

**DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council meeting held virtually
(on line) via Zoom on Tuesday September 29th, 2020 at 7.30pm**

A video-recording of this meeting can be seen on Bruton Town Council's Youtube channel by clicking on this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JA85eBYr-zg>

Present: Councillors Anderton, Abi Baker, Karen Baker, Brownlow (from 20/91), Crawford, Hood, Jones, Pickering (from 20/91), Robinson and Skinner
In the chair: Councillor Jones
In Attendance: District Councillor Lucy Trimnell
County Councillor Anna Groskop
The Assistant Town Clerk
A spokesperson for Open Mental Health
Several members of the public live-streamed the meeting via Youtube

20/86 Welcome and Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Day and Hall.

20/87 Minutes of the Council meeting held on 25th August

The Council RESOLVED 8-0-0 [For-against-abstain] to approve the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 25th August 2020.

20/88 Public question time

There were no questions or comments from members of the public

20/89 Declarations of Interests

No Councillors had any interest to declare in respect any agenda items.

20/90 Action Points from Previous Meeting

- The Market Towns Investment Group (MTIG) of South Somerset District Council (SSDC) has been notified of the Town Council's priority project, the Station Road car park improvement.
- An application for Somerset County Council's (SCC) Climate Emergency Community Fund is being drafted.
- The logo of Bruton Town Council (BTC) has been forwarded to IDDEA Renewable Energy Systems Ltd for the Solar Streets project.
- Westcotec will complete the order for the Speed Indicator Device (SID) when the mounting bracket dimensions have been confirmed. SID installation locations have been agreed with Somerset County Highways Department (Highways), subject to the use of lampposts in two cases being acceptable to Highways Lighting engineers. [**Note:** Highways has since confirmed that the use of these lampposts is acceptable].
- Councillor Buckland will be drawing up details of the works to adapt the Engine Shed for use as a food bank.

At this point County Councillor Groskop joined the meeting.

- There had been four enquiries about the Community Development Officer role; the closing date is 9th October 2020.

- The Jubilee Park playground has been opened, some Playground equipment has been repaired and GB Sport & Leisure have been asked for prices for replacing the Multiplay, the Carousel and the Seesaw.

20/91 Reports from District and County Councillors

i. County Councillor Anna Groskop

- Somerset is fortunate to have been less badly affected by Covid-19 than some other parts of the country, with a total of 204 Covid-related deaths reported so far. The overall death rate is 4% below the five-year average for the county.
- SCC has put on an extra 20 school buses to enable staggered start and finish times.
- The Climate Change strategy has been passed by SCC's Scrutiny Committee and it is hoped that the County Council will adopt it in the foreseeable future.
- The bollards on St Catherine's Hill are likely to be installed imminently.

At this point Councillors Brownlow and Pickering joined the meeting

- Residents are encouraged to use local services and businesses so as not to lose them.
- Supporters of the *One Somerset* bid for a single unitary authority believe that the alternative *Stronger Somerset* bid will fail because each of the two proposed unitary authorities has a population of c.2.8k. which is lower than the Government's preferred threshold of 3k. The Government is expected to respond to the bids by December 2020.

ii. District Councillor Lucy Trimmell

- Residents are encouraged to report nuisance bonfires via the SSDC website.
- SSDC will be running a 12-month trial in Yeovil of electric scooters available for hire.
- SSDC's anti-litter campaign has reached c.33,000 residents across the district via social and other media. SSDC can provide local litter-picking groups with requisite equipment and will also collect bagged-up waste.
- Anyone interested in the Green Recovery Challenge Fund (for large community environmental charities and partnerships) and the SSDC Community Grant (for smaller local environmental initiatives) is encouraged to contact Councillor Trimmell. SCC's Climate Emergency Community Fund is available for Town and Parish Councils.
- SSDC invites responses to its Council Tax Support Scheme consultation which closes on 4th November 2020 (<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ACSFinalSSDC/>).
- Somerset Waste Partnership is grateful to residents for the high level of recycling through lockdown. Next summer it plans to expand its kerbside collections in South Somerset to include more plastic and other recyclable materials.

20/92 Coronavirus response

The Coronavirus Coordination Group met in the wake of recent changes in Government regulations. The local information phone line, neighbourhood support pods, Church-led befriending service and food deliveries through the post office shop have all experienced a substantial drop in demand and are well placed to cope if there is an increase in demand. However the prospect of more restrictions over the next six months is likely to lead to greater levels of anxiety and mental health problems.

- Open Mental Health.** The Manager of the Balsam Centre, Wincanton, briefed the Council about this Community Mental Health framework. Although it is a long-term project with a wide scope it has particular relevance during the current pandemic:
 - *Open Mental Health* is a pilot project funded through the *Trailblazer* element of NHS *Transformation* programme, the only such one in the South West.
 - It reports to the major mental health charity *Rethink Mental Health* and works closely with Citizens Advice.

- In South Somerset it is based at and led by the Balsam Centre.
- It aims to integrate the work of Somerset Mental Health Alliance (a group of ten voluntary sector charities) with NHS and Local Authority services.
- It will also work closely with smaller and more specialist local charities and community organisations and help them to access funding.
- Its aim is to help enable those with mental health challenges to gain easy access to the people and services best able to help them.
- It asks Town and Parish Councils to help spread the word and encourage community organisations and anyone in need of help to get in touch.

Councillors expressed their thanks for all the help provided by the Balsam Centre to Bruton residents over the years and during the current pandemic.

ii. Bruton Food Drop:

- The Food Drop service is in funds and has benefited from many generous donations from individuals, businesses and the Town Council.
- With the easing of lockdown many volunteers are back at work and the use of professional management is under consideration.
- The Food Drop and Bruton Food Bank are working closely together. Both operations will be able to operate much more effectively when they can use The Engine Shed; plans and planning advice are both going forward.

iii. Community Office:

- In accordance with Government guidelines the Clerk and Assistant Clerk are working from home whenever possible.
- The Council is most grateful to the volunteers who are doing a great job keeping the Front Office open and ensuring that proper Covid-secure protocols are implemented.
- Very few calls are now coming in to the Council's information line. Councillors agreed that it would be appropriate to reconfigure the system so that rather than checking voice mail messages by rota a notification email would be generated whenever a call comes in.

20/93 Draft Minutes and reports from Committees and Working Groups:

i. Planning Committee, 23rd September 2020

The Committee had commented on three planning applications and made arrangements to respond to two Government consultations on changes to the Planning system.

ii. Community Engagement Committee, 15th September 2020

The Council has received four enquiries about the advertised position of Community Development Officer, but as yet no applications. The application deadline is 9th October.

It was RESOLVED 9-0-1 to promote the advertised position of Community Development Officer via a boosted post on Facebook, at a likely cost of £50-£100.

iii. Working Groups:

- It was agreed to defer consideration of a report from the Jubilee Park Working Group until the next Full Council meeting.
- The Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group Solar Streets initiative is going ahead. Castle Cary Town Council has joined the Group's retrofitting initiative and other neighbouring parish councils are welcome to join as well.

- The Safer Walking and Cycling Working Group is running a survey on Walking and Cycling to School, and Primary School children and their parents have been highly supportive. SCC's initial response to the Walking and Cycling Manifesto for Somerset has been encouraging and the Group is looking forward to receiving a formal response shortly.

20/94 South Somerset District Council Leisure Planning Obligations schedule

It was agreed that:

- i.** in view of the leisure facilities which already exist on Cuckoo Hill, some of the S.106 funds associated with application 20/02297/OUT (land North of Brewham Road) might usefully be directed to help fund larger projects at Jubilee Park, including the repair and upgrading of children's play equipment, rather than being confined to the development site. It was noted that vulnerable flood-relief groundworks underlying the Cuckoo Hill playground site constrain the installation of additional play equipment;
- ii.** it would be preferable if funding from the S.106 funds currently allocated to the installation of a skate park could be re-allocated to leisure equipment more broadly since it is hoped that a skate park will already be in place by the time these funds become available;
- iii.** the Council should seek confirmation that S.106 funds allocated to the refurbishment of changing rooms in the existing pavilion could be used for a new pavilion if one is built.
- iv.** provision should be made for improvement of the lower pitch at Jubilee Park, as previously agreed by the Council.

It was RESOLVED 10-0-0 that the Assistant Clerk in consultation with Councillor Robinson and the Jubilee Park Development Working Group discuss with SSDC the possibility of using some of the S.106 funds associated with the proposed development north of the Brewham Road off-site, as determined by the Town Council.

20/95 Membership and Terms of Reference (ToR) for Jubilee Park Development Programme Working Group and the Lease of Jubilee Park.

- i.** **It was RESOLVED 10-0-0 that Councillors Karen Baker, Buckland, Crawford and Robinson along with Grahame Baker, Rufus Bullough, Vicki Haselgrove, John Marsh and Bernie Page be appointed members of the Group and that it be asked to draft Terms of Reference when it meets on 19th October 2020.**
- ii.** Councillors expressed their gratitude to the Friends of Sexey's Hospital for confirming that they are ready to extend the Jubilee Park lease, having obtained Charity Commission approval.

It was RESOLVED 10-0-0 that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be authorised to sign the lease extension on behalf of Bruton Town Council, subject to the wording of clause 2.1 of the draft lease being amended by adding (to the requirement to obtain the landlord's consent for any media coverage associated with the property) the standard legal phrase, "such consent not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed".

20/96 Staff salary award 2020-21:

It was RESOLVED 10-0-0 to approve the 2020-21 pay award and holiday entitlement agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.

20/97 Recruitment panel for Community Development Officer

Councillor Anderton declared a personal interest in this item and did not speak or vote.

It was RESOLVED 9-0-0 that Councillors Abi Baker, Jones and Pickering be appointed to the recruitment panel, with Councillor Robinson attending in an advisory capacity and Councillor Skinner as a reserve member.

20/98 Councillor Reports

- Councillor Hood noted that since lockdown there has been a substantial increase in complaints about heavy traffic and speeding and the Transport Committee is likely to bring this matter up at the next Council meeting.
- Councillor Crawford drew attention to the need to deal with aquatic weeds in the river Brue, near Church Bridge.

20/99 Accounts for Payment

It was RESOLVED 10-0-0 to approve payment of the amounts set out in the schedule below dated 29th September 2020

20/100 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Council discussed whether or not the nature of the business to be discussed under the next agenda item made it necessary to exclude the press and public.

It was RESOLVED 8-1-1 not to exclude the press and public.

20/101 Transfer of Assets and Services

The Council considered the possible transfer of assets and services from SSDC to BTC and whether or not this would be a good time to discuss the matter with SSDC, given the proposed changes to the structure of Local Government. Councillors agreed that in any event residents should be invited to express their views via a public consultation.

It was RESOLVED 8-1-1 to set up a Task and Finish group, comprising Councillors Anderton, Crawford, Jones, Robinson and Skinner, to prepare a working paper setting out a coherent vision and rationale for the transfer of certain assets and services to the Town Council.

The meeting ended at 9.32pm

Members of Council considered the following matters in the exercise of their functions: Equal opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime and Disorder, Health and Safety and Human Rights.