

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Town Council Meeting
Held on Monday 21st June 2021 at 7:00pm in the Corn Exchange



PRESENT

Cllr L Hitchings – Chairman
Cllr L Lindsay
Cllr H Mieville
Cllr H White
Cllr P Osborne
Cllr N Lacey-Clarke
Cllr C Jacques

Cllr C Stevens – Vice Chairman
Cllr P Clark
Cllr S Hitchings
Cllr B Quayle
Cllr R Holmes
Cllr A Cross

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk
Nicci Brown – Press (via Microsoft Teams)
Ross Ingham – Ingham Pinnock Associates (via Microsoft Teams)

Assistant Town Clerk

27. PUBLIC SESSION

No members of the public were in attendance.

28. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS

Cllr Quayle gave the report this month.

- 28.1 Town Centre Replacement Slabs – The programme has been published, which is scheduled to start on 12th July and finish in October. Cllr Quayle gave details of the works.
- 28.2 Bin Replacement – Both Dorset Councillors have been working with the Dorset Waste Services, looking at increasing capacity of the bins around the town. He explained that there are a few options to be explored.
- 28.3 Grass Verges – The second stage of the cutting of the verges has been delayed due to the weather. The Rangers started to cut the verges last week.
- 28.4 Bin Collections – Most of Blandford Forum has new bin collection dates. Any issues coming from the change should be reported.
- 28.5 Council Services – Due to the delay in easing of restrictions the Dorset Council is still operating limited face to face services.
- 28.6 Bridge Strengthening Works – Repair works to the Blandford Bridge have been completed.
- 28.7 Community Start Up Grant – This new grant is now open from the Dorset Council and existing groups are encouraged to apply.
- 28.8 Works on Milldown crossings – The works to the pedestrian and cycleway are commencing on 26th July and are scheduled to be completed within four weeks.
- 28.9 Parking Charges – The Dorset Council will be publishing these and Cllr Quayle urged the Town Council to respond.

28. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS (cont.)

- 28.10 Vacant Properties – The empty property in The Close is being purchased by the Dorset Council and the empty property in Salisbury Street is due to go on the market imminently.

Cllr Stevens spoke about the pollarded trees in St Leonards Avenue, they are now sprouting and disabled users are unable to get past. Cllr Quayle reported that this is already being looked at. Cllr Mieville enquired about the possibility of more frequent emptying of the bins in the town. Cllr Lacey-Clarke reported that this has been put forward to the Dorset Council and that this is also an item on this agenda.

29. APOLOGIES

Cllr J Stayt

Cllr R Carter (via Microsoft Teams)

30. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None were received.

31. MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 4TH MAY 2021

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Cross, SECONDED by Cllr Mieville and AGREED (12 in favour, 1 abstention) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED.

32. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

The paper was noted (see Appendix A).

- 32.1 Website Back-Up – Following the discussion at the Town Council meeting on 26th April, Cllr L Hitchings set up the Town Council's website to back up automatically on a weekly basis to the Town Council's existing Google Drive.
- 32.2 Finance & Staffing Committee Meeting – The committee met in the Corn Exchange on 7th June 2021, which was the first meeting held there since the same committee met on 16th March 2021, prior to the national lockdown.
- 32.3 Future of Meetings – No response was received regarding the suggestion of a working group to formulate a response to the government consultation on the future of online meetings.
- 32.4 Skatefest – The Chairman of Council asked that the Skatefest is arranged for this year, following last year's event being cancelled, and this has therefore been arranged for Sunday 29th August 2021.
- 32.5 Volunteer Dorset – It is hoped that local people will sign up to be Volunteer Ambassadors this summer, greeting visitors to the town and signposting them to the different attractions, beauty spots, shops and restaurants/cafés in the town.
- 32.6 Welcome Back Fund – The Dorset Council has advised that, following the Town Council's request/expression of interest, funding has been forthcoming for a temporary Changing Places toilet and Pop-Up Market in the town. More details are currently awaited.
- 32.7 Code of Conduct, Register of Interests & Complaints Training – The Assistant Town Clerk is arranging for all Councillors, the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk to undertake this essential training that is being run by the DAPTC. The Code will then be an agenda item for consideration and approval.

32. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE (cont.)

32.8 Thank You – A Thank You letter was received from The Rotary Club of Blandford for the A-Frame the Town Council donated to the Food Bank.

33. CIVIC REPORT

The paper was sent to Councillors via email.

34. TO NOTE DECISIONS MADE UNDER THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The paper was noted (see Appendix B).

35. RECOMMENDATIONS AND RECEIPT OF MINUTES

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

Cllr S Hitchings chaired the F&S agenda items no. 8 and 9.

35.1.1 Minute No. 10. Review of End of Year Accounts 2020/21

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Cross, SECONDED by Cllr L Hitchings and AGREED unanimously that

The end of year accounts for 2020/2021 are approved.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

35.1.2 Minute No. 11. To Consider Grant Applications

11.1 Blandford Snooker Club (no previous applications)

The paper was noted (see Appendix K).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Cross, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens and AGREED unanimously that

A grant of £1,500 is approved for plaster work required (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

11.2 The Artori Academy (no previous applications)

The paper was noted (see Appendix L).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr Osborne and AGREED unanimously that

The Academy is signposted to discuss the possibility of scholarships with the William Williams charity to cover the cost of the summer school placements.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

35.1.3 Minute No. 12. To Receive an update on the Youth Centre SLA and consider how to proceed

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr L Hitchings and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council vires the ringfenced SLA money for the youth centre for the 2020/21 financial year to the skate park reserves (1305).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

35. RECOMMENDATIONS AND RECEIPT OF MINUTES (cont.)

35.2 The Minutes were RECEIVED

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr P Osborne and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council noted that the Annual Internal Audit Report (page 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/2021) was received and noted at the F&S Committee Meeting held on 7th June 2021, under agenda item no. 9, as well as the Internal Auditor's Report.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

36. TO CONSIDER GRANT REQUESTS (RECEIVED SINCE THE F&S COMMITTEE MEETING) FROM:

36.1 Tricuro Castleman House

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, BUT NOT SECONDED that the Town Council approves a grant of £200. It has been requested that the Blandford Camp are involved to help with the planting, as they were seeking a community project they could be involved with.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Jacques and AGREED (9 in favour, 2 against, 2 abstentions) that

The Town Council requests that the accounts are received from Tricuro, so a more informed decision can be made.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

36.2 Life Education Wessex & Thames Valley

The paper was noted (see Appendix E).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Mieville, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (7 in favour, 6 against) that

The Town Council approves a grant of £430 (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

37. TO APPROVE SECTION 1 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT OF THE ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2021

The paper was noted (see Appendix F).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council approves Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Return for the year ending 31st March 2021.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

38. TO APPROVE SECTION 2 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS OF THE ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2021

The paper was noted (see Appendix G).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Holmes, SECONDED by Cllr Osborne and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council approves Section 2 – Statement of Accounts of the Annual Return for the year ending 31st March 2021.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

39. CORN EXCHANGE

39.1 To retrospectively approve expenditure for fees for the Corn Exchange project

The paper was noted (see Appendix H).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Holmes and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council retrospectively approves expenditure of £9,500.00 + VAT for professional fees for the architect, surveyor and quantity surveyor, using funds from the Corn Exchange Project Manager budget line. (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

39.2 To consider expenditure authority for progression of the project

The paper was noted (see Appendix I).

Ross Ingham from IPA explained the options available to the Town Council. The Chairman thanked him for his report.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council approves expenditure of £25,850 for IPA to progress the project, using funds from the Corn Exchange Project Manager budget line (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

40. TO CONSIDER THE TOWN COUNCIL'S POSITION WITH THE PAYMENT FOR USE OF THE SPORTS PAVILIONS APRIL - JUNE

The paper was noted (see Appendix J).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke but the proposal was WITHDRAWN that the sports clubs are to pay 50% of their rent.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Cross, SECONDED by Cllr White and AGREED (8 in favour, 4 against, 1 abstention) that

The Town Council agrees that the Cricket Club and Bowling Club are to pay 50% of their quarterly rent from 1st April 2021 and the Rugby and Football Club payment relief is to be extended for the next quarterly period.

40. TO CONSIDER THE TOWN COUNCIL'S POSITION WITH THE PAYMENT FOR USE OF THE SPORTS PAVILIONS APRIL – JUNE (cont.)

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr White and AGREED unanimously that

All Sports Club are to pay their utilities bills from 1st April 2021.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

41. TO CONSIDER AMENDMENTS TO THE CO-OPTION POLICY WITHIN STANDING ORDERS

The paper was noted (see Appendix K).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Mieville and AGREED (10 in favour, 3 against) that

The Town Council agrees that discussions over co-option candidates will take place in the public domain, but the voting will be done by secret ballot.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

42. TO CONSIDER REQUESTING ADDITIONAL BINS VIA THE DORSET COUNCIL AS PART OF THE REOPENING FUNDING

Cllr Lacey-Clarke will be abstaining from this vote as this request will be considered by him in his capacity as a Dorset Councillor.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens and AGREED (12 in favour, 1 abstention) that

The Town Council would like to request option B, the housed bins, and would like to request for the bins to be as large as possible a fitting for the location. The Town Council would like to request that the bins are emptied more frequently too.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

43. RECREATION & AMENITIES MATTERS:

43.1 Review & Approval of Allotment Agreements and Rents

The paper was noted (see Appendix L).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lindsay, SECONDED by Cllr Mieville and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council approves the following:

- **The Allotment Management Committee Rent for 2021/22 increases to £464.12 +VAT.**
- **The rent for Lamperd's Field allotment for 2022/23 increases to £38.50 for a full 250sqm plot.**
- **The rent for Elizabeth Road allotment plots for 2021/22 is agreed at 23p per square metre.**
- **The addition of (*a minimum of 75% of the plot should be cultivated*) is included in section B.1.2 of the Lamperd's Field agreement.**
- **Councillors note the request of a soil sample of the new allotment site.**

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

43. RECREATION & AMENITIES MATTERS (cont.):

43.2 To note the report by Operations Manager January 2021-June 2021

The paper was noted (see Appendix M).

The Chairman thanked the Operations Manager for the detailed report.

44. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE AND CONSIDER ANY REQUESTS FROM THE:

44.1 Neighbourhood Plan Working Group – Blandford +

Cllr Carter informed Councillors that the Dorset Council is meeting this week to formally approve the Neighbourhood Plan.

44.2 BFTC Commemoration Group

Cllr Carter reported that the Armed Forces Day event has been postponed.

Cllr Lacey-Clarke thanked Cllr Carter for his clear and concise reports.

44.3 Climate Change & Biodiversity

Cllr Osborne reported that there is no update.

44.4 Dorset Council Grant to support the Market Area Enhancement Project

Cllr Stevens informed Councillors that, due to the slab replacement, the project has been put on hold. An events list has been created by volunteers, but the suggested locations do not include the Market Place. A meeting was due to be held on Wednesday 23rd June, but as key people are not able to attend the meeting will be cancelled and rescheduled.

44.5 Community Governance Review Working Group

Cllr Carter reported that there is no update.

44.6 To consider forming a Working Group to arrange events for The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee 2nd-5th June 2022

It was PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens and AGREED (10 in favour, 2 abstentions, 1 against) that

A Working Group is being created, consisting of Cllrs Jacques, Mieville, Lindsay, Stevens, S Hitchings, L Hitchings.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

45. REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY AND LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Cllr Mieville thanked everyone for attending the monthly Litter Picks, especially the Dorset Rangers who helped the last few times and the Blandford Canoe Club who attended the event in June. The next Litter Pick will be in July and in August they will be weekly. He asked for all Councillors to attend and support the Litter Picks.

The meeting closed at 8:41pm.

SIGNED

DATED