



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 28 JULY 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)

Councillors Present: Cllr T Bloomfield, Cllr O Harvey, Cllr A Kingston-James (Deputy Mayor), Cllr A Lawton, Cllr J Malin, Cllr B Mandley, Cllr C Palmer*, Cllr M Palmer, Cllr D Prosser, Cllr H Rose, Cllr T Venner*

Councillors in Attendance: Cllr M Chilcott**
Cllr C Lawrence**
Cllr M Kravis*
Cllr A Hadley* (*denotes Somerset West and Taunton "SWaT" Councillor
**denotes Somerset County Councillor "SCC")

Officers in Attendance: Mr B Howe (Acting Clerk)
Mr A Giles (Acting Responsible Finance Officer "RFO")
Mrs J Notley (Note-taker)

Members of the Press and Public: 3 members of the Public
1 member of the Press

The Acting Clerk opened the Meeting as host on Zoom and told the Meeting that all participants would be kept muted until they wished to speak.

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

Apologies had been received from Cllr N Hercock.

644 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN RESPECT OF ANY AGENDA ITEMS [\(Localism Act 2011\)](#)

Member	Item	Interest	Time Period	Speak/Vote
Cllr T Bloomfield	655.4 656.2	Personal	2020	Stayed in the room and spoke
Cllr P Bolton	655.4 656.2 All	Personal Personal SWaT Councillor	2020	Stayed in the room and spoke Stayed in the room and spoke 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 Venner	All	SWaT Councillor	2020	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted

DISPENSATIONS (Localism Act 2011)

No-one had requested any dispensations.

The Mayor proposed an amendment to the Agenda. He had no Mayor's Announcements and proposed bringing forward Item 18 on the Agenda (to discuss a letter received regarding motorhomes parked at Quay West/Street) to replace Mayor's Announcements (Item 5).

Proposed: Cllr Bolton **Seconded: Cllr Prosser**
Agreed with all in favour that Item 18 be moved to Item 5

645 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM:

- **Somerset County Council ("SCC")**

Cllr Chilcott reported that the SCC/SWaT COVID-19 helpline had taken in excess of 7,000 telephone calls and that it was still open between 8.00 am and 6.00 pm seven days a week. She reminded the Meeting about face coverings being mandatory in certain settings, and asking people to be considerate and also to be aware that some are exempt from wearing them. She gave figures for COVID testing at Taunton Racecourse, mobile testing and home tests and reported that sadly there had been one death, in a hospital, in Somerset. She reported that the Somerset Coronavirus Appeal Fund had raised over £800,000 and so far over £500,000 worth of grants had been awarded and some of those grants had gone to organisations in Minehead. She thanked Councillors for their feedback on the Townsend Road consultation which was now complete and Minehead's disappointment that there would be no new zebra crossing had been noted. The scheme would limit bus parking to school drop-off and pick-up times. There would be a final consultation before any new restrictions were introduced. Cllr Chilcott reported that the Leader of SCC would be presenting an item on One Somerset to all County Councillors and there had been a lot of interest shown around the county. Most interest from Town Councils concerned devolution of assets such as open spaces and car parking and SALC had put forward a report with 7 recommendations in it from towns and parishes which would all be taken on board with the business plan. The business plan was online on the One Somerset website.

Cllr Christine Lawrence had technical difficulties and was unable to speak to the Meeting. It was agreed to try talking to her later.

- **Somerset West and Taunton District Council ("SWaT")**

Cllr Kravis gave Cllr Benet Allen's apologies as he was unable to attend because of illness. Business Rate Grants and Discretionary Grants had taken up much officer time in the past month. Discretionary Grants to the value of £2.1 million had been awarded, spread out among as many businesses as possible. Some of the original Business Rate Grants still had not been claimed in the various categories and the scheme would be closing on 14 August. Businesses were urged to apply quickly. SWaT was now looking at the Recovery Plan and £0.5 million had been found to put towards recovery of the high street - £100,000 was available for Minehead but SWaT did not want to rush out the spending but ensure it was spent well. The District

Council was working with other District Councils in Somerset on the unitary debate and would be presenting to the Secretary of State at the appropriate time. The Snazaroo building was now up and building of the unit next to it was going well. Cllr Hadley said it had been announced that the land for housing next to the Snazaroo building would be a priority but SWaT were not sure yet who the developer would be. The BT telephone box removal consultation would continue until 28 August.

- **Police**

A written report had been sent in and was on the Members' Area of the website for Councillors to read.

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

Cllr Lawton told the Meeting that she and Cllr Venner had attended two BID Meetings in the previous month and that the emphasis had been on the recovery from the COVID crisis of small businesses, how to stimulate business in the town and to make the town more attractive to residents and other consumers. The prospect of the £100,000 grant for Minehead town centre was being considered but there was a short timeline-to put proposals in and BID was also looking at other grants available and seeing how much more financial help is available from other sources. One or two incentives had come from the PR company involved - Daffodil PR – who were reporting a good take-up of people expressing an interest via social media in visiting Minehead. A Minehead giftcard was being considered in time for Christmas shopping and looking at other ways to help the High Street survive.

- Cllr Bolton reported the positive Meetings he and Cllr Kravis had had with Butlins which had re-opened the previous Friday. They were struggling to fill their accommodation to capacity. There was a good working relationship between Butlins and MTC.

- *Advisory and Working Groups* – The Acting Clerk said there had been a Toilets Advisory Group Meeting and this would be discussed later in the Meeting.

Cllr Lawrence was finally able to join the Meeting via telephone. She had had no complaints from residents about the motor homes parked on the seafront but residents had said owners should pay for the parking. The Parking Officer would welcome any input from Council on this parking and parking generally to include in his consultation. She reminded Council that if the Unitary recommendation was implemented Town Councils would possibly be able to take charge of their own parking and open spaces. Cllr Harvey said he was concerned about vehicles driving in excess of the speed limit in that area and that the speed limit should be lower.

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

No-one had asked to speak.

653 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON TUESDAY 30 JUNE 2020 – *TO RATIFY THAT ALL HAS BEEN AGREED*

There were no recommendations.

654 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 13 JULY 2020 - *TO RATIFY THAT ALL HAS BEEN AGREED*

654.1 *To provisionally agree the £30,000 budget to complete non-contracted works on the Community Centre, subject to recommendations from the Community Building Advisory Group and discuss giving delegated powers to the Community Centre Advisory Group*

Cllr Venner said he was not comfortable with delegated powers with no terms of reference. He said Council must make sure that there was a check in place to ensure everything was done correctly with records for the audit trail. The Acting Clerk said the Community Hall was expected to be handed over to MTC at the end of the week and would be 95% finished. There was some urgency if the Hall was to open in September. Cllr Palmer pointed out that at the next Full Council Meeting, if any decision is made about expenditure, it would have to be ratified there anyway.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton **Seconded: Cllr Mandley**
Agreed with 1 abstention and the rest in favour.

655 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AMENITIES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 14 JULY 2020 - *TO RATIFY THAT ALL HAS BEEN AGREED*

655.1 *To agree the purchase of a germicidal hand sanitiser gel for use in the Public Toilets and enter into an 18-month contract with 'Initial' for dispensers and sanitiser*

The Acting Clerk told the Meeting that Council had tried to buy locally the hand sanitiser gel but it was working out very expensive and was not user-friendly. It would be used up over the following few months. It was proposed to have a contract agreement with Initial over an 18 month, rather than 3 year, period at about £700 per annum. One of the hand sanitisers had been damaged recently. With the Initial contract sanitisers would be replaced as part of the contract. The local company was a similar cost but not so good.

Proposed: Cllr M Palmer **Seconded: Cllr P Bolton**
Agreed with 1 abstention and the rest in favour.

655.2 *To agree that band performances in Blenheim Gardens be reinstated on a trial basis from 1 August 2020, subject to Government guidelines and social distancing - plus any bands booked are required to sign a waiver stating that if there are issues with the paving area and/or changes in Government Covid-19 guidelines MTC may have to cancel their booking at short notice*

Cllr Bolton said the bandstand in Blenheim Gardens was looking a lot better and thanked SWaT for the refurbishment which had been carried out very quickly. Councillors discussed hosting the few bands presently allowed to play but after discussion it was decided that Government social distancing guidelines would be impossible to adhere to so Councillors reluctantly decided to vote on postponing all concerts until 2021.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton **Seconded: Cllr Kingston-James**
Agreed with 1 against, 2 abstentions and the rest in favour.

- 655.3 *To discuss the further work necessary to trees on MTC land, including some within the Alcombe Parks, as stipulated by the 'traffic light' system of urgency within the Tree Report*

The Acting Clerk said Council was now catching up with all the work specified in the November 2018 Report and would end-up having done everything set out in the report.

- 655.4 *To agree 'in principle' support of the Funfair returning to Minehead in September, subject to any amendment in Government Covid-19 rules and restrictions*

Cllr Bloomfield read out a letter from Leigh Danter about his family's funfair and the COVID-19 measures they were putting in place. Cllr M Palmer wondered how the funfair was different from the band concerts and Cllr Bolton said it was easier to control how many people attended. However relevant Government guidelines and legislation were hazy. It was agreed in principle to look nearer the time at the guidelines before agreeing the possible visit of the Funfair in September.

Proposed: Cllr Bloomfield **Seconded: Cllr Mandley**
Agreed with 3 abstentions and the rest in favour.

- 655.5 *To agree Option 1 in the Report sent for consideration by the Finance & Staffing and Amenities & Environment Committees*

With regard to the proposed replacement of Amenities Equipment, both Committees had recommended Option 1 in the Report which was from a local supplier.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton **Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield**
Agreed with 2 abstentions and the rest in favour.

656 FINANCE MATTERS

- 656.1 *To discuss and approve Direct Debit payments for June 2020*
656.2 *To discuss and approve payments for July 2020 under £1,000*
656.3 *To discuss and approve payments for July 2020 over £1,000*
656.4 *To discuss and approve Income for June 2020*

Cllr C Palmer, Chair of the Finance & Staffing Committee, recommended that items 656.1 to 656.4 be taken together in a single vote of approval.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Lawton

Agreed with three abstentions and the rest in favour to approve the payments and income reports.

656.5 *To receive a Verbal Report regarding bank reconciliations for the period 1 June to 30 June 2020*

Cllr M Palmer reported that she had carried out the bank reconciliations and that all was it should be.

657 TO RECEIVE A GRANT APPLICATION REGARDING AN OUTDOOR CINEMA – CLLR T VENNER

Cllr Venner said he was going to re-write the application for a grant for the Regal Film Society's outdoor, drive-in movies. He would take it to the next Finance and Staffing Committee Meeting.

658 TO DISCUSS PLANS TO REFURBISH THE SUMMERLAND CAR PARK TOILETS AND DRAWING-UP A SPECIFICATION

The Acting Clerk said a survey would be needed of the toilets to specify precisely what needed doing and asked for a budget of, say, £2,000 to get expert advice which would then enable the Advisory Group to invite tenders for the work. He said this would need to be carried out by someone who knew about building so that tenders could be specific and equal. Cllr M Palmer proposed that the Advisory Group go ahead and commission a survey but Cllr Venner said he proposed an amendment that no more than £2,000 be spent on the survey.

Proposed: Cllr M Palmer

Seconded: Cllr T Bloomfield

Agreed with 1 abstention and the rest in favour that a budget of no more than £2,000 be allocated to commissioning a survey of Summerland Place public toilets.

659 TO DISCUSS THE CREATION OF A POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Acting Clerk said this proposal had been suggested at the Annual Full Council Meeting and Councillors could either abandon the idea or defer it to the next Full Council Meeting. Cllr Venner was in favour of the proposal and thought that Council should have such a Committee in line with SWaT and SCC. He proposed that it should be discussed at the next Full Council Meeting.

Proposed: Cllr Venner

Seconded: Cllr Bolton

Agreed with 1 against, 1 abstention and the rest in favour.

660 TO DISCUSS UNITARY AUTHORITY FOR SOMERSET CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTION

Cllr Venner felt that although this period was the wrong time for a consultation about a Unitary authority it was the right time for Minehead Town Council to hear from the Leader of Somerset County Council about their proposals and also the leader of the District Council. MTC needed to be well-informed about both proposals. Cllr Malin felt this would be an ideal

topic for the new Policy and Development Committee to discuss. After some discussion, Cllr Bolton proposed that MTC invite David Fothergill, Leader of CC, and Federica Smith-Roberts, Leader of SWaT to come and speak to Council about their proposals.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton **Seconded: Cllr Mandley**
Agreed with 1 abstention and the rest in favour.

Cllr Venner thought that much more could be achieved with a face to face Meeting and that MTC should invite Leaders to a socially distanced physical Meeting if possible rather than a Zoom Meeting.

661 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT FROM THE ACTING CLERK REGARDING THE COMMUNITY BUILDING

The Community Building Advisory Group had had a site meeting on 8 July 2020 and had sent a list of works needing completion to both Committees. It had been recommended under Item 654.1 that a budget of £30,000 be set for the completion of all works.

The Acting Clerk reported Qube would soon be handing the keys over to MTC and that ownership of the Building would pass to Council on approximately 1 August 2020. He had had meetings with Minehead AFC about their matches and training sessions which had started and they would need to use some of the facilities in the following 2-3 weeks. The Lease and Licence for MAFC were being drawn-up and would need to be signed. The MUGA and tennis courts improvements were nearly completed. Installation of the new flood lights would commence the following day. Temporary fencing around the site would remain until work had been completed on the paths and at the front of the Hall. Demolition of the old building had been held-up because the company's employees were on furlough but should begin the following Monday.

Colin Johnson had already received a lot of interest from various classes wanting to use the Community Building and an income would soon be generated.

Cllr Harvey returned to the Meeting.

662 TO DISCUSS THE THREE VACANT COUNCILLOR POSTS AND THE PROCEDURE

The Acting Clerk reminded the Meeting that there were three vacancies for Councillors and that these could now be advertised for fourteen days. If more than 10 people were interested in each vacancy there would need to be an election, but this could not be held until next May. If not, Council would be able to co-opt following its next Meeting.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton **Seconded: Cllr Rose**
Agreed with two abstentions and the rest in favour that Council advertise the three Casual Vacancies.

663 TO DISCUSS THE QUOTE TO PURCHASE NEW DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE FOR THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, TOILETS, AND BLENHEIM GARDENS AND NEW DEPOT SIGNS. THE COST WOULD BE MET FROM S106 FUNDING OBTAINED IN 2019

Proposed: Cllr Mandley Seconded: Cllr Malin
Agreed with all in favour to purchase the new signage.

Cllr Bolton proposed a half hour extension of time for the Meeting, seconded by Cllr Bloomfield and agreed with all in favour.

664 TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE SITING OF HALF PIPE SKATE RAMP

Cllr Bloomfield had surveyed several possible sites for the Ramp and had presented an illustrated report to all Councillors. Cllr Rose favoured siting the Ramp near the Rose Garden. Several Councillors felt Culvercliffe was an unsuitable site. Cllr M Palmer, for several reasons, favoured siting the Ramp at Irnham Road Recreation Ground. The Acting Clerk reminded Councillors that they had previously decided not to put the Ramp at Irnham Road and that the decision could not be overturned within six months; if they went ahead with that plan they would be making a U-turn on that decision. Cllr Malin also favoured siting it at Irnham Road Recreation Ground, well away from residential properties, and near the toilets. After discussion Cllr Malin moved a vote.

Proposed: Cllr Malin Seconded: Cllr Harvey
Agreed with 3 abstentions and 7 in favour that the Half Pipe Skate Ramp be sited at Irnham Road Recreation Ground.

Cllr Bolton said he had abstained because although he thought it was probably the best site he didn't necessarily think it would be viewed that way by local residents.

665 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.

The Public Meeting closed at 9.59 pm.