

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Town Council Meeting
Held on Monday 8th June 2020 at 7:00pm online using Microsoft Teams



PRESENT

Cllr Lindsay – Chairman
Cllr P Clark
Cllr S Hitchings
Cllr B Quayle
Cllr J Stayt
Cllr R Carter
Cllr C Jacques
Cllr A Cross

Cllr L Hitchings – Vice Chairman
Cllr H Mieville
Cllr H White
Cllr D Russell
Cllr P Osborne
Cllr R Holmes
Cllr N Lacey-Clarke
Cllr C Stevens

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk
Assistant Town Clerk
Nicci Brown – Press
Hugh De Iongh – Dorset Council

Operations Manager
Market Manager
Nic Nicol – Town Team

1. PUBLIC SESSION

- 1.1 Cllr Quayle spoke about an e-mail that has been circulated by a resident regarding the apparent lack of response from Blandford Forum's community during the Coronavirus crisis. Cllr Quayle is not in agreement and has stated that there has been a fantastic community support. Schools, surgeries, the Foodbank, taxi firms, the Town Council, many community and volunteer groups as well as many residents have helped during this situation. The Blandford – Covid19 Community Help Group has done an excellent job. Many residents have helped the Dorset Council, as well as their neighbours. A great amount has been achieved in a short time. He would like to thank the Town Council and residents for the excellent response. The Chairman and Cllr Holmes agreed with Cllr Quayle's comments. Cllr White also echoed Cllr Quayle's comments, as someone who has shielded over this period, because he has received incredible support from neighbours and various groups.
- 1.2 Cllr Stevens enquired with the Dorset Council Councillors if the verges will be cut this year as some pavements are not wide enough to be able to socially distance. Cllr Lacey-Clarke will give a full response at the next meeting and reminded Councillors to ask questions beforehand so they can be answered in full at the meeting.

2. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS

Cllr Lacey-Clarke gave the report this month.

- 2.1 Thank You – Cllr Lacey-Clarke would also like to thank all volunteers and Town Council staff who have helped the community during this situation.
- 2.2 Slab Patches – Both Dorset Council Councillors are still working on replacing the current pavement slabs. The funding has been committed and a slab patch will be installed shortly for the public to see and test. The location for the test area will be near the taxi rank on Sheep Market Hill. As soon as the dates are available, they will be made public.
- 2.3 Age UK – The Dorset Council is continuing to work with Age UK to support vulnerable residents.

2. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS (CONT.)

- 2.4 Highways – Dorset Council Highways are working on filling potholes in Blandford Forum, one major hole opposite the recycling centre has been completed. The potholes reported by Cllr Holmes on Holland Way and roads around that area have been put forward for repair and are being assessed.
- 2.5 Wimborne Road – This has been fully resurfaced now.
- 2.6 Discretionary Grants – These are now available to apply for until 14th June for businesses who do not have their own rateable business premises.
- 2.7 Town Centre Plan – Cllrs Lacey-Clarke and Quayle are working on the plan to open up the town centre. They have held a meeting with Highways and the cabinet member for Highways, the Town Clerk and officers. Once ideas have been confirmed, further information will be provided.

3. APOLOGIES

None

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

None had been submitted.

5. MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 27TH APRIL 2020

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (14 in favour, 2 abstentions) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED.

The Chairman confirmed that these minutes will be signed once we are in a position to do so.

6. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

- 6.1 Thank You – David Rose has written to the Town Council to thank Councillors for awarding him with a Certificate of Appreciation.
- 6.2 Corn Exchange – Officers had been discussing what we can do in the Corn Exchange complex whilst it is closed. We have discussed painting the hall, etc. but part of that discussion was on the lobby glazing, which still needs replacing and is dangerous. Councillors will recall that we did apply for LBC but had various problems. Hence, we met recently with the architectural designer who worked with us on Woodhouse Gardens and he has quoted £900 for the following:
We need to proceed with a new application, and produce some suitably scaled and detailed drawings, along with a specification of the works giving precise details of what is proposed. I suggest I liaise with a couple of manufacturers who specialise in this type of work and obtain appropriate information from them to support our application. My fee for working with you on this, will include for me producing the scaled plans, sections and specification, along with liaising with the specialist manufacturers, preparing and submitting a planning application and monitoring through to a decision being issued. It will not include for any Building Regulation or detailed construction issue details, which we can look at separately once a planning approval is granted. I propose a lump sum fee of £900 excl VAT and local authority fees, but including for reasonable expenses. I would look to get onto the project fairly swiftly once you give me an instruction.
- Although this is within the Town Clerk's spending limits, there is already expenditure authority from the Town Council meeting held on Monday 23rd April 2018 (Minute 203.3.1) for £8665.70 in total, which included the supply and installation, and the architectural designer has been instructed to proceed, but this will come back to council should we require more funding once the final costs are known.

6. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE (CONT.)

The above was written prior to the government announcement regarding the reopening of indoor markets but we will continue to work on the lobby glazing because it is a health and safety issue.

A Zoom meeting was held on Wednesday 27th May with the new consultants and they are producing a report with recommendations for the Town Council to consider.

- 6.3 FOI – A Freedom of Information Act request has been received from a resident, and responded to, asking what the Town Council is doing regarding the reopening of the markets. Councillors were informed of the actions being taken by email on 27th May 2020 following a meeting between the Market Manager, Operations Manager and the Town Clerk.
- 6.4 Park Road Gatherings – The Town Council was copied into an email to Dorset Police from a resident complaining about large number of youths gathering at Park Road recreation ground. Large amounts of litter were accumulating in and around the football dugouts and no social distancing was being observed. The Operations Manager responded to the resident and stated that the area was litter picked daily, including weekends and that Town Council staff would board up the dugouts to prevent them being used as a gathering point. It was further explained that we have no authority to enforce social distancing. The local PCSO was copied into the response.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS AND RECEIPT OF MINUTES

7.1 Finance & Staffing Committee Meeting held on Monday 1st June 2020

7.1.1 Minute 10 - Review of end of year accounts 2019/20

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

The end of year accounts for 2019/2020 are approved.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

7.1.2 Minute 12 – To consider grant applications

Minute 12.1 - Freedom Street Party – Justine Templeman (no previous applications)

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Mieville and AGREED (14 in favour, 2 abstentions) that

The Town Council does not commit funds or resources to the event at this stage because, although it supports the principle behind it, following discussion Councillors were concerned that it is too early to plan such an event and, in addition, there are too many uncertainties over the full extent of the financial impact the pandemic has had on the Town Council budgets.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

7.2 The Minutes were received.

8. TO APPROVE SECTION 1 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT OF THE ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2020

The paper was noted (see Appendix A).

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

The Town Council approves Section 1 Annual Governance Statement of the annual return for the year ending 31st March 2020. The Chairman and Town Clerk will sign the original document in person, as a wet signature, before returning the document to the RFO.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

9. **TO APPROVE SECTION 2 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS OF THE ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2020**

The paper was noted (see Appendix B).

Cllr Mieville queried why the receipts for year end 31st March 2020 are much higher than to year end 31st March 2019. Cllr S Hitchings and the Town Clerk confirmed that this is due to the funding received for the railway arches, cricket club project and public art.

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

The Town Council approves Section 2 Statement of Accounts of the annual return for the year ending 31st March 2020. The Chairman and Town Clerk will sign the original document in person, as a wet signature, before returning the document to the RFO.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

10. **TO RETROSPECTIVELY CONFIRM THE CONTINUING FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S CRICKET PAVILION**

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

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

The Town Council retrospectively approves that the Town Council is continuing to financially manage the refurbishment of its cricket pavilion project, which includes the £20,000 loan and the Sport England funding, and associated expenditure authority (General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

11. **TO RETROSPECTIVELY APPROVE EXPENDITURE FOR THE RENEWAL OF THE OFFICE 365 SUBSCRIPTION FOR ALL COUNCILLORS AND STAFF**

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

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

The Town Council retrospectively approves expenditure of £1,860.00 plus VAT for the Office 365 subscriptions, using budget line 4040 IT Maintenance/Software. This approval is valid for the yearly subscriptions for the whole of the council term until 2024. (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

12. **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WORKING GROUP – BLANDFORD+**

To review and approve amendments to the:

12.1 **Planning Remit in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan**

The paper was noted (see Appendix E).

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

The Town Council approves the amendments to the Planning Remit, with the following changes:

Point 4 - There will be *up to* a 15-minute public session at the start of each meeting.

Point 6.1.2 – Change the sentence ‘*To request that the application is refused on this basis*’ to ‘*To request that the application should be refused on this basis*’.

Point 6.2.6a - Amend to Dorset Council Structure Plan.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

12. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WORKING GROUP – BLANDFORD+ (CONT.)

12.2 Respective Roles & Responsibilities of Blandford + Councils, Steering Group & Co-Ordinator

The paper was noted (see Appendix F).

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

The Town Council approves the amendments to the Roles and Responsibilities of Blandford + Councils, Steering Group & Co-Ordinator document.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

Cllr Stayt left the meeting at 8.19pm.

12.3 Memorandum of Understanding for the Blandford + Steering Group

The paper was noted (see Appendix G).

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

The approval of the document will be taken to another meeting, following further discussions with the Blandford+ Steering Group. The following items need to be amended or clarified:

- **Amend point 2.d to - *The parishes carry the right for their representatives, on any proposal in their respective parishes, to refer that proposal to their parish council for final decision.***
- **The Steering Group should consider, and draw up, a list of infrastructure projects for possible S106 payment for all three parishes with proposed percentage mirroring as in point 2.h.**

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

The Chairman took the decision to bring agenda item no. 15 forward, due to members of the public being in attendance.

**13. TO CONSIDER FORMING A WORKING GROUP TO FOCUS ON TOWN CENTRE RECOVERY PLANNING AND SUPPORT FOR THE TOWN TEAM SURVEY:
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NQ8D2ZZ>**

Cllr Lacey-Clarke has requested that both Dorset Council Councillors are invited to the Market Area Enhancement Working Group meetings going forward.

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

The Town Council does not agree to form a separate working group but will cover this item in the Market Area Enhancement Working Group. There will be no delegated authority and any items will be referred to a full Town Council or Planning meeting.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Mieville, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens but NOT AGREED (7 in favour, 8 against) that the Town Council supports the survey and wishes to proceed via electronic means.

It was THEN PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Holmes and AGREED (10 in favour, 4 against, 1 abstention) that

14. TO CONSIDER FORMING A WORKING GROUP TO FOCUS ON TOWN CENTRE RECOVERY PLANNING AND SUPPORT FOR THE TOWN TEAM SURVEY (CONT.):

The Town Council does not support the survey at this stage and it will be discussed by the Market Area Enhancement Working Group as soon as possible and the matter will be brought back to the next Planning committee meeting on Monday 22nd June.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

15. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL TO DATE

The paper was noted (see Appendix H).

16. TO CONSIDER EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY FOR THE PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS

The paper was noted (see Appendix I).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Lindsay and AGREED (12 in favour, 3 against) that

**The Town Council agrees to purchase the conference system for council meetings using Company B. The following budget lines will be used:-
£500 from budget line 4028 New Equipment
£528 from budget line 4097 Cllr Welfare/Meeting Expenses
£4,552.85 from budget line 5206 Building Maintenance & Materials.
(Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).**

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

The meeting closed at 9:37pm.

SIGNED DATED