

Draft minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 26th October 2021 in the Unionist Hall.

Present: Councillors Anderton, Brownlow, Buckland, Crawford, Fradley and Robinson (Chair).

Also present: Assistant Clerk, Community Development Officer, County Councillor Groskop, District Councillor Trimmell and the Town Clerk

There were no members of the public present at the start of the meeting.

The meeting started at 19:30.

21/125 Casual Vacancy:

- a) To resolve to suspend Standing Orders for this item only to enable a paper ballot should there be more than one applicant.

The Chair informed the Council that, as there was only one applicant for co-option, there was no need to suspend standing orders as voting could take place by a show of hands.

- b) To consider applications received for co-option for the current casual councillor vacancy, and to co-opt a new council member.

One application had been received from Mr Jamie Cullen.

Councillor Buckland **nominated** Mr Cullen, Councillor Anderton seconded the nomination.

RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to co-opt Mr Cullen to the Town Council.

- c) To receive a declaration of acceptance of office or resolve that this can be received at a later date.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that, as Mr Cullen was not present, his declaration of acceptance of office form could be received at the next Full Council meeting.

Action 211026/1: Action Town Clerk

The Chair noted that Councillor K. Baker had resigned from the Council and asked for thanks to be formally recorded for her hard work and service to the Town Council. Councillor K. Baker's volunteering work in the wider community was also recognised.

21/126 Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Councillors A. Baker, Day, Jones, Hood and Pickering.

21/127 Declarations of Interests

Councillor Buckland declared disclosable pecuniary interests in items 21/131 d) viii and 21/136 as they related to a quote from and payment to his employer.

21/128 Minutes of previous meetings

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 28th September 2021.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the minutes as presented and that the Chair could sign the minutes at a later time.

21/129 Public Question Time

No members of the public were present.

21/130 To review the action points from previous meetings Noted.

It was **agreed to move item 21/134** to this point in the meeting.

21/134 Neighbourhood Plan – To receive a report from the Assistant Clerk and agree Councillors to form an initial working group to plan the project.

The Assistant Clerk summarised the content of his report, which had been circulated before the meeting.

Councillor Brownlow recalled that the Council had previously agreed to begin work on a neighbourhood plan once the Town Plan had been completed. The Chair agreed and added that, as the Town Plan was almost five years old, it would be pertinent to refresh it.

There was some general discussion about the influence a neighbourhood plan can have over planning application decisions and how this is linked to the fact that SSDC has been unable to demonstrate the availability of a five-year housing land supply.

The Chair noted that grants were available from Locality but that these were due to expire soon. Regarding the required working group, the Chair said that this would require members to join from the wider community. Councillor Anderton suggested that the working group should first investigate the probable cost of completing a neighbourhood plan. The Chair indicated that he might be willing to Chair the working group.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the initial working group would be comprised of Councillors Brownlow, Fradley, Hood and Robinson; in addition, it was unanimously agreed that the first tasks for the working group would be to give consideration to funding and to the recruitment of members from the wider community.

19:54 – The Assistant Clerk left the meeting.

21/131 Minutes and Recommendations from Committees and Working Groups:

a) Planning Committee –

- i.** to note the minutes of the meeting held on 12th October and to consider a **recommendation** that the Full Council responds to a letter from Castle Cary Town Council and Ansford Parish Council, supporting their opposition to an appeal in respect of planning application 19/01840/OUT for 200 dwellings on Land North of Ansford Hill, Ansford, Castle Cary, BA7 7PD.

The notes of the meeting were received.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Town Council supported the position of Castle Cary Town Council and Ansford Parish Council in opposing the appeal in respect of planning application 19/01840/OUT and that Councillor Brownlow and the Assistant Clerk were authorised to make final amendments to a draft letter to the Planning Inspector before sending it.

Action 211026/2: Councillor Brownlow & Assistant Clerk

- ii. To receive feedback from the informal meeting held on 20th October concerning the allocation of S106 monies associated with the proposed housing development south of the Brewham Road and to consider how to take the matter forward.

Councillor Fradley summarised ideas from the meeting for possible uses for the amenity land on the site south of Brewham Road (planning application 19/00655/OUT) and questioned whether the installation of a play area on the site would be the best use of the S106 funding available. There was some general discussion about the merit of installing small play areas on multiple new developments, as this would result in many small facilities. It was felt that a more strategic and coherent approach to the use of S106 funding across the whole town was required. The Chair suggested that the Town Council could arrange a meeting with SSDC Planning Officers to discuss a more flexible approach to the use of S106 funding. District Councillor Trimmell offered to assist with this.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Town Council would prefer not to have a Local Equipped Area for Play on the site of application 19/00655/OUT but were open to developing a strategic approach to play provision across the town as a whole. District Councillor Trimmell asked for possible dates to be sent to her so she could arrange a meeting with SSDC Planning Officers to take this idea forward.

Action 211026/3: Town Clerk

b) **CEEWG** – to receive an update following the meeting held on 11th October. Councillors noted the written report. No further action was required.

- c) **Transport Committee** – to approve the notes from the meeting held on 14th September.

Noted.

- d) **Abbey Ponds Working Group** – to receive an update following the meeting held on 12th October and consider the following recommendations:
 - i. That the Town Council supports the working group's wish to develop/reinstate the Abbey Ponds.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Town Council would support the group in carrying out further work on the feasibility of developing or reinstating the ponds.

- ii. To note that research is required to ensure adequate water flow is available to fill the ponds.

Noted.

- iii. To ask the working group to prepare a risk assessment for volunteers carrying out any clearance work, for approval by the Full Council at a future meeting, which would be required by the Town Council's insurers. The risk assessment also to include a signage plan to keep members of the public informed of progress with the works.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the working group should carry out a risk assessment as detailed above, for presentation at a future Town Council meeting.

Action 211026/4: Community Development Officer

- iv. To note that Historic England has specified that hand tools should be used and root systems are not disturbed but allowed to rot in situ.

Noted.

- v. To request all relevant documents are shared with the Town Council, including any management plans, improvement plans or other relevant documents.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Town Council requires that all relevant documents are shared with the Town Council in view of the fact that the Town Council is the leaseholder of the site.

- vi. To agree that the working group can apply for Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) initially for scrub clearance. The permission would be valid for 5 years.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the working group may apply for Scheduled Monument Consent so that scrub clearance work could take place.

- vii. To note that Historic England has confirmed that the construction of a wooden bridge construction can go ahead and to ask the working group to provide any plans and quotes for this work for consideration at a future Full Council meeting.

Noted. The Chair pointed out that Town Council officers must obtain any quotes for work taking place on Town Council land. As such, plans and specifications for any future work must be submitted to the Town Clerk so that quotes can be obtained.

Action 211026/5: Community Development Officer

20:17- Councillor Buckland left the meeting due to the previously declared disclosable pecuniary interest.

- viii. To consider two quotes for maintenance work to the edges of the new path.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the Town Council's current grounds maintenance contractor should carry out the maintenance work to the path. Two votes for; One vote against; Two abstentions. Motion carried.

Action 211026/6: Town Clerk

20:21 – Councillor Buckland returned to the meeting.

21/132 Reports from District Councillor Lucy Trimmell and County Councillor Anna Groskop.

County Councillor Groskop reported that she had received complaints about missed kerbside collections, road works and bulbs having been dug up on Quaperlake Street. Despite reporting missed kerbside collections, waste had still not been collected. Residents had also expressed concern about electricity supplies but Councillor Groskop had not been able to find out if supplies were likely to run out.

Councillor Groskop went on to report that the issue of phosphates in relation to planning applications would be considered by the County Council's Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee on 2nd November.

Finally, Councillor Groskop said she had received positive feedback in relation to the headteacher at Bruton Primary School and the new Enterprise Centre.

District Councillor Trimnell reiterated Councillor Groskop's concerns about missed kerbside collections. She had reported many missed collections but waste had still not been taken away. It was noted that the Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) website was not easy to use and Councillor Trimnell had been in talks with SWP about this issue. Any residents experiencing problems with their kerbside collections could contact Councillor Trimnell for support.

Councillor Trimnell had been in contact with Streetscene about the collapsed wall at Burrowfield steps and would report back to the Community Development Officer with any news.

The Town Council's application for a Community Grant from SSDC towards the cost of replacement play equipment would be considered at the December Area East Committee meeting.

Councillor Trimnell reported that grants of up to £2000 were available from SSDC to assist the start-up of new community groups.

Finally, Councillor Trimnell reported that infrared cameras had been purchased by SSDC to assist in identifying properties that were emitting heat and could benefit from insulation or other measures to reduce heat loss. These cameras would be loaned to Bruton Town Council for use with the Retrofit project.

21/133 Winter Heating Scheme – To consider setting up a scheme that will seek local donations/unnecessary winter fuel payments to provide a fund that Bruton residents struggling with heating bills can access.

The Chair reported that Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) had run a scheme in the past to enable unnecessary winter fuel payments to be distributed to residents who were at risk of fuel poverty. It was **agreed** that the Town Council should determine whether SCF would be running the scheme again this year and work with them to promote it locally.

Action 211026/7: Town Clerk

21/134 Neighbourhood Plan – To receive a report from the Assistant Clerk and agree Councillors to form an initial working group to plan the project.

This matter was dealt with after item 21/130 above.

21/135 Station Road Car Park - To receive an update on progress with the project.

The Clerk reported that she had applied for pre-planning advice from SSDC and was awaiting a response. She had also instructed Instavolt to carry out a survey to determine the viability of installing electric vehicle (EV) charging points on the site and had initiated discussions with the landowner regarding alterations that would be required to the Town Council's lease to enable parking spaces to be sub-let to an EV charging point provider. A final plan was expected to be submitted by Crestmoor soon. The Chair said that it was hoped that a formal agreement could be reached on the final plan at the November Full Council meeting.

21/136 MUGA Jubilee Park – To note that the Clerk has given temporary permission until the end of October 2021 for Castle Cary netball club to use the MUGA on Thursday evenings for two hours, at a charge of £7.50 per hour; to consider adopting draft booking form and policy and to agree that the booking can continue after October 2021 at a charge of £7.50 per hour.

The Clerk reported that, since the agenda had been published, Councillor Anderton had relayed information to her regarding grant conditions, which stipulated that the Town Council was not allowed to charge for use of the MUGA. As such, the Clerk was instructed to remove the references to charges from the Booking Form and Conditions of Hire documents and replace them with a request for a suggested minimum donation of £7.50 per hour.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed, subject to the above changes, to approve the MUGA Booking form and Conditions of Hire document as presented.

Action 211026/8: Town Clerk

21/137 Somerset Unitary Authority – To receive an update from a conference held on 7th October.

The Chair reported that he, Councillor Jones and the Clerk had attended a conference on 7th October, which had proved useful, especially for those councils who had had little involvement in the unitary process to date. There was a general keenness from the unitary team to engage with town and parish councils. Local Community Network pilots were being set-up and Bruton would be working with Castle Cary and Wincanton Town Councils, plus neighbouring parishes, on a health and wellbeing pilot. The structural change order, which would detail electoral arrangements, was due to be released in the coming week.

21/138 New Committee Structure

- a) To consider approving draft terms of reference for the new committee structure.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the committee terms of reference as presented.

- b) To agree a small group of Councillors to review the operation of the various working groups.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that Councillors Anderton, Hood, Jones and Robinson would form the group to review the operation of working groups.

21/139 Retrofit charges – To consider approving a list of fees chargeable to clients of the Retrofit service.

It was **agreed** to defer this matter to allow an informal Zoom meeting to be arranged to discuss the matter further, before bringing the issue back to the next Full Council meeting.

21/133 Hybrid meeting equipment – To consider giving the Town Clerk delegated power to spend up to £500 on hybrid meeting equipment, in consultation with the Chair, Vice-chair and Councillor Anderton, the funds to be taken from projected underspends from the Hall Hire budget (£100) and Office Redecoration budget (£200), with the remainder taken from the Printed Information budget.

Councillor Anderton explained that the Council would need to purchase portable microphones, camera and mixing adapter, which could be connected to a laptop to enable meetings to be broadcast on YouTube. Councillors would not be able to interact with the meeting remotely but could watch live.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to delegate power to the Clerk to purchase the above equipment, in consultation with Councillor Anderton and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council.

Action 211026/9: Town Clerk

21/134 Bank Reconciliations

To approve the bank reconciliations for the HSBC current and deposit accounts and the Unity Trust current account and deposit accounts to 30th September 2021. Councillor Fradley had checked the bank reconciliations before the meeting and found them to be correct.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the back reconciliations as presented.

21/135 Budget Position

To note the budget report to 30th September 2021.

Noted.

21/136 Accounts for Payment - Members to consider the schedule of payments (October 2021)

21:03 – Councillor Buckland left the meeting due to the previously declared disclosable pecuniary interest.

The Clerk reported that additional payments needed to be authorised to the grounds maintenance contractor and the cleaner. The invoices for these payments had been received while the Clerk was on leave so it had not been possible to include them on the payment list for the October meeting. The Clerk would ensure that they were included on the list for the November meeting.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the list of payments as presented and that the two additional payments could be made as requested.

21:05 – Councillor Buckland returned to the meeting.

21/137 Reports Council to receive reports from:

a) Members representing the Council on outside/other bodies

Abbey Ponds Working Group – Councillor Brownlow reported that a supply of stone had been sourced and found to be suitable for addition to the second bund. It would be delivered on Thursday.

Community Hall Committee – Councillor Crawford reported that coffee mornings would recommence on 6th November.

Library Management Committee – The Chair reported that the Library had submitted a planning application for a rear extension, which would soon be considered by the Planning Committee.

Market Town Investment Group (MTIG) – Councillor Anderton reported that he would not be able to attend the next MTIG meeting on 11th November. It was **agreed** that either Councillors Jones or Robinson would attend in his place.

b) Town Councillors

Councillor Brownlow reported that the visit to the Enterprise Centre had been enjoyable.

Councillor Buckland reported that Sexeys School had a vacancy on its board of governors, which the school would like to be filled by a Town Councillor. It was felt that the Council would prefer not to nominate a member to become a governor but might be open to a member becoming an observer on the board of governors instead, with possible involvement in the school's forward planning. The Clerk was instructed to add this matter to the next Full Council agenda.

Action 211026/10: Town Clerk

Councillor A. Baker had sent a report regarding fundraising for a defibrillator to be installed at the Unionist Club. Fundraising would continue to enable the provision of a second defibrillator at the Enterprise Centre. Thanks were recorded to all those who had donated and who had been involved in the project, particularly Grahame Baker, who had taken the lead.

c) Chairman – Nothing to report.

The meeting ended at 21:12.

Zöe Godden

Zöe Godden
Town Clerk

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