

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held in the
Community Hall on Tuesday May 17th, 2022 at 7.30pm**

Present: Councillors: Grahame Baker (from item 22/003), Buckland, Coulter, Cullen,
Crawford, Fradley, Jones, Robinson, Taylor and Wilson
In the chair: Councillor Jones
In Attendance: District & County Councillor (and unitary Councillor elect) Lucy Trimmell
County Councillor (and unitary Councillor elect) Tom Power
Deputy Town Clerk

22/001 Election of the Council Chairman and Town Mayor

**It was RESOLVED 9-0-0 [For-against-abstain] that Councillor Jones be
elected Council Chairman and Town Mayor for the year 2022/23**

22/002 Election of the Council Vice Chairman and Deputy Town Mayor

**It was RESOLVED 9-0-0 that Councillor Robinson be elected Deputy
Council Chairman and Deputy Town Mayor for the year 2022/23**

At this point Councillor Grahame Baker arrived at the meeting

22/003 Acceptance of Office as Councillor

The Council noted the signed Declarations of Acceptance of Office presented by
those members who were present.

**It was RESOLVED 10-0-0 that those members who were not present
be permitted to sign their Declarations of Acceptance of Office
before the next ordinary meeting of the Council on 31st May 2022.**

22/004 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillors Anderton, Abi Baker and Hood
for being unable to attend

22/005 Declarations of Interests

All members would complete and submit a Declaration of Interests form within
28 days of being elected. Councillor Robinson declared an interest in respect of
the Council's review of its subscription to the Somerset Association of Local
Councils, his employer.

22/006 Minutes of previous meetings

**It was RESOLVED 9-0-1 that the minutes of the Full Council meeting
of 26th April 2022 be adopted as a true and accurate record.**

22/007 Committee and Working Group Terms of Reference

The Council reviewed the Terms of Reference of Committees and of those
Working Groups that report directly to the Full Council, namely:

Council Committees – Events, Finance, Planning & Consultation Response,
Town, Strategic Planning

Council Working Groups – Climate & Ecological Emergency (CEEWG),
Jubilee Park Development Programme (JPDPWG)

**It was RESOLVED 8-0-2 to approve the Terms of Reference of Council
Committees, the CEEWG and the JPDPWG.**

22/008 Council & Committee meeting dates, the Composition of Council Committees & Working Groups, and the format of meetings.

a) It was RESOLVED 10-0-0 that:

- i. The Full Council would meet on 31st May, 28th June, 26th July, 30th August, 27th September, 25th October and 29th November 2022, and 24th January, 28th February, 28th March and 25th April 2023.**
- ii. The Town Committee would have its first meeting on 14th June and meet every other month thereafter, and that the Finance & Resources Committee would have its first meeting on 15th June and meet quarterly thereafter.**

b) It was RESOLVED 10-0-0 that Councillor membership of Council Committees and Working Groups would be as follows:

Appeal Panel - Cllrs. Abi Baker, Crawford, Cullen

Events Committee - Cllrs. Abi Baker, Grahame Baker, Buckland, Coulter, Crawford, Fradley, Wilson

Finance & Resources Committee - Cllrs. Anderton, Cullen, Fradley, Hood, Jones, Robinson

Grievance & Disciplinary Committee - Cllrs. Anderton, Grahame Baker, Buckland

Planning & Consultation Response Committee - Cllrs. Abi Baker, Grahame Baker, Buckland, Fradley, Hood, Robinson, Taylor, Wilson

Strategic Planning Committee - Anderton, Abi Baker, Coulter, Cullen, Hood, Jones, Robinson

Town Committee - Cllrs. Anderton, Abi Baker, Grahame Baker, Buckland, Coulter, Crawford, Cullen, Fradley, Taylor, Wilson

Climate & Ecological Emergency Working Group - Cllrs. Coulter, Hood and Jones

Jubilee Park Development Programme Working Group - Cllrs. Grahame Baker, Buckland, Crawford, Robinson.

It was noted that other Council Working Groups were the responsibility of and reported to the Town Committee. It was agreed that the status of the Jubilee Park Development Programme Working Group would be considered at a future Council meeting. It was further agreed that non-councillor members of Council Working Groups would be asked whether they were content to remain members before the full Group membership was confirmed.

- c) Councillors discussed whether or not to continue holding informal Committee meetings online as a consultative exercise in support of officers charged with making decisions under delegated authority. Cllr. Robinson explained that the legal position is unclear but professional bodies are increasingly concerned about the continued use of such arrangements which were devised to help Councils function effectively during lockdown. Continuing to operate in such a way might be considered inappropriate if not illegal since the legal impediments on physical meetings have been removed and Councils and Committees are required by law to meet in person in order to take decisions. It was suggested that Planning might be considered a special case since for many years uncontroversial planning consultations have been delegated to officers in parish and town councils across the country as a matter of course.**

It was **RESOLVED 9-0-1** that as in pre-pandemic times, all Council and Committee meetings would henceforth be held face-to-face so that they could make decisions, apart from some meetings of the Planning and Consultation Response Committee. At the discretion of the Planning & Consultation Committee Chairman and the Deputy Clerk, members of the Committee would be permitted to meet informally online and discuss uncontroversial planning applications as a consultative exercise to assist the Council Officer charged with making recommendations on behalf of the Council to the Local Planning Authority.

22/009 Council Representation on Outside Bodies

It was **RESOLVED 10-0-0** that the Council would be represented on outside bodies as follows:

Chamber of Commerce – to be decided

Community Hall – Cllr. Crawford

Community Interest Company (Good Company) – James Hood

Environment Warden, Tree Warden – Nick Truman

Jubilee Park Pavilion & Youth Club Trust – Cllrs. Abi Baker & Buckland

Community Library – Cllr. Robinson

Market Towns Investment Group AND Rural Community Network

Rural Market Towns Group – Cllr. Anderton

Museum – Cllr. Crawford

Sexey's School (Observer) – to be decided

Youth Groups – Cllrs. Abi Baker & Crawford

22/010 Banking arrangements

It was **RESOLVED 10-0-0** that the Council's bank mandate be modified and that Cllrs. Anderton, Hood, Jones, Robinson and Wilson be confirmed as authorised signatories.

22/011 Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

It was **RESOLVED 7-0-3** that the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations be adopted.

22/012 Register of Property

Councillors agreed to refer consideration of the Council's property register to the Finance and Resources Committee.

22/013 Insurance

Councillors agreed to defer consideration of the Council's insurance cover to the Full Council meeting on 31st May.

At this point Councillor Robinson left the meeting

22/014 Subscriptions

Councillors agreed to defer consideration of Council subscriptions to the Full Council meeting on 31st May.

At this point Councillor Robinson rejoined the meeting

22/015 Complaints procedure

Councillors agreed to defer consideration of the Council's Complaints procedure to the Full Council meeting on 31st May.

22/016 Code of Conduct

Councillors considered the new Model Code of Conduct recommended by Somerset Monitoring Officers and the Somerset Association of Local Councils. It was noted that the new Code has received widespread support across Somerset and that the adoption of a single, county-wide code would make it easier for monitoring officers to offer consistent support and advice to local councils. The new code is likely to prove particularly helpful in identifying cases of bullying and suggesting appropriate remedies.

It was RESOLVED 9-0-1 that the Model Code of Conduct be adopted.

22/017 General Power of Competence

It was noted that the General Power of Competence is available to Councils whose Proper Officer holds a Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA), and at least two-thirds of whose members are elected rather than co-opted. Bruton Town Council fulfils both of these criteria.

It was RESOLVED 9-0-1 that the General Power of Competence be renewed.

22/018 Local Community Network (LCN) Terms of Reference

The Council considered the *South East Somerset Wellbeing LCN Terms of Reference* drawn up by councillors from Bruton, Castle Cary, Milborne Port and Wincanton with the advice and support of the Locality Manager of South Somerset District Council.

It was RESOLVED 8-0-2 that the LCN Terms of Reference be adopted.

22/019 Council stall at the Church Fête

This item would normally be considered at a regular monthly meeting but was included here because of time constraints. Councillors agreed that the Council stall at the previous Church Fête had been highly effective at engaging public interest in Council projects and was well worth repeating.

It was RESOLVED 10-0-0 that the Council would set up its stall at the Church Fête on 2nd June and use it to display photographs of past Council projects such as the new playpark as well as to present details of current Council projects:

- **Proposed improvements at the Station Road car park**
- **Possible acquisition of the Methodist Church for community use.**
- **A proposed Community Garden at Eastfield**

Councillors Buckland, Coulter, Crawford, Jones and Robinson agreed to help set up and man the stall and it was thought likely that some councillors and officers who were not present at the meeting would also want to help

The meeting ended at 9.07pm

Chairman

Date