

**Minutes of the Town Committee meeting held at Bruton Community Hall
Tuesday 21st November 2023, 7.30pm.**

Councillors present: G Baker, Coulter (Vice Chair), Crawford, Cullen, Fradley, Robinson and Taylor.

In the Chair: Cllr Coulter.

Officers in attendance: Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk

Members of the public in attendance: 1 (Cllr Jones as a member of the public)

Public session opened at: 7.30pm.

Public session closed at : 7.30pm.

Meeting opened at :7.30pm.

Minutes

T23/60: Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1)).

To receive and approve any apologies of absence.

Apologies were received from Councillors Anderton and Buckland.

It was RESOLVED [5-0-0][for-against-abstain] to accept and approve the apologies submitted.

T23/61: 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).

Cllr Coulter declared a pecuniary interest declared in agenda item 23/74..

T23/62: Minutes of the previous meeting (LGA 1972 sch 12 para 41 (1)).

To agree [the minutes of the last meeting](#) on 19th September 2023 as a true and accurate record.

It was RESOLVED [5-0-0] to accept and approve the minutes of the meeting of 19th September 2023 as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

T23/63: To receive a short verbal report from the clerk and an update regarding actions from the previous meeting.

The clerk delivered a short verbal report, which can be found as an appendix to these minutes.

T23/64: ASB update

To receive verbal update from Town Clerk following discussions with PCSO, and to note further communication from residents.

The Town Clerk met with the PCSO at the end of October. The PCSO is very receptive to being notified directly regarding incidents of antisocial behaviour, but these must also be logged by phoning 101, or online via the [Avon and Somerset Police website](#). The PCSO did make contact directly with residents at Lower Backway, which was helpful and received very positively.

T23/65: Footpaths working group.

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

The notes from the last meeting were circulated previously and duly noted.

T23/66: Abbey Ponds working group.

To receive an update from the recent working group meeting and to agree any recommendations.

A site meeting took place with Historic England on 15th November to discuss the recent class 5 works undertaken by Hauser and Wirth at the Scheduled Ancient Monument.

- a. To consider a Section 17 Management Agreement, if received, from Historic England. The application has been received and needs to be completed. This is for the works that need to take place annually around the outpour area, that have taken place recently under an emergency measures. The management plan will be in place for 5 years (before further review) and will allow for the middle sluice to be cleared on an ongoing basis. The application is to be completed by the Town Clerk, and submitted to Historic England, in due course.
- b. To consider the remedial works, and the additional regular maintenance works at Abbey Ponds, as per the recent quote received.
A request for additional works has been received, regarding the remedial maintenance for the abbey ponds area from the main entrance gate at the

railway bridge, to up to the top gate area but before the allotment field. Cllr Jones (as Chair of the Abbey Ponds working group) requested that the committee agree expenditure of up to £995 as per the quote received, for the remedial works, as Hauser and Wirth have cleared some of the wall area quoted for.

It was RESOLVED [5-0-0] to agree the remedial works as quoted for, up to expenditure of £995, as per the schedule presented.

T23/67: Allotments

- a. To receive an update regarding both allotment sites.
Cllr Crawford gave a short verbal update. The plots are in fairly reasonable order, and there is a very short waiting list. New tenants are in the process of clearing their new plots.
- b. To consider quote from SLR for management of vacated plots.
Some debate was undertaken regarding the management of the vacated plots, and a more green approach was discussed – wood chips and cardboard. It was decided that no action is taken, but the first year can be offered for free if the plot requires a lot of attention.

It was proposed and RESOLVED [4-0-1] that to take no action for the item being and offer the plot free of charge for the first year if required.

T23/68: Jubilee Park

- a. To consider SLR quote for fencing repair.
The quote for fencing replacement, posts and rails, was discussed and considered.

It was resolved [5-0-0] that this quote be accepted and a request for a general reserve expenditure be made to full council to fund this replacement.

- b. Dog fouling. To consider/confirm positioning for the new signs.
There are five signs, which are to be placed at all entrances: railway bridge, car park, top entrance car park, MUGA and the stile at the back of the football pitch, as suggested. Officers will view locations and arrange to install the signs.
- c. To receive a verbal report of play equipment inspection – to consider new fencing requirement and individual puzzle apparatus.
- Removal of the circular area of posts with the climbing wall was discussed. This equipment is very tired, and would benefit from being removed. This will leave an area that would be appropriate to consider equipment to fill this area.

- Several puzzle/game boards were viewed, and consideration given to install some of these items in the play area. These boards can be installed at the edges.
- New fencing was also discussed, just along the car park length of the fence to the farm gate.
- It was also suggested that sponsorship be considered for various items in the play area.

It was resolved [5-0-0] to obtain quotes for: the removal of the play equipment, to purchase and install some/all of the puzzle boards (once the manufacturer is determined), and to replace the length of chain link fence along the car park, to the farm gate (including the small entrance gate) for fencing to enhance the view of the play area.

- d. To discuss Woodland Trust application pack for memorial wood and decide if wish to apply.
The smaller package of 30 or so trees was discussed. It was agreed to make further enquiries and make an application, with a view to planting in the field beyond the MUGA.

It was RESOLVED [5-0-0] to pursue the application to obtain trees from Woodland Trust.

- e. To consider the summer pitch cutting at Jubilee Park, as an extension to the current grounds maintenance contract.
Summer pitch cutting had been removed from the grounds maintenance contract when the contract was last reviewed. It is clear that this element needs to be included in the contract. A quote was obtained from the grounds maintenance contractor, to undertake two cuts per month between the months of April to October inclusive.

It was RESOLVED [5-0-0] to accept the quote for additional pitch cutting from April to October, 2 per month, that was previously within the grounds maintenance contract, and add this to the current grounds maintenance contract.

T23/69: Cemetery

- a. Grave digging order. To consider and regularise grave digging and to prompt/make clear the requirement for 6 month inspection by the funeral directors

It was RESOLVED [5-0-0], to adopt the Grave Digging Order as circulated.

- b. Wessex Water mains inspection. To agree the quote for the works to upgrade the taps on both water supplies as instructed after the inspection.

It was RESOLVED [5-0-0] to accept the quote and to go ahead with the tap replacement, as required by Wessex Water.

T23/70: Station Road car park

To review/consider River Brue Habitat improvement project.

This would be funded by the Environment Agency and the TWIST (Transforming Waterways in Somerset Town) initiative. The proposal requires Town Council permission as the Town Council is the Riparian Owner of that part of the river.

It was RESOLVED [5-0-0] to approve the improvement project as submitted and give the approval as required.

T23/71: Volunteering

To consider the introduction of a volunteering handbook and volunteer agreement.

It was recognised that a structured framework is required to muster the volunteer contingent, to ensure that the insurance aspect is adhered to. The clerk is to contact the insurance company to obtain further guidance.

The example provided is a two page document, to provide a framework.

Additionally it would be useful to have a list of the volunteer groups that engage and also to have a list of organisations that need volunteers.

T23/72: Appearance of the Town

- a. Town Map. To further consider the proposal for a refreshed Town Map (brought forward as per ref T23/11).
This is to be deferred to the next Town Committee meeting.
- b. To consider size specification for new bin outside the Spar shop in High Street.
A response is still awaited from Somerset Council.

T23/73: Speed Indicator Device (SID) Location

To consider request for an additional SID location in Wyke Champflower. If agreed at committee, to apply to Highways to agree an appropriate location, and once agreed at Highways, for the new location to be added to the rotation schedule.

It was RESOLVED [5-0-0] to approach Highways to agree an appropriate location for the SID, and if agreed then add the location to the rotation.

Speeding on Station Road was a cause for concern, and this is to be added to the next Town Committee agenda.

Cllr Coulter left the meeting at 8.36pm for the next agenda item.

Cllr Robinson took the chair for this item.

T23/74: Silver Street Car Park

To note that Somerset Council has given notice to end the lease on 1.11.24 from King's School Bruton and to consider effects. Discuss any actions required.

The car park is being returned to Kings by Somerset Council in November 2024. The car park is adjacent to the community hall, and the car park is used by hall users on a regular basis. It was recognised that the car park is crucial to the availability for the hall, and is also used for the church.

It was suggested that a conversation to be continued with Kings about the ongoing community issues, and that Cllrs Jones and Fradley continue their ongoing discussions and to include the car park as part of a benefit to the wider community.

It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to recommend that Cllrs Fradley and Jones include the Silver Street car park as part of the ongoing discussions with Kings, as soon as possible.

Cllr Coulter rejoined the meeting at 8.43pm as Chair.

T23/75: Town Council assets assessment

To consider a full survey for the Engine Shed, Patwell Pump, Churchyard (walls and topple test), and other assets if appropriate, in order to plan for future maintenance.

Some professional advice is required for these items, and survey reports are required. The clerk is to contact local contractors/surveyors for further assistance and guidance.

The asset register is to be circulated to councillors for information.

T23/76: Date of next meeting 30th January 2024. Agenda items to the clerk by 20th January 2024.

Meeting closed 8.47pm.

END OF MINUTES

Appendix 1

Clerk's Report for Town Committee 21 November 2023

Signage

Various signs have been ordered and need to be installed. The signage for the corridor to indicate the location of the toilet has arrived and needs to be installed. The signs regarding being a responsible dog owner have arrived, the locations need to be determined, this is an agenda item.

Signage on the High Street to direct pedestrians to the Information office and the Town Council was installed by Highways during the recent road works.

Litter pickers and Hi Viz

Additional litter pickers have been ordered, and Hi-viz jackets have been donated by Allan Wilson (thank you!).

Litter bin outside the Spar

Somerset Council are assessing the size of the new bin that can be installed.

Station Road Car Park

Signage being considered. The contractor who is undertaking the tree works for SSE on 3rd January 2024 can leave some large logs to be strategically placed, to restrict parking along the riverside fence. A decision is required as to whether the log placement is to go ahead.

Riverside Walk

Winter works should still go ahead, but not sure about the steps/footpath on the desire line.

Request from One Planet Bruton to assist with locations for 500 bulbs (narcissus, native bluebells and snowdrops) which need planting in the next few weeks.

No further update as yet regarding Legg Footbridge, I have emailed for an update from the meeting that Somerset Council officers were having on 13th November about the bridge.

Community Office

a. Electricity supply

The electricity supply transfer is still ongoing!

b. PAT Testing

PAT testing is completed, and the lighting has been replaced with LED lighting.

c. Office tidy up

Officers worked really hard last Friday, and made an excellent start at clearing the offices to rearrange them. Two filing cabinets are ready to go to the tip, and a lot of unwanted rubbish.

Further work will be required, but this can take place as and when – shredding of confidential but no longer required documents, and other sorting out.

The clearance day needs to be arranged for the allotments and Jubilee Park, with the skip hire. This to be discussed under the volunteer heading of the agenda.

Jubilee Park/pavilion/MUGA

a. Electricity supply

The electricity supply has now been transferred!

b. Annual play area inspection

The annual play area inspection has been booked to take place during November. The Clerk is due to meet with Cllr Fradley to conduct an inspection on 15th November to consider if there was anything urgent, and what the vision is for the play area. To be discussed at the agenda item.

Grit bin

The grit bin for the new location at the top of Cole Road is installed, and Somerset Council have been notified. Somerset will drop off some grit into the box.

Sycamore tree in riverbank wall

Community Hall and Kings/Somerset Council contacted about the adjacent areas of river wall with vegetation and trees. The Community Hall has responded verbally, and written confirmation is awaited. No firm response from Kings as yet.

Appearance of the Town/volunteer activity

A team of volunteers (organised by One Planet Bruton) were due to weed key areas around Church Bridge, the entrance to Station Road Car Park, and Crown Green, next weekend. Somerset Council have had workmen in that area who have tackled some of the space already, so the area that volunteers will be addressing is smaller (car park entrance, beds near to Man on a Bench).

Dog waste bin at Gants Mill Lane

Has now been installed.

END OF REPORT