

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Town Council Meeting
Held on Monday 26th September 2022 at 6.08pm in the Corn Exchange

DRAFT
Subject to confirmation

PRESENT

Cllr C Stevens – Chairman of Council
Cllr S Hitchings
Cllr N Lacey-Clarke
Cllr B Quayle
Cllr L Lindsay
Cllr P Osborne – late arrival 6:11pm

Cllr H Mieville – Vice Chairman of Council
Cllr A Cross
Cllr L Hitchings
Cllr R Carter
Cllr E Bray

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk
Responsible Financial Officer

Operations Manager
Member of the public

IN ATTENDANCE VIA MICROSOFTTEAMS

Nicci Brown
Ross Ingham (Ingham Pinnock Associates)

Member of the public

At the beginning of the meeting, the Chairman of Council and Mayor of Blandford Forum, Cllr Colin Stevens swore his allegiance to His Majesty King Charles III following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 8th September 2022, prior to a one-minute silence.

56. PUBLIC SESSION

The Chairman thanked the Town Clerk, Operations Manager and their staff for the Town Council response to the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and subsequent events.

Cllr Lacey-Clarke urged Councillors to attend the public exhibition at the parish rooms on Thursday 29th September 2022 2pm-8pm for the Bryanston Estate proposals for Deer Park Farm.

57. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS

Cllr Quayle advised that a full report will be given at the next meeting.

He updated Councillors on the works Dorset Council is carrying out in the town centre, including the amendments to the crossing on East Street and the introduction of loading bays.

58. APOLOGIES

Cllr P Clark
Cllr K Herbert
Cllr R Holmes

Cllr C Jacques
Cllr H White

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

Cllr Quayle and Cllr Lacey-Clarke advised that they will abstain from voting on Agenda Item No. 10 as paying members of the Trust. Cllr Mieville advised that he is involved in groups that support the Blandford Environmental Trust and expressed a personal interest.

60. MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 25th July 2022

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr L Hitchings and AGREED (9 in favour, 2 abstentions) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED.

61. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

The paper was noted (see Appendix A).

- 61.1 Vacancies – The positions of Caretaker and Committee Clerk have now been filled. Andy Sargeant, the new caretaker started on 1st September 2022, enabling a two-week handover period with other colleagues including John Scott, who is retiring on 16th September 2022. The Committee Clerk is Julie Wigg and she joins the council on 31st October 2022. The successful candidate for the position of Responsible Financial Officer, Murray Sims, started on 15th August 2022 and will be attending this meeting
- 61.2 Staff Training – The Operations Manager has completed the Introduction to Local Council Administration (ILCA), which is a Level 2, online sector specific learning tool. The Business Support Officer and Mayor's Assistant have also registered for the course. The Responsible Financial Officer has completed the Financial Introduction to Local Council Administration (FILCA) which is a Level 2 online sector specific learning tool to support all new Responsible Financial Officers (RFO's) in England and Wales. The Town Clerk has now received confirmation that her submission to The Carbon Literacy Project has passed the assessment criteria and she is now able to use the accreditation.
- 61.3 DAPTC Motions – No motions were received prior to the deadline of 30th September 2022 for the DAPTC AGM in November.
- 61.4 Blandford Business Group – The Business Group has written to thank the Town Council for the sponsorship of their event and the Entrepreneur category. They are 'delighted' and will be in touch nearer the time as the Town Council will receive a free ticket for one of the members to attend, which will be offered to the Mayor in the first instance.
- 61.5 Books of Condolence for HM Queen Elizabeth II – The Town Museum has agreed to exhibit/store the council's Books of Condolence, which contain 735 messages, instead of sending them to the Dorset History Centre. In addition, a book compiling the town's response to The Queen's demise has been created, to accompany the Books of Condolence.

62. CIVIC REPORT

The paper was sent to Councillors via email.

63. COMMITTEE MEETING MATERS DEFERRED DURING THE PERIOD OF NATIONAL MOURNING

Recreation & Amenities Committee Meeting scheduled for Monday 12th September 2022

- 63.1 Report seeking retrospective expenditure approval for repairs to the skate park

The paper was noted (see Appendix B).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED unanimously that

The Councillors retrospectively approve expenditure of £1996.49 +VAT using funds from the SARA Skatepark budget line 1305 (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

63. COMMITTEE MEETING MATTERS DEFERRED DURING THE PERIOD OF NATIONAL MOURNING (cont)

Finance & Staffing Committee Meeting scheduled for Monday 19th September 2022

63.2 Analytical Review of Expenditure against Budget for the following:

63.2.1 Administration Budget for the year to 31st August 2022

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

63.2.2 Overall Revenue Budget for the year to 31st August 2022

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

63.2.3 Reserves Accounts as at 31st August 2022

The paper was noted (see Appendix E).

63.3 Review of Finance Documentation

63.3.1 To receive and retrospectively approve cheque payment 011130 (Sheet 872) totalling £19.86 (for petty cash)

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (10 in favour, 1 abstention) that

The cheque payment 011130 (Sheet 872) totalling £19.86 (for petty cash) is received and retrospectively approved.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

63.3.2 To receive and retrospectively approve direct debit payments for the period 1st May 2022 to 31st July 2022 (sheets 196-198) totalling £89,014.36

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (9 in favour, 2 abstentions) that

The direct debit payments for the period 1st May 2022 to 31st July 2022 (sheets 196-198) totalling £89,014.36 are received and retrospectively approved.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

63.3.3 To receive and retrospectively approve Online Faster Payments FP096 to FP102 totalling £105,407.13 (includes payments to other Town Council bank accounts)

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (9 in favour, 2 abstentions) that

The Faster Payments FP096 to FP102 totalling £105,407.13 are received and retrospectively approved.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

63.3.4 Retrospective approval of the Investment Account for the period 1st June 2022 to 31st August 2022

The paper was noted (see Appendix F).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Mieville, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (9 in favour, 2 abstentions) that

The Investment Account for the period 1st June 2022 to 31st August 2022 is received and retrospectively approved.

63. COMMITTEE MEETING MATERS DEFERRED DURING THE PERIOD OF NATIONAL MOURNING (cont)

63.3.5 Report by Chairman on Bank Reconciliation and Petty Cash checks

Cllr L Hitchings advised that he has not carried out a petty cash check prior to this meeting but will do so this week. He confirmed that the monthly bank reconciliation had been undertaken during the period and everything was found to be in order.

63.3.6 Bank Reconciliation to 31st August 2022

The paper was noted (see Appendix G).

64. TO CONSIDER PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS (DISTRIBUTED TO COUNCILLORS SEPARATELY DUE TO THE SIZE OF THE DOCUMENT)

The paper was noted (see Appendix H).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED (10 in favour, 1 abstention) that

The councillors approve the proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

65. TO CONSIDER A GRANT APPLICATION FROM BLANDFORD ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST

The paper was noted (see Appendix I).

Cllrs Quayle and Lacey-Clarke declared an interest as paying members of the Trust and refrained from discussion and voting.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Osborne, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED (7 in favour, 2 abstentions, 2 non-votes) that

A grant of £300 is approved (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

66. TO APPROVE EXPENDITURE FOR A LEGIONELLA RISK ASSESSMENT

The paper was noted (see Appendix J).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr L Hitchings and AGREED unanimously that

The councillors approve the expenditure of £7,954.00+VAT using funds from the PPM Budget line which currently has a balance of £39,566 (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

67. TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE UPDATED PLANS FOR THE CORN EXCHANGE PROJECT

The paper was noted (see Appendix K).

Cllr Lacey-Clarke thanked Ingham Pinnock Associates (IPA) for arranging a thorough access audit and Ross Ingham (IPA) noted that in addition to advice on the stage area the audit covered the whole scheme and amendments have been made that will benefit users of the venue.

67. TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE UPDATED PLANS FOR THE CORN EXCHANGE PROJECT (cont)

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council approves the updated plans which incorporate recommendations from the access audit report and the plans are now submitted to the local planning authority.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

68. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE AND CONSIDER ANY REQUESTS REGARDING THE:

68.1 Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Group – Blandford +

68.1.1 To approve the updated Memorandum of Understanding

The paper was noted (see Appendix L).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (10 in favour, 1 against) that

The updated Memorandum of Understanding is approved, subject to the inclusion of Bryanston Parish Council at the end of the document.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

The Town Clerk advised that she has updated the Blandford+ Neighbourhood Plan website and advertised the public consultation for the modification review.

68.2 BFTC Commemoration Group

Nothing to update.

68.3 Climate Change & Biodiversity

A press release is being prepared by Dr Pam Buchan, who supported the council with the Motion for the Ocean.

68.4 Dorset Council Grant to support the Market Area Enhancement Project

Cllr Carter met with two expert planners from AECOM to discuss the Neighbourhood Plan and accompanied them on a site visit with the aim of a better protection of the open spaces, which will subsequently be included as a modification to the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the Design Codes. Cllr Carter reported that the planners spoke positively about reducing traffic in the Market Place and encouraging pedestrian access.

7:00pm – Cllr Bray left the meeting.

69. REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY AND LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

None

70. CONFIDENTIAL

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Quayle and AGREED unanimously that

The public and press may be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity might be prejudicial to the public interest as per the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

70. CONFIDENTIAL (cont)

70.1 Town Clerk's Report

Nothing to report.

70.2 To note the Town Clerk's Appraisal (in accordance with Standing Orders)

The Town Clerk's appraisal was carried out on 8th August 2022 with Cllrs L Hitchings and S Hitchings.

7:03pm – Cllr Bray returned to the meeting.

70.3 To receive a report regarding the Town Council's salaries budget and current workload, retrospective expenditure authority and to consider requests for the 2023-2024 budget (paper to follow)

The paper was noted (see Appendix M).

Cllr L Hitchings suggested bringing staff on SCP4-5 up to £10.90 to meet the National Real Living Wage.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Cross, SECONDED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke and AGREED unanimously that

The staff on SCP 4-5 receive a temporary top-up to the National Real Living Wage from 1st October 2022 and the matter is brought back to council for further consideration once the national increase is known.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

70.4 To minute the appointment of the Responsible Financial Officer for Blandford Forum Town Council for identification purposes

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke and AGREED unanimously that

The previous Responsible Financial Officer is removed from the Town Council's list of employees and signatories and is replaced with the current Responsible Financial Officer, Murray Sims.

70.5 To consider a request for the temporary storage of items owned by St Peter and St Paul's Parish Church (paper distributed to Councillors)

The paper was noted (see Appendix N).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Bray and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council stores the items on behalf of the parish church for a temporary period, subject to the items being suitably insured and there is no cost to the Town Council.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

The meeting closed at 7:17pm.

SIGNED

DATED