

**BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Town Council Meeting**  
**Held on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at 7:06pm Online using Microsoft Teams**



**PRESENT**

Cllr L Lindsay – Chairman  
Cllr P Clark  
Cllr S Hitchings  
Cllr B Quayle  
Cllr C Stevens  
Cllr R Holmes  
Cllr N Lacey-Clarke  
Cllr J Stayt

Cllr L Hitchings – Vice Chairman  
Cllr H Mieville  
Cllr H White  
Cllr R Carter  
Cllr P Osborne  
Cllr C Jacques  
Cllr A Cross

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Town Clerk  
Operations Manager

Assistant Town Clerk  
Nicci Brown – Press

**45. PUBLIC SESSION**

No members of the public were in attendance.

**46. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Quayle gave the report this month.

- 46.1 Milldown Play Park – There has been a slight delay for components to arrive. The Dorset Rangers are hoping the play park will be completed early next week.
- 46.2 Household Recycling Centre – The centre will be closed for ten days from Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September for repair work, and residents are requested to use other facilities nearby. Going forward, the Dorset Council is looking to loosen the extra restrictions that were introduced due to Covid-19.
- 46.3 Special Educational Needs Survey – Residents with children with special educational needs are encouraged to complete a survey that the Dorset Council is currently running to see how Covid-19 has affected them.
- 46.4 Street Cleaning – Street cleaning teams have started in Blandford Forum on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September. There has been a delay due to Covid-19 and one of the machines breaking down.
- 46.5 Highways Complaints – Cllr Quayle requested that any resident complaints received by Councillors about blocked pathways or overgrown hedges should be passed to either Dorset Council Councillor for actioning.
- 46.6 Adult Social Care – A new website for Dorset has been created. Cllr Quayle requested for Councillors to encourage residents who require adult social care to use the website.
- 46.7 Anti-Social Behaviour – Complaints have been received and both Dorset Council Councillors are working with the Dorset Council, the police and other agencies to improve the situation for residents.
- 46.8 Climate and Ecological Plan – The plan is going to Cabinet on 6<sup>th</sup> October. Following this there will be a public consultation, which Councillors are encouraged to respond to.

**46. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCILLORS (CONT.)**

- 46.9 Green Energy – Cllr Quayle thanks officers and Cllr Osborne to moving the Town Council to green energy and special thanks to the Town Clerk for sharing what has been found by working with other Town Councils in Dorset.

Cllr Holmes welcomes the street cleaning but would like for the shops to be encouraged to clean outside their premises, which would make it more welcoming for visitors to the town. Cllr Holmes reported that the T-Junction by Fairfield Bungalows onto Salisbury Road requires cutting back. Cllr Quayle will have a look as he thought it had been cut.

Cllr Carter spoke about the grass cutting on the bypass. He believes that Highways are leaving the grass in the hedge and it does not look appealing. He requested for it to be left further back if possible. Cllr Lacey-Clarke responded that the Dorset Council has two different machines, one that cuts and leaves and one that cuts and collects. They are moving to the cut and collect machine, however, if there is an emergency cut it might have been a cut and leave machine.

**47. APOLOGIES**

None

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

None had been submitted.

**49. MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 27<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2020**

It was PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (14 in favour, 1 abstention) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED. The minutes will be signed at the earliest opportunity.

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

The paper was noted (see Appendix A).

- 50.1 Energy Contract – The Contract for Electric and Gas expires on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020. The RFO has received quotes from four suppliers for Electric and four suppliers for Gas. Following consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee and the Town Clerk, we have entered into a five-year contract for the Electric at an estimated cost of £43,939 over the five years for all 10 sites. The electric is now 100% renewable, in line with the Town Council's aims within its Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan. There is no difference in price between 100% renewable (Green) or non-renewable (brown). We have entered into a five-year contract for the Gas at an estimated price over five years being £5,635 for the three sites. We were provided with quotes for 3 years, 4 years and 5 years. As the gas prices are very low, at the moment and a very competitive rate was offered for the electric, entering into a five-year contract will stabilise our budgets over this period.

- 50.2 WWI Book – Nicci Brown has paid the outstanding £952 on the loan for the WWI book 'Blandford in the Great War 1914-1918'.

- 50.3 Certificates of Appreciation – The Standing Orders state that, in an ordinary year, *nominations for certificates of appreciation should be made by the end of March each year, except under special circumstances, to be agreed by the Council. The matter is to be raised in CONFIDENTIAL session at the next Town Council meeting, in April each year, except under special circumstances, to be agreed by the Council, and the agenda will not name the nominee.*

Four nominations had been received by the deadline in March and, due to special circumstances, the votes were cast by Councillors using SurveyMonkey.

## 50. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE (CONT.)

An additional nominee was made later this year. All nominees received a majority of Councillors voting in favour of the award and they were: The Revd Canon Jonathan Triffitt, Jo Hutson, Gail del-Pinto, Tom Snape and David Rose.

- 50.4 Community Fridge – Another meeting has been arranged for 6<sup>th</sup> October and progress is being made. A funding application has been submitted to the Dorset Council. At present, the Georgian Fayre has committed £1,000 and a grant application will be made to the Town Council.
- 50.5 Community Expo – The event went well with 60 people having attended between 10am and 1pm. Thanks to Cllrs Pat Osborne and Roger Carter for manning the Town Council table and hosting the budget and Corn Exchange consultations. No negative feedback was received – only positive comments about how refreshing it was to be interacting and engaging with people again. The results of the Corn Exchange consultation are pictured here and the budget consultation feedback for consideration at budget setting and R&A and T&GP budget setting meetings is as follows:
- Litter bins around central store area (the area of Central Ward that's topped and bottomed with Shaftesbury Lane and Lockeridge Close and flanked by Holland Way and Jubilee Way)
  - More toilets
  - Clean Tabernacle toilets more often
  - Seating areas around the wider town, not just the town centre
  - Take forward actions from the Town Team/Town Council survey
  - Electronic wall board visible from street (*this has previously been suggested by the Operations Manager and Cllr John Stayt for the Shambles*).
- 50.6 Land North and East Of Blandford Forum – Following their consultation, Wyatt Homes has now submitted their hybrid planning application to the Dorset Council for up to 600 dwellings and non-residential uses.

## 51. CIVIC REPORT

The report was sent to Councillors via email.

## 52. RECOMMENDATIONS AND RECEIPT OF MINUTES

### 52.1 Finance & Staffing Committee Meeting held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020

The paper was noted (see Appendix B).

#### 52.1.1 Minute 17 – To consider grant applications – (current available balance is £13,384.20 which includes £3,384.20 from 2019/20 underspend)

Minute 17.1 In Jolly Good Company – Deferred from June meeting, but amended application for less amount and relocating to Woodhouse Gardens Pavilion)

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

**The grant of £1,470 is approved but the hire charge is dealt with separately as free hire to the value of £320, giving a total grant of £1,150 (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

52.1.1 Minute 17 – To consider grant applications – (current available balance is £13,384.20 which includes £3,384.20 from 2019/20 underspend) (cont.)

Minute 21 - Review of current banking process

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

- **The authorisation by Councillors for BACS Payments – Commercial Online Banking is to be done remotely with the confirmation email attached to the payment analysis form and financial regulations updated.**
- **The authorisation of BACS Payments and online banking faster payments are to be done remotely with the confirmation email attached to each payment analysis form. The email is to include the payment reference and the batch total amount for each payment. The Financial Regulations are to be amended accordingly.**
- **Cllr L Hitchings requested that ‘Vice Chairman’ is included, to provide additional cover, and that it is explicit that two family members are not to be involved in the same transaction. The amended wording is highlighted within the text, as follows:**

***“5.3 A schedule of payment of money shall be prepared by the RFO and together with the relevant supporting invoices and list of payments made via BACS / Faster payments must be checked by the two members to ensure that the Town Clerk’s initials or, in his/her absence, those of the Chairman / Vice Chairman of Council are noted on the invoices as “Payment Authorised”. If the “Payment Authorised” has the signature of the Chairman/Vice Chairman of Council, then he/she cannot sign the relevant cheque/payment. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Finance & Staffing Committee should not sign cheques/make payments as they will be responsible for checking the full list of payments which shall include cheques, BACS payments, online banking faster payments, direct debits, standing orders and telepay and which will be submitted to the quarterly Finance & Staffing Committee for retrospective approval and minuted accordingly. Regarding Faster Payments on business online banking, two members of the same family must not be allowed to be an ‘authorising user’.***

- **Barnes will now be paid via online banking by faster payment.**
- **Direct Debits remain the same so that Councillors can have sight of the invoices as there are too many to scan over and the salaries payment requires two signatures.**
- **Payments are made via online business banking with a transfer to Blandford Forum Town Council. If a payment needs to be made to a supplier, then a faster payment can be made.**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

Minute 25 – To receive an update on the youth centre sla grant and consider how to proceed

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr White and AGREED unanimously that the Town Council

- **Continues with the current SLA for 2020/21 and waits to receive all the reports/signed accounts required for the 2020/21 grant monies before it can be released; and**
- **Transfers the £15,000 in accruals from the 2019/20 financial year to Reserves budget line 1006 Youth Services and continues to wait for the signed annual accounts before releasing the 2019/20 grant monies.**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

52.1.1 Minute 17 – To consider grant applications – (current available balance is £13,384.20 which includes £3,384.20 from 2019/20 underspend) (cont.)

Minute 26 – To receive a report on Mark James bankruptcy and insolvency

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

**The sum of £51.90 is written off to bad debts and the VAT of £10.38 reclaimed.**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

It was noted that Mr James has been welcomed back to the Corn Exchange as a hirer w/c 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

Cllr Stevens questioned if Mr James has provided the correct paperwork for his bankruptcy, enabling the Town Council to reclaim VAT.

52.1.2 The Minutes were received.

52.2 Recreation & Amenities Committee Meeting held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

Cllr White noted that there were two recommendations, however one is being referred to the Barnes for a Recreation Trust meeting.

52.2.1 Minute 18 - To consider replacement equipment for Larksmead play area

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

**The Town Council approves expenditure for the replacement of the play equipment at Larksmead and to add it to the tender documents for the play area at Badbury Heights, once the transfer of land is completed, using funds from the accruals budget line for Larksmead play area, which has a balance of £26,914 (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8). Officers were asked to source available s106 monies to contribute towards the costs.**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

52.2.2 The Minutes were received.

53. **TO CONSIDER EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY FOR THE LIGHTING UP OF WOODHOUSE GARDENS FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER**

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lindsay, SECONDED by Cllr L Hitchings and AGREED (14 in favour, 1 against) that

**The Town Council approves expenditure authority to proceed with Company B to light up Woodhouse Gardens for the period of 5 weeks, taking expenditure of £1,231.04 from budget line 1025 Christmas Lights (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

**53. TO CONSIDER EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY FOR THE LIGHTING UP OF WOODHOUSE GARDENS FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER (CONT.)**

Cllrs Stevens and S Hitchings suggested some of the old coloured lights in the cemetery chapel could be used as part of the display. These were left in the chapel by the volunteers following the switch to white lights.

**54. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE PHASING OUT OF BUSINESS ANALOGUE AND DIGITAL LINES**

The paper was noted (see Appendix E).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (12 in favour, 3 against) that

**The Town Council notes the report and budgets for the changes from 2021/2022 in preparation for the ‘switch off’ and requests an updated quote, and additional quotes, closer to the time.**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

**55. TO RETROSPECTIVELY APPROVE EXPENDITURE FOR WORKS TO THE ACCESIBLE UNIT AT THE MARSH & HAM TOILETS**

The paper was noted (see Appendix F).

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

**The Town Council approves retrospective expenditure authority for £4,716.00 from General Reserves for works to the accessible unit at the Marsh & Ham toilets (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

**56. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE TOWN COUNCIL PLAN 2019-2024**

The paper was noted (see Appendix G).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED (14 in favour, 1 against) that

**The Town Council notes the report.**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

**57. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE CORN EXCHANGE PROJECT AND APPROVE THE AMENDED DIARY OF MEETINGS TO INCLUDE A FULL COUNCIL MEETING**

The paper was noted (see Appendix H) and following discussion, Councillors:

- Approved the inclusion of the three Corn Exchange meetings and the change of date for the Town Assembly meeting.
- Noted the dissolution of the Corn Exchange working group and that the only agenda item for the new Town Council (Corn Exchange) meetings will be the Corn Exchange.
- Will consider appointing Project Champions to the project at the meeting in November. A discussion was held about the Project Champions and their role. The Town Clerk suggested that informal meetings held in between council meetings could be held with all councillors invited to attend, as usual, but with

**57. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE CORN EXCHANGE PROJECT AND APPROVE THE AMENDED DIARY OF MEETINGS TO INCLUDE A FULL COUNCIL MEETING (CONT.)**

- Project Champions to be in attendance. IPA was concerned about the disbanding of the working group due to the need to meet regularly for several hours of discussion, which may not be welcomed at full council meetings. Having a structure in place for such a project also demonstrates good governance to funders. It was suggested that Councillors seek further clarification from IPA at the next meeting.

Cllr Stayt left the meeting at 8.20pm.

**58. TO RECEIVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LEISURE CENTRE WORKING GROUP REGARDING THE FUTURE FUNDING OF BLANDFORD LEISURE CENTRE**

The paper was noted (see Appendix I).

It was proposed by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Quayle and AGREED (13 in favour, 1 abstention) that

**The Town Council is not minded to renew the service level agreement with the Dorset Council over the leisure centre.**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

It was proposed by Cllr Lindsay, SECONDED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke and AGREED (13 in favour, 1 abstention) that

**The Town Council confirms that ten payments (authorised for three years and seven years respectively) have been made to NDDC/DC in support of the leisure centre and the Town Council does not authorise expenditure for an additional (11<sup>th</sup>) payment of £50,000.**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

**59. TO APPROVE A REVISED PLAN FOR REMEMBRANCE EVENTS**

An email update was sent to Councillors last week and the Town Clerk confirmed that further updates will be given once clarification has been received from the Dorset Council and the RBL.

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

**60.1 Neighbourhood Plan Working Group – Blandford +**

Cllr Carter confirmed that further funding had been sought by the Assistant Town Clerk to help with the Referendum costs. No further updates have been received from the Dorset Council regarding their Decision Statement to allow for the Neighbourhood Plan to go to Referendum.

**60.1.1 To review the Rationale of the Steering Group and to review and approve amendments to the Memorandum of Understanding**

The paper was noted (see Appendix J).

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

**The Town Council notes the Blandford + Steering Group Rationale and approves the Memorandum of Understanding.**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

**60. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE AND CONSIDER ANY REQUESTS FROM THE: (CONT.)**

60.2 Public Art Plan

The paper was noted (see Appendix K).

60.3 Dorset Council Grant to support the Market Area Enhancement Project

A working Group meeting is being held on 6<sup>th</sup> October to discuss the survey results.

60.4 Climate Change & Biodiversity

60.4.1 To consider using paperless distribution of agendas & Minutes

The paper was noted (see Appendix L).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Osborne, SECONDED by Cllr Mieville and AGREED (13 in favour, 1 against) that

**The Town Council adopts a digital way forward, making paperless solutions a norm and Councillors should request to receive paper agendas and minutes.**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

60.4.2 To adopt an amended and updated Action Plan, drafted by Cllr Osborne, incorporating the existing list of actions

The paper was noted (see Appendix M).

Cllr Mieville thanked Cllr Osborne for the comprehensive report.

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

**The Town Council adopts the amended and updated Action Plan.**

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

**61. REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY AND LOCAL ORGANISATIONS**

None have been received.

Cllr Mieville invited all Councillors to the Clean Up Blandford Campaign litter pick this Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October at 10.30am at the Marsh & Ham. All equipment will be provided, and social distancing rules will be followed.

The meeting closed at 8:53pm.

**SIGNED .....**

**DATED .....**