

MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 18 December 2018

at 7.30pm at The Quaker Meeting House, Bancks Street, Minehead

The meeting was digitally recorded

Present

Mayor: Cllr N Hercock

Councillors: Cllr P Bolton, Cllrs L Culverhouse, Cllr R Dinnick, Cllr G Everett, Cllr O Harvey, Cllr A Kingston-James*, Cllr G Miele, Cllr A Parbrook, Cllr J Parbrook*, Cllr S Slade, Cllr M Smith, Cllr R Thomas*, Cllr T Venner*

(* denotes WSC Councillor)

Members of the Public and Press

17 members of the public

2 members of the press

Officers in Attendance

Mr B Howe (Acting Clerk)

Mr A Giles (Acting Responsible Financial Officer)

Mrs J Notley - Minute Taker

Acting Clerk, Mr Bryan Howe reminded all present that the meeting was being digitally recorded and provided microphones for speakers and requested any filming be kept to the meeting only

1083. Apologies for absence [LGA 1972 s 85 \(1\)](#)

Apologies had been received from Cllr Malin and Cllr L Smith and were accepted

1084. Declarations of Interest [In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members](#)

To receive and record any declarations of interest in respect of any matters included on the Agenda for consideration at this meeting

Member	Item	Interest	Time Period	Speak/ Vote	
Cllr P Bolton	1095	Personal	2018	No	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr Kingston-James	All	WSC Councillor	2018	Yes	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted

Member	Item	Interest	Time Period	Speak/ Vote	
Cllr J Parbrook	All 1093	WSC Councillor Personal	2018	yes	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted Stayed in the room
Cllr M Smith	1087	Personal	2018	yes	Stayed in the room and spoke
Cllr Thomas	All	WSC Councillor	2018	yes	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr Venner	All 1097b	WSC Councillor Personal	2018	yes	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted Stayed in the room and spoke

(i) Dispensations In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members
None

1085. (a) To approve the Minutes of the Full Council meeting on 27 November 2018 and Mayor to sign as a true and correct record

Proposed: Cllr Kingston-James

Seconded: Cllr Venner

RESOLVED with 12 in favour and 2 abstentions (councillors absent) that the minutes of the Full Council meeting on 27 November 2018 be signed as a true and correct record

(b) Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting on 4 December 2018

Minutes to be agreed as a true and correct record by those councillors who were in attendance. [LGA 1972, Sch12 para41 \(1\)](#)

Cllr Thomas, Chair of that meeting, said the observation on application no 3/21/18/084 had been proposed by Cllr Everett and Seconded by Cllr M Smith

Proposed: Cllr Slade

Seconded: Cllr M Smith

RESOLVED with all in favour that, subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting on 4 December 2018 be signed by the Chair as a true and correct record

1086. Council Reports:

Somerset County Council: Cllr Mandy Chilcott gave a short report from County and commented that cuts in government funding meant a loss of over £150million in the past six years in real terms and County would need to save another £27million in the next three years. Cllr Chilcott reported that the Public Health Report shows rising levels of self-harm in Somerset, mainly affecting girls between ages 10 and 24, and are above the national average. She gave details of the county wide parking review in which Minehead's parking would be reviewed early on in the programme. County is also continuing to push for reduction in single use plastics but this was proving quite difficult

West Somerset Council: Cllr A Hadley was unable to attend so Cllr Chilcott told Council that the main body of work at the District Council was moving towards the new

council next May. The Shadow Council has 84 councillors across 2 councils who are working to pull all their policies together

1087. Asset Management

Cllr Martin Dewdney had attended to answer any questions about the management of assets owned by West Somerset Council and Minehead Town Council. These included the possible taking over of Wellington Square by the Town Council and a piece of land adjacent to Alcombe Children's Centre which WSC would like to acquire from Minehead Town Council. Other assets mentioned included the Parks Walk, Blenheim Gardens and the Café and Clanville Gardens. Cllr Dewdney said WSC had paused discussions on these other assets because the Town Council had taken on a huge project in taking over the toilets and developing the Community Building. Cllr Venner said that these plans were all medium to long-term ones and Council would be discussing giving expressions of interest in all assets in Minehead presently owned by WSC, but this would all cost money and the Council had to act as a body to move forward with assets. Cllr Dewdney thanked Council for all the groundwork it had taken on from WSC. Mr Howe said an Advisory Group would be set up to deal with all Council's assets

1088. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor, Cllr Hercock said he had attended the Christmas Festival and lights switch-on on 30 November and 1 December and thanked everyone who had put their hearts and souls into making it such a success. He had also attended the Christmas Tree Festival on 8 December where there were many more trees this year. Cllr Hercock had held a Mayor's Coffee Morning on 14 December and also been to the Amnesty International morning on the same day. On 16 December he had attended an excellent Carol Service at the United Reform Church. Cllr Miele enquired about attendance at the Coffee morning and the queries posed. Cllr Hercock said he had been asked about the Rail Link, Community Building project and had positive comments about the Christmas Festival; there had been 10-15 members of the public there

Mr Howe introduced Jenny Bashford who confirmed her start date as new Town Clerk in January and thanked Council for giving her this chance to participate because Minehead was an exciting place. She hoped she would bring new skills and new thoughts about what could be achieved together collaboratively

1089. Adjournment of Meeting for Public Inclusion in accordance with Standing Order No.1c Subject to standing order 1(c), members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business on the agenda

No-one had asked to speak

1090. Community Building – update from Acting Clerk

Mr Howe reported that authority had now been obtained from Mr Hugh Luttrell with regard to the covenants at Irnham Road; Louise Crossman, Project Manager, was now talking to Qube and Jewsons for the second tendering stage. The start date is estimated to be early in March. Colin Johnson had been speaking to Minehead Football Club about the temporary lease they would need and future management ideas for running the whole project. The Advisory Group would probably now have to have fortnightly meetings to discuss details of the project

1091. Internal Audit 2018/2019

Mr Giles said Council had its books audited in two ways – by an internal auditor to look at practices and procedures throughout the year, producing a report at the end of the year and this, in turn, forms part of the information going to the external auditor annually. Mr Giles said Council needed to look at the options because the internal audit contract had not been reviewed for a number of years. However, suitable auditors were hard to find and two suggested auditors had declined. He suggested the matter be deferred to the January meeting and hope that local alternatives could be found. The current contract was with Auditing Solutions from Wiltshire

1092. Invoices for Payment (under and over £1,000) and Direct Debits, BACS and Manual Payments for November/December 2018 - any invoice shall be presented to Full Council

Recommendation: A schedule of payments shall be presented to Council. If the schedule is in order it shall be proposed, seconded and authorised by resolution of the Council

Mr Howe told councillors that all payments were listed for approval because Finance and Staffing Committee had not had a meeting during the month to approve invoices under £1,000

Proposed: Cllr Venner

Seconded: Cllr Miele

RESOLVED with all in favour that Council approve for payment the list of invoices presented

1093. Youth Service Report

Mr Paul Matcham introduced himself as being from Minehead Eye and gave a report on the youth service it offered. It ran 7 youth clubs across West Somerset with 2 clubs in Minehead, one at Minehead Eye and the other at Cuckoo Meadow. There were 50-60 members attending every week at Minehead Eye and about 20 at Cuckoo Meadow. Minehead Town Council had supported the service by granting £1,500 to each youth club. Somerset County Council had until 2018 contributed £3,500 but budget cuts meant this would cease and the youth service were looking at ways of plugging the gap

in funding. Funds had been sourced from Hinkley Point and the Lottery. Mr Matcham said he had two months in which to fill in the gap in funding for the next financial year and to try and create a new sustainable model for funding. He was asking Council if it could contribute £6,000 in the next financial year

Cllr Everett asked if any fund-raising would be done by the youth clubs and Mr Matcham said there were plans to have fund-raising events at Minehead Eye so the users of the schemes could show how they valued the youth service. Cllr Venner asked if Council could have a copy of the service level agreement between Council and Minehead Eye. Cllr Venner said Council would come back to Mr Matcham in January after discussions about setting the precept

1094. 2019/2020 Precept/Budget

Cllr Venner, Chair of Finance, said he hoped all councillors would work together to agree a balanced budget and the precept. He detailed some of the extra responsibilities the Town Council had to budget for, on, including grass cutting from the District Council, ownership and running of the public toilets and maintenance and service costs of the Community Building. To date, items such as highways grass cutting and upkeep of the toilets had been funded from reserves but would now need to be included in the precept. Money had also to be put aside for long term issues such as extra land for the Cemetery. Cllr Venner said that the increase under discussion would amount £20 to £25 extra annually on Council Tax on a Band D property. Mr Howe said the reserves looked high but included amounts earmarked for specific projects. Mr Giles reminded councillors that at the Full Council meeting on 22 Jan the precept would have to be set and notified to the District Council as the deadline for submission could not be extended further. He hoped that reserves would be re-stated then and earmarked reserves reviewed and updated in light of decisions made recently

1095. Christmas Events and Lights

Cllr Hercock said he was most impressed with how the Christmas lights switch-on went with the Town Council and Gateway Events and the community working in harmony. He hoped that next year's event would be even bigger and better. Mr Howe said Council had contributed £2,000 towards the Gateway Events and he had received many positive comments from people in the town. He apologised that, due to an oversight, Alcombe had not been included in the switch-on and thanked the Amenities Team for very quickly putting up some new trees with lights. Over £6,000 had been invested in new lights for the town this year. Cllr Everett praised the very hard work of the Amenities Team line manager in sorting out all the lights, echoed by Cllr Harvey, who said the whole team had worked well above and beyond their duty in preparing for the switch-on

1096. Advisory Groups – Reports/Updates

From the Toilets Advisory Group Cllr M Smith gave a full report on her fact-finding visit to Weston-Super-Mare to view their public toilet arrangements. She had compiled

a report, circulated to councillors, and emphasised the value of a specialist survey Weston had carried out of the toilets' use. She proposed holding an information morning for the public in February and carrying out a digital survey in July, keeping the public fully informed and giving it a chance to have its say. She told councillors about the "Changing Places" heavy duty facilities for the disabled, such as those available in Taunton and Wellington. Minehead has nowhere in the town suitable to operate such a facility which does need staff in the area to guarantee ease of access. Cllr Smith also informed councillors of a "Community Toilets" scheme which is successful in some towns, whereby companies offer to provide toilet facilities in return for a small grant. The upgrade of Summerland Place toilets would be postponed until after a survey of their use and for now would just have a facelift. In Blenheim Gardens the Ladies' block will be converted into 2 Gents' and 2 Ladies' cubicles so dispensing with the need to operate 2 separate blocks

1097. Grant Applications

- (a) West Somerset Advice Centre
- (b) Lawns Community Hall
- (c) Minehead & Exmoor Music Festival

Cllr J Parbrook said that there were issues to be addressed with all three grant applications.

Proposed: Cllr J Parbrook

Seconded: Cllr T Venner

RESOLVED with all in favour that all three applications be deferred for consideration at the next Finance and Staffing Committee meeting

1098. To resolve to exclude members of the press and public - To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted [Public Bodies \[Admission to Meetings\] Act 1960](#)

Proposed: Cllr Kingston-James

Seconded: Cllr Bolton

RESOLVED with all in favour that the meeting continue *in camera*