

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Town Council Meeting
Held on Monday 23rd November 2020 at 7:00pm Online using Microsoft Teams



PRESENT

Cllr Lindsay – Chairman
Cllr P Clark
Cllr S Hitchings
Cllr B Quayle
Cllr P Osborne
Cllr C Jacques
Cllr A Cross

Cllr L Hitchings – Vice Chairman
Cllr H Mieville
Cllr H White
Cllr J Stayt
Cllr R Carter
Cllr N Lacey-Clarke
Cllr C Stevens

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk
Assistant Town Clerk
Mark Williams – Treads
Derek Gardiner – North Dorset CPRE
Peter Slocombe – Pimperne Parish Council

Operations Manager
Nicci Brown – Press
Rupert Hardy – North Dorset CPRE
Ian Ricketts – Blandford Allotment Committee
Members of the Public

75. PUBLIC SESSION

75.1 Mark Williams- Treads

Mark Williams informed the Town Council that Treads decided to reduce their overheads by working out of the youth centre premises. Due to the current situation they are also working online. Treads is running a project with Victim Support on bullying. They are finding that not all young people like to be seen on camera and are getting fatigued with using social media and not all young people have access to laptops. They have a number of active funding bids so they can help out. However, Treads is aiming to be sustainable in its own right in the next 12 months. Mark Williams confirmed that Treads is relatively quiet currently, but they have worked on creating new policies and a business plan. They are very clear on where Treads wants to go and what they need to focus on, and where the lack of support is for young people.

75.2 Rupert Hardy – Chairman of North Dorset CPRE

Rupert Hardy spoke about planning application P/OUT/2020/00026. He said that according to the government's housing targets North Dorset suffers from a housing shortage. However, a report commissioned by Dorset CPRE shows that the need is 24% lower than the current housing target. He believes there is no need for new housing. The scale of this development is strategic and should therefore progress with the Dorset Plan. Mr Hardy is concerned about the visual impact on the Cranborne Chase AONB. The AONB is now an international dark sky reserve and the developer has not covered any lighting scheme to consider this. Mr Hardy urges the Town Council to oppose this application.

75.3 Derek Gardiner – North Dorset CPRE

Mr Gardiner spoke about planning application P/OUT/2020/00026 and said that the development is not sustainable being on the bypass. There will be an increase in traffic and noise. The A350 will suffer major congestion and with the Bellway development in Blandford St Mary the bypass will cease to function. The allotments will take years to be cultivated. The school will only be built in Phase 2 which is too late. Mr Gardiner urges the Town Council to oppose this application.

75. PUBLIC SESSION (CONT.)

75.4 Ian Ricketts – Blandford Allotment Committee

Mr Ricketts spoke about planning application P/OUT/2020/00026 on behalf of the 146 plot holders. The proposed site is inappropriate, with the prevailing winds making it difficult to cultivate. The proximity of the proposed Waste Transfer Centre is a concern due to the potential odour and rodents. The access to the site is a potential issue due to congestion and lack of parking. Exit to the main A354 will result in gridlock to the new site. Mr Ricketts said that allotment holders require parking, storage and a dedicated building for allotment holders only. The proposed site is not big enough as there will be an increased demand for plots with the additional houses.

75.5 Peter Slocombe – Pimperne Parish Council

Mr Slocombe spoke about planning application P/OUT/2020/00026 and spoke on behalf of the Parish Council, whose view is based on the Pimperne Neighbourhood Plan. The plan indicates the current boundary in the Letton area. The application crosses the boundary, and the application ignores the open gap between the two parishes. The application is in variance with the Pimperne Neighbourhood Plan. The flood attenuation ponds are in the parish of Pimperne. Mr Slocombe feels it is unacceptable that the application gives little regard to the Pimperne Neighbourhood Plan. No consultation by the applicant took place with the Pimperne Parish Council or its residents.

76. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCILLORS

Cllr Quayle gave the report this month.

- 76.1 Coronavirus – The infection rate is currently going up. Cllr Quayle urged Councillors to advertise the local restriction support grant for shops and businesses. The Dorset Council is continuing the support number 01305 221000, which is for all residents who are struggling.
- 76.2 Household Waste Recycling Centre – This remains open for essential waste from 10am – 4pm.
- 76.3 Covid-19 Briefing for Young People – The briefing is happening on Thursday 26th November at 6pm. The link is available from the Dorset Council website.
- 76.4 Parents and Carer Helpline – This line is for young people and carers to help deal with Coronavirus; the number is 01258 474036.
- 76.5 Replacement Slabs – The test patch was installed on 2nd November and residents have been asked for their comments. 85 - 90% of the comments are positive. Residents would like to see a standalone slab, which Cllr Quayle confirmed, will be tested.
- 76.6 New Shoppers Permit – This consultation ends on 6th December.
- 76.7 Free Christmas Parking – It has been confirmed that free parking will be on Saturday 5th, 12th, 19th and 24th December.
- 76.8 Revenue Support Fund – This grant fund closes on 29th November and is for voluntary organisation, cultural and community organisations. Cllr Quayle urged Councillors to request for local groups they are involved with to apply.
- 76.9 Climate Emergency and Action Plan – He urged Councillors to complete this survey.

76. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCILLORS (CONT.)

76.10 Highways – The gritting programme has started for this year.

76.11 EVCP – 44 electric vehicle fast charging points will be installed in Dorset, with one of them being in Langton Road car park.

76.12 Parking Review – Following the discussion at the T&GP meeting and the Town Centre Enhancement working group recommendations him and Cllr Lacey-Clarke would like to move the Parking Review forward. Cllr Quayle sees that the recommendations from both groups can go alongside each other. He will bring the recommendations to a Town Council meeting for discussion and voting, for it to then go to public consultation.

Cllr S Hitchings asked if Cllr Quayle has any comments about the 4-way traffic lights in Blandford St Mary and the delay this set-up has caused. No works took place for the first five days and Cllr S Hitchings felt that this has had an economic impact. Cllr Lacey-Clarke confirmed that he has reported the complaints received and that the local MP and Dorset Councillor for Blandford St Mary ward are now involved along with the contractor to discuss the issues.

77. APOLOGIES

Cllr R Holmes

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

Cllr Mieville declared an interest in agenda item no. 9 as the husband of an allotment holder.

79. MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 26TH OCTOBER 2020

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Mieville, SECONDED by Cllr Osborne and AGREED unanimously that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED. The minutes will be signed at the earliest opportunity.

80. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

The paper was note (see Appendix A).

80.1 Public Conveniences – The Town Council has received a £200 donation from Stourpaine Parish Council for the upkeep of the toilets.

80.2 Park Road Toilet Block – An asbestos survey has been carried out since the authority to proceed was given at the last council meeting. SSE is compiling a quote to relocate the electricity supply.

80.3 Calendars – The calendars for 2021, raising funds for the Mayor's Charity – The Community Kitchen, have now sold out.

80.4 Town Centre Recovery Survey – As requested by the Dorset Council, in town centre recovery meetings, the survey results were shared with Dorset Council officers John Sellgren, Michael Westwood, James Potten and Matthew Piles.

80.5 Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022 – The Nation will come together over a four-day Bank Holiday weekend to celebrate The Queen's 70 year reign. The May Bank Holiday Weekend will be moved to Thursday 2nd June 2022 and an additional Bank Holiday on Friday 3rd June 2022 will see a four-day weekend to celebrate Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee - the first time any British monarch has reached this historic milestone. The Town Clerk is awaiting guidance from the Pageant Master as to how the government expects town and parish councils to

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

be involved. Terence Dear has already advised that Gordon Irving is arranging for a concert to be held in the church on the Sunday afternoon.

- 80.6 Skate Park Lease – The Dorset Council has now sent a draft lease, which has been passed to the town council's solicitor to consider.
- 80.7 Centenary of War Memorials – The Cross of Sacrifice at the cemetery and the plaques on the Town Hall in Blandford Forum were erected in 1921, so next year is the centenary of that event. Various groups/individuals are trying to research the background and details of the introduction of the Cross and the plaques and haven't got very far because all the borough council minutes from 1918-21 would be at the Dorset History Centre. The Town Clerk has written to the History Centre to ask if it is possible for us to cover the costs of someone going back through these minutes or if we could collect them and go through them and then return them once we are finished.
- 80.8 Mayor's Christmas Card – There will be more recipients this year, but less paper usage and cost, with the majority of cards being sent out via email. The Blandford Opportunity Group designed the card and the Mayor's Secretary has added a moving background.
- 80.9 Corn Exchange – The consultants have prepared a consultation to run in December and January and this has been submitted to the Forum Focus for the December edition. They are also meeting with other stakeholders via Zoom in the coming weeks – Tony Horrocks & Sam James (panto), Terence Dear & Nicci Brown (Civic Society), Pat Pryor (ArtsReach), James Henshaw (Coade Hall), Clive Newall (comedy nights) and Andy Reynolds (re markets).

Cllr S Hitchings spoke about online banking and said that a few months ago, the Town Council voted to move to online banking. He urged Councillors to look into their commitments as the RFO is struggling to secure Councillors willing to participate. He stated that this is not an onerous task and the RFO is still waiting for responses from some Councillors.

90. CIVIC REPORT

The paper was sent to Councillors via email.

The Chairman thanked the Town Clerk and her staff for organising a Remembrance service. The reduced, socially distanced service was very well organised and very poignant.

91. RECOMMENDATIONS AND RECEIPT OF MINUTES

91.1 Recreation & Amenities Committee Meeting held on Monday 9th November 2020

91.1.1 The Minutes were Received.

91.2 Town & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Monday 16th November 2020

91.2.1 The Minutes were Received.

92. APPENDIX A – NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS (WYATT HOMES – LAND NORTH OF THE BYPASS)

The paper was noted (see Appendix B) and the Chairman asked Cllr Clark to chair this item.

92. **APPENDIX A – NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS (WYATT HOMES – LAND NORTH OF THE BYPASS) (CONT.)**

Cllr Carter responded to the public participants and reminded attendees that the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan has passed examination by an independent examiner. The five basic conditions were met, and the objections raised by the public participants were answered at examination. The legality of the plan is being considered by the Dorset Council. The required housing numbers will be decided by the government and the Dorset Council, with the strategy being to have growth in the towns. Regarding the issue with the boundary to Pimperne, this is an issue that needs to be decided by the Local Planning Authority, as it is not in the B+NP. At Regulation 14, 16 and at the examination all these points were raised too and were overturned. The only building in the AONB will be the new, much needed school.

A lengthy discussion took place on concerns some Councillors had about the traffic and safety on the highway, especially for schoolchildren, and the need for environmental issues to be addressed with regards to climate change. Cllr Carter reminded Councillors of the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan Policy B2, and support from public consultations, for a school, infrastructure and housing in the northern part of the town.

Cllr Carter asked for this to be a recorded vote.

Cllr Carter – in favour
Cllr Clark – in favour
Cllr Stayt – in favour
Cllr White – in favour
Cllr Stevens – in favour
Cllr Cross – in favour
Cllr Mieville – in favour

Cllr Quayle – against
Cllr Lindsay – against
Cllr S Hitchings – against
Cllr L Hitchings – against
Cllr Osborne – against
Cllr Lacey-Clarke – against
Cllr Jacques – against

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Stayt but **NOT AGREED** (7 in favour, 7 against) with the Chairman, Cllr Lindsay using her casting vote to vote against the proposal that the Town Council supports the application, as it is in conjunction with the Blandford+ Neighbourhood Plan, subject to a list of discussion items being submitted.

A discussion was held on who had the casting vote as Cllr Clark had been chairing the agenda item, and he is the Planning meeting chairman, but councillors were advised that it was a full council meeting and the Chairman of Council, Cllr Lindsay therefore has the casting vote.

Please also see below at Minute No. 92 (cont.).

93. **TO CONSIDER THE TOWN COUNCIL'S POSITION WITH THE PAYMENT FOR USE OF THE SPORTS PAVILIONS OCTOBER - DECEMBER**

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

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

The Town Council extends the payment relief of 50% to the sports clubs during October and December 2020 and 100% payment relief for November 2020 and will review this again at the end of this period.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

Cllr Lacey-Clarke queried the resolution being submitted to the planning authority, based on minute no. 92 above. A discussion was held and it was agreed to revisit the agenda item in order to form a resolution. The Chairman decided to call for a comfort break at 8.28pm and reconvened the meeting at 8.35pm.

The meeting returned to agenda item no. 9 to resolve the material planning reasons for the objection.

Minute No. 92. (cont.) – APPENDIX A – NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS (WYATT HOMES – LAND NORTH OF THE BYPASS)

It was clarified that the application is separate to the neighbourhood plan and should be judged on its merit.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr P Osborne, SECONDED by Cllr Jacques and AGREED (6 in favour, 6 against, 2 abstentions), with the Chairman Cllr Lindsay using her casting vote to vote in favour of the proposal that

Although the Town Council supports a new school and infrastructure in that part of the town in line with its neighbourhood plan, it objects to the application on the grounds of avoidable environmental impact and the impact on traffic and highways safety.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

Cllr Stayt left the meeting at 8.53pm.

94. TO RECEIVE THE APPROVED EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT FOR 2019/20 AND TO NOTE THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

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

The Town Council receives and notes the External Auditor's report.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

95. TO CONSIDER EXPENDITURE APPROVAL FOR REPLACEMENT LAPTOPS FOR OFFICE STAFF

The paper was noted (see Appendix E).

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

The Town Council approves the purchase of two new laptops for office staff at a cost of £1,270 + VAT, using funds from the IT replacement accrual budget line, which has a balance of £18,004.49 plus £200 to replace the hard drives (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

96. TO CONSIDER EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF RAISED BEDS FOR WILDFLOWER AREAS AT JUBILEE WAY

The paper was noted (see Appendix F).

96. TO CONSIDER EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF RAISED BEDS FOR WILDFLOWER AREAS AT JUBILEE WAY (CONT.)

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

The Town Council approves expenditure for the introduction of three raised beds for bulbs, wildflowers and a planting scheme at £1,600, using funds from budget line 6200 Containers Planting & Signs (due to the underspend from not having three tier planters this year (COVID-19)) (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8). This includes the local contractor being permitted to display signage for his business.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

97. TO RECEIVE THE RECOMMENDATION FROM THE WORKING GROUP AND RESPOND TO THE NALC CONSULTATION STANDARDS MATTER 2

The paper was noted (see Appendix G).

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

The Town Council submits the working group's recommendations.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

98. TO CONSIDER FORMING A WORKING GROUP WITH DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO RESPOND TO THE SHOPPERS PARKING PERMIT

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

The Town Council creates a working group with delegated authority to respond to the consultation. A Doodle Poll will be sent to all Councillors.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

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

99.1 Neighbourhood Plan Working Group – Blandford +

Cllr Carter wrote to DC's Cllr David Walsh regarding the delay on the legal decision. Cllr Walsh responded that it is being looked at and the group should have a decision in two weeks.

99.2 Public Art Plan

Cllr Osborne confirmed that the reinforced concrete base has been installed. The art benches are to be installed this Wednesday 25th November and the canopy the following day Thursday 26th November. The surfacing work will happen week commencing 30th November and the project will be completed. Cllr Osborne thanked the Assistant Town Clerk for her work on this.

99.3 Climate Change & Biodiversity

99.3.1 To consider responding to the Dorset Council Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy consultation

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

The Town Council approves that the Climate Change working group will respond to this survey with delegated authority.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

99.4 Dorset Council Grant to support the Market Area Enhancement Project

99.4.1 To receive an update/consider any recommendations from the town centre recovery survey meeting

The paper was noted (see Appendix H).

In view of the time required for this item, the Chairman deferred it until the 21st December meeting. Cllr Stevens urged Councillors to read all the documentation before the meeting and to attend the next working group meeting.

100. REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY AND LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Cllr Carter reported that the Mortain Twinning Association held their AGM, and the Chairman was re-elected. The group proposed two exchanges next year, but this is still subject to further discussions.

Cllr Carter said that it is the 100-year anniversary of the RBL and it was thought both the Commemoration group and the RBL might join together in their celebrations next year as it is also the centenary of the cross of sacrifice and the war memorial plaques on the town hall.

Cllr Mieville thanked Cllr Carter for his reports.

The meeting closed at 9:09pm.

SIGNED

DATED