

Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on 27th June 2023 at The Morland Hub, Pearce Drive, Highbridge at 7 pm

Present: Councillors L. Millard (Chair), R. Baker, P. Clayton, A. Elrick, J. Flurry, G. Gudka, R. Keen, A. Mathews, B. Metcalfe, A. Morgan, M. Murphy S. Perry, C. Searing, B. Vickers, J. Warren

In attendance: E Dutton, Deputy Town Clerk and 13 members of the public

Public Participation:

A representative from the Yacht Club informed Members that an application for funding had been made to replace the toilets, and make them disabled friendly. If they receive funding and once the toilets are in place during the club opening hours the facilities will be open to the members of the public. The Club is keen to have support from the local council and local businesses, the Mayor has given her support already. The application was submitted 10 days ago and will be considered on the 21st July. Councillors were asked if they could write a letter of support.

65.0.T23 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Wynn and Facey and the Town Clerk.

66.0.T23 To receive any declarations of interest on items included on this agenda

There were no declarations of interest.

67.0.T23 Appointment of the Mayors Cadets for the ensuing year

Corporal Knight and Cadet Britten from the Army Cadets were appointed by The Mayor for the ensuing year.

(8 members of the public left the meeting at this juncture)

68.0.T23 To receive and approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 15th May 2023

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Town Council, held on 15th May 2023, were presented by the Mayor.

Resolved that the minutes be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

69.0.T23 Matters arising from previous minutes

The response to The Environment Agency's consultation on proposed to Hinkley Point C's water discharge activity permit had been circulated.



The Deputy Clerk reported that the Town Council were unable to make contact with Sedgemoor Cycle Group therefore a representative was no longer required.

70.0.T23 To receive the Mayors report

The Mayor read out the following report "I have now chosen my charity for this year. I will be supporting the 'Friends of Burnham Memorial Hospital'. They are a small local charity that benefits the lives of our residents directly. I look forward to working with them this year.

I have also appointed my two army cadets for this coming year. I look forward to getting to know them and their army cadet unit.

Over the last month I have been continuing to push forward our Climate and Ecology agenda. Later in the agenda I will give a brief summary of our work to date. To support that work I have attended a webinar organised by NALC that was focussed on supporting local councils to respond to climate change. I also attended a Severn Estuary Partnership Forum meeting at Cardiff University. This enabled me to network with other organisations working in our local area. I met Daisy from Surfers Against Sewage and we discussed our Dog Poo Campaign alongside the plastic free agenda. She is supporting both these activities with resources and advice. I will be attending a webinar run by Somerset Wildlife Trust about water quality. This will enable us to work alongside them in forming a volunteer group to monitor water quality locally. We already have some residents involved in that work.

As part of our response to the Annual Town Meetings concerns, we arranged a meeting of Trowbridge Court residents, Homes in Sedgemoor and some councillors. This was a useful meeting that has led to the setting up of regular meetings with the residents and the Housing Officer. We also then joined the estate walkabout where we were joined by two PCSO Officers. This was a really helpful exercise when everyone was able to share their concerns and we could look at ways of working together to find solutions. As a result, PCSO Ash will be completing an audit of CCTV cameras used in the town. We will then look at ways of increasing the number to ensure the safety of our residents. They have been used effectively in both Taunton and Bridgwater. Homes in Sedgemoor are now looking into extending parking at Trowbridge Close and providing a gate / barrier at the end of Kiln Drive, to prevent accidents between cyclists and pedestrians.

Councillors Perry, Keen and I accepted an invitation to visit to the Portishead Police HQ. It was excellent and gave us a good overview of the work of the Police in our area. The most startling statistic we were told was that over 65% of calls to the centre were not related to crime or



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anti-social behaviour. This is causing a rethink of the way the Police are being deployed. We were told that it is really important for residents to register any concern they might have as this gives good data for the police to create a picture of crime in the area. They will then respond to that need.

The new Youth Town Council will come up later in the agenda. They will be able to explain their focus going forward. I was also contacted by another local council for advice on how to set up a Youth Town Council.

Councillor Perry and I joined a meeting of the SALC Health and Wellbeing Group. We had a good discussion about our areas of need and what we are doing to support health and wellbeing in the two towns. After the meeting we were sent details of how to access funding from SALC to support health and wellbeing projects. This information has now been passed on to our Climate and Ecology Group and Finance and Resources Committee Chair.

I attended the Vintage Car Rally and the Volunteers Day. We are also working with the Nornen Project to support them by providing a Civic Reception for all the Norwegian visitors. There will be more than 30 visitors attending the reception in August. I believe there will be members of 5 families whose descendants were rescued from the Nornen. We are also hoping to host the descendant of the owner of the ship and the local Mayor”.

71.0.T23 To receive report from the Police

The report was noted.

72.0.T23 To receive any reports from Somerset Councillors

Report to follow from Councillor Clayton.

73.0.T23 To receive minutes of previous committee meetings

The Chair of the Town Improvements Committee reported that the Christmas lights contract will be going to tender, the legacy clock design has been decided and will be placed by the fountain, a family member had been contacted and will be involved in the unveiling of the clock. The toilets at Crosses Penn are being removed shortly. There were no questions raised.

The Chair of the Planning Committee reported on the current issue which is the development of the next phase in Highbridge, there has been ongoing discussions about the lack of apparent agreement on how long it should take. There were no questions raised.



The Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee reported they have confirmed the grant application timetable and the next round of grants will be considered at the meeting on the 14th September and applications must be received by the 25th August. They had also agreed to release a grant for £495 to BARB for a PA system for their event. We had a brief report on the relocation project and arranged a meeting for middle of July to progress next steps. There were no questions raised.

The Chair of the Princess Management Committee reported that Councillor Warren was elected as Vice Chair, a report was received regarding the Kings Coronation Screening, the volunteer's day and the Civic reception for Fritzlar. The report from the consultant regarding the staffing review had been received and considered at the Committee and an extraordinary meeting was held on the 20th June to consider other recommendations from the report, which is an agenda item 88.0.T23. There were no questions raised.

74.0.T23 To receive reports from town councillor representatives appointed to outside bodies

Councillor Millard reported that the Fritzlar group had been very helpful helping to find hosts for the summer Norwegian family's that are coming over as part of the Nornen Project.

Councillor Keen reported he attended the ceremony of the Maces in Axbridge, which is the handing over of the two ceremonial Maces to the museum and received a talk from a historian on the history and Royal Charters of Axbridge that date back to the 16th century.

Councillor Perry reported she had attended the AGM of the Highbridge Festival of Arts Committee where it was reported that over 2000 performances took place in March at the festival and they also held a 75th anniversary concert which was very successful.

Councillor Warren reported he had attended the AGM of the Community Association and the roof has now been successfully repaired, they are now moving on to upgrading their heating system and looking at security systems to gain access to the building.

75.0.T23 To consider appointing a representative on to the Seed Consortium

Resolved that Councillor Keen is appointed as a representative on the Seed consortium.

76.0.T23 Introduction to the Youth Council

The Appointed Chair of the Youth Council gave an overview of the Youth Town Council. They plan to start an activities club for all ages, with no set



activities, they feel most clubs that are already set up are sports based, and there are not enough Arts & Craft. They plan on giving the young people a voice and are in the process of producing forms for students to complete, to enable them to give their feedback on what they would like to see in the town or things they would like changed.

77.0.T23 To agree the Youth Council's Terms of Reference

The terms of reference was considered.

Resolved that the Terms of Reference are approved.

78.0.T23 To appoint Members to the Youth Town Council

Resolved that Councillor Millard and Councillor Keen be appointed as members of the Youth Town Council.

(2 members of the public left the meeting at this juncture)

79.0.T23 To receive verbal update from the Homelessness Working Group

Councillor Baker reported lots of feedback had been received, Councillor Federica from Somerset Council will be visiting both towns. The work by Waffle Hub, Food Bank/Trussel Trust is outstanding and recommend their family cooking sessions and asked Councillors if they could support the residents to attend and will bring proposals and recommendations to the next Council meeting. A number of rough sleepers had their tents set alight and there was an increasing number of vulnerable people accessing the services over the last couple of months, especially the retired generation who have been reliant on their pension, now seeking support for food and an increasing number of family's who do not have a roof to keep their children warm, dry and safe.

80.0.T23 To receive a Climate and Ecology Working Group update

An update was given including the following:

Councillors Millard and Vickers had a successful launch of the Repair Café at the Eat Festival with the Fixy Van and are now in the process of setting up Repair Cafes.

The Growing Group held a very successful Seed and Plant Swap and Share last month.

The Plastic Free Group are working with Businesses to become Plastic Free Champions.

Burnham and Weston Solar Energy are now providing community buildings with an energy audit.

We now have a Bus Group who will be working with the Somerset Bus Partnership to push for improvements in bus services locally.

Somerset Wildlife Trust and Our Highbridge held a successful 'What If?' walk along the Brue Green Pathway

The working group is now organising an Eco Festival on 30th September from 1-4pm in Apex Park.

81.0.T23 To consider report for funds to set up a Repair Café

Councillor Vickers gave an overview of the circulated report.

Resolved that £250 from the Climate and Ecology budget be allocated for the purchase of the start-up pack and other cost of materials needed.

82.0.T23 To receive list of payments up to 11th June 2023

Resolved that the list of payments attached were approved.

83.0.T23 To approve list of direct debit payees for the year

Resolved that the following list of direct debit/Standing Orders and BACS payments below were approved for the year.

Payee	Frequency	Description	Type	Amount
GLOBAL PAYMENTS	Monthly	PT Transaction Charges	D/D	Variable
BIFFA WASTE SERVIC	Monthly	PT Waste Collection	D/D	Variable
BRIDGE SOLUTIONS	Monthly	Phone System	D/D	Variable
CROWN GAS & POWER	Monthly	Gas TC	D/D	Variable
CROWN GAS & POWER	Monthly	Gas PT	D/D	Variable
DVLA-WV09XVL	Annually	Van Tax	D/D	320
EDF ENERGY	Monthly	Market Stall cabinet	D/D	7
EDF ENERGY	Two Monthly	TC Office Electric	D/D	Variable
EDF ENERGY	Monthly	Brent Road Cem Electric	D/D	90
EDF ENERGY CUST PLC	Monthly	Highbridge Clock	D/D	Variable
EE LIMITED	Monthly	Sim Cards	D/D	218.8
FINTEC GROUP LTD	Quarterly	Photocopier Lease	D/D	315.68
FUEL CARD SERVICES	Monthly	Fuel	D/D	Variable
GOCARDLESS	Monthly	Design Hive Website	D/D	114
GOCARDLESS	Monthly	Ticketsolve-Ticket Fees	D/D	Variable
ICO	Annually	Information Commissioner	D/D	35
IRIS SOFTWARE LTD6	Monthly	Payroll Software	D/D	126.65
ITEC CONNECT LTD	Monthly	Photocopier Usage	D/D	Variable
J&R FOOD SERVICE	Monthly	Ice-creams PT	D/D	Variable
M J CHURCH	Monthly	Waste from Cems	D/D	Variable

OTIS LIMITED	As required	PTAC lift maintenance	D/D	Variable
O2	Monthly	Mobile	D/D	17.04
O2 DEVICE PLAN	Monthly	Mobile	D/D	6.5
PAY & SHOP DD COLL	Monthly	Princess	D/D	Variable
POZITIVE ENERGY	Monthly	PT Elec	D/D	Variable
POZITIVE ENERGY	Monthly	TC Elec	D/D	Variable
RENTOKIL INITIAL	Monthly	PT and TC Sanitary	D/D	Variable
SOMERSET COUNCIL	Monthly	Princess Rates	D/D	798
SOMERSET COUNCIL	Monthly	TC Rates	D/D	878
SOMERSET COUNCIL	Monthly	Brent Road Rates	D/D	499
SSE ELECTRICITY	Monthly	BOS Cem	D/D	Variable
SSE ELECTRICITY	Monthly	Highbridge Cem	D/D	Variable
TIMETASTIC	Monthly	Employees Holidays App	D/D	22.8
TV LICENCE DDA	Annually	PT TV license	D/D	159
WATER2BUSINESS	Half Yearly	BOS Cem Water Rates	D/D	203.18
WATER2BUSINESS	Half Yearly	Highbridge Cem Water Rates	D/D	138.95
WATER2BUSINESS	Half Yearly	TC Office Water Rates	D/D	104.41
WATER2BUSINESS	Half Yearly	Allotments Water Rates	D/D	34.27
WATER2BUSINESS	Half Yearly	Brent Road Cem Water Rates	D/D	85.71
WATER2BUSINESS	Annually	PT Water Rates	D/D	515.7
WORLDPAY	Monthly	PT Card Fees	D/D	Variable
SALARIES	Monthly	Employee Payroll	BACS	Variable
PENSIONS	Monthly	Employee Pension	BACS	Variable
HMRC PAYE	Monthly	Employee PAYE	BACS	Variable
PREPAID CARD	Annually	Annual Account Fee	D/D	£69.00
CURRENT ACCOUNT	Monthly	Bank Charges	D/D	Variable
ACCOUNT NO 2	Monthly	Bank Charges	D/D	Variable
COMMUNITY COUNCIL	Yearly	Membership	S/O	40

84.0.T23 To consider the internal audit report for 2022/23

Resolved to agree to take forward any actions.

85.0.T23 To approve the Annual Governance Statement (s.1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2022/23)

The Council reviewed each statement.

Resolved The Council completed The Annual Governance Statement which was approved and signed by the Chair.

Signed by Chair.....

Date.....



86.0.T23 To approve the Annual Accounting Statement for the year ending 31 March 2023 (s.2 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23)

Resolved that the Annual Accounting Statement was approved and signed by the Chair.

87.0.T23 To note the public rights and publication notice dates

Resolved the dates for the public rights and publication notice commence on Thursday 29th June 2023 and end on Thursday 10th August 2023 and will be published on the Town Council website and the notice board on the 28th June 2023.

88.0.T23 To note the Princess Management Committees agreed action plan following the Princess review

The report was noted.

89.0.T23 To consider the expression of interest letter relating to the Princess Theatre

Councillors debated whether to proceed with an expression of interest. A lengthy discussion took place and all councillors were given the opportunity to make comments.

Resolved that The Town Council will implement a number of improvements that were received within the Princess Review. Investigate how other theatres in the region are run, managed and funded and review the findings quarterly, bringing the findings back to the Town Council this time next year. A letter is sent to Mr & Mrs Scott confirming the decision.

90.0.T23 To appoint one member and a substitute to the Local Community Network

Resolved that Councillor Millard is appointed as the Town Council representative and Councillor Vickers is appointed as a substitute to the Local Community Network.

91.0.T23 The next Town Council meeting will be held on Monday 7th August 2023 at 7pm

The next meeting will take place on 7th August 2023.