

Minutes of the Full Town Council meeting of Ilminster Town Council held on
**Tuesday 15th February 2022 at 19:30 hrs, in the Council Chamber, Council
Offices, North Street, Ilminster, TA19 0DG**

Chair: Cllr P Burton

Councillors: Cllr B Hamilton, Cllr M James, Cllr B Jenner-Hurford, Cllr I MacKillop, Cllr S Shepherd, Cllr R Swann, Cllr L Taylor, Cllr N Tinson, Cllr F White, Cllr L Wilcock.

Officers: M Tredwin (Town Clerk) via Teams, Julie Earp (Deputy Town Clerk and RFO), V Freeman (Administration Officer)

In attendance: Cllr V Keitch via Teams, Cllr H Lancaster via Teams, Cllr A Shearman via Teams and 8 members of the public.

1148 Public Forum

Veronica Horman from the Rotary Club of Ilminster updated members on their plans for the Jubilee celebrations on Sunday 5th June.

Tim Browning advised councillors that as the Swan Precinct is unlit at night it is very dark and hard to see where you are walking. The PCSO's advised members and Mr Browning that the Swan Precinct is privately own land. The meeting chair advised that the land owners have been contact several times and we are waiting for a response.

PCSO's John Martin and Steve Trace from the Ilminster Policing Team attended the meeting to update members. Updates included they are out and about in the town, shop lifting is increasing but as shops get to know the offenders, they can be more vigilant, as town levels of crime remain low, there has been some anti-social behaviour at the recreation ground which they are monitoring. There will be a new Chief Inspector and Inspector joining the team. A new beat manager has been appointed and will take up their post in June, there is the possibility of a temporary beat manager between now and June.

1149 Apologies for Absence

Cllr M Gunn – Personal reasons
Cllr V Keitch – Personal reasons
Cllr H Lancaster – Personal reasons
Cllr A Shearman – Personal reasons
Cllr A Dance – Personal reasons

1150 District and County Councillors Report

Members **NOTED** Cllr Hamilton's District Councillors report.
Cllr Hamilton updated members on the LGR Joint Scrutiny Committee meeting he had recently attended.
There are new opportunity hubs being set up in Chard/Wincanton and Yeovil to help people apply for jobs.
The Octagon theatre is looking for funding. Costs have gone up for building work, timber prices have increased by up to 74%
There are Omicron grants available for businesses and hospitality.
SWP are looking to purchase a vehicle to use as a repair and restoration hub that will tour around the local towns as a repair shop.

1151 Declarations of Interest

None made

1152 Dispensations

None received, none granted

1153 Minutes – Town Council

Members noted the minutes of the meeting held via Teams on 25th January 2022.

Members **RESOLVED** by 5 votes for and 6 abstentions, due to not being present at the meeting, that the minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2022 as a correct record. The minutes from the indicative meeting on 25th January 2022 will be appended to the minutes of the 28th January meeting.

Proposer Cllr S Shepherd Seconded Cllr F White

1154 Minutes – Planning, Highways and Transport

Members **NOTED** the minutes from the meeting held on 1st February 2022.

1155 Councillor Representatives of external organisations

Cllr Taylor attended a Warehouse Theatre meeting. They have a full program of events, and they are reintroducing play readings. The houses have been reasonable during recent performances.

Cllr Burton attended the Ilminster Fairtrade Fortnight meeting. They have various events planned for the event starting on 21st February.

Cllr MacKillop attended a Public Transport forum meeting. Members were advised that there will be changes to the concessionary bus fares scheme from April

Cllr James attended the Chamber of Commerce meeting where they were updated on the success of the Christmas lights and plans for the forthcoming IMEX festival and Somerset Day.

1156 Financial Monitoring

Members **NOTED** the finance report.

1157 Appoint an Internal Auditor

This item was moved to exempt business under minute number

1158 Wessex Water Proposals

Members discussed the plans for reducing sewerage overspills in Ilminster.

Discussions included the location of the tank. If the work takes 6 months how would it affect the activities planned on the recreation ground. Concerns were raising if the tank was located in the car park, not for loss of revenue but it would cause chaos on Wharf Lane when parents drop off and pick up children from school, shoppers use the car park when shopping in the town. If there is a lack of parking people will go elsewhere and won't come back. Concerns were also raised that visitors to Muchelney House use the car park. Members discussed that if the tank was located on the recreation ground it

would be less disruptive, reservations about using grasscrete as overtime it can look shabby and unkempt and if tarmac would be a better option. Would there be any kind of compensation from Wessex Water, it was thought it was more likely to be a benefit in kind. Members discussed if they could request land drains. If the fair was due to arrive during the work the access road would need to be upgraded and if the area was fenced off the fair would still need access. When they start work there is going to be a lot of excess earth, where is that going? Members appreciated that Wessex Water will have the final say but we should have sensible negotiation with them.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to agree to allow Wessex Water to site a sewerage overspill tank on the recreation ground and to delegate authority to officers to negotiate and oversee the project.

Proposer Cllr Swann Seconded Cllr Taylor

1159

Neighbourhood Plan

Members NOTED the updated neighbourhood plan document.

Member discussed the design guide and thanked Cllr Shepherd on all his hard work.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously for the Neighbourhood Plan as put before Council on 15th February 2022 to support that the plan be put forward for the Referendum and Independent examiner.

Proposer Cllr Shepherd Seconded Cllr Taylor

1160

Ilminster Sports Club Ltd

Darren Paull attended the meeting and advised members that they are looking to build the play park to help to keep the pavilion sustainable, a lot of people walk around the field and do not realise the facilities are open to the local community. They are planning to hold more family events and BBQs etc this year. They have been in discussions with SSDC about applying for a grant to cover some of the costs. The other 2 parks in the area are far enough away that they can still apply for a grant. Mr Paull was happy to answer any questions and address any concerns members may have.

Members discussed the revised plans for the play park. Discussions included if the access and play equipment would be inclusive and accessible to all, for examples children with mobility and sensory issues, would the fence be removed so residents have full access to the play park at all times, as the play park can't be seen from the road would it encourage youths to gather

there. Who would be responsible for any insurance, upkeep, safety checks and maintain the park. Would there be any cost to Ilminster Town Council?

Members were advised that the play equipment and play park would be inclusive and fully accessible to everyone. There would be no cost to Ilminster Town Council, the insurance, safety checks, maintaince, upkeep and all other associated costs will be covered by Ilminster Sports Club Ltd. They do not have any issues with antisocial behaviour at the moment, they have CCTV installed that has been approved for use in a public area. The park would be available for the members of the community to use at all times. They haven't made a final decision on fencing.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the building of a play park in accordance with the design submitted to the meeting.

Proposer Cllr James **Seconded** Cllr Wilcock

1161

The Queens Platinum Jubilee celebrations

Members discussed the plans for the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations. Officers are to arrange a 2nd meeting with organisations to confirm what events are planned. Concerns were expressed if there was to be large events on the recreation ground would there be sufficient toilet facilities.

Members also expressed concerns that the route up to the Beacon was very overgrown making it difficult to access. Members were advised that officers are in contact with Dillington House over the lightening of the Beacon. It was suggested that New Road could be closed for the evening to allowed easier access.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to delegate authority to Officers to manage any applications for events on Council land in relation to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Proposer Cllr Jenner-Hurford **Seconded** Cllr Tinson

1162

SSDC Play Days

Members considered a request from SSDC Play Days to allow the annual event to take place on the recreation ground on Tuesday 16th August 2022.

Members commented that they have received very positive feedback from previous events. Young Somerset are also looking to join in the event.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to agree to the request for Play Days 2022 to take place and to delegate officers authority to manage any requests relating to this event.

Proposer Cllr Swann Seconded Cllr Shepherd

1163

Community Events

Members considered various community events planned for 2022 and whether to give delegated authority to Officers regarding these events. Discussions included if the events were significantly different to usual than Town Council should be consulted. How the delegated authority should last for. The Town Clerk advised members that all delegated authorities have to be reviewed annually. It was suggested that the scarecrow competition has a Jubilee theme.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to agree the request for the Christmas Festival, formerly Victorian Evening, 2022 to take place and to delegate to officers authority to manage any request relating to this event.

Proposer Cllr Swann Seconded Cllr Tinson

Members **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to officers to vary permissions for all aspects of the IMEX event 2022 where considered appropriate.

Proposer Cllr Wilcock Seconded Cllr Taylor

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to agree the request for Lawson All Human Circus to take place and to delegate to officers authority to manage any requests relating to this event.

Proposer Cllr Tinson Seconded Cllr Swann

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to delegate authority to officers to run the scarecrow competition 2022 and for any decisions related to it to be delegated to officers.

Proposer Cllr Tinson Seconded Cllr Swann

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to delegate authority to officers to help Ilminster Fairtrade to promote Fairtrade Fortnight commencing 21st February 2022.

Proposer Cllr Hamilton Seconded Cllr Wilcock

1164

Future of local Government in Somerset

Members **NOTED** the verbal updates from Cllr Keitch and the Town Clerk.

The new Unitary authority is a once in a lifetime opportunity to get it right for the people of Somerset. They can try and avoid the pit falls other authorities have made.

Whilst there is an election in May 2022 district council will still run until vesting day in April 2023. The focus is on making sure everything is safe and legal for April 2023, the finer details will come later. The setting up of the new Unitary authority is a drain on SSDC staffing levels.

There has been no decision made on the number of Planning Committees going forward.

Members discussed Town and District Councillors are used to dealing with various emails from the public concerning recycling, footpaths, overgrown hedges etc that County Councillors may not have experienced before.

There were concerns that some Councils may take on a lot of extra responsibility, some may take on a bit and some may take on nothing. There has been no update of whether there will be an extra funding for taking on extra responsibilities. What will happen in the future whilst taking on extra responsibilities is voluntary at the moment, but will they look to streamline the Councils and responsibilities in the future.

The Town Clerk updated members that we need to get the message out to local Parishes so they realise the impact that the Unitary authority will have on them.

1165

Exempt business

That in the view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advised in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded while members consider this item in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

Proposer Cllr Jenner-Hurford Seconded Cllr Hamilton

1166

Appoint an Internal Auditor

Members reviewed and discussed the quotes relating to appointing a new internal auditor.

Members **RESLOVED** unanimously to appoint IAC Audit and Consultancy Ltd as the Town Councils internal auditor for the next 3 years.

Proposer Cllr Swann Seconded Cllr Shepherd

Meeting ended 21.06

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