

Minutes of the Town Council remote meeting held via Skype, on **Tuesday 19th January 2021** starting at 19:30hrs

Present:

Chair: Cllr P Burton

Councillors: Cllr S Shepherd, Cllr J Dewick, Cllr M Gunn, Cllr V Keitch, Cllr I Mackillop, Cllr L Taylor, Cllr F White, Cllr A Shearman, and Cllr B Hamilton, Cllr V Higgins, Cllr L Wilcock, Cllr M James

Officers: Mrs J Earp (Deputy Town Clerk and RFO) and Mrs H White (Town Clerk)

In Attendance: Linda Vjeh
One member of the public

Speaker

The speaker wanted to talk about Cemetery Lodge. The speaker had concerns.

1. The insulation of the property they think is very poor. The heating is kept on all day to keep the temperature at 16-18 degrees. If it is switched off for 20 minutes the temperature drops. The speaker suggested a thermal camera device to do a survey which may help solve the problem.
2. The heating system is not correct. All contractors who have visited the property to do works have said that system is not suitable. In December 2020 the electric invoice was £328.
3. The bedroom is the work room in the house. This room never heats up and water drips from the chimney. The humidity is 83%.

All that being said the speaker said that they were happy living there and treat the Lodge as their home.

The Chair thanked the speaker for their comments and confirmed that the Lodge was being discussed later in the meeting.

842 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Cllr R Swann.

843 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made regarding any items on the Agenda.

844 Minutes

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 24th November 2020 and 2nd December 2020.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 24th November 2020 and 2nd December 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

845 Mayor's Announcements/Engagements

The Mayor explained that due to the pandemic engagements were much reduced this year and it has been a quiet year. The Mayor confirmed his attendance to the following:

- A question and answer session via Zoom with the children of Greenfyld School. It was a very positive discussion.
- A raffle at Cottage Flowers to raise money for the Iminster flags.
- A raffle for the Blood Bikes. These are a charity who deliver drugs etc on bikes. This was live on U-Tube.
- The new hairdressers in town - Ben Russell for the opening ceremony. The Mayor cut the ribbon.
- The Carol Service that took place outside the Church on the grass and judged the best Christmas hat.

846 Police Report

Consideration was given to the police report received. The police report provided an update on policing in Iminster. The written report was circulated ahead of the meeting. No comments were made on the report. The police were thanked for providing the information.

847 Report from District Councillors

Consideration was given to the District Councillors report received. Reference was made to the £23 million refurbishment to the Octagon in Yeovil. The decision has been agreed in principle at this stage. If it progresses grants will be sought for the costs.

Councillors commented that South Somerset District Council were supporting Chard, Wincanton etc with projects so when could Iminster see some investment. It was explained by District Councillors that work was being invested in towns that needed the investment and other smaller high streets would hopefully follow in the future. No other comments were made.

7:50pm – power cut in part of Iminster – Cllr B Hamilton left meeting.

848 Report from the County Councillor for the Iminster Division

Consideration was given to the report provided by the County Councillor for the Iminster Division. An update was provided about redeployment of staff through the pandemic. Confirmation was provided that although the planning team at South Somerset District Council had been redeployed to assist with the vaccinations the CEO of the council will continue to deal with any planning applications. No further queries were raised, and no additional comments were made.

7:55pm – Cllr B Hamilton re-joined the meeting.

849 Strategic Plan 2021/2022 – 2024

Consideration was given to the draft Town Council 3 year Strategic Plan for 2021/2022-2023/2024. The plan had been discussed as part of the recent workshops completed and the comments made during those workshops had been taken on board to update the plan.

The SWOT analysis was considered:

- An amendment needed to be made to the date.
- It was suggested that Councillors are also added as a weakness

- It was suggested that the strengths and weaknesses were internal controls and the Opportunities and Threats would be external controls. A discussion was had that the plan should reflect the towns plan and if an Opportunity or Threat was internal it should be reflected in the plan.

RESOLVED to accept the plan with the proposed amendments as presented.

850 2021/2022 Budget and Financial Plan for future years

Consideration was given to the Town Council's budget and financial plan for future years, this included the capital programme.

The Councillors discussed:

- That the reserve money and capital programme were kept separate.
- The purchase of a chipper and whether one was required. The Councillors were not aware that the Council had had a chipper in the past. A chipper had always been hired in the past.
- Costs for the tree surgeon were discussed. Our current grounds team can only cut 30cm branches off trees. Anything else the Council need to use a tree surgeon. Costs are there for the predicted cost of maintaining the trees in Ilminster Town Council's care over the coming years.

No other comments on the reports were made.

851 Precept 2021/2022

Consideration was given to the precept for 2021/2022. The Councillors discussed the pandemic and how residents of the town had suffered this year. Some residents would be out of work and would possibly be struggling in the year ahead.

Precept figures had been produced to keep the precept the same as last year with no increase.

A proposal was made to set the precept as the same as last year with no increase.

The vote was requested be a named vote.

Proposer – Cllr Shearman – in favour

Seconded – Cllr Shepherd – in favour

Cllr White – in favour

Cllr Mackillop – in favour

Cllr Taylor – in favour

Cllr Dewick – in favour

Cllr Gunn – in favour

Cllr Hamilton – in favour

Cllr Keitch – in favour

Cllr Higgins – in favour

Cllr James – in favour

Cllr Wilcock – in favour

Cllr Burton – in favour

(in favour 13, against 0, abstain 0)

RESOLVED to keep the precept figure for 2021/2022 the same as the last financial year with no increase.

852 Payments and Virements

Consideration was given to the schedule of payments for authorisation. It was confirmed that the £81 received for the demolition of the grandstand would cease next year. The grounds team are still selling logs. Advertising needs to be ramped up for this. Consideration would be given as to whether logs could be sold at the market.

No other comments made.

8:40pm - Cllr James left the meeting.

853 Calendar of Meetings

Consideration was given to the calendar of meetings for the remaining part of the municipal year and into the year May 2021/2022.

RESOLVED to accept the amended calendar meeting dates as presented.

854 Market Town Investment Group (MTIG)

Consideration was given to the tenders received for the work on the path into the recreation ground. Three companies had been approached and the tender had been placed on the website. Only two companies had provided a quote for consideration. The two quotes received were very similar, only about £100 between each.

The MTIG should provide 50% of the cost if we were successful with the application that had to be submitted by 31st January 2021. It was considered the path improvements were essential to make the recreation ground accessible for all. A vote was taken on the two tenders.

RESOLVED to appoint tender A.

The Town Clerk will submit the MTIG application and await a decision.

8:56 – Cllr Dewick left the meeting.

855 Cemetery Lodge

Consideration was given to the condition of the Cemetery Lodge. The speaker had attending the meeting to raise concerns. A further report was awaited from another contractor who had been to the Lodge to provide a survey on the current state of the building.

The tenant had provided pictures of the front door and provided an explanation that water was getting into the property under the door and was wet under foot in the bedroom. It was suggested that a carpenter visit the property to suggest repairs. 2 months ago the tenant had to call the managing agent as there was water leaking through the conservatory roof, down the walls and into the dining room.

The Town Council had spent around £67K on the property only four years ago. Questions were asked as to why the Lodge can now be in such a bad state. It was acknowledged that the problems in the lodge were a major problem and as the landlord the matters need to be addressed.

Once the new report was received an extraordinary meeting should be called to move the matter along and agree next steps.

It was acknowledged that the tenant had been very tolerant.

856 Exclusion of Press and Public

To consider exclusion of the press and public from the meeting, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, section 1(2), for: Agenda items 16 Letter from Resident, 17 East Street and 18 Land at Canal Way due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted i.e. business information and information relating to potential negotiations.

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Agenda item 16 Letter from Resident, 17 East Street and 18 Land at Canal Way due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted i.e. business information, financial information and items relating to potential negotiations.

857 Letter from Resident

Consideration was given to the letter received on 8th January 2021 from a resident. The Town Clerk requested a working group to assist with the response to be sent on behalf of the Town Council. This was agreed. A letter would be prepared and sent. A copy would be provided to the Town Council for their information.

858 East Street

An update was provided on the property. A survey report had been undertaken and an accessibility survey. The reports had been presented to the Councillors. Points raised in the survey were discussed. It was agreed that it would be sensible to obtain a builders perspective on the works. A question should be raised with the owner regarding the tell-tales and request a copy of the asbestos report.

A vote was taken to continue the meeting for a further 30 mins to 10:30pm.

RESOLVED to continue the meeting until 10:30pm.

859 Land at Canal Way

Consideration was given to reconsidering the decision made at the Town Council meeting on 15th September 2020.

RESOLVED to reverse the decision made at the Town Council meeting 15th September 2020.

The Town Clerk will advise the landlord accordingly.

The meeting closed at 10:17pm.