



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON MONDAY 29 MARCH 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 N Hercock, Cllr A Kingston-James (Deputy Mayor), 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**
Cllr Benet Allen*

(*denotes Somerset West and Taunton "SWaT" Councillor

**denotes Somerset County Councillor "SCC")

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.

1060 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [LGA 1972 s 85 \(1\)](#)

All Councillors were present

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1061 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	1062 & 1071.2	Personal	29.03.2021	Stayed in the room; did not speak or vote
CLlr J Malin	1070.1	Personal	29.03.2021	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.

1062 TO FILL a casual vacancy for a Councillor - to co-opt a councillor for Minehead Periton and Woodcombe Ward

No election had been called for one of the casual vacancies in the Minehead Periton and Woodcombe Ward so Councillors were free to co-opt another Councillor. Mr Mark Kingston-James gave a short statement about his wish to serve as a Councillor.

Proposed: CLlr Bolton

Seconded: CLlr Malin

Agreed with all in favour that Mr Mark Kingston-James be co-opted as Councillor for Minehead Periton and Woodcombe Ward.

CLlr M Kingston-James signed his Acceptance of Office, witnessed by the Clerk. Councillors welcomed him to the Council.

1063 TO RECEIVE a presentation from Ray Tew, Chairman of MCDT - Partnership Working with Minehead Coastal Development Team

Mr Tew gave a short presentation about his own involvement with Minehead matters over the past 30 years, starting with the Regal Theatre. He said he had inherited the chair role of the new, merged organisation formed from the MCCT and the MDT which would be known as the Minehead Coastal Development Team. It was primarily a bridging organisation sitting between statutory and non-statutory bodies covering the difference between essential delivery and desirable delivery. It saw attracting funds from non-governmental

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bodies as key, with much funding now coming down the line. This would include funding for wellbeing and environment.

The Mayor said he was aware that a legacy from the previous Council was that MTC does not actively support tourism. He said this needed to be changed because tourism was the main source of income in the town. Cllr Bolton thought it should be one of Council's Priorities. Bryan Howe said the Priorities would be discussed in May 2021. Cllr Bolton said Council needed to decide whether it was going to give MCDT its backing to obtain funding otherwise the area would lose the potential funding available. Cllr Lawton thought MTC should give MCDT its full backing with Cllr Venner adding that Council needed to be a lot more proactive and play a bigger part in the new organisation.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr A Kingston-James

Agreed with all in favour that Minehead Town Council back the merged organisation to be known as the Minehead Coastal Development Team and play a full part in the MCDT.

1064 TO RECEIVE reports from:

- Somerset County Council ("SCC")

Cllr Mandy Chilcott welcomed Cllr M Kingston-James and gave the meeting her updates:

Minehead Middle school traffic calming measures – the designs have been finalised with a Work Order expected in April 2021 and aiming for construction during the summer holidays.

Parking review –WSP, who provide technical and strategic advice, have been appointed to work with SCC on the project. The SCC officer running the parking review is now back in post after COVID duties. Plan will consult with MTC, residents and businesses to understand the range of issues around parking, including motor homes. Consultation will take place after the elections in May as Councils were now in the pre-election period.

Level crossing – a complex project. The new control box was already being made and the Office of Road and Rail have approved the new crossing. It is now in the consultation phase for a statutory two months. Structural work could take place on the new plinth for the signal box. Cllr Chilcott said there was a really good article about the crossing in the Railway Herald on 12 March and she could forward it to the Clerk for circulation if required.

Minehead Library would now be operating from the Old Hospital while the refurbishment was carried out. There would be a limited service and users should check with its website for opening times and details of the services running.

Cllr Christine Lawrence thanked all those who had helped with the COVID vaccination programme and all the COVID volunteers. She emphasised the need for continued caution.

West Somerset Community School Crossing – a start date had been set of 4 May 2021 after a long wait; the crossing should be in place well before the busy summer season.

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Manor Road – the situation was complicated. The officers dealing with the problem had been looking at 2 structures – the crossroads culvert opposite the Britannia Inn and the Manor Road retaining wall. The bridge itself seemed to be satisfactory. The 50-metre long culvert was presently being surveyed and a void under the highway had been repaired. Investigations were under way to find a solution as to how to replace the culvert. Excavations would be difficult as it would need the road to be closed which was impossible; residents and emergency services needed access. A further complication was that utility services had been driven through the culvert. The retaining wall was being considered for strengthening or culverting but again a lack of space and the need to maintain access was a great concern. The officer had yet to consult with riparian owners and the Department of the Environment. The feasibility of all options was being considered. The work needed doing but they weren't sure how this could be accomplished because of heavy vehicular use of the road and the large number of parked cars was also a consideration.

- Somerset West and Taunton District Council (“SWaT”)
Cllr Benet Allen reported that:
Elections were taking place on 6 May 2021 and notices had been published; councils would enter the pre-election period (purdah) on 30 March during which they could not announce any new business which was seen to favour a political party, but otherwise it would be business as usual.
SWaT would be submitting, along with Sedgemoor District Council and SCC, their Expression of Interest in hosting the world's first nuclear fusion power station. The government was starting an 18-month process to choose a location, with Cumbria being the main rival. The Councils had a strong case and investment would be huge and very welcome.
SWaT Spring Clean - staff would be tackling litter in locations across the district, targeting problem areas such as residential streets, highway verges and open spaces. As the spring clean progressed SWaT would also be encouraging members of the public to get involved and take pride in their neighbourhoods.
Recycling collections would be a day later for most people over the Easter break; garden waste collection subscriptions were due to be renewed on 1 April but would now continue until 10 May. New subscriptions would run for a year from the start date - the 1 April date was no longer a requirement.
SWaT has agreed a rough sleeper strategy and aims to end rough sleeping in the district by 2027. The Council had bought the Gascony Hotel in Minehead to use as temporary homeless accommodation.
- Police
Cllr Bolton read out the statistics from the Police Report for the benefit of the public watching on Facebook.
- Councillors attending Meetings on behalf of Minehead Town Council (“MTC”)

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Cllr Lawton had attended 2 Minehead BID meetings. There had been a Public Realm Committee meeting on 9 March which had received updates on the Wellington Square area, bunting, benches, flowers and Christmas lights. On 16 March she had attended a board meeting at which it was decided to cancel the eatFestival planned for 10 April 2021. There had been a presentation from Lisa Redstone from SWaT about the Recovery Plan and also updates from other groups.

Cllr Rose attended the Exmoor Parish Forum on 18 March. It had acknowledged the need to work with the MTC Planning Committee to facilitate the building of new homes.

- Advisory and Working Groups
None

1065 TO ADJOURN the Meeting for Public Inclusion *Standing Order No.3e*
No-one had asked to speak

1066 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Bolton told the meeting he had had his COVID vaccination and the service had been marvellous. He advised everyone to have the jab to protect themselves and everyone else because the effects of COVID were awful.

1067 TO AGREE the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 22 February 2021 – *Minutes to be agreed by Councillors who were in attendance*
Cllr Lawton had noticed 2 typing errors on page 2.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield

Agreed, subject to the correction of the two errors, with all in favour

1068 TO NOTE the Minutes of the Planning, Finance & Staffing and Amenities & Environment Committee Meetings held in March
The meeting noted the Minutes of the Committee meetings.

1069 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE any recommendations from the Finance and Staffing Committee Meeting held on Monday 8 March 2021 - *To ratify that all has been agreed*

1069.1 Recommendation that MTC enter into a Service Level Agreement with Minehead Youth Club for a 3-year term, contributing £6,000 per annum

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr A Kingston-James

Agreed with all in favour that MTC enter into a Service Level Agreement with Minehead Youth Club for a 3-year term, contributing £6,000 per annum

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1070 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE any recommendations from the Amenities and Environment Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 9 March 2021 - *To ratify that all has been agreed*

1070.1 Recommendation that Council authorise a new access gate into Periton Playing Field

Proposed: Cllr Bloomfield

Seconded: Cllr Harvey

Agreed with 2 abstentions and the rest in favour that Council authorise a new access gate into Periton Playing Field

1070.2 (a) Recommendation that the existing MTC Noticeboard at the Cemetery is replaced and that three watering cans are provided displaying the MTC logo as replacements for the current plastic containers.

Proposed: Cllr Bloomfield

Seconded: Cllr Hercock

Agreed with all in favour the existing MTC Noticeboard at the Cemetery is replaced and that three watering cans are provided displaying the MTC logo as replacements for the current plastic containers.

(b) Recommendation that the pathways within the Cemetery are improved to a much higher standard over a period of time

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Bolton

Agreed with all in favour that the pathways within the Cemetery are improved to a much higher standard over a period of time

1070.3 Recommendation that the Harepark Terrace Allotment site be extended into the adjoining field owned by MTC

Cllr Hercock left the meeting

Cllr M Palmer had seen a comment on Facebook that this area was extremely difficult to work and consisted of clay and bricks. She suggested doing a soil test. The Clerk said she would speak to the Amenities Team Manager about the area. Cllr Lawton suggested using raised beds but Cllr M Palmer thought Council would have to consider the cost implications. Cllr Bolton proposed an amendment to the recommendation.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr Harvey

Agreed with 1 abstention and the rest in favour that a soil test be carried out to check if that part of the field was suitable to be used as allotments before any action is taken

Proposed: Cllr Bloomfield

Seconded: Cllr Bolton

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Agreed with 9 in favour, 1 abstention and 1 against that the Harepark Terrace Allotment site be extended into the adjoining field owned by MTC.

1070.4 Recommendation that Full Council approve the booking and performance of bands for an eight-week period from Saturday 3 July 2021

Cllr Lawton checked that this recommendation was subject to the COVID restrictions in place at the time, which Cllr Bloomfield confirmed. Councillors were asked to agree a nine week period instead of eight weeks. Cllr Harvey asked that Council monitor the sound levels in decibels of the various bands. Cllr Bolton said he was able to do this with a hand-held device.

Proposed: Cllr Bloomfield **Seconded: Cllr Bolton**

Agreed with all in favour that Council monitor the sound levels of the performing bands

Proposed: Cllr Bloomfield **Seconded: Cllr Venner**

Agreed with all in favour that Council approve the booking and performance of bands in Blenheim Gardens for a nine week period from Saturday 3 July 2021

1071 FINANCE MATTERS

1071.1 To discuss and approve urgent payments for March 2021

Urgent payments consisted of 5 items totalling £46,089.89

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr Venner**

Approved with 1 abstention and the rest in favour

1071.2 To discuss and approve payments for March 2021 under £1,000

Payments under £1,000 were 21 items, totalling £4,272.51

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr Lawton**

Approved with 2 abstentions and the rest in favour

1071.3 To discuss and approve payments for March 2021 over £1,000

Payments over £1,000 were 7 items, totalling £25,621.18

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield**

Approved with 1 abstention and the rest in favour

1071.4 To discuss and approve Regular Payments for February 2021

There were 15 Regular Payments totalling £3,095.14

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr Malin**

Approved with 1 abstention and the rest in favour

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1071.5 To discuss and approve Income Report for February 2021

Income received totalled £35,857.25

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Lawton

Approved with 1 abstention and the rest in favour

1072 TO DISCUSS the Report on updating the Vehicle Fleet

Councillors had seen a Report by the Deputy Clerk on updating the Vehicle fleet. He reminded the meeting that, in line with the Priority of Making Minehead a Green Town MTC already had in use a fully electric vehicle. An application to SCC for funding to help finance another similar vehicle had been unsuccessful. Therefore he had purchased a water tank and electric pump as previously agreed to convert the present vehicle for watering purposes. Toilet cleaning had been taken back in-house and it had been expected to engage 2 cleaners and lease 2 vans. Only one cleaner had been employed so a second leased van had not been necessary. The Deputy Clerk had ordered one leased electric van. He asked Councillors to consider purchasing another 'Electric Eric' vehicle as it was more versatile than a van. His recommendation was to purchase the Goupil vehicle, second-hand and refurbished, using half the lease budget and the rest from the Vehicle/Equipment Reserve at an estimated cost of £10-£14,000.

Cllr Malin asked about a guarantee and Bryan Howe said Council would secure a 1-year warranty.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr Malin

That Council proceed with the Deputy Clerk's recommendation.

Cllr Venner questioned whether it would be possible to purchase a more up-to-date vehicle. The Deputy Clerk said the first electric vehicle had been four years old. He told the meeting that a similar vehicle bought new would cost about £30,000. Purchasing one identical to Electric Eric would cost roughly about 16,000. The vehicles have a long life and come with a new battery. Cllr Harvey said it was more environmentally friendly to re-use a vehicle rather than purchase a new one.

Cllr Venner said he would propose an amendment to the original proposal.

Proposed: Cllr Venner

Seconded: Cllr Malin

Agreed with all in favour that officers be asked to look for a second, refurbished Goupil vehicle at a cost of circa £16,000.

1073 TO AGREE the date and time of the Annual Council Meeting

Cllr Bolton told the meeting that Government had not extended the permission to meet remotely using Zoom and this would run out on 7 May 2021. It would not be permissible to

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meet physically indoors until after 21 June. He suggested holding the Statutory Annual Council Meeting on Tuesday, 4 May 2021.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield

Agreed with all in favour that the Statutory Annual Council Meeting be held on Tuesday, 4 May 2021, remotely using Zoom.

1074 TO RESOLVE to exclude Members of the Press and Public ([Public Bodies \[Admission to Meetings\] Act 1960](#))

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr Lawton

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

The public meeting closed at 20.49.

DRAFT