

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Town Council Meeting
Held on Monday 19th February 2024 at 7:01pm in the Corn Exchange



PRESENT

Cllr H Miéville – Chairman of Council	Cllr N Lacey-Clarke – Vice Chairman of Council
Cllr B Quayle	Cllr S Hitchings
Cllr R Holmes	Cllr K Herbert
Cllr P Clark	Cllr H White
Cllr L Lindsay	Cllr P Osborne
Cllr S Chapman	Cllr C Stevens
Cllr A Cross	Cllr C Jacques
Cllr R Carter	Cllr L Hitchings – late arrival at 7:20pm

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk	Operations Manager
Maggie Putt	

158. PUBLIC SESSION

Cllr Miéville invited Councillors to join him in a minute's silence to remember former Mayor, Martin Brickell who passed away today. Cllr Miéville added that he had attended the memorial service for David Milsted, who was a long-standing Councillor and former Mayor of Gillingham.

159. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS

Homeless Concerns – Dorset Council has teamed up with CA etc to help residents who have a mortgage or rent from a landlord but are struggling to pay bills and are worried they could lose their property. These people aren't homeless but it's to stop them from becoming homeless.

Budget – The Dorset Council has approved its budget with no cuts to frontline services. This is a £1.82 increase per week for a Band D property. A premium on second homes was also agreed.

26 East Street – There has been an empty property for a long time and the Housing Standards Team is now applying to the Secretary of State for a compulsory purchase. Cllr Quayle asked for Councillors to get in touch with any properties in a serious state of disrepair.

Langton Car Park – The flood defence wall has been damaged and from 4th March 2024 Dorset Council will commence the work to fix it.

160. APOLOGIES

None

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

Cllr Lacey-Clarke stated that he will not participate in voting on the Rugby Club lease, because he is a fee-paying member of the Club. Cllr Lacey-Clarke also identified a pecuniary interest in the bedding agenda item because he sponsors the planters.

162. MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 29th JANUARY 2024

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Cross, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED (14 in favour, 1 abstention) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED.

163. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

The paper was noted (see Appendix A).

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

Town Council Funding – Emails of thanks have been received from the Blandford Youth & Community Centre and In Jolly Good Company, following council approval for their respective funding.

Town Museum – Dr Hixson Andrews has advised that the Museum has received a grant to create exhibition material for visually impaired visitors as well as an outreach package for people in care homes or who are otherwise unable to travel to the museum (including features for people who cannot access upstairs exhibitions). This will greatly improve the Museum's offer for disabled visitors and they are, understandably, really excited about it. Dr Hixson Andrews is still waiting to hear about our (BFTC, Fashion Museum, Blandford Museum) partnership grant to Dorset Council for 3D photography and will keep us informed. She added that the ability to add 3D images to the aforementioned project would be a big enhancement.

Insurance Cover – A meeting has been held with an insurance broker, who specialises in council cover, as we are approaching the end of our agreement period. The insurance policy was last reviewed in 2021.

Blandford Community Fridge – As Councillors are aware, the fridge volunteers were included in the visit to the anaerobic digestion plant. Arrangements have now been made for the volunteers to visit the Big Yellow Bus Garden Project in Shillingstone. The aim is to develop the fridge volunteers' understanding of all the food support provisions in the area, which only improves the service visitors receive at the Blandford Community Fridge. Councillors are welcome to attend this visit, which has been arranged for Tuesday 5th March 2024 at 10:30am.

Commonwealth Day – The Raise the Commonwealth Flag event is scheduled for 10am from the Town Hall on Monday 11th March with local schools in attendance.

Town Council's 50th Year – An event has been arranged for Saturday 23rd March in the Corn Exchange to mark the 50th anniversary of the Town Council between 2pm and 5pm. This year Blandford Forum Town Council is 50 years old. Entertainment will be provided by Blandford Stour Valley Band and there will be free tea, coffee & cakes. It would be really nice to have as many councillors attend as possible, please. A photographic display is being prepared, with as many photos being collated as possible to show the council over the last half a century!

In addition, you will notice the new planter stickers marking the 50th year, and there will also be a 50 marked out in Woodhouse Gardens!

Easter Egg Hunt – The Easter Egg Hunt in Woodhouse Gardens has been arranged for Friday 5th April 2024, 10am to 12pm, which is kindly sponsored by Sarunds.

Public Works Loan Board – The loan application for the Corn Exchange works has been submitted to the county association.

Corn Exchange Meeting – The Town Clerk advised that the Corn Exchange meeting will go ahead next week on 26th February 2024.

164. CIVIC REPORT

The paper was sent to Councillors via email (see Appendix B).

Cllr Miéville thanked Cllr Lindsay for her expert calling at the Bingo night held on Saturday and the Town Clerk for organising the Barn Dance.

165. RECOMMENDATIONS AND RECEIPT OF MINUTES

None

7:21pm – Cllr Holmes left the meeting.

166. TO RECEIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE MAYORAL ALLOWANCE WORKING GROUP

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Chapman and AGREED (10 in favour, 4 abstentions, 1 non-vote) that

The Town Council retains the existing arrangements (keeping the already approved amount in the Mayoral Allowance budget line) and approves the amendments to the Mayor's Handbook.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

7:25pm – Cllr Holmes returned to the meeting.

167. TO APPROVE THE SIGNING OF THE LEASE WITH THE BLANDFORD RUGBY CLUB

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (13 in favour, 1 against, 2 abstentions) that

The Town Council approves the lease with the Blandford Rugby Football Club.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

168. TO CONSIDER RESPONDING TO THE DORSET COUNCIL/BCP JOINT TRAVEL PLAN

The paper was noted (see Appendix E) and it was agreed that Councillors would respond individually.

169. TO APPROVE EXPENDITURE FOR BEDDING AND PLANTERS

7:39pm – Cllr Lacey-Clarke left the meeting.

The paper was noted (see Appendix F).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Cross, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED (14 in favour, 1 abstention, 1 non-vote) that

The Town Council approves expenditure of £4,7660.80 + VAT using funds from 6200 T&GP revenue account (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

7:45pm – Cllr Lacey-Clarke returned to the meeting.

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

169.1 Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Group – Blandford +

The paper was noted (see Appendix G).

169.2 BFTC Commemoration Group

Cllr Carter updated Councillors on the exhibition for the D-Day 80 anniversary in June, that the group is working towards.

169.3 Climate Change and Biodiversity

The meeting has been re-arranged for 22nd February 2024 and B+ members are invited to attend.

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

169.4 Dorset Council Grant to support the Market Area Enhancement Project

There is a working group meeting scheduled for Wednesday at 10:30am.

170. APPENDIX A – NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

170.1 P/FUL/2023/04173 – Pines Court East Street Blandford Forum Dorset DT11 7DU

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Cross, SECONDED by Cllr Chapman and AGREED (15 in favour, 1 non-vote) that

The Town Council has no objections to the application (Blandford + NP policy B10 Design Codes: CA1 B.Code 15 apply).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

170.2 P/FUL/2023/06004 & 06005 – 17 West Street Blandford Forum DT11 7AW

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

The Town Council has no objections to the application (Blandford + NP policy B10. Design Codes: CA1 B. Code 15 apply).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

170.3 P/FUL/2024/00364 – The Grainstore, Shaftesbury Lane, Blandford

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

The Town Council has no objections to the application (Blandford + NP policy B3 and B10. Design codes: CA5).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

171. REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY AND LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

None

172. CONFIDENTIAL

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

The public and press may be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity might be prejudicial to the public interest as per Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

172.1 To approve the updated Heads of Terms for the land north of the bypass (deferred from January meeting and awaiting advice from solicitor)

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Holmes and AGREED (9 in favour, 5 against, 2 abstentions) that

The Town Council defers the discussion of the Heads of Terms until the March meeting and agrees to join the pool of contractors for the maintenance work at the land north of the bypass when it is considered.

The meeting closed at 8:16pm.

SIGNED

DATED