

**Minutes of the Town Committee meeting held at
Bruton Community Hall Tuesday 17th September
2024, 7.30pm**

Councillors present: Crawford, Robinson, Coulter.

In the Chair: Cllr Coulter.

Officers in attendance: Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk.

Members of the Public: 0.

Public session was not required.

Meeting started: 7:30pm.

MINUTES

T24/39: Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1)).

To receive and approve any apologies of absence.

Apologies were received from Cllrs Baker, Fradley, Anderton and Buckland

It was RESOLVED [3-0-0] to receive and approve the apologies and the reasons submitted.

T24/40: 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).

No declarations of interest were received.

T24/41: Minutes of the previous meeting (LGA 1972 sch 12 para 41 (1)).

To agree [the minutes of the last meeting](#) on 23rd July 2024 as a true and accurate record.

It was RESOLVED [3-0-0] to accept, approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd July 2024 as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

T24/42: To receive a short written report from the clerk and an update regarding actions from the previous meeting.

This report will be circulated and will be available on the Bruton Town Council website.

The report was received and noted.

T24/43: Footpaths working group.

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

No update was available.

T24/44: Abbey Ponds working group.

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

No update was available.

T24/45: Town Committee Budget.

- a. The spend to budget to 31st August 2024 was presented for overview.
- b. To consider the budget for 2025/26.

It was agreed for this item to be moved to the end of the agenda.

T24/46: Speed Indicator Device (SID).

- a. To consider submitting a formal request for an additional SID location on Silver Street/Plox. as per the map. If agreed, request that Somerset Council amend the current Memorandum of Understanding to include the new position.
- b. To agree the installation of an additional post for the SID, subject to the new location being agreed, and instruct Somerset Council accordingly.
- c. To agree to order sufficient brackets for the SID posts for the new locations.

The device at the start of Silver Street by Kings school, which is owned by the school, does not store or collect data.

Following a meeting with a Somerset Highways representative, a location at the beginning of the decline on Plox has been identified as the only option deemed suitable to fit Somerset Highways criteria.

It was RESOLVED [3-0-0] for this item to be deferred to Full Council for a decision.

T24/47: Waste and Dog Bin review, Bruton

To discuss the communication received regarding the potential for future charging from 1 April 2025 for waste and dog bin emptying, in Bruton. To discuss the next actions, and the budget provision required for bin emptying to continue at the present level in the next financial year.

There has been no response from Somerset Council to date. It remains unclear how many bins Bruton Town Council is expecting to be charged for.

A summary of the potential costs was reviewed, considerations for reducing these costs were discussed.

It is recommended to chase Somerset Council and await a response. Also to further ask for a break-down of these costs.

T24/48: Somerset Council Enhanced Highway Maintenance Pilot.

To discuss the proposal from Somerset Council of additional services such as standard maintenance works (such as sign cleaning, additional verge and hedge cutting, post installation) and specialist works (line painting, drain and gully clearing), and to consider expressing interest in this service.

The Gully clearing schedule was discussed and clarification is required as to which gulleys are a flood risk.

It was recommended not to express an interest in the Enhanced Highway Maintenance Scheme at this time, but that a future budget of £2000 for additional services, should be considered for next year.

T24/49: Condition Survey.

To review the conditions surveys received for Engine Shed, Patwell Pump, War Memorial, and the closed churchyard and to decide upon next actions.

A summary of recommendations was reviewed.

Areas of immediate concern are in the engine shed with the need for an electrical inspection and some roof patch repair. An estimate was given of £2350.00 by the surveyor.

It was recommended to obtain quotes for the Engine Shed inspection and repairs and to consider moving funds from an earmarked reserves to meet the costs.

It was RESOLVED [3-0-0] to recommend to full council that the immediate works are addressed as soon as possible, and funds are diverted from an alternative earmarked reserve to pay for the works.

Remaining items can wait to be addressed with a possibility of seeking grant funding for the war memorial. A future budget of £20,000, with a view to building upon this as an earmarked reserve for the future required maintenance.

T24/50: Allotments

- a. To receive an update regarding the recent allotment inspections.

The Town Clerk, Cllr's Crawford and Taylor made inspections on the plots that required extra attention. As a result, two notices to cease tenancy have been issued.

- b. Further to recent communication from a plot holder, and to decide upon next actions.

The plot causing an issue will be cleared once the notice to cease the tenancy has been exercised. The request to refund the plot holder fee for the adjacent plot has been refused, as the plot the other side has managed their plot under the same conditions.

It was RESOLVED [3-0-0] to organise clearance of the plot in question once the tenancy ends and to inform the plot holder of the process planned.

- c. To discuss and decide the best way to manage unoccupied allotment plots, raised beds, and extended areas within the allotment sites.

An interim plan was made for clearing this particular plot, Officers and Councillors and any other willing volunteers will take some time to help clear the plot of items. Items for repurpose/recycling can be advertised for other plot owners or they will be removed for disposal once ready.

Officers are happy to assist and make a start on this should Cllrs feel it is an effective use of their time. This will commence in October and officers will keep councillors updated with the process, so councillors can get involved as well.

Once all items have been cleared, Cllr Taylor has volunteered to organise to trim and cover the plots to maintain and suppress the weeds.

T24/51: Abbey Ponds.

- a. Footpath Signage to Hauser & Wirth via Abbey Ponds.
Further to a meeting recently with Hauser and Wirth, suggestions are required for the signage to better highlight the pedestrian footway from Dropping Lane up through Abbey Ponds and the allotment field.

Suggested designs and locations were made available in the meeting papers and circulated prior to the meeting.

It was agreed to share the designs with Hauser & Wirth, and the suggested locations, but make clear that we have no budget for this, and clearer signage is necessary.

- b. Kissing Gate.
To discuss the kissing gate at Abbey Ponds and the temporary repair recently. To discuss the next steps regarding replacing the gate.

A metal gateway has been suggested however due to the nature of the land it is not possible to install.

A suggestion was made to get a metal chain to attach to the existing gate.

The current gate post cannot be secured in the ground due to limitations as the area is classed as Scheduled Ancient Monument. Officers will investigate and will organise a temporary securing mechanism for the gate in the meantime.

T24/52: Library Junction Area Enhancement

To discuss next actions after response to recent sponsorship request.

This item was deferred to next meeting.

T24/53: Maintenance of Town Council assets

- a. To discuss maintenance spreadsheet compiled recently, of all Bruton Town Council areas of responsibility, and decide upon next steps.

A list of High priority items had been previously circulated.

A quote to refurbish the bus shelters has been requested. The bus shelter at Church Bridge will require liaison with the Church, as the shelter is attached to the Grade 1 listed wall.

A budget provision should be considered once the quotes are received.

Cllr Buckland and Bruton Tree Warden recommend tagging trees to help identify them, enabling them to also be logged on the new assets app.

It was recommended that a tree budget and a tree reserve should be considered.

- b. To discuss the 'Civic.ly' app for monitoring assets and maintenance, and to consider

A demonstration of the app was given.

Currently the town council has a free trial of basic plan until 31 March 2025.

It was recommended to proceed with the professional plan at £39 per month and to consider this in the budget for 25/26, as well as monitoring ongoing need.

- c. 'Welcome to Bruton' road signs. To discuss next steps to upgrading the signs at various locations on main roads into Bruton.

It was felt that with other urgent budget demands the Welcome to Bruton signs are not a priority in the short term.

It was suggested that the Chamber of Commerce may like to take a lead in this project.

T24/54: Jubilee Park

- a. To discuss the maintenance required in the car park adjacent to the Jubilee Park Pavilion. To discuss the quotes obtained to date to fill the large pothole in the car park and decide upon next actions.

A summary of the quotes was reviewed, and it was proposed to appoint the lower cost patch repair for now. It was further recommended to rename the Station Road Car Park sinking fund to Car park maintenance fund.

It was RESOLVED [3-0-0] to undertake the patch repair. It was further RESOLVED [3-0-0] to recommend to full council that the Station Road Car Park sinking fund is changed to be a Car Park Maintenance Fund.

- b. To consider the quote received for the required part for the cantilever swing, and the play area signs, and discuss the next steps.

The quote for the installation of the fixing was very high. It was agreed to seek further quotes for fitting the part if possible.

The inspection reported this repair as a medium to moderate risk.

The Jubilee Park Sign examples were reviewed and approved.

It was RESOLVED [3-0-0] to proceed with ordering the Jubilee Park signs.

- c. To discuss the quote obtained from three play area providers, and to discuss the next steps.

It has been recommended by the working group to proceed with the zip wire as a priority at this time.

This is for further discussion in Strategic Planning in October

There are earmarked reserves for Jubilee Park Development and Play Area which could provide options to install something as soon as possible. A recommendation would be required for full council to agree any expenditure from earmarked reserves.

T24/45: Town Committee Budget.

- a. The spend to budget to 31st August 2024 was presented for overview.
- b. To consider the budget for 2025/26.

This item was revisited.

It was RESOLVED [3-0-0] for this item to be deferred for formal discussion at next town committee when more Cllrs are present.

T24/55: Date of next meeting 12th November 2024.

The next meeting is on 12th November, **venue to be confirmed.**

Agenda items to the clerk by 1st November 2024.

END OF MEETING AT 9:20pm

END OF MINUTES