

**Minutes of the TOWN COMMITTEE meeting held at the
Museum, on 11th October 2022**

Present: Councillors Anderton, Coulter, Crawford, Fradley, Jones and Wilson.

In the chair: Councillor Anderton

In attendance: The Deputy Clerk

1. Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85(1)).

Apologies were received from Councillors A Baker, G Baker, Buckland and Robinson.

It was RESOLVED (6-o-o) [for-against-abstain] to approve the apologies.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting (LGA 1972 sch 12 para 41(1)).

It was RESOLVED (6-o-o) that the minutes of the Town Committee meeting of 14th June 2022 be adopted as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

3. Declarations of interest

None.

4. Abbey Ponds Working Group.

A report of a recent meeting will be circulated shortly. A working party will be clearing small sections of scrub to enable archaeological investigations.

5. Brubowl Working Group

A report of a recent meeting will be circulated shortly. Fund-raising is going well.

6. Footpaths Working Group

A report of a recent meeting has been circulated. The Group has decided to reduce the frequency of meetings to roughly one meeting every two months.

7. Retrofit Working Group.

The Group reports to Full Council rather than to the Town Committee.

8. Cost of living crisis.

Brue Larder:

- Members understand that the governance of the Larder is the remit of *good company*, the Bruton Community Interest Company, while the Committee's role is to give support on behalf of the Council and wider community. The Committee Chairman will discuss with the Larder's organisers how best this can be achieved.
- The Larder is currently helping some 40 Bruton residents.
- There is a shortage of volunteers and more help would be much appreciated.
- Council backing may help the Larder gain access to outside funding.

Warm room scheme:

- Members expressed support for the provision of comfortable public spaces open to residents who are economising on home heating because of high energy costs.
- Although there are several possible venues in Bruton most of them have problems including limited availability, staffing, safeguarding and (in one case) a lack of washing facilities.
- Public houses seem the best option as they are warm, comfortable, well-staffed and open for much of the day. Members agreed it would be worth approaching the publicans who might well be supportive.
- Members also agreed to approach a local housing association which has facilities that they might be willing to make available for this purpose.
- Elderly and disabled residents are the ones most likely to benefit from such a scheme but if they have difficulties walking any distance it might be necessary to arrange transport.
- The Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) is offering grants of up to £1,000 to support such initiatives, with an application deadline of 31st October 2022.

It was RESOLVED 6-0-0 to delegate authority to the Deputy Clerk to apply to the SCF for a grant to support a Warm Rooms initiative if such a scheme is deemed practicable.

Citizen's Advice:

- It was agreed that Councillor Jones would contact *Citizen's Advice* to discuss whether they might be able to provide a service in Bruton.

9. Play Area

- There was agreement on the importance of regular safety checks and Councillor Fradley very kindly agreed to check the play equipment every Tuesday, as in the past.
- SLR has repaired a swing which had a bolt missing; the Deputy Clerk was asked to try and source the proprietary part from specialist suppliers.

10. Town Information

- **Information boards and maps** – The boards and maps need refreshing. It was agreed that the Council would be asked to allocate the necessary funds in the 2023-24 budget.
- **Step into Bruton** - Members are aware that stocks of the leaflet are almost exhausted. The Chamber of Commerce plans to publish a new edition shortly and in the meantime it was agreed to look into the cost-effectiveness of simple, tear-off maps to be kept in the Community Office and given to visitors to help them find their way around.
- **Town Council website** – The website which was built from scratch at minimal cost by a serving Councillor has served the town and the Council very well but adjustments are needed to improve accessibility to documents and other information. It was agreed that Councillor Anderton will discuss possible improvements with the incoming Town Clerk.

11. Allotments

- **Durslade allotments**

It was **RESOLVED 6-0-0** that the Deputy Clerk be authorised to arrange the purchase and installation of a water trough to serve the allotments having first confirmed that this is acceptable to the landlord.

- **Cuckoo Hill allotments**

Members agreed that the manual hedge cutting was well done, and that in future a small tractor and hedge cutter should be able to reach those parts of the hedge where the adjacent strip is too narrow to accommodate a large tractor.

12. Look of the Town

- **Commercial waste bins** – This matter was discussed by the Full Council in September. It was noted that some traders have managed to reduce the time their large bins are left at the side of the highway or on public land.

- **Picnic area by Packhorse bridge** – The damaged picnic tables and benches are being replaced.

- **Weed control** – Members supported a *Clean-up Bruton* day and SLR will be asked to collect weeds and other green waste left in heaps by volunteers. The Deputy Clerk will report the dismal state of the wild-flower area by the river and the dilapidated state of the footpath leading up to Plox to South Somerset District Council; it owns the land and is responsible for its upkeep.

13. Date of next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would be on 13th December

END OF MINUTES

Patrick Pender-Cudlip
Deputy Town Clerk.

Signed:

Date: