

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Town & General Purposes Committee
Held on Monday 9th October 2023 at 7pm in the Corn Exchange

DRAFT
Subject to confirmation

PRESENT

Cllr R Holmes - Committee Vice Chairman	Cllr C Jacques
Cllr H Mieville - Chairman of Council	Cllr C Stevens
Cllr N Lacey-Clarke - Vice Chair of Council	Cllr A Cross

IN ATTENDANCE

Operations Manager	Committee Clerk
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SITTING IN

Cllr L Hitchings	Cllr S Hitchings arrived at 7:02pm
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Committee Vice Chairman, Cllr Holmes was Acting Chairman in Cllr Herbert's absence, and she asked Cllr Cross to support her as Acting Vice Chairman.

10. PUBLIC SESSION

Cllr Mieville took the opportunity to advertise his forthcoming Mayoral events on Saturday 14th October with The Fabulous Forum and Saturday 21st October, when the Blandford Stour Valley Band is playing the Proms. Both events are for charity so Councillor attendance would be appreciated.

11. APOLOGIES

Cllr K Herbert – Committee Chairman	Cllr B Quayle
Cllr P Clark	

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

None had been submitted.

7:08pm – Mr T Markus from Oakfield Street joined the meeting online.

Although Councillors had moved on to further business it was agreed to move back to the Public Session to allow Mr Markus to speak. He is concerned about the parking situation along Oakfield Street, particularly the difficulty emergency services have getting through the narrow part of the street. Residents are parking on both sides of the road, so he suggests introducing double yellow lines. He agreed with Cllr Mieville's view that the car park is empty but accepts that residents do not want to pay to park.

Councillors agreed to bring Agenda Item 10 forward to next business so Mr Markus can hear the Councillors' discussion.

13. TO AGREE NEXT STEPS WITH REGARDS TO THE OAKFIELD STREET SITE VISIT

Cllr Cross clarified that the discussion during the site visit centred around making the street one way and in order to do this parking would be lost. He explained to Mr Markus that Cllr Quayle had spoken to residents who weren't in favour of losing parking and without any further evidence (e.g. examples of near misses or vehicles obstructing the road) and support from residents Dorset Council would not consider any intervention. Cllr Cross asked Mr Markus if he felt he could gather support from the residents and Mr Markus confirmed that he might struggle.

13. TO AGREE NEXT STEPS WITH REGARDS TO THE OAKFIELD STREET SITE VISIT (cont)

Cllr Lacey-Clarke said that he has had several site visits over the years and the predominant issue for residents in the area is lack of parking. Cllr Lacey-Clarke explained that at least 65-70% of residents would need to support any intervention so it seems unlikely they will support having further double yellow lines along the road. Cllr Lacey-Clarke suggested that Mr Markus reports any issues, especially if the highway is blocked as it is illegal to block a highway. Mr Markus said that he has seen vehicles reverse out on to the road. Cllr Lacey-Clarke said this is certainly a safety issue and he will investigate.

Mr Markus thanked the Councillors for their time and accepted that further consultation with residents may be fruitless, but he will report any near misses or vehicles obstructing the highway.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Mieville, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens and AGREED (5 in favour, 1 abstention) that

The Committee is unable to assist any further at this stage and the resident will continue to monitor the situation.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

Mr Markus left the meeting at 7.22pm

14. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10th JULY 2023

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Mieville, SECONDED by Cllr Jacques and AGREED (5 in favour, 1 abstention) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED.

15. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Dorset Council (Waiting, Loading, Stopping and Parking Places) (Map Based) (Amendment no.3) (Salisbury Street and Market Place, Blandford) Order 2023 was noted.

16. GENERAL UPDATES FROM:

16.1 Blandford Business Support Group – No report was received.

Cllr Cross attended the Business Support Group meeting recently and reported that the business group are holding their awards evening on the 27th October. Cllr Cross encouraged councillors to vote. He understands the Council have been offered two free tickets. Cllr Mieville has received an invite and plans on attending.

Cllr Mieville asked for clarification about whether Councillors should be attending the business group meetings. Cllr Lacey-Clarke said Town Councillors are not expected to attend as they are for businesses. Cllr Stevens thinks that as the council support the group, then they should be invited to attend. Cllr Lacey-Clarke said Councillors only usually attend group meetings when there is an SLA attached and if this was a proviso of offering £250 towards the event then this should have been made clear from the start. Cllr Mieville said that at one meeting there were more councillors than businesses so this may be why Councillors are being discouraged. He asked if Cllr Lacey-Clarke if he could ask the group when Councillors are allowed to attend. Cllr Lacey-Clarke agreed to speak to the group.

16.2 Blandford Police – An update report was received (see Appendix A).

16.3 Market Manager – An update report was received (see Appendix B).

17. DORSET COUNCIL HIGHWAYS

No requests.

18. REVIEW OF TOWN & GENERAL PURPOSES BUDGETS TO 31st AUGUST 2023

18.1 Analytical Review of Revenue Budget to 31st August 2023

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

18.2 Review of Earmarked Reserves to 31st August 2023

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

17.3 Reserve Accounts to 31st August 2023

The paper was noted (see Appendix E).

19. TO AGREE A DATE FOR THE REMAINING FREE PARKING DAY

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

The following dates be used for the free parking days:

Saturday 11th, Sunday 12th and Saturday 25th November 2023.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

20. TO CONSIDER A RESIDENT'S REQUEST FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A ZEBRA CROSSING AT THE START OF BLACK LANE, NEAR ARCHBISHOP WAKE SCHOOL

Cllr Cross said that he has visited Black Lane on a couple of occasions recently and has seen a school crossing patrol so he feels this has been dealt with. Councillors agreed and felt that no further action is necessary.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Holmes, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (unanimously) that

The resident is advised that now there is a school crossing patrol the Committee feels that this matter has been dealt with. It was also agreed that in future the Committee Clerk will refer any highway matters directly to Dorset Council.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

Post Meeting Note: Dorset Council insists that any highways requests are considered by town/parish councils prior to being referred to Dorset Council.

21. CHRISTMAS 2023

21.1 To consider Christmas Window Competition details and expenditure approval for proposed prize money

Cllr Stevens queried if the prize money should be increased in line with inflation. Cllr Holmes suggested an increase of £25 each. Cllr Lacey-Clarke said that having spoken to businesses they would prefer a trophy as it is difficult to show the income in their accounts.

Cllr Stevens said that when he spoke to businesses last year they used the money to reward the staff which Cllr Lacey-Clarke agreed was a good idea. Cllr L Hitchings likes the idea of a trophy and feels this could save the council money in the long run. Cllr L Hitchings would be in favour of purchasing three different sized trophies and still offering a small amount of prize money. Cllr Jacques feels they should be able to keep the trophy as it is still less than the prize money and it's something for them to keep.

21. **CHRISTMAS 2023 (cont)**

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens and AGREED (5 in favour, 1 against) that

The Committee approves the expenditure for the proposed prize money using funds from the Christmas Town Decorations budget line 1025 (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

**First Prize - £100
Second Prize - £50
Third Prize - £25
Charity/not for profit - £100**

It was also agreed that the Committee purchases and engraves a trophy that is given to the winner to keep for the year and the runners up get certificate.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Holmes and AGREED (5 in favour, 1 against) that

The Committee Chairman has delegated authority to approve the design, engraving and costs up to the approved amount.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

21.2 **To appoint the judges for the Christmas Window Competition 2023**

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

The judging panel consists of the Mayor, the Chairman of Town & General Purposes Committee and a representative from Blandford Business Group and the judging takes place on 9th-10 December.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

21.3 **To approve a newsletter to all businesses regarding the small Christmas trees and decorations**

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

The Committee approves the newsletter to all businesses regarding the small Christmas trees and decorations.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

21.4 **To approve expenditure for installation of the trees and column lights**

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

The Committee approves expenditure of £8,650 + VAT for the installation of the trees and column lights using funds from the Christmas Town Decorations budget line 1025 (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

The meeting closed at 8.05pm.

SIGNED:

DATED: