

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee
held on Monday 13th November 2023 at 7:02pm in the Corn Exchange

DRAFT
Subject to confirmation

PRESENT

Cllr L Lindsay – Committee Chairman
Cllr H Miéville – Chairman of Council
Cllr N Lacey-Clarke – Vice Chairman of Council
Cllr L Hitchings
Cllr S Chapman

Cllr C Stevens – Committee Vice Chairman
Cllr S Hitchings
Cllr H White
Cllr R Carter

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk

Operations Manager

20. PUBLIC SESSION

The Chairman of Council, Cllr H Miéville thanked the Town Clerk and the staff for the Acts of Remembrance that took place over the last week and Cllr Lindsay asked that he puts it in writing for the staff involved.

21. APOLOGIES

None

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

None were submitted.

23. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11th SEPTEMBER 2023

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr White and AGREED (7 in favour, 2 abstentions) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED.

24. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

The paper was noted (see Appendix A).

Persimmon Homes – Another chasing email has been sent to the solicitors acting on the Town Council's behalf and, once received, Councillors will be informed of the outcome/update.

Blandford United Football Club – The Club has asked if the grounds team can spare a few hours over the next couple of weeks to work on the pitch due to the amount of divot work that is required. This has been discussed and agreed and the Club will be invoiced accordingly, in line with the additional works done on the cricket pitch.

Christmas Decorations at Woodhouse Gardens – The Town Council's contribution to the church's tree trail is a Christmas tree in Woodhouse Gardens, with councillors and staff on the decorations. These are being renewed this year and a photo will be sent once it is in place on 27th November, ready for the start of the tree trail. However, our tree is not part of the competition because they are judged by the Mayor! The gardens will be decorated for the month of December, as usual, with inflatable guests again this year!

Barn Dance – A barn dance has been arranged in the Corn Exchange, before it is closed, with Black Sheep on Saturday 3rd February 2024. This should be a good opportunity to give the venue a lively send-off!

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

Corn Exchange Tenders – One contractor has withdrawn from the process which leaves four contractors, who have all arranged to visit the venue. The Town Council's quantity surveyor has been responding to queries from the contractors, and the responses are shared with all the contractors tendering for the works.

Bastard Memorial – At the last R&A meeting, the Town Clerk raised the damage to the Bastard memorial in the churchyard, which was reported by the Mace Bearer. The Committee was reminded that local councils who have responsibility for closed churchyards are responsible for memorial repairs should they be considered to be a danger to the public or unsafe. This is not considered to be the case with this memorial. However, the Operations Manager spoke with a local stonemason, but they are very busy at the moment and said it is not really the type of work they carry out. Town Council staff will keep an eye on it if it deteriorates further or causes any issues.

Park Road EVCPs –The Town Clerk informed the Committee that Chris Whitehouse at Dorset Council had been very supportive and assisted in approaching the provider, raising concern over the cost of the electric to the Town Council and the lack of income to date. The RFO has confirmed that the Town Council received £1,896.55 on 10th October we received. Based on the monies received for the July to September quarter, it looks like we might be marginally in profit (£35). We will continue to monitor the usage and income.

Cllr Lacey-Clarke suggested that his line manager is informed at Dorset Council.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

25. REVIEW OF RECREATION & AMENITIES BUDGETS TO 31ST OCTOBER 2023

25.1 Analytical Review of Revenue Budget

The paper was noted (see Appendix B).

25.2 Review of Earmarked Reserves

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

25.3 Reserve Accounts

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

26. CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 AND RECOMMENDATION TO FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING

The paper was noted (see Appendix E).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Chapman, SECONDED by Cllr Stevens and AGREED unanimously that a **RECOMMENDATION** is made to the Finance & Staffing Committee that

The earmarked reserves are set at £11,000, which is £4,500 less than last year's budget for the Recreation & Amenities Committee, for the 2024-25 financial year.

ACTION: F&S Committee

27. REPORT BY THE OPERATIONS MANAGER SEPTEMBER 2023 – NOVEMBER 2023

The paper was noted (see Appendix F) and the Committee Chairman thanked the Operations Manager for his report.

28. TO CONSIDER EXPENDITURE FOR SURFACING AT BALMER ROAD PLAY AREA

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

Company A is appointed to replace the play area surfacing at Balmer Road play area, at a cost of £45,169 + VAT using funds from reserves 10521 (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

29. TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM BLANDFORD RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB FOR PERMANENT FENCING AT LARKSMEAD

The paper was noted (see Appendix G).

This item was deferred to the next meeting, due to information awaited from the Rugby Club.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

The meeting closed at 7:40pm.

SIGNED: DATED: