

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Town Council Meeting
Held on Monday 25th January 2021 at 7:00pm Online using Microsoft Teams

DRAFT
Subject to confirmation

PRESENT

Cllr Lindsay – Chairman
Cllr P Clark
Cllr S Hitchings
Cllr B Quayle
Cllr R Holmes
Cllr A Cross
Cllr R Carter
Cllr P Osborne

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

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk
Assistant Town Clerk
Nic Nicol – Town Team

Operations Manager
Nicci Brown – Press

114. PUBLIC SESSION

114.1 Cllr White commended the Blandford Group Practice for their efforts in rolling out the Covid-19 vaccination programme and would like for a letter of thanks to be sent. Cllrs Carter and Holmes agreed with Cllr White's comments. Cllr Carter would also like to include the successful roll out of the flu vaccination in the letter.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

114.2 Cllr White spoke about the passing of former Councillor Hazel Warrington and would like to pass condolences to the family. The Chairman confirmed that a card and flowers have been sent on behalf of all Councillors. Both Cllrs Carter and Holmes expressed their condolences too.

115. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCILLORS

Cllr Quayle gave the report this month.

- 115.1 Condolences – Both Cllrs Lacey-Clarke and Quayle would like to give their condolences to Peter Warrington. They both appreciated the support from Hazel in the recent years.
- 115.2 GP Surgery – Cllr Quayle echoed Councillors' comments about the vaccination plan put into place and said that it has been very well run.
- 115.3 Covid-19 Response – Cllr Quayle reminded Councillors about the Dorset Council helpline number 01305 221000, where help is supplied on an array of issues for all residents.
- 115.4 Council Services – Officers have been deployed to help in areas that are under pressure. Services are still being provided, but response times might be slower.
- 115.5 Digital Helpline – This helpline on 01305 221048 provides digital support to get residents better connected.
- 115.6 Fostering – If anyone is interested in Fostering, they should contact Dorset Council, who are looking for volunteers.

115. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCILLORS (CONT.)

- 115.7 Funding – Every year around £279,000 are made available for cultural organisation. This year the Blandford Museum has been awarded £5,000. This scheme is run annually, and Cllr Quayle is pleased to see that the Museum has been awarded some funds this year.
- 115.8 St Mary School near Shaftesbury – Cllr Quayle reported that the Dorset Council has purchased the facility and a consultation on future plans for the site starts on 4th February. Members and residents are asked to respond. The Dorset Council has ambitious plans to transform the school, potentially providing better educational opportunities for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. However, there is also scope for adult social care and community support. This site will benefit Blandford residents.
- 115.9 Local Restriction Support Grant – Any businesses are urged to apply; in case they are eligible.
- 115.10 Climate Change Consultation – The consultation has now ended, and the Dorset Council are evaluating the responses. Cllr Quayle thanked all respondents on behalf of Lacey-Clarke. The Dorset Council has been awarded a grant of £19m for decarbonisation of local government facilities. This will help support the Dorset Councils ambition to be carbon neutral.
- 115.11 Dorset Council Local Plan – The Local Plan consultation is running until 15th March. The measures set out in the plan will go up to 2038. Councillors are encouraged to engage with the plan so they can support residents, if they have any questions.
- 115.12 Dorset Council Planning Portal – Cllr Quayle reported that there have been issues with the portal over the last few days as they are still merging all the previous sites.
- 115.13 Dorset Council budget – Cllr Quayle reported that the budget proposals for 2021/22 were presented to cabinet for approval on 19th January, proposing an increase from £304m to £313m which will be an on the general council tax of around 1.99%, which equates to £1.62 per week for a Band D property.

Councillors are urged to contact Cllrs Quayle and Lacey-Clarke if there are any issues so they can investigate immediately.

Cllr Mieville expressed his interest in the future plans of the St. Mary site and would like to speak to Cllr Quayle further about this. He also expressed that he believes it a shame that the previous authority to the Dorset Council did not see the same opportunities in the Nordon site.

Cllr White spoke about the Dorset Local Plan and the fact that Blandford is now linked to the Eastern Area. He asked if there was any consultation with anyone? Cllr Quayle responded that he is not aware of any consultation. Cllr White said that Blandford Forum is the hub for the surrounding area and will not be in the same area as the villages it services. Cllr Quayle said that there are issues in the plan that need to be voiced by the town council and individual members.

Cllr Stayt asked about the St Mary school site. He is wondering about the cost and size of the property. Cllr Quayle requested for his questions to be sent in an email so he can obtain an answer.

Cllr Osborne asked if there is any truth in the site being in Wiltshire and will therefore be under the scrutiny of Wiltshire Planning and not Dorset. Cllr Quayle confirmed that it is in Wiltshire and therefore any Planning applications will go to that authority.

115. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCILLORS (CONT.)

The Chairman asked that any further questions regarding the St Mary site are directed at Cllr Quayle directly, outside of this meeting.

116. APOLOGIES

None

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

None had been submitted.

118. MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 21ST DECEMBER 2020

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Holmes, SECONDED by Cllr White and AGREED (13 in favour, 2 non-votes) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED. The minutes will be signed at the earliest opportunity.

119. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

The paper was noted (see Appendix A).

119.1 Wessex Water Refill Unit – Wessex Water have confirmed that the installation is scheduled for the week commencing 25th January 2021.

119.2 Public Conveniences – Pimperne Parish Council wishes to continue support for the town WC's and have allocated £50.00 grant in the budget for 2021-2022. Charlton Marshall Parish Council has also voted to make a contribution of £500.00 for 2021-2022.

119.3 Census 2021 – As Councillors are aware, the Town Council's bid for the contract to provide a service to the public for the completion of the Census 2021 was successful. The regional manager has recently provided an update on the lockdown and its implications on the Census, which is as follows:

"A number of centres have contacted us to confirm whether we expect the Census Support Service to go ahead. We have received confirmation from ONS of their intention to run Census 2021, as planned. Given the many challenges faced by households as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government believes this Census will be of vital importance in understanding these challenges and the support people need to overcome them. We are therefore working to our existing timetable for the roll-out of the service. The only difference you will see is our visits to you will be virtual ones for the foreseeable future. Much of our preparation and training was planned to be online, and this will continue. If you have any questions then please continue to get in touch with your Regional Census Support Manager who will be happy to help. The lack of certainty around the length of the current lockdown, and the restrictions that may remain in place after the 1st March, may make operation of the Census Support Service challenging in the first few weeks. We will work with every centre to ensure that, where it is safe to do so, you can offer a face to face service for those people who need it. We will shortly be issuing further guidance to help you put in place measures to make the service safe for staff and customers. This will include the recommendation to introduce booked appointments, to help with the flow of customers in your centre. We have also gained a commitment from ONS to honour the contracts we have in place with you in the event that you have to temporarily close the service during the planned operation period due to national or local COVID-19 restrictions or a COVID related incident. We hope this will provide you with some reassurance, in these challenging times."

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

119.4 Community Fridge – This project is going well and the last meeting was held on 12th January 2021. The meetings have been held monthly since September 2020 and the Town Clerk has now gathered the templates from Hubbub in preparation for the introduction of the fridge, is setting up a shared space where volunteers can access the documents and is arranging the required training for the volunteers to complete.

119.5 Laptops – Four laptops have been given to The Blandford School, who are very grateful.

119.6 Funding – Historic England has approved a grant of £4,000 towards the replacement of the lobby glazing between the Town Hall and the Corn Exchange. Works started on 20th January 2021 with the scaffolding in place and the glazier visiting to measure up for the replacement lantern light.

120. CIVIC REPORT

There is no Civic Report this month.

121. RECOMMENDATIONS AND RECEIPT OF MINUTES

None.

122. TO CONSIDER EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY FOR HEALTH & SAFETY AND HUMAN RESOURCES SUPPORT

The paper was noted (see Appendix B).

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

The Town Council approves the contract renewal for a further five years at £2,940 + VAT per year, plus employee insurance, using the Professional Services budget line (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

123. TO APPROVE THE SUBSCRIPTION TO THE DORSET ASSOCIATION OF PARISH & TOWN COUNCILS FOR 2021/22

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

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

The Town Council approves expenditure for the subscription to DAPTC of £1,335.66 for the 2021/2022 period using budget line 4057 (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

124. TO CONSIDER SUPPORT FOR A TECHNICAL COLLEGE WITHIN NORTH DORSET

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

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

The Town Council supports the proposal in principal and awaits further information.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

125. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE TOWN COUNCIL'S PLAN

The paper was noted (see Appendix E).

Cllr Carter commented that in Project IN03 the support to the Leisure Centre needs to be deleted.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

126. TO CONFIRM THAT ALL DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION IS IN PLACE FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL'S REACCREDITATION APPLICATION FOR THE LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME FOR QUALITY GOLD STATUS

This item has been deferred to the next Town Council meeting on 22nd February 2021.

127. TO CONSIDER THE X8A BUS SERVICE FOLLOWING THE CONTRACT EXPIRY WITH THE DORSET COUNCIL

The paper was noted (see Appendix G).

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

The Town Council does not consider supporting this service as the benefit to the town does not justify the cost that would have to be reflected on the precept.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

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

128.1 Neighbourhood Plan Working Group – Blandford +

Cllr Carter reported that the Counsel is looking through the paperwork and further consultations are being held. A decision on the Neighbourhood Plan is expected soon.

128.2 BFTC Commemoration Group

Cllr Carter reported that there has been no update.

128.3 Public Art Plan

Cllr Osborne reported that the grounds work contractors have been to reassess the site and will return on Tuesday 26th January to install the kerb edge. Hopefully if all goes well the tarmac surfacing works can happen in the following week, possibly on the Monday or Tuesday.

128.4 Climate Change & Biodiversity

Cllr Osborne reported that he attended a seminar held by the Centre of Sustainable Energy. They are working on providing a tool for town and parish councils to calculate their carbon footprint. The tool has been distributed for testing before being rolled out in the near future.

128.4.1 Litter Free Dorset Campaigns

Cllr Mieville thanked everyone on behalf of Yvonne Mieville and Blandford War on Waste. The meeting was very useful, and Mrs Mieville especially liked the campaign 'Love where you live', where local residents litter pick their area. Cllr Mieville also spoke about the 'Bin your Butt' campaign.

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

128.5 Dorset Council Grant to support the Market Area Enhancement Project (meeting scheduled for Monday 18th January was cancelled due to current situation)

Hugh de longh has updated the Action Plan; which Cllr Stevens will forward to the Town Clerk for distribution to all Councillors.

129. REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY AND LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

The latest minutes and attendance data from the Blandford Leisure Centre Consultative group were distributed by Cllr Carter.

The meeting closed at 7:59pm.

SIGNED

DATED