom on Wednesday 4 November at 7.30 pm. The Deputy Clerk said the seminar would go through the Budget line by line.

825 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

(Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960)

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr Kingston-James

Agreed with all in favour to exclude members of the press and public

The public part of the Meeting closed at 9.16 pm.

826 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

The Meeting closed at 10.23 pm.