

**Minutes of the Town Committee held at Bruton Community Hall Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup>  
September 2023**

**Councillors present: Buckland, G Baker, Coulter, Cullen, Fradley, and Taylor**

Officers in attendance: Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk

Members of the Public in attendance: 5

Public session opened at: 7.30pm

The following questions/comments were made:

- Town plan maps: an update required about the project. The chair at the time was going to write a specification but as yet non forthcoming. If the chair does not have capacity can this be allocated to another councillor.
- Riverside walk anti-social behaviour (ASB). Reports have been made to the police regarding excessive and underage drinking, loud noise, criminal damage to cars, littering and broken glass, mostly evenings but occasionally during the day as well. It is felt that the ASB issue will be exacerbated by the reinstalling of the picnic benches. Other suggestions were made as to actions that could be taken about ASB.

Public session closed at: 7.37pm

Meeting opened at: 7.37pm

**Minutes**

**T23/39: Election of Vice Chair. The vice chair has resigned from the vice chair position. To elect a vice chair.**

**It was RESOLVED to propose and elect Cllr Coulter as vice chair of this committee [4-0-0][for-against-abstain] that is elected as vice chair.**

**T23/40: Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1)).**

To receive and approve any apologies of absence.

Apologies were received from Cllrs Anderton and Crawford.

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

**T23/41: 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 Buckland declared an interest in item T23/58.

**T23/42: Minutes of the previous meeting (LGA 1972 sch 12 para 41 (1)).**

To agree [the minutes of the last meeting](#) on 18th July 2023 as a true and accurate record.

**It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to agree the minutes of the meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023 as a true and accurate record.**

**T23/43: To receive a short verbal report from the clerk and an update regarding actions from the previous meeting.**

The clerk provided a brief verbal report regarding the actions from the last meeting.

**T23/44: Footpaths working group.**

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

No meeting scheduled recently.

**T23/45: Abbey Ponds working group.**

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

- The ponds area has become overgrown which has generated some negative interest from the members of the public. Cllr Jones is due to meet with the contractor, the clerk and the vice chair of the working group to discuss actions and to consider any additional action.
- Conservation management plan for the entire area, Cllr Jones spoke with estate management at Kings, and with Historic England officers recently. A follow up meeting is arranged for 26 October to discuss a management plan in more detail, hopefully to have a plan in place by the new year.
- Signage at the bottom of the gate needs updating, and a small group of working group members to meet and discuss the way forward.
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**T23/46: Allotments**

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

The clerk gave a short verbal up date of both allotment sites.

- b. To discuss and decide what actions to take to manage unoccupied plots on both allotment sites.

To consider installing black membrane over the unoccupied plots, specifically a heavy duty membrane, to hinder weed growth and make sure that the plot doesn't become more unwieldy.

**It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to obtain a quote for installation of heavy duty black membrane to cover unoccupied allotment plots from the current grounds maintenance contractor.**

- c. To discuss the required maintenance on the raised beds at Durslade.

A list of required maintenance has been compiled and a quote for the required works has been requested.

- d. Allotment tidy up. To consider hiring a skip for a day to facilitate rubbish removal from Cuckoo Hill allotments which would require volunteer support.

To consider alternatives such as waste removal companies.

There is a lot of rubbish on the allotment that has been in place for some time.

Whilst to considering an 'allotment tidy up' to also look at other areas of the town that need to be cleared. The concern is that this would need to be conducted very quickly.

It was proposed to establish a small working group to manage the co-ordination of the waste, base the skip at Jubilee Park, by the bottom gate (by the railway bridge).

**It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to request to full council to grant extra budget to facilitate the hire of a skip to remove waste. It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to delegate to the Town Clerk working with the committee chair to agree skip hire and arrangements.**

**T23/47: Jubilee Park**

- a. Notice board. As a result of vandalism the notice board has been removed. It is unclear at this stage whether it can be repaired. To consider next actions.

A discussion followed about replacing the noticeboard Perspex and relocate the noticeboard for use, or to not replace it at all, as it is uncertain if it will occur again.

It was suggested to laminate agenda and other papers and place them onto the pavilion for viewing. A notice to be placed into the office window regarding the removal of the noticeboard for the time being, and that the trial of placing on the pavilion wall.

- b. MUGA floodlights. A specification is required about the timer/payment mechanism for operation of the MUGA floodlights.

A specification was discussed for the timer on the MUGA floodlights, to ensure that the timer can be used and that there is a switch for users to use the floodlights at the required time.

The concern is that the floodlights need to have a warm up time, and a cool down time, and would be difficult to manage with a timer and an override system.

**It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to get the timer fixed, to allow the current regular user to have an access key to the light box, and to consider other options for the floodlights, such as LED lights (Obtain quotes from providers to consider switching to LED, to give a guide to how much this will cost to do)**

- c. MUGA. Request to hire the space. To decide how best to manage requests to hire the use of the MUGA space.

This situation does not occur very often, usually during the summer holidays. In the past, a donation has been accepted to contribute to the use of the MUGA floodlights.

- d. Fencing. To discuss the state of the fencing and gates at Jubilee Park as a result of cows entering the park area. To consider next actions and remedial work required.

The gate at this area, particularly that next to the skate park, needs maintenance work, as it is the gate that is causing the issue.

**It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to contact the grounds maintenance contractor to quote for improving the gate and to obtain a quote to install a 3 wooden rail fence behind the skate park, with a stile to allow users access to the field to retrieve footballs etc.**

This is to be revisited at the November Town Committee meeting.

- e. Dog fouling. To consider additional signage and decide on next action.

It was suggested to install signage on the main gate entrances to the Jubilee Park.

**It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to obtain a quote for 5 signs to be installed at the Jubilee park entrances. It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to delegate to the Town clerk working with the Committee Chair to order the signs.**

- f. Annual play area inspections are due in November. To consider and approve a quote received.

**It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to accept the quote and to book in the annual play inspection.**

**T23/48: Grit Bins.**

- a. New grit bin proposal at Cole Road. To consider quotes for installing a grit bin as a result of communications with Highways.

The Town Clerk detailed a quote for placing and installing the grit bin.

**It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to approved the new grit bin, accepting the quote for preparing the area for the grit bin, purchasing and installing the grit bin.**

- b. Somerset Council grit bin review. To receive a short verbal report from the clerk regarding the recent review of the grit bins within the town.
- c. To agree any remedial action required to ensure that Somerset Council can access all grit bins for their grit replenishment programme at the end of September.

Councillors will address the foliage that needs to be removed from around the grit bins that were highlighted as having access issues.

- d. To consider whether additional grit bins discovered should be added to the Somerset Council grit bin map. This would mean the Town Council taking responsibility for the grit bins.

**It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to adopt the unlisted grit bins found and request that they are added to the Somerset Council map and list for replenishment.**

**T23/49: Sycamore tree growing from the river wall, located at/near the Community Hall.**

There is a sycamore tree growing from the wall. To discuss and decide upon any actions required from the Town Council.

The sycamore trees along the stretch of riverside wall, including the Engine Shed area, would be better removed from the wall to prevent any further damage. There is one part of the area which is the responsibility of the community hall and one part of the wall that is Kings/Somerset Council. It would be beneficial to notify Somerset Council and the community hall that their areas need to be addressed also.

**It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to obtain a quote to have the sycamore tree cut back, and cut back the vegetation along the Engine Shed stretch. It is important to cut back and not use any type of weedkiller.**

**T23/50: Picnic benches at Packhorse Bridge**

- a. To receive an update regarding the replacement of the picnic benches at Packhorse Bridge. To decide where the replacement benches need to be located.

It was agreed to not progress this project at the moment, and try to address the ASB in the short term. This is to be revisited in the new year.

- b. Bench installation at Packhorse Bridge – anti social behaviour concerns – request for a meeting received from resident.

Officers are to contact the PCSO to work with them to establish how best to address the increase of ASB in this area.

**T23/51: Riverside Walk and Plox area**

To receive a short verbal report from the clerk regarding a recent meeting with Somerset Council to discuss managing the Riverside Walk area.

This area is the responsibility of Somerset Council (SC), and the town council is an information sharing conduit between SC and community groups

**T23/52: Eastfields Refurbishment Project**

- a. Following successful replacement of the perimeter fence a community engagement exercise needs to take place to determine the next action. To discuss and decide the best way for this to move forward.

Plans have been drawn up to show how the area can be transformed into a garden with planters, as a proposal, but it was suggested that a sensory garden would be more maintainable than anything more formal.

A coffee morning or afternoon to ask nearby residents what they would like, with a brief questionnaire to be circulated to obtain some feedback. It is important for the area to be meaningful and not a possible location for ASB to take place. List of questions, poster to advertise, and a design to show. Cllr Fradley is happy to work with Cllr Crawford to start to work on a plan.

- b. Water supply offer from adjacent property. To acknowledge and discuss the offer of connecting a water butt to a nearby property, if and when required.

The Town Council are delighted to accept this offer.

**T23/53: Cemetery Gates**

Refurbishment of Cemetery gates. The gates need repainting. To consider quotes received so far and to decide upon next actions.

There is no current reserve for maintenance for the cemetery gates. A request to full council is required to permit a general reserve expenditure. Quotes for the proposed works and advice received were considered.

**It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to accept the quote for £925 and request to full council that the expenditure is supported from general reserves.**

**T23/54: Enquiry for Food Van**

Request received from member of public to use Jubilee Park as a location for a food van. To discuss.

This request was discussed, and it was considered that the best way that the Town Council can assist is to signpost the member of the public to other sites in the Town, that may be more beneficial

**T23/55: Appearance of the Town**

A number of comments have been received from various residents regarding various areas of the town and how they feel it can be improved. To discuss and decide upon any action.

This is a tricky topic for discussion and action.

It was suggested to arrange a get together volunteers, with a SC representative, and also some Town Councillor representation, to try and co-ordinate how best to tackle the type of issues that have been raised.

**T23/56: Community Office.**

The council office and the information office need to be organised and rearranged, to ensure that the working environment is more appealing and a pleasant experience. To discuss and decide what is required to facilitate this: officers working additional hours, waste removal.

**It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to recommend to full council to agree paid overtime for two officers to spend one day reorganising and sorting out the community and information office.**

**T23/57: 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.

**It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to obtain quotes (from stone masons/master masons) to assess the three assets as listed, to establish if there are any intermediate or long term repairs likely.**

To discuss at the next meeting.

**T23/58: Dog waste bin.**

To discuss installing an additional dog waste bin at Gants Mill Lane.

There is no dog waste bin at this location. There is a spare bin in the council office, which could be installed. Sexeys school have agreed to ensure that the bin is emptied, free of charge.

**It was RESOLVED [4-0-0] to go ahead and agree for Sexeys to install the bin, supplied by the town council, and Sexeys school will be responsible for the emptying of the bin as and when required.**

**T23/59: Date of next meeting** 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023. Agenda items to the clerk by 10<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

Meeting closed at 9.16pm

**END OF MINUTES**