

**Minutes of the Town Committee meeting held at Bruton Community Hall Tuesday
18th July 2023**

Councillors present: Anderton, Coulter, Crawford and Wilson

Officers in attendance: Town Clerk, Assistant Clerk

Members of the Public in attendance: 3

Public session opened 7.30pm

Public session closed 7.30pm

Meeting opened 7.30pm

**T23/20: Election of Chairman. To discuss and agree whether to use
Chairman or alternative title of ‘Chair’ or similar.**

**It was RESOLVED [4-0 0] [for-against-abstain] to elect Cllr Buckland as
Chair of the Town Committee.**

Cllr Buckland wished to be considered as chairman.

**It was proposed and RESOLVED [4-0-0] that Cllr Anderton is elected chair
for this meeting only, in the absence of Cllr Buckland, and that Cllr
Buckland is elected chair of this committee.**

It was proposed and resolved [3-1-0] to continue with the title of Chair.

T23/21: Election of Vice Chairman.

Both Cllrs Crawford and Coulter were interested in being Vice Chair of Town
Committee.

Cllr Crawford was proposed at Vice Chair.

It was RESOLVED [4 0-0] to elect Cllr Crawford as Vice Chair.

T23/22 Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1)).

To receive and approve any apologies of absence. Apologies were received from
Councillors Buckland, Cullen, and Fradley.

**It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to receive and approve the apologies as
submitted.**

T23/23: Declarations of interest.

Declarations of Interests Members to declare any interests, including disclosable pecuniary interests (DPI) they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any written requests from members for dispensations that accord with the Localism Act 2011 s33 (b-e) (This does not preclude any later declaration).

There were no declarations of interest.

T23/24: Minute of the previous meeting (LGA 1972 sch 12 para 41 (1)).

To agree [the minutes of the last meeting](#) on 16th May 2023 as a true and accurate record.

It was clarified that the youth tender contract winner would be managed with CCTC and the stakeholder committee.

It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to agree the minutes of the last meeting as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

T23/25: to receive a short verbal report from the clerk and an update regarding actions from the previous meeting.

The Clerk provided a short verbal report regarding actions undertaken since the last Town Committee meeting in May 2023

T23/26: Footpaths working group.

To receive an update from the last meeting and to consider and agree any recommendations.

The Working Group meeting notes were previously circulated.

T23/27: To hear a report from the public meeting held on 17th July 2023

To hear feedback regarding a meeting about a local planning application, if an attendee is present to provide a short verbal report.

Cllr Anderton provided a short verbal report. The meeting was broadly positive, with similar information detailed as presented at the Bruton Town Council (BTC) Planning Committee meeting in June. The venue is to move more towards being a food orientated venue, which may lend itself to a quieter place. A noise consultant has been employed to consider mitigation against noise pollution. A great deal of feedback was received from those members of the community who attended. A Planning application to be submitted early next month, which will be heard at a BTC planning meeting, when the consultation is notified to BTC by Somerset Council.

T23/28: Litter

- a. Litter in the town. To ensure that the Town Council has sufficient equipment to support community litter picks.

The clerk overviewed the requirements for equipment required to support litter picks. BTC has some equipment, but HighViz vests are required in multiple sizes, for those organisations that do not have access to the appropriate equipment.

It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to delegate to the clerk's office, working with the chair of this committee, to obtain quotes for the required equipment and to go ahead and purchase what equipment is required.

- b. Litter bin outside the Spar. The bin is too small and regularly overflows. A proposal has been received requesting that the Town Council take ownership of the bin and replace it with a larger one. The inadequate sized bin has been reported to Somerset Council, and a response has not yet been received. The existing bin does need to be bigger. It is thought that it is an Somerset County bin, and is on the normal round of collections.

It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to purchase an increased capacity bin, which does not encroach upon the pavement, as long as the bin is continued to be emptied.

T23/29: Allotments

- a. To receive an update regarding both allotment sites.

Cllr Crawford overviewed both allotment sites. There are a couple of plots that need to be contacted to comply with both the cultivation aspect of the tenancy agreement, and to keep the weeds to a minimum so they do not become a nuisance.

- b. Update regarding non cultivation of allotment plots.

The Clerk's office is to contact the grounds maintenance contractor to sensitively level the vegetation on the plot without destroying existing plants.

- c. To discuss and decide what actions to take to manage unoccupied plots on both allotments.

Councillors wish to advertise the vacant plots on social media.

- d. To discuss and decide how to best promote the allotments

As above, Councillors wish to advertise the vacant plots on social media, and that there is not a waiting list

T23/30: Picnic benches at Packhorse Bridge.

- a. To re-view design proposals for the replacement picnic benches at Packhorse Bridge.

The clerk encouraged the committee to consider the benches to be replaced. Cllr Anderton suggested that there are three options: to replace like for like, as was there previously, and bolt the benches down onto concrete bases; to consider the concrete designs previously; and to consider the benches that may be donated by an alternative resident.

There could be a combination of either two or all of the above. The committee is keen to reduce the use of the sleeper flowerbeds as seating.

The proposal was to accept the kind offer of the donated bench, along with the Town Council installing one traditional picnic benches, bolted down onto a concrete base to

restrict movement. It is important to build in the maintenance of the benches into subsequent years budgets.

It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to install the donated bench and also a traditional picnic bench (as was in place previously) on a concrete bed.

- b.** Bench installation at Packhorse Bridge – anti social behaviour concerns.

Some correspondence has been received from residents that back onto Lower Backway, regarding the antisocial behaviour in this area. A specific request was made for the installation of CCTV which the Town Council has no budget to provide and monitor, nor existing power supply that can be used to support CCTV, at this time.

The advice provided to complainants has been consistently to report incidents of AntiSocial Behaviour, both to the police and to Somerset Council. The Police communication book has now been reinstated by the Clerk's office to keep track of those reports directly received in the Community Office, and can be relayed to the PCSO when they visit.

T23/31: Jubilee Park

- a.** Play area surface. To consider a quote received for removing the kerb edging from two areas of play equipment.

The clerk overviewed the items highlighted that needed to be addressed by the quote which was as a result of the play inspection report earlier this year, to reduce the potential trip hazards of the wetpour shrinking away from concrete edging. It is intended to have grass edging which softer, and easier to maintain.

It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to accept the quote and go ahead with the remedial works.

- b.** MUGA floodlights. Further discussion and decision required about the timer/payment mechanism for operation of the MUGA floodlights.

Cllr Anderton is to determine the specification and provide it to the clerk for the Clerk's office to progress the requirements for a timer system on the MUGA floodlights.

- c.** To consider the introduction of an agreement to formalise the use of the Jubilee Park by Bruton United Football Club (BUFC).

Third party usage of the facilities at Jubilee Park, potentially for financial gain, needs to be documented/have an agreement in place. Currently an agreement of this nature cannot be located, but further attempts will be made to establish if such an agreement exists. A gentle reminder to BUFC to ensure that BTC has given permission for third parties to use the space, that there is consultation and BTC fulfils the responsibility as a lessee for the area.

The Clerk's office will arrange to meet with BUFC to ensure that a proper process is in place with third party usage of the facility, to ensure that the requirements of BTC as the leaseholder is fulfilled.

T23/32: Signage required within the town area.

- a. To approve the proposed designs for signs which have been previously agreed, to progress to order and installation.

The signs were broadly approved on with some typographic tweaks regarding the letter spacing and font. Cllr Anderton to work with the assistant clerk.

It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] that the signs were approved and the necessary formatting improvements made before ordering the signs.

- b. To consider the installation of multiple signs in Station Road car park ([minute ref FR22/44 Finance and Resources Committee](#)), to discourage car parking outside of marked bays. This includes consideration and approval of a quote for installing posts for the signs to be mounted upon.

The placing of the signs was discussed, which is crucial to ensure that the Environment Agency has access to the river along the bank. The main sign to the car park is out of date, and that sign needs to be visible and professional. Consideration for the sign to be changed at the entrance so it is up to date (SSDC removed) and then a further sign within the car park to reinforce parking within the marked bays.

It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to investigate and assess the main entrance sign, to discuss whether the sign can be improved rather than be replaced, and then a install a further sign to encourage parking within marked bays.

This committee will meet at the car park to view the car park improvements a year on, and to consider the sign placement.

T23/33: Grit bin request on Cole Road.

To receive an update regarding the request for a grit bin on Cole Road. To consider the quotes for grit bins, and the associated costs to make the location a viable option for Somerset County Highways.

Awaiting the quote for installation, and an agenda item for the next committee meeting.

T23/34: Riverside Walk and Plox area

- a. To consider a request to improve the management of the Riverside Walk area.

This is an area that has deteriorated in recent years due to inconsistent management. A suggestion of an efficient way to manage the area was received from a local resident.

The Town Clerk forwarded this to Somerset Council for consideration, as the area is owned by Somerset Council.

- b.** To discuss and decide on next actions as a result of communication from Somerset Council.

It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to accept the kind offer of an informal meeting (as suggested in the return correspondence) with Somerset Council, but the timing to be after the correspondence for the maintenance of the bridge in Berkeley Gardens has been sent to Somerset Council, which means that both items can be discussed at the same time.

T23/35: Dovecote Building

- a.** To discuss a report, written and previously circulated by the clerk, regarding the management of the Dovecote Building by Somerset Council. To discuss and approve the recommendations within the report regarding improvements within the community office.

Cllr Anderton clarified that BTC has first refusal to purchase the building, should it be proffered for sale, which is not the same as part ownership.

Recommendations included a review of the office furniture and workstation areas; review of the lighting and heaters in both offices; to consider moving archive records to the Archive Store in Taunton, and securely disposing of records no longer required (consideration to scanning items and holding an electronic copy); consider frosted window covering in the council office; explore the A3 printer request.

It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] accept the report as presented and for the clerk to work with the office team and the chairman of this committee to work through the recommendations .

- b.** To discuss a report, written and previously circulated by the clerk, regarding the recent electricity bill received from the supplier, covering a period of multiple years. To decide the next actions to be taken.

The Clerk overviewed the difficulty engaging with the energy provider, and the frustrations encountered when a complaint was raised. An offer of an exgratia payment has been made by the energy supplier, which if accepted would bring the matter to a close. The alternative to escalate the complaint to the Energy Ombudsman.

Further observations were made in the report: there are two electricity meters which means two standing charges. The supply could be monitored with just one meter, but this means electricity work funded by BTC. An alternative consideration is to instruct the energy provider to replace the one normal meter with a smart meter. (one supply is already a smart meter).

It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to progress complaint this to the ombudsman. It was [4-0-0] to confirm this action and the next steps regarding the electricity meter as recommended in the report, at Full Council on 25th July 2023.

T23/36: EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC - To consider the exclusion of press and public for the remainder of the meeting under the *Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings Act 1960*, Section 1 (2) on the grounds that discussion of agenda item 23/37: Chair's Awards for Service to the Community 2023 (confidential nomination).

It was resolved [4-0-0] to exclude the press and public to discuss the next agenda item.

T23/37: To discuss the nomination for Somerset Council Chair's Awards for Service to the Community 2023.

To discuss and determine a nomination to be forwarded accordingly, if appropriate. This was discussed and there were no nominations to be considered.

T23/38: Date of next meeting 19th September 2023.

Meeting closed 8.42pm

END OF MINUTES