

**Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2023  
in the Council Chamber, The Old Courthouse, Jaycroft Road,  
Burnham-on-Sea at 7 pm**

**Present:** Councillors L. Millard (Chair), G. Gudka, R. Keen, A. Mathews, B. Metcalfe, M. Murphy S. Perry, C. Searing, B. Vickers, J. Warren

**In attendance:** K Noble Town Clerk, N Brookes Responsible Finance Officer and 3 members of the public.

**Public Participation:**

There were no representations made.

Before the meeting started the Mayor welcomed Nicole Brookes, who had joined the Council as the Responsible Finance Officer.

**92.0.T23 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Baker, Barber, Clayton, Elrick, Facey, Flurry, Morgan and Wynn.

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

Councillor Murphy declared an interest in item 108.0.T23.

**94.0.T23 To receive and approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Town Council, held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023, were presented by the Mayor.

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

**95.0.T23 Matters arising from previous minutes**

There were no matters arising.

**96.0.T23 To receive the Mayors report**

The Mayor read out the following statement;

Over recent weeks I have been continuing our work to implement the Climate and Ecology Action Plan. This has meant attending the meetings for the Repair Café, Growing Group, Plastic Free, Bus Group and a working party to plan our Eco festival in September.

I was pleased to open the new Conservatory at the Memorial Hospital. The Friends have been working hard over the last 6 years to put a new



roof onto the building. This is now completed and looks amazing. The Activities Coordinator is looking forward to making full use of the room.

I attended the Burnham Motor Clubs 70<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations. On being asked which car I would like to take home, I had to explain that I was afraid that cut out all the beautiful sports cars as I would be unable to get out of them! It was a lovely afternoon.

I had a meeting with the Principal of The King Alfred's School Academy. We discussed working together next year. I would like to congratulate the school on being awarded the Green Flag Award as an Eco School with distinction! We will be continuing this when the school joins the Eco festival to showcase all their hard work.

As there was no Police report available, the Mayor confirmed that CCTV cameras will be repaired very soon and all 9 will then be in operation.

PCSO Dunbar has visited Kiln Drive and will visit whenever he can.

PC Danielle Hardaway will be working with us to set up public meetings with the Police on a monthly basis. There is a possibility that we could combine Council Drop In sessions and these Police meetings.

**97.0.T23 To receive any reports from Somerset Councillors**

The attached report was circulated by Somerset Councillor Murphy.

**98.0.T23 To receive minutes of previous committee meetings**

Planning Committee – Councillor Vickers gave an overview of items that had been considered at the Committee. No questions were raised.

Town Improvements Committee – The Committee Chair gave an overview of the last meeting and reported that the refurbished public conveniences at Manor Gardens were now open. A question was raised regarding the Town Board, but this would be dealt with later in the meeting.

Finance and Resources Committee – The Committee Chair gave an overview of matters considered at the last meeting. The migration of the new accounts system was taking longer than expected, but it was confirmed that VAT return had been submitted.

**99.0.T23 To receive list of payments to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023**

The attached list of payments was received and noted and no queries raised.

**100.0.T23 To agree end of year corrections and approve journal from general reserves to earmarked reserves**

Councillor Gudka explained that the year end closure was prepared by a locum and suffered from lack of continuity of knowledge about some of



these items and how they should be treated. This does have a significant impact on general reserves.

There is a need for clearer reports that make explicit the interaction between the income and expenditure account and earmarked reserves and a further review of the earmarked reserves is needed.

The RFO will be asked to undertake proper review of CIL funds, as a priority.

**Resolved** that the Council agrees to journal £99,556 from general reserves to earmarked reserves, as detailed below;

Replacement van	£3,000
Princess donations	£754
Cemeteries provision for walls	£2,000
Grant allocation (Nornen)	£2,500
Insurance Claim – Solar Panels	£10,200
High Street Fund Grant	£50,000
CIL Highbridge	£31,102

#### **101.0.T23 To receive Working Group update reports**

- High Street Task Force – The formation of the Town Board has been agreed and applications were received and considered and board members appointed from a range of stakeholders. The Board will be administered by Somerset Council and although the Town Council does participate it doesn't have control. The first meeting has yet to take place. Concerns have been raised regarding the meetings being confidential and member details not being made public. This will be raised at the first meeting.
- Climate and Ecology – The Repair Cafes will be starting in September and Councillor Vickers was thanked for all her work to date. Updates were given on the Bus Group, Plastic Free Group's refill campaign, the Growing Group and the Eco Festival.
- Highbridge Regeneration – It is hoped a meeting will take place by the end of the month.
- Office Accommodation – A positive meeting was held with Somerset Council, who are keen for the project to move forward. The next step is for the Town Council to obtain valuations on the buildings.



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

A public consultation of the proposed redevelopment of the Morland Hub will be held at the Hub on 2<sup>nd</sup> September.

**103.0.T23 To consider the Somerset Council Pension Fund - Consultation on Funding Strategy Statement**

**Resolved** the report is noted and there are no comments.

**104.0.T23 To consider proposal to administer the Beautification Grant Fund**

Background information was given regarding the grant of £15,000, which is being made available by Somerset Council. The grant covers both Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge.

**Resolved** that the Council agrees to administer the Beautification Grant, within the deadlines and terms set by Somerset Council. The Clerk is requested to ask if the grant can also include improvements to accessibility. The awarding of the grants is delegated to the Finance and Resources Committee.

**105.0.T23 To agree Princess Theatre review working group membership and scope**

The circulated proposal was considered.

**Resolved** that Councillors Perry, Vickers, Matthews, Metcalfe and Millard are appointed to the working group, although members not present will also be offered the opportunity to attend. The scope of the group will be ;

- To gather information on other theatres – how they are owned, managed and funded;
- To compare this data with our own area and theatre;
- To update the TC on a quarterly basis on this research project
- To present findings to a Town Council meeting in June 2024 to consider which option for owning/managing/funding the Princess Theatre is best for the Town Council.

**106.0.T23 To consider correspondence from Somerset Council regarding Community Funded 20mph Speed Limits**

Councillor Vickers had undertaken research and reported her findings about speed limits and signage outside each of the schools. A lengthy discussion took place and comments for and against reducing the speed limit were made.

**Resolved** that an expression of interest is made for a speed survey to be undertaken outside St Andrews School, at initial deposit cost of £500 and £15,000 be allocated in next year's budget for the speed limit to be



reduced if authorised by Somerset Council. The Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee will liaise with the Clerk to confirm the budget allocation.

**107.0.T23 To consider action following concerns raised by a resident regarding the lack disabled access at Highbridge Train Station**

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the inadequate provision for disabled access at the train station.

**Resolved** that the Council takes whatever action it can to try and bring about change and to make sure GWR know they are failing their duties under the Equalities Act. The Town Clerk is asked to initiate a meeting with GWR.

**108.0.T23 To consider request from Crosses Penn Community Sports Trust for a letter of support for MUGA proposal**

(Councillor Murphy left the meeting at this juncture)

Councillor Warren gave some background information regarding the Trust and the proposals.

**Resolved** that the Council sends a letter of support.

**109.0.T23 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Council is an extraordinary meeting scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> August 2023 at 7 pm.

## SOMERSET COUNCIL

AUGUST 2023 Newsletter

Clr Mike Murphy

### Trial brings hope for phosphate mitigation funding

Somerset Council is hoping to secure Government funding to deliver phosphate mitigation measures which will unlock the delivery of 18,000 new homes across the area and provide for longer term nature recovery.

The Council working in partnership with the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), Plymouth University, Salinity Solutions, and Dorset Council, has submitted a bid for £10.5m to the Government's Nutrient Mitigation Fund.

The funding would be used to expand the Council's existing phosphate credit scheme and deliver both interim and long-term phosphate mitigation measures including the installation of modular units to provide a secondary treatment process at wastewater treatment works in the catchment area.

The new energy efficient water processing technology, developed by Salinity Solutions, has the potential to assist all the nutrient neutrality catchment areas by providing cost effective bridging measures to 2030 – meeting the Governments Technically Achievable Limit (TAL) proposed under the Levelling and Regeneration Bill. It would also work alongside the delivery of nature-based solutions for nutrient neutrality, which take longer to establish.

Salinity Solutions and Wessex Water have delivered a no-cost trial for Somerset Council to demonstrate the efficacy of their modular water treatment units for phosphate mitigation. A unit has been in place at the Fivehead Wastewater Treatment Works near Taunton for two weeks allowing independent water sampling to be undertaken. Early indications show promising results with the first verified laboratory results showing over 98% of phosphates and 88% of nitrates removed.

For further information, visit: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/trial-brings-hope-for-phosphates-funding/>

### Affordable housing success in Somerset

More than 2,000 affordable homes have been delivered across Somerset over the past three years, thanks to Somerset Council.

The Housing Enabling team have been working closely with a range of affordable housing delivery partners to provide new, high quality, energy efficient homes that locals can afford.

The Council understands that affordable housing must meet a range of needs and work is taking place to increase the provision for larger homes, fully adapted wheelchair accessible homes and is working in partnership within parishes to satisfy identified housing need.

Development highlights include:

- Cornhill, Wellington – a development of 26 homes for rent and 16 for shared ownership by LiveWest on a brownfield site within the centre of the town. The 42-home development included the repair and conversion of a listed building.

- Rainbow Way, Minehead – works have started to deliver the Council’s first scheme of 54 net zero carbon affordable homes for rent. It includes a broad range of housing types, including fully adapted wheelchair homes and bungalows.
- Neat Lane, Pilton – a development of 20 affordable high-quality homes has been completed, all for social rent and for local people in the village of Pilton. This second phase rural development is situated next to an existing rural exceptions site on land gifted by Michael Eavis, but now transferred to the housing provider, Guinness Partnership. The scheme consists of 8 x 1 bed flats, 6 x 2 bed houses, 4 x 3 bed houses and 2 x 2 bed bungalows, with the latter designed for older people.

New homes are being built across Somerset and will be available to rent or buy through low-cost homeownership. Details on these affordable homes are available on the Homefinder Somerset website here: [www.homefindersomerset.co.uk/choice/content.aspx?pageid=500](http://www.homefindersomerset.co.uk/choice/content.aspx?pageid=500)

### **Homelessness Health in Somerset - the Homeless and Rough Sleeper Nursing Service wins prestigious NHS Parliamentary Award as NHS celebrates its 75th birthday**

At the NHS Parliamentary Awards held in London to coincide with the NHS 75th birthday, it was announced that Somerset’s Homelessness Health in Somerset - the Homeless and Rough Sleeper Nursing Service - was the overall winner in the Health Equalities category.

In Somerset, hundreds of people are affected by homelessness every year, including those sleeping on the streets. They are some of the most vulnerable patients in our county, often with complex health needs.

People who are homeless, or vulnerably housed, face huge barriers to accessing healthcare and experience some of the most severe health inequalities, reporting much poorer health than the general population.

Drug and alcohol difficulties are common amongst the homeless population who are also more likely to struggle with their mental health and have experienced significant trauma in their lives.

Since 2021, the NHS in Somerset, has been working in partnership with colleagues in Somerset Council’s Public Health Service, the voluntary sector and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust to support the health of those experiencing homelessness and other vulnerable communities such as street workers. By pulling together different funding streams and partners across the whole health system, this collaborative and strategic approach has had a huge positive impact on supporting those most at risk of experiencing health inequalities.

Homelessness Health in Somerset Service, supported by Inclusion Health GPs, is funded by NHS Somerset, Somerset NHS Foundation Trust, and Somerset Council. This service recently secured additional funding from NHS England to add a mental health support service to the existing service to become one of only a few services in the country to provide a joint physical and mental health service to those experiencing homelessness.



## Rural England Prosperity Fund now open for applications

Businesses and organisations in Somerset are being encouraged to find out if they are eligible for capital funding grants aimed at supporting businesses and community infrastructure in rural areas.

The funding is available following Somerset Council's successful £3.4 million submission into Government's Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF).

This first call for applications is seeking to allocate a total of £850,000 to eligible capital infrastructure projects. These projects must be delivered – and grant funding spent - by the end of March 2024. Grants can be between £5,000 and £100,000 and match-funding contributions are required.

The REPF has very specific criteria set by Government. Therefore, Somerset Council's Economic Development team is urging businesses and organisations to carefully check eligibility on their website <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/business-economy-and-licences/funding-and-grants-for-business/>

To discuss a potential project applicants should email REPF@somerset.gov.uk in the first instance. A further £2.5 million call for proposals for capital project activity and expenditure in the 24/25 financial year is expected later in the year.

## Government funding for Somerset's road to nature recovery

Somerset Council has been given the lead role in developing a plan to protect and enhance nature and wildlife in Somerset. The Council has been appointed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to lead the preparation of a new Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Somerset.

Led by the Council and the Somerset Local Nature Partnership, the strategy LNRS will be a new long-term evidence-based strategy to recover, protect and enhance nature and wildlife here in Somerset.

Over the next 12 to 18 months, the Council will establish what is needed to protect and restore Somerset's nature to benefit the biodiversity of habitats and species. It will also look to identify further environmental benefits, such as flood regulation, water quality and access to green space for health and wellbeing.

Working with the Somerset Local Nature Partnership, the Council will:

- Engage with stakeholders across the farming, health, community, development and natural resource management sectors.
- Drive a coordinated action plan.
- Highlight where the most important areas for nature are.
- Identify opportunities to restore, grow and connect wildlife in urban and rural areas.
- Adopt a joined-up approach working with residents, groups, landowners, and organisations to build a mapped framework

Opportunities for Somerset residents, businesses, farmers, landowners, and communities to have their say and contribute to the strategy will be shared in the coming months.

You can find more information on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the ongoing work to protect Somerset's environment in our climate strategy on the Somerset Council website.



## Ten Somerset parks and green spaces receive prestigious Green Flag awards

This international award, now in its fourth decade, is a sign to the public that the space boasts the highest possible environmental standards, is beautifully maintained, and has excellent visitor facilities. Two of the ten parks have also retained their Heritage status.

The parks and greenspaces awarded Green Flag status are:

- Ham Hill Country Park near Yeovil
- Chard Reservoir Local Nature Reserve
- Yeovil Country Park
- Apex Park and Marine Cove in Burnham on Sea.
- Swains Lane Nature Reserve near Wellington
- Vivary Park in Taunton
- Blenheim Gardens in Minehead

Congratulations also go to Somerset Council's grounds management team, who look after Victoria Park, French Weir, and Comeytrowe Park for Taunton Town Council, who also receive Green Flag Awards.

As well as having Green Flag status, both Ham Hill Country Park and Wellington Gardens retain their Green Heritage Site Accreditation, supported by Historic England, for the management of their historic features. Ham Hill is an ancient Iron Age hillfort and Wellington Gardens a grade II listed former Edwardian Park established in 1927.

A full list of Green Flag Award-winning parks and green spaces is available here:

<https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/sites/default/files/resources/Winners%20List%20Green%20Flag%202023%20%281%29.pdf>

## Somerset households invited to offer Homes for Ukraine

More host families are needed in Somerset to help support Ukrainian refugees who have been forced to flee their country.

Since the Homes for Ukraine scheme was launched in March 2022, Somerset has welcomed over 1,500 Ukrainians to date, with host families playing a pivotal role in creating a safe environment for guests to re-settle and rebuild their lives in some way, supporting and helping them navigate a new life in the UK.

Becoming a host (or sponsor) can be hugely rewarding, with the key consideration being the ability to provide a bedroom and a comfortable place to live for a minimum of 6 months.

The next step is to register your interest and Somerset Council can provide more information about how hosts and guests are matched, training and support for both parties, checks and visits that form part of the arrangements, thank you payments to hosts and what to do if the relationship breaks down.

To find out more about the Homes for Ukraine scheme and to register your interest in becoming a host, visit Homes for Ukraine: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/housing-support/homes-for-ukraine/>

There are a number of ways to support refugees and asylum seekers in Somerset, in addition to hosting. If you are able to offer your time, skills or resources to supporting guests, get in touch at [homesforukraine@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:homesforukraine@somerset.gov.uk)

## Council transport schemes gearing up for national awards

Two innovative Somerset Council initiatives boosting public transport and active travel are in the running for prestigious awards.

Bridgwater's growing network of cycling, wheeling and walking paths provides the focus for The Bridgwater Way. Through working with schools, a series of initiatives have been delivered including an annual schools' challenge, bike maintenance training, Dr Bike healthchecks for pupil and parent bikes, led rides, competitions in school classroom activities, including learning how to design streets for more walking and cycling. Increases in walking and cycling of up to 27 per cent have been achieved and reductions in car use of up to 22 per cent.

Somerset Council's Bus It campaign, supported by the passenger group Somerset Bus Partnership, was launched last summer with the aim of increasing bus use in the county, protecting valuable services and raising awareness of Somerset's Bus Service Improvement Plan. As well as using local media including radio and social media to highlight the savings bus users can make and benefits to the environment, the campaign, focuses on key initiatives like the £1 fare for any single journey in the Taunton zone, and new evening bus services linking key towns. Bus It uses a range of unique eye-catching in-house designed materials and messaging, winning plaudits and a request from another authority to purchase the content.

The fare capping and evening bus initiatives, along with the campaign, have so far helped to support a 24 per cent rise in bus use in Taunton and 14 per cent rise across Somerset. Bus It is up for Campaign of the Year Award.

## Council review of parking charges comes into effect in August

Somerset Council will be introducing new parking charges across the county following a review which will give consistency and cover inflationary costs.

During August, there will be an overall 10 per cent rise in parking charges across Somerset - though this will vary from car park to car park, in some the increase will be very slightly above or below 10 per cent, as the new fee will be rounded up to the nearest 10p.

Parking season tickets are also being increased by a similar percentage in the measures agreed at the Council's Annual Budget Meeting.

To provide support for residents, on-street parking permits in residential areas are not increasing.

Prior to the Council's review of parking charges there was some inconsistency across the county - in some cases parking charges haven't increased for years.

The new charges recognise and allow for inflationary pressures and will ensure the Council can meet its transport objectives without increasing additional demand on its budget.

## E-Newsletters – how to sign up

Somerset Council produces a number of e-newsletters covering many topics including business, the environment, waste and recycling, transport, news and events.

To receive these important updates directly into your email inbox and to choose which emails are most relevant to you, visit: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKSC/subscriber/new>

## DATE OF

INVOICE	SUPPLIER	INVOICE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	NET	VAT	GROSS
19/07/2023	Absolutely Dragulous Ltd	INV-1056	show settlement			£672.75
12/07/2023	Amazon Payments UK Limited	INV-GB-169203881-2023	table legs	£15.74	£3.25	£18.89
19/07/2023	Amazon Payments UK Limited	GB3780YABEY	door sign	£14.12	£2.82	£16.94
	Somerset Council	Apr-23	pension payment			£6,489.59
15/07/2023	Bravo Events Ltd	631	technician cost Absolutely Dragulous	£288.00	£57.60	£345.60
20/07/2023	Bravo Events Ltd	636	240v battery	£132.35	£26.47	£158.82
24/07/2023	Bravo Events Ltd	626	technician cost month	£1,125.00	£225.00	£1,350.00
01/04/2023	ICCM	4128202324	corporate membership			£95.00
	Somerset Council	Jun-23	pension payment			£6,493.02
21/07/2023	Lee Hall t/a TWC	35	window cleaning			£48.50
04/07/2023	M F Public Address Systems	1	Armistic Day Parade			£160.00
	Somerset Council	May-23	pension payment			£6,492.93
10/07/2023	Proper Job	Z0009T03-1443355	castor wheel	£6.75	£1.35	£8.10
11/07/2023	Screwfix	1393793371	post fix concrete	£9.98	£2.00	£11.98
12/07/2023	Screwfix	1394207050	fire signs	£11.65	£2.32	£13.97
17/07/2023	Screwfix	CN 1395239568	post fix concrete	-£4.99	-£1.00	-£5.99
10/07/2023	Somerset Council	30020731	dog bin collection service	£69.68	£13.94	£83.62
18/07/2023	Spot-On-Supplies (Hyg) Ltd	31644711	cleaning supplies	£150.42	£30.08	£180.50
	Cashplus bank		pre-paid card top up			£500.00

£23,134.22

paid 25/07/23

18/07/2023	Amazon	16JL-HW73-1XN6	Coat rack	£10.82	£2.16	£12.98
31/07/2023	Character Graphics	35164	leaflets Princess			£35.00
28/07/2023	Craig Morris	28.07.23	Medium show Princess			£511.26
17/07/2023	CRS	30503006680	Powder postcrete	£6.90	£1.38	£8.28
25/07/2023	Greenways Ground Maintenance	784	Cemetery maintenance			£2,291.78
24/07/2023	Hellends Kitchen	NHTC05	Civic event-cream tea			£468.00
21/07/2023	Rialtas	30929	IT consultancy	£785.00	£157.00	£942.00
26/07/2023	Screwfix	1398889482	work clothing	£62.49	£12.49	£74.98
26/07/2023	Screwfix	1398889490	work clothing	£45.82	£9.16	£54.98
26/07/2023	Somerset Council	30022072	clear fallen tree	£180.00	£36.00	£216.00
25/07/2023	VWV	BN1-00156088	Councillor Conduct Training	£1,625.00	£325.00	£1,950.00
21/07/2023	JH Groundwater Ltd	364	Water quality sampling & reporting	£1,005.00	£201.00	£1,206.00
28/06/2023	Avalon Promotions Ltd	1676	Performance fee deposit	£650.00	£130.00	£780.00
31/07/2023	Lyreco UK Limited	6723584586	stationery & sundries	£256.72	£29.52	£286.24
01/08/2023	Sansum Solutions Group Limited	INV-10100	Cleaning - monthly service	£260.16	£52.03	£312.19
31/07/2023	Phillip Smith	PWS 01	Programming Advice			£315.00

Cashbook payments

BARB Grant

Cost code 130/4305

Grant approved at F&R Committee on 5<sup>th</sup> June

£495.00

£9,959.69

Total

£33,093.91