



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE STATUTORY ANNUAL FULL COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 2 JUNE 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* (Deputy Mayor)

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

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

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

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

Members of the Press and Public: 10 members of the Public
0 members 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.

556 CONFIRMATION THAT A QUORUM WAS PRESENT [LGA 1972, Sch.12, paras 12, 28](#)

It was confirmed by the Meeting that a Quorum was present.

557 ELECTION OF MAYOR/CHAIR AND ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE [LGA1972s14 \(1\), 15\(1&2\), 33\(1\) and 34\(1&2\)](#)

The Acting Clerk asked for nominations for Mayor.

Cllr M Palmer nominated Cllr Bolton as Mayor, seconded by Cllr Lawton. No other nominations being received, a vote was held and this was unanimously agreed.

The Acting Clerk announced that Cllr Bolton was elected Mayor of Minehead for 2020/2021.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Bolton be elected Mayor, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, and shall continue in office and preside at the Annual Meeting until his successor is elected at the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

The Mayor signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, witnessed by the Zoom participants at the Meeting, to be signed at a later date by the Acting Clerk.

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

Apologies had been received from Cllr S Heard, Cllr N Hercocock and Cllr B Mandley.

559 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 Venner	All	SWaT Councillor	2020	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted

DISPENSATIONS [\(Localism Act 2011\)](#)

No-one had requested any dispensations.

560 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR/CHAIR

Cllr Rose nominated Cllr C Palmer, seconded by Cllr A Kingston-James.

Cllr Venner nominated Cllr Kingston-James, seconded by Cllr Bloomfield.

A vote took place with Cllr Palmer receiving 3 votes and Cllr Kingston-James receiving 6 votes. There was one abstention.

The Mayor announced that Cllr Kingston-James was elected Deputy Mayor for 2020/2021.

561 TO AGREE MINUTES:

561.1 *The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 5 May 2020*

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr Prosser

Agreed with all in favour.

561.2 *The Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 5 May 2020*

Cllr C Palmer said he had in fact received apologies from Cllr Prosser and she should not be marked as "Absent".

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield**
Agreed, subject to the amendment, with all in favour.

562 TO REVIEW DELEGATION ARRANGEMENTS TO COMMITTEES

Councillors had discussed changing the structure of the Council, possibly dispensing with Committees and having more frequent Full Council Meetings.

Cllrs Venner and Malin were in favour of having a Policy and Development Committee, as had been the case in the past, which could possibly meet twice a year to look at major structural proposals. Cllr Venner suggested that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairs of Committees should get together to discuss the proposition.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton **Seconded: Cllr Venner**
Agreed with one abstention and the rest in favour that a Policy and Development Committee should be set up within the next three months to consider, without a time limit, the structure of the Council.

563 TO AGREE THE APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND DEPUTIES

563.1 *Amenities and Environment Committee*

Cllr Kingston-James nominated Cllr Bloomfield, seconded by Cllr Prosser.
Cllr M Palmer nominated Cllr Kingston-James, seconded by Cllr Harvey.
Cllr Kingston-James, as Deputy Mayor, declined the nomination.

Cllr Bloomfield was elected Chair of the Amenities and Environment Committee with 6 in favour.

Cllr Kingston-James nominated Cllr Prosser as Deputy Chair, seconded by Cllr Venner.

Cllr Prosser was elected Deputy Chair of Amenities and Environment Committee with 6 in favour.

563.2 *Finance and Staffing Committee*

Cllr Venner nominated Cllr C Palmer, seconded by Cllr Prosser.
Cllr Rose nominated Cllr Venner, who declined the nomination.

Cllr C Palmer was elected Chair of the Finance and Staffing Committee, with 9 in favour and one abstention.

Cllr Bolton nominated Cllr Lawton as Deputy Chair, seconded by Cllr Bloomfield.

Cllr Lawton was elected Deputy Chair of Finance and Staffing Committee with 9 in favour and one abstention.

563.3 *Planning Committee*

Cllr Rose nominated Cllr C Palmer, seconded by Cllr Bloomfield.

Cllr C Palmer was elected Chair of the Planning Committee with all in favour.

Cllr Rose nominated Cllr M Palmer, seconded by Cllr Bloomfield.

Cllr M Palmer was elected Deputy Chair of the Planning Committee, with 8 in favour.

564 TO AGREE THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

564.1 *Amenities and Environment Committee*

Cllrs Harvey, Mandley, C Palmer, M Palmer, Rose and Venner had volunteered to stand as members of the Amenities and Environment Committee

564.2 *Finance and Staffing Committee*

Cllrs Bloomfield, Heard, Hercock, Malin, Mandley, M Palmer and Venner had volunteered to stand as members of the Finance and Staffing Committee.

564.3 Following a suggestion from the Acting Clerk and a report from Cllr C Palmer that the previous Planning Committee Meeting had not been quorate, despite having 8 members, Councillors considered a proposal that all Councillors should stand on the Planning Committee.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer Seconded: Cllr Lawton

Agreed with all in favour that the Planning Committee would in future comprise all 16 Councillors (at present 14).

565 TO AGREE THE SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2020/21

Councillors had received the proposed Schedule of Meetings.

Cllr C Palmer wished to change several dates of Full Council Meetings which clashed with District Council Meetings.

The Acting Clerk said that once the Community Building was open all Council Meetings would be held there, including Planning Committee Meetings, following the current arrangements with hall lettings booked on the free days. Any subsequent changes to dates of Full Council Meetings would need to be to the Tuesday before or the Tuesday after the scheduled date.

Proposed: Cllr Prosser Seconded: Cllr Venner

Agreed with all in favour that Planning Committee Meetings would in future be held in the evening: the present proposed Meeting dates would stand, apart from 4 Full Council Meeting dates which would be altered. Cllr C Palmer would inform the Acting Clerk which these dates were.

Items 566 and 567 would be considered and approved *en bloc*.

566 TO AGREE THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO ADVISORY/WORKING GROUPS

Cllr Bolton suggested that Advisory and Working Groups should decide who would be the Lead Councillor for the group and report back to Council.

Advisory/Working Group	Councillors
<i>Allotments Advisory Group</i>	Cllrs Mandley, M Palmer, C Palmer and Rose
<i>Cemetery Advisory Group</i>	Cllrs Bloomfield, M Palmer and Prosser
<i>Community Building Advisory Group</i>	Cllrs Bloomfield, Bolton, Lawton, C Palmer and M Palmer
<i>Community Orchard Group</i>	Cllrs C Palmer, M Palmer and Rose
<i>Flooding Advisory Group</i>	Cllrs Bloomfield, Kingston-James and Rose
<i>Hopcott Common Advisory Group</i>	Cllrs Bloomfield, Bolton, Malin and Rose
<i>Partnership Advisory Group</i>	Cllrs Bolton, Kingston-James and M Palmer
<i>Public Conveniences Advisory Group</i>	Cllrs C Palmer, M Palmer and Prosser
<i>Risk Management Advisory Group</i>	Cllrs Harvey, Lawton, Malin, C Palmer and Venner, along with the RFO
<i>Staffing Advisory Group Interview Panel/ Staff Induction/Training</i>	Cllrs Bloomfield, Kingston-James, Lawton and M Palmer
<i>Grievances</i>	Cllrs Harvey and C Palmer
<i>Appeals</i>	Cllrs Bloomfield, Lawton and Malin

567 TO AGREE MTC REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Outside Body	Councillors
<i>Business Improvement District ("BID")</i>	Cllrs Lawton and Venner
<i>Broadlands Retirement Home</i>	Cllr Prosser
<i>Cuckoo Meadow Steering Group</i>	Cllrs Bloomfield and Venner
<i>Ellicombe Gardens Residents' Association</i>	Cllrs Bloomfield, Bolton and M Palmer
<i>League of Friends of Minehead Hospital</i>	Cllr Malin
<i>Minehead Area Panel</i>	Cllr Kingston-James
<i>Minehead Development Trust</i>	Cllr Lawton
<i>Minehead Coastal Communities Team</i>	Cllrs Kingston-James and M Palmer
<i>Minehead and Porlock Bus Group</i>	Cllr Venner
<i>Minehead Shopwatch</i>	Cllr Bloomfield
<i>Minehead Twinning Association</i>	Cllrs Bloomfield and Prosser
<i>Minehead Youth Club</i>	Cllr Venner
<i>Plastic-Free Community Group</i>	Cllr Heard
<i>Quirke's Almshouses</i>	Cllrs Bolton, Lawton and Malin
<i>West Somerset Advice Bureau</i>	Cllr Bloomfield
<i>West Somerset Flood Group</i>	Cllr Kingston-James

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield

Agreed with all in favour that members of Advisory Groups and Representatives on Outside Bodies were approved as stated.

568 TO ADJOURN THE MEETING FOR PUBLIC INCLUSION (Standing Order no 3e)

568.1 Mr Graham Sizer, on behalf of Minehead BID, had wanted to speak but was having technical difficulties in accessing the Zoom Meeting. Mr Andrew Hopkins of BID said Mr Sizer had wanted to thank MTC for the excellent working relationship it had achieved with BID and to thank MTC for all its help during the year.

568.2 The Acting Clerk read out a letter addressed to MTC from Mrs Daphne Barr dated 29 May, enclosing a statement to be read at the Meeting. Mrs Barr said she was shocked to learn that Cllr Sandra Slade had resigned as a Councillor and Mayor after having received “personally offensive and abusive” emails from other Councillors. The statement questioned the integrity of Councillors who behave in this way.

Mrs Barr said Cllr Slade had been an honourable Councillor and Mayor who had worked hard for MTC and for the community: she had listened to residents’ concerns and had acted upon them, for which Mrs Barr thanked her. Mrs Barr hoped the new Mayor would be a worthy successor to Cllr Slade.

Cllr Bolton, Mayor, said it was a very sad situation that Sandra Slade felt she needed to resign and she would be a very hard act to follow. He wanted to reassure residents that once MTC was out of the COVID-19 measures he would continue with the Mayor’s Coffee Mornings.

Cllr Venner said Council should reply to the letter and thank Mrs Barr very much for her comments.

568.3 Cllr Mandy Chilcott gave a brief report from SCC:

- She firstly said that huge congratulations were due to the company at The Regal Theatre who have won the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service; the highest award a voluntary group can be given in the UK.
- The debate about a unitary authority had commenced with SCC working on a business plan for reducing five Somerset Councils to a single unitary authority. Council would be hearing from SWaT and SCC about this matter in the following month.
- There was no further news yet about the pedestrian crossing near the school.

568.4 Cllr Christine Lawrence told the Meeting that 1-7 June was Volunteers' Week and this was an opportunity to thank everyone in Minehead and Alcombe and indeed throughout Somerset who has volunteered throughout the COVID-19 situation. They had been amazing and SCC could not have managed without all these people who have given their time and effort. The situation had brought people together and all had learned to work together.

568.5 Cllr Bolton had attended a COVID-19 briefing at SWaT. What it had been doing over the previous 10 weeks and the amount of work it had done in the background had been astonishing. All staff of all the Councils across Somerset had gone above and beyond what could possibly be expected to try and keep everyone safe and to manage the situation whilst under immense strain.

569 TO APPROVE THE PAYMENTS SCHEDULE FOR MAY 2020 (*INVOICES PREVIOUSLY APPROVED BY COUNCILLORS VIA EMAIL*)

The RFO told the Meeting that questions relating to the May Payments Schedule had all been answered and 10 Councillors had approved the payments by email.

Proposed: Cllr Venner

Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield

Agreed with all in favour that the Payments Schedule for May 2020 was approved.

570 TO RECEIVE THE INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2019/20 (*SECOND UPDATE REPORT*)

Cllr Lawton commented that this was a very positive document and MTC should acknowledge the efforts of the RFO and the Finance Assistant. It was an incredible achievement to have come to this point over the previous 12 months. Cllr Venner agreed and was pleased MTC had worked as a body to produce this document. Cllr Bolton said it was testament to the RFO's brilliant guidance.

The RFO said the only item to be completed was the Asset Register. It had been acknowledged by the auditor that MTC had implemented both of the two recommendations from the first Report. He said the Fidelity Guarantee had been increased to £2,000,000.

571 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON COUNCIL ASSETS

Councillors had received the RFO's Report on MTC's Fixed Assets and the Asset Register he had prepared.

The RFO said the Register had been almost complete when the COVID-19 lockdown came into effect and he had been unable to finish the Register with staff from the Depot. Two of the team had carried out physical checks on assets at the Depot and he was confident the Register was 95% accurate. There was still much work to be done because MTC needed photographs of equipment, and assets still had to be tagged and security marked.

The total value of all assets, including the Community Centre, was just under £3,000,000. Cllr Rose queried the value of the land owned by MTC and the RFO said such land had no material value as it was a community asset which could not be sold.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield

Agreed with all in favour to accept the Asset Register.

572 TO AGREE A DATE FOR A FINANCE SEMINAR TO REVIEW

572.1 Draft Accounts for 2019/20

572.2 Levels of general and earmarked reserves

572.3 Implications of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the 2020/21 Budget

The RFO said the Accounts for 2019/2020 had been closed and the reserves approved. He suggested holding the Seminar on 23 June 2020 at 7.00pm. This would be a week before the next Full Council Meeting and allow time for the relevant paperwork to be emailed to Councillors.

573 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON THE COMMUNITY CENTRE FROM THE ACTING CLERK

The Acting Clerk updated the Meeting on progress with the Community Centre.

- The contract end date, because of COVID-19, had been moved from early May to the end of July 2020.
- Utility companies were presently only carrying out emergency work so installation of electricity and gas meters was delayed.
- The Acting Clerk was recommending acceptance of a quote from R E Sherrin of Carhampton to construct and fit a bar, his quote being substantially cheaper than previous quotes. Minehead AFC would contribute £5,000 towards the work. When completed the structure of the bar would belong to MTC with MAFC providing all equipment. Further purchases for the Community Centre would need to be ordered in June/July, including benches, furniture, conference and sound system and kitchen equipment.
- Of the three quotes obtained Kingfisher Lighting had been awarded the contract to install six new floodlights. C J Lynch would carry out the groundwork for these in July.
- The preferred contractor, Courtstall, had started replacing all fencing of the Multi-Use Games Area and tennis courts on 27 May and they would also resurface both areas and install a root barrier.
- The application to SWaT for funding of £16,500 towards the Adult Gym had been successful and of the three quotes obtained Wicksteed Leisure had been chosen to supply the equipment. C J Lynch would carry out the groundwork for the scheme.
- The goal presently located on the site of the new adult gym was to be dismantled and a new location for it would need to be decided.
- Quotes were being obtained for the refurbishment of the two pillars at the Irnham Road entrance which would involve blocking up windows, installing new secure doors and re-decorating. These could then be used for storage.
- Gilpin Demolition would start work demolishing the old building as soon as electricity and water supplies had been disconnected. MAFC were ready to vacate the building and all contents were to be removed on 18 and 19 June 2020. Demolition itself and removal of the foundations would take several weeks. The area would be then be grassed over.
- The RFO told the Meeting that there was an earmarked reserve of £50,000 for the demolition of the old building. Reserves would need to be adjusted to account for any spending in excess of this. The Budget for the Community Centre would be discussed, along with other budgets, at the Finance Seminar.

- The Acting Clerk said the building would probably open officially in September. He said there was time to finish the work and enable the Football Club to get into the building before their season started back. In reply to a question from Cllr Lawton, the Acting Clerk confirmed that MAFC would be the licensees running the bar and that MTC would not be involved in this.

574 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

(Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960)

The Acting Clerk said MTC was considering streaming its Meetings through its website and would keep the public informed about this.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr M Palmer

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

The Meeting adjourned at 9.25 pm.

Cllr Prosser left the Meeting at 9.30 pm.

The Meeting resumed at 9.30 pm.

575 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

The Meeting closed at 10.15 pm.