

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Town Council Meeting
Held on Monday 22nd November 2021 at 7:03 pm in the Corn Exchange

DRAFT
Subject to confirmation

PRESENT

Cllr L Hitchings – Chairman
Cllr A Cross
Cllr S Hitchings
Cllr B Quayle
Cllr H Mieville
Cllr N Lacey-Clarke
Cllr K Herbert

Cllr C Stevens – Vice Chairman
Cllr R Carter
Cllr H White
Cllr C Jacques
Cllr R Holmes
Cllr L Lindsay

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk

Operations Manager

IN ATTENDANCE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Nicci Brown – Press

94. PUBLIC SESSION

94.1 Mark Williams – TREADS

Mr Williams thanked councillors for their support and assistance over the years. TREADS has aimed to be financially independent and they now have a considerable amount of money from successful funding bids. TREADS has been running projects, including workshops on bullying, and have relocated to the United Reformed Church.

Councillors thanked Mr Williams for his attendance and for all his efforts at TREADS on behalf of young people.

95. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS

Cllr Lacey-Clarke gave the report this month.

95.1 Ofsted – Cllr Lacey-Clarke informed members that the Dorset Council received ‘Good’ for education and ‘Outstanding’ for leadership in a recent review.

95.2 Partnership Working with Police – Cllr Lacey-Clarke and Cllr Quayle have met with the new Police & Crime Commissioner, David Sidwick and have held a joint surgery with the new PCSO, Charlotte. They had planned to have a joint surgery at the Yuletide Festival but, unfortunately, the committee is unable to accommodate them.

95.3 Paving – Cllr Lacey-Clarke offered to answer any questions about the paving.

96. APOLOGIES

Cllr P Osborne

Cllr P Clark

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

None had been submitted.

98. MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 18TH OCTOBER 2021

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Holmes, SECONDED by Cllr Mieville and AGREED unanimously that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED.

99. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

The paper was noted (see Appendix A).

- 99.1 Public Convenience Donations – Charlton Marshall Parish Council has agreed to send a contribution of £500 towards the upkeep of the public conveniences in Blandford Forum for 2022/23. An invoice for this amount will be sent in the new financial year. Spetisbury Parish Council has also agreed to contribute £50 for the current financial year.
- 99.2 Complaint – Bryanston Parish Council has written to complain about the Town Council's response to the community governance, which has been circulated to all Councillors.
- 99.3 Funday Expenditure – Councillors will recall that up to £1,000 was approved towards the Mayor's Funday in September. Invoices have now been submitted, totalling £495.98 for air horns (which will be donated to the Town Council), insurance cover and the PA system.
- 99.4 Paving Works – The Dorset Council has written to advise that the: *Dorset Highways paving works in Blandford are being put on hold to allow unforeseen utility work to be carried out. It recently came to light that fibre optic cabling is set to be laid under the pavements in the town centre this autumn and, to avoid newly laid paving being disturbed, the highways project is being paused. The contractor undertaking the cabling works has around 200 connections to make throughout the town centre. They are currently carrying out site investigations to inform their scheme design – which will require some new ducting to be installed in the footway. To ensure that this cabling is complete before the new paving is installed, Dorset Highways has completed its first phase of work (which will not be affected by the cabling) and have now left the site. All pavements have been left safe, and workers will return to Blandford in the New Year to complete the paving project once the utility cables have all been installed. A new way of working had recently been established for the project in order to minimise disruption to residents and businesses, and this will be put back into operation when work resumes. This sees highways operatives focussing on one area at a time rather than two. The new overall programme has been split into ten phases, with work being carried out in much smaller sections of around 15m at a time with the old paving removed, foundation prepared and new slabs laid before the team move along to the next 15m of that phase. Although much less disruptive for residents and businesses, this new way of working extends the project to a total of 33 weeks rather than the original proposed 12 weeks. More detail of the phasing of works in the New Year will be provided nearer the time. We do apologise for any inconvenience caused in this matter and we would like to thank you for your patience.*
- 99.5 'Right tree in the right place for the right reason' – The Town Clerk and Operations Manager have booked to attend an online session on this subject. The details are as follows: *Tree planting is high up the agenda to mitigate climate change, but consideration is needed to ensure the right choses are made to avoid making mistakes and causing other issues. Staff from the Forestry Commission will explain the detail that is behind this simple mantra that many are now becoming familiar with. They will explain the work that goes to ensuring the trees provide a benefit when planted and avoid causing harm, and will offer a reminder of the huge range of these benefits that is leading to the drive to plant trees. They will also discuss how the trees need to be site adapted and also Right Today and Right Tomorrow given the impacts of climate change which will occur within the life of a single tree.*
- 99.6 Quality Gold Application – The National Association of Local Councils has written to advise that the Town Council's application for reaccreditation for Quality Gold level has been successful. Cllr Sue Baxter, Chairman of NALC, wrote to congratulate the council on this achievement, which can be read at Appendix A within the agenda.
- 99.7 Wimborne War on Waste – From 2020 the large poppies were attached using string instead of single use cable ties. This has been spotted by a member of the public who has passed it on to Wimborne War on Waste. They have written to the council to thank them for their efforts.

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

- 99.8 Orienteering Course – Dorset Council officer, Laura Everett-Coles has been working with the newly appointed Strategic Business Manager for Blandford Primary Care Network (PCN) at Whitecliff Surgery and has £1500 of funding from Public Health Dorset for an orienteering course utilising the green spaces in Blandford and providing a free community asset for the town for residents and visitors to use and enjoy. The Town Clerk and Mayor have been invited to a meeting and more information will be reported back in due course.
- 99.9 Remembrance – The wash up meeting is scheduled for Monday 29th November 2021 and the following items have been raised for discussion:
- Using the whole Market Place to spread out the parade to help improve visibility for spectators.
 - Acquire additional chains for spacing out of wreaths.
 - Extend the sound system to the Greyhound House end of the Market Place.
- 99.10 Election – Dorset Council has confirmed that an election will be held to fill the vacancy in the Old Town Ward on 20th January.
- 99.11 Benches – The Dorset Council has put the military and fire benches back in the wrong locations and there is a small chunk out of the Jack Counter VC commemorative stone. This has not been reported to DC, although the bin has and I know Noc and Byron have struggled to make any progress with it.
- 99.12 Community Governance – Correspondence from Dorset Council, in response to the Town Council's submission, has been shared with Councillors.
- 99.13 UNISON – The union is in dispute concerning the pay rates for 2021/2022 for all workers whose pay is based upon pay awards made by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services or the Joint Negotiating Committee for Youth and Community Workers. UNISON seeks an increase of 10% in pay for all such workers, payable from April 2021. As the Town Council employs workers whose pay is based on pay awards made by the National Joint Council for Local Government Service or the Joint Negotiating Committee for Youth and Community Workers, UNISON has stated that a trade dispute subsists between the council and members of the union. UNISON intends to hold a ballot for industrial action to include its members employed by a number of employers with which it is in dispute in relation to the above matters. The Town Council employs two members of staff who are union members.

100. CIVIC REPORT

The paper was sent to Councillors via email.

101. RECOMMENDATIONS AND RECEIPT OF MINUTES

101.1 Recreation & Amenities Committee Meeting held on Monday 8th November 2021

There were no recommendations and the Minutes were RECEIVED.

101.2 Town & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Monday 15th November 2021

There were no recommendations and the Minutes were RECEIVED.

102. TO APPROVE EXPENDITURE FOR A REPLACEMENT PHOTOCOPIER/FAX MACHINE

The paper was noted (see Appendix B).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Mieville and AGREED (12 in favour, 1 against) that

102. TO APPROVE EXPENDITURE FOR A REPLACEMENT PHOTOCOPIER/FAX MACHINE (cont)

The Town Council agrees to:

- Purchase a replacement Xerox photocopier/printer with fax up to a maximum cost of £3,575 + VAT including delivery using funds from accruals budget line (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).
- Ask Company A to explain the differences between the Xerox 7020 and Xerox C8130 before committing to the less expensive model.
- Part exchanges the existing machine to reduce the costs and for ease of disposal.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

103. TO CONSIDER FORMING A WORKING GROUP TO RESPOND TO THE DORSET COUNCIL CONSULTATION ON HOW THEY DEVELOP AND DELIVER THEIR LIBRARY SERVICE IN THE FUTURE

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

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

A response is submitted by the Town Council.

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

The Town Council asks an informed member of staff to respond on behalf of the council.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

The Chairman also encouraged Councillors to consider responding to the consultation as individuals.

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

104.1 Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Group – Blandford +

Cllr Carter updated Councillors on the current status of the plan and advised that a monitoring group meeting is due to take place soon.

104.2 BFTC Commemoration Group

The group is due to hold discussions about working with the Queen's Jubilee working group on the Platinum events for 2022.

104.3 Climate Change & Biodiversity

Due to low responses for the next meeting and the visit to the waste management centre, a new poll will be distributed in January 2022. Cllr Mieville offered to chair the meeting if it takes place prior to Cllr Osborne's return.

104.4 Dorset Council Grant to support the Market Area Enhancement Project

Cllr Stevens said the businesses he spoke to are struggling and have found the town quiet and were supportive of part pedestrianisation.

104. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE AND CONSIDER ANY REQUESTS FROM THE: (cont)

104.5 The Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2nd - 5th June 2022

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

Cllr Lacey-Clarke advised that a discussion had been held with the Green Space team about the possibility of planting 70 trees, which unfortunately is not possible. Cllr Stevens said he has been discussing the prospect of tree planting with the schools and needs to find some suitable land and associated permissions.

105. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE TOWN COUNCIL PLAN

The paper was noted (see Appendix E).

106. TO CONSIDER PURCHASING REPLICAS OF JACK COUNTER VC'S MEDALS

The paper was noted (see Appendix F) and it was noted that the cost for mounting will be £42.

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

The Town Council agrees to purchase the Jack Counter VC replica medals, to be mounted for display purposes, using funds of between £200 and £300 from the Civic budget line (4802) (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8) and will do the same for any other resident who achieves the same award/recognition.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

107. REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY AND LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Cllr Carter advised members that he has distributed information about the recent meeting of the Foundation Governors, Blandford Secondary School Foundation.

The meeting closed at 8:10 pm.

SIGNED

DATED