

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on
**23rd January 2024 at 19.30hrs, in the Council Chamber, Council Offices,
North Street, Ilminster, TA19 0DG**

Chair: Cllr L Taylor

Council: Cllr B Hamilton, Cllr M James, Cllr B Jenner-Hurford, Cllr I MacKillop, Cllr S Osborne, Cllr D Paul, Cllr P Sellers, Cllr S Shepherd, Cllr N Tinson.

Officers: J Earp (Deputy Clerk), V Freeman (Administration Officer)

In attendance: 2 members of the public present.

2023-0185-TC Public Forum

There were no members of public who wished to speak.

2023-0186-TC Apologies for Absence

Cllr M Gunn

Cllr A Shearman

Cllr V Keitch

Cllr J Karchud

The Clerk has confirmed that reasons have been provided.

2023-0187-TC Somerset Council Member's Reports

Members **NOTED** the Somerset Councillors reports.

2023-0188-TC Declarations of Interest

Cllr Taylor declared an interest in agenda item 17 Donation to the Library.

Cllr Hamilton declared a personal interest in agenda item 17 Donation to the Library and agenda item 19 Future Meeting Venue.

Cllr Shepherd declared an interest in agenda item 19 Future Meeting Venue.

Cllr Tinson declared an interest in agenda item 19 Future Meeting Venue.

Cllr Paul declared an interest in agenda item 19 Future Meeting Venue.

2023-0189-TC Dispensations

There were none requested or granted.

2023-0190-TC Minutes – Town Council

Members **RESOLVED** by 8 votes for that the Minutes from the meeting held on 19 December 2023 as a correct record.

Proposer Cllr Shepherd **Seconded** Cllr Tinson

2023-0191-TC Minutes – Planning, Highways and Transport

Members **NOTED** the Minutes from the meetings held on 5th December 2023 and 9th January 2024.

2023-0192-TC Minutes – Open Spaces

Members **NOTED** the Minutes from the meeting held on 5th December 2023.

2023-0193-TC Mayor/Deputy Mayor Reports

Members **NOTED** the Mayor and Deputy Mayors reports.

2023-0194-TC Police Report

No police report provided.

Members were asked to report any queries directly to officers.

Officers have received an email from Sergeant Karen Pattison to introduce herself as the new Neighbourhood Sergeant for the area and she will endeavour to attend a future meeting.

19.36 Cllr Osborne arrived.

2023-0195-TC Co-option

Mr Morris introduced himself and spoke about his experience and interests. Mr Morris asked Members questions around what the immediate priorities of the Council are and how the Town Council engages with the people of Ilminster.

Members were handed voting papers for a written anonymous vote.

The Deputy Clerk and Administration Officer counted the votes.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to appoint the candidate, Jonathan Morris as a co-opted Member of Ilminster Town Council and to allow him, upon signing the Declaration of the Acceptance of Office to assume his role on the Town Council.

Proposer Cllr Taylor **Seconded** Cllr Osborne

Cllr Morris signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Cllr Taylor welcomed Cllr Morris to Ilminster Town Council.

20.15 Cllr Morris left the meeting.

2023-0196-TC Grant Application

A representative from the Citizens Advice Somerset gave a presentation to Members. Members were advised that Citizens Advice Somerset currently have 117 volunteer advisors and they are in the process of recruiting more. There is a free advice line that is open 5 days and 3 evenings a week. If someone needs advice the best place to start is via the website and use either the virtual advisor, email or telephone number. Many enquiries can be resolved this way. If needed the advisor can arrange for a face to face appointment. It is possible to have an appointment in Ilminster.

Members discussed the application, discussions included could we look at a service level agreement (SLA) instead.

The representative advised Members that they have applied to all councils in Somerset and they have received a good response, some councils have agreed one off grants and others have put an SLA in place for up to 3 years.

A Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to suspend Financial Regulation 5.8 that limits the maximum amount of a grant that can be awarded for this grant application only.

Proposer Cllr James **Seconded** Cllr Tinson

AGENDA ITEM 6

B Members **RESOLVED unanimously** to award a grant of £1,200 to Citizens Advice Somerset to support the cost of providing advice, support and specialist casework enabling the people of Ilminster to plan and manage life events and change.

Proposer Cllr Hamilton **Seconded** Cllr James

2023-0197-TC **Quarterly Finance Report**

Members **NOTED** the report.

2023-0198-TC **Schedule of Payments**

A Members **RESOLVED** by 9 votes for and 1 abstention (Cllr Hamilton as the reconciler) to approve the payments for November and December 2023.

Proposer Cllr Jenner-Hurford **Seconded** Cllr Shepherd

B Members **RESOLVED** by 9 votes for and 1 abstention (Cllr Hamilton as the reconciler) to approve the completion of the bank reconciliation for November and December 2023 and note the account balances as of 31 December 2023.

Proposer Cllr Taylor **Seconded** Cllr Jenner-Hurford

2023-0199-TC **Neighbourhood Plan**

Members **NOTED** the report.

Members thanked Cllr Gunn for her report.

Cllr Osborne advised Members that Neighbourhood Plan's from other areas are currently being processed by Somerset Council.

2023-0200-TC **Grant Application**

Members discussed the application and noted that it was a retrospective grant application. Members were advised that the application was received after the Agenda had been published for the December Town Council meeting and it was added to this meeting as it was the next available meeting. Members have asked officers to write to the applicant to remind them any future grant applications need to be sent in advance of the event.

A. Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to suspend Financial Regulation 5.8 that limits the maximum amount of a grant that can be awarded for this grant application only.

Proposer Cllr Jenner-Hurford **Seconded** Cllr Taylor

B. Members **RESOLVED** by 9 votes for to approve the grant for £775 for Life Education Wessex and Thames Valley from the 2023-24 Grant budget.

Proposer Cllr Sellers **Seconded** Cllr Hamilton

2023-0201-TC **Donation to the Library**

Members discussed the request to give a £5000 donation to Ilminster Library. Discussions included should it be a grant, a subsidy or a Service Level Agreement, previous invoices have indicated the funds will be used for staff salaries, have we received confirmation that the funds will be used only for Ilminster Library, the grants policy needs to be reviewed, it is unusual to receive an unsolicited invoice, the original agreement in 2019 was only for 3 years, under the terms of our grant policy, grants can not be used for running costs.

AGENDA ITEM 6

Officers will contact Somerset Council to obtain further information.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to defer this Agenda item until the February Town Council meeting when further information is available.

Proposer Cllr Osborne **Seconded** Cllr MacKillop

2023-0202-TC Somerset NHS Wheelchair Service Improvement Board

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to nominate Cllr Stuart Shepherd to act as a council representative by attending meetings of the Somerset NHS Wheelchair Service Improvement Board and to provide the council with updates following those meetings.

Proposer Cllr Hamilton **Seconded** Cllr Sellers

2023-0203-TC Future Meeting Venue

Members discussed the proposed venues.

Discussions included there is free evening public parking opposite Muchelney House, the Arts Centre is a charity, some Members felt they would feel awkward and that they were invading Muchelney House residents space as it is their home, would all suggested venues provide the confidentiality required for Exempt Business, there can be no bar open or sale of alcohol during meetings, and should we consider using more than one venue.

A Members **RESOLVED** to delegate to officers to block book The Arts Centre for the calendar of scheduled meetings for Town Council from 1 April 2024.

Proposer Cllr Sellers **Seconded** Cllr MacKillop

B Members **RESOLVED** to delegate to officers to block book The Archie Gooch Pavilion for the calendar of scheduled meetings for Committee meetings from 1 April 2024.

Proposer Cllr Hamilton **Seconded** Cllr Jenner-Hurford

Meeting ended at 20.58