

**BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL**

**DRAFT**  
Subject to confirmation

**Minutes of the Corn Exchange Meeting**  
**Held on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at 7:03pm in the Corn Exchange**

**PRESENT**

Cllr C Stevens – Chairman of Council  
Cllr P Osborne  
Cllr A Cross  
Cllr S Hitchings  
Cllr H White  
Cllr L Hitchings – late arrival

Cllr H Mieville – Vice Chairman of Council  
Cllr Holmes  
Cllr R Carter  
Cllr L Lindsay  
Cllr P Clark

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Town Clerk  
Elowen Harley – Youth Advisor

Operations Manager  
Sam James – Producer/Director

**IN ATTENDANCE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

Nicci Brown

**15. PUBLIC SESSION**

No matters were raised.

**16. APOLOGIES**

Cllr N Lacey-Clarke  
Cllr E Bray  
Cllr C Jacques

Cllr B Quayle  
Cllr K Herbert

**17. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

None had been submitted.

**18. MINUTES OF THE CORN EXCHANGE MEETING HELD ON 18<sup>th</sup> JULY 2022**

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (7 in favour, 3 abstentions) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED.

**19. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE**

National Lottery Heritage Fund Application – Ingham Pinnock Associates asked the Town Clerk and Operations Manager to seek letters of support for the National Lottery Heritage Fund application. Requests were sent to numerous contacts and letters were gratefully received back from the following:

Blandford St Mary Parish Council  
Bryanston Parish Council  
Blandford Group Practice  
John Sellgren – Executive Director Place, Dorset Council  
Catharine Chapman, Blandford Business Group  
Blandford Forum Parish Church  
Blandford & District Branch of the RBL  
Blandford Yuletide Festival

## 19. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE (cont)

Artsreach  
Oh No It Isn't  
The Blandford School  
Blandford + Monitoring Group

Unfortunately, the grant request of £25,000 from Dorset Council was not successful and IPA has sought an explanation.

Existing Regular Hirers – An email has been prepared to send to our existing regular hirers of the Town Hall complex, providing an update, drawings and proposing a meeting to discuss the progress being made. This will also give hirers an opportunity to ask questions. It is suggested that the Town Clerk, Operations Manager, Bookings Receptionist and the Architect are present, but this cannot be arranged until the next stage of fees is approved.

Citizens Advice Central Dorset – The Community Room is now being used by this organisation in order to provide residents with advice on issues relating to the cost-of-living crisis. Daniel Cadisch, Chief Officer has written to say: *'Many, many thanks for such a positive and helpful response from the Council. We very much appreciate that you are not charging us for the room and please pass our thanks to the Councillors. I am sure that this extra capacity will make a real difference to all those clients feeling the pressure right now.'*

7:08pm – Cllr L Hitchings arrived.

Planning Application – The planning application has been shared with Councillors via email this afternoon. A selection of the 'proposed' plans will also be shared with the regular hirers of the Town Hall complex (as mentioned above), simultaneously inviting them in for a meeting with the architect, Town Clerk and Operations Manager to discuss the project in more depth. However, the architect has advised that we add that, although the Town Council is committed to the project, with the present construction and financial markets we will need to carry out an audit on affordability for all aspects. This is due to the significant increase in the cost of the project since the last estimate by the Quantity surveyor, made up of inflation, extra costs of additional/DDA requirements asked for by Councillors and the general increase in prices.

Flooding – There was flooding to the rear of the stage over the last week and two roofers have been out today to find the ingress.

## 20. TO CONSIDER OPTIONS FOR THE OFFICE RELOCATION DURING THE REFURBISHMENT OF THE TOWN HALL/CORN EXCHANGE COMPLEX

The paper was noted see (see Appendix A).

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

**The Town Council supports the proposal to relocate to Legion House during the closure of the offices and Town Hall complex.**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

It was noted that there will also be storage costs for the items currently stored underneath the offices.

## 21. TO APPROVE EXPENDITURE FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A LOFT HATCH IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

The paper was noted (see Appendix B).

21. **TO APPROVE EXPENDITURE FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A LOFT HATCH IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER (cont)**

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

**The Town Council approves expenditure authority of up to £12,489.30 + VAT using funds from the Corn Exchange Reserves budget line 1105, whilst planning permission is awaited (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

22. **CONFIDENTIAL**

It was PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr Osborne 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.**

Councillors discussed potential funding opportunities as a result of the increase in project costs.

The meeting closed at 7:50pm.

SIGNED .....

DATED .....