

Minutes of the **Town Council** meeting  
held in the Council Chamber, The Council Offices, North Street, Ilminster,  
on Tuesday 17 September 2019 starting at 19.30hrs

**Present:**

**Chair:** Cllr P Burton

**Councillors:** Cllr J Dewick, Cllr P Hamilton, Cllr V Higgins, Cllr V Keitch, Cllr I Mackillop,  
Cllr A Shearman, Cllr S Shepherd, Cllr R Swann, Cllr L Taylor, Cllr F White and  
Cllr L Wilcock.

**In Attendance**

Cty Cllr L Vijeh

Officers: Miss J Norris (Town Clerk)

Mrs M Covell (ECA Consultants)

4 members of the public attended the meeting

**Speaker 1**

The speaker started by saying that he was making the assumption that everyone present wished to take action to help mitigate climate change. Many Councils have declared a climate emergency, including South Somerset District Council and the speaker called upon the Town Council to declare the of a climate and ecological emergency. Following such a declaration the speaker continued that action would be needed and suggested that a complementary resolution should be made to implement the One Planet Principles for the planning, delivery and communication of our commitment to sustainability.

The Speaker then referred to having a a local plan to achieve carbon neutrality meaning any emissions would be balanced by schemes to offset an equivalent amount of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere, such as planting trees or using technology like carbon capture and storage and he suggested that the Town Council consider a third motion to strive towards Ilminster becoming carbon neutral by the year 2030. One way of working towards carbon neutrality is by the planting of new trees; the Ilminster Tree Project has started which aims to plant at least 7,000 trees in the next six months and has an eclectic membership. The speaker concluded with a request and suggested fourth motion that tee Town Council pledges £7,000 for tree-planting within Greater Ilminster during the next calendar year

Cllr Keitch requested the speaker to converse with her after the meeting so that she could put him in contact with the relevant South Somerset District Council Portfolio Holder

**673 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gunn and James

**674 Declarations of Interest**

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

**675 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on **16 July 2019** were considered.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.

**676 Office Action Plan**

The Office Action Plan relating to Town Council Meetings was considered:

Issues raised or discussed during consideration of this agenda item included:

- Cricket Club are considering a list of architects to do the design for a new pavilion
- Quality Award – a submission for this award is on hold until the new office staff have been recruited.

**RESOLVED** to note the Office Action Plan.

**677 Mayor's Announcements/Engagements**

- a) The Mayor went past cemetery on Saturday and the Community service workers were there so he stooped and spoke to them and they really appreciated that someone was taking an interest and was appreciative of the jobs they were doing.
- b) The Mayor's list of engagements between 10 July 2019 and 10 September 2019 had been circulated; the Mayor said that he had particularly enjoyed the Wadham School presentation evening where it had been lovely to hear about the young people's achievements.

**678 Police Report**

This agenda item provides an opportunity for the Police to report on any matters relevant to policing in Ilminster. There was no written Police report but the Town Clerk had seen PCSO John Martin that morning and there were no policing matters he wished to draw to the Town Council's attention. PCSO Hatchard has now been deployed to Chard.

**679 Reports from District Councillors**

Cllr Keitch gave a report regarding the District Council as Cllr Hamilton was unable to attend the meeting.

The report included the following information:

- Cllr Keitch is on the Board of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership who have sent the Local Industrial Strategy to Government for consideration and, hopefully, approval.
- The Local Plan review is on-going.
- Customer access points at Chard and Crewkerne are now open and the Chard Community Office has revised opening hours and is not open on a Wednesday.
- The Climate Change workshop was very popular and SSDC is also engaging with schools. A draft strategy is due for consideration at the October Council Meeting which will assist in taking work forward.
- The Area West Chapter of the Local Plan includes the topic of crime and community safety quite prominently.

## Agenda No 3B

- Cllr Keitch's portfolio includes 1 Team and PACT (Partners and Communities Together)
- Chard regeneration has planning permission for phase; demolition work will start soon and the first building to be constructed will be the leisure centre and swimming pool. The project has obtained some money under the Improving Town Centres initiative.
- Future of local government in Somerset group has changed its membership since the May elections. The Group have reviewed the work already completed and commissioned some additional work; one of the main principles is how the Councils will work together to deliver good services with shrinking budgets.
- Muslims in Yeovil are looking for a multi faith cemetery; SSDC Councillors will be visiting the mosque in Yeovil.
- Transformation is still progressing; there are problems with the planning department and the processing of planning applications is currently slow, nationwide it is very difficult to recruit professional planning staff. The commercial team are very active and the return on the investments of buying property have already exceeded the original targets.
- The local Ilminster advice centres held by the District Councillors are going well – there has been a recurring theme about the drummer on the Rec which has been referred to Chair of the Open Spaces Committee.
- The Fire Brigade are going to attend a SSDC meeting to talk about the current consultations.
- The CEO of St Margaret's Hospice will be attending a SSDC meeting to provide an update of the future of the hospice in Yeovil.
- Investment in "battery farm" meets both green energy and investment criteria There is a small legal matter to be resolved and then the units can be switched on; This will be one of the first facilities of its type in the UK.

Issues raised or discussed by Town Councillors during consideration of this agenda item included:

- Electric Charging Point for West Street Car Park - Cllr Keitch will find out the timetable and forward the information to the Town Council
- It has been reported on local radio that SSDC Investment projects have already exceeded expectations
- Why does Chard seem to get money from SSDC for projects but Ilminster doesn't? Cllr Keitch responded that SSDC did consider purchase of the former Gooch & Housego Premises but surveyors and professional advisors said that the anticipated return on investment did not make it a realistic and viable investment opportunity. A lot of the money for the Chard regeneration project will be grants from other organisations.
- Street Lighting – would it be possible to reduce the amount of electricity used by switching off street lights; an alternative view was put forward that street lighting was important in that it helped to prevent trips and falls and also improved perceptions about personal safety. The County Councillor said she would look into whether or not street lighting in Ilminster used energy efficient / LED units and if it was possible for lighting to be turned off at times when people were unlikely to be walking about the town.

**680 Report from the County Councillor for the Ilminster Division**

The County Councillor's reports for July and August had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The County Councillor reported that she had now received exceptional approval to use her allocation of the Improved Lives Fund for planting trees but she must be able to demonstrate clear community benefit.

Issues raised or discussed by Town Councillors during consideration of this agenda item included:

- Street Lights – There are 3 street lights regularly not working on The Mead - if they are going to be turned off it needs to be at times when people are not out and about
- When the lights were not working recently in Silver Street it was reported to a Councillor that local business lost money and female staff were concerned about their safety at going home time
- Ilminster Young Farmers have trees to give away
- Ilminster will not be affected by proposed fire service changes

**681 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies**

No reports were given from Representatives on Outside Bodies.

Issues raised or discussed during consideration of this agenda item included:

- Please circulate the list of representatives on outside bodies to Councillors to remind them of the organisations and their representatives.

**682 Update From Neighbourhood Plan Development Group**

Cllr Shepherd, Chair of the Development Group referred Councillors to the Group meeting notes circulated as part of the supporting papers for the Town Council meeting and said they were a diverse group of people working hard to produce a draft plan. Cllr Shepherd reminded the meeting of the forthcoming public workshop about site allocation.

**683 Update from Former Gooch and Housego Premises Working Group**

The Mayor reported on behalf of the Working Group that a structural survey and breakdown of costs to make the building watertight had been obtained. Other people have expressed interest in being involved and SPARK have attended a Working Group session to provide information on management structures which had generated an interest in the possibility of setting up a Community Interest Company. The Working Group are still collecting evidence for options for the Town Council to consider. Council will need to be realistic when it considers the options – there are some fantastic ideas about how the building could be used but Councillors will need to take into account all the resources that would be needed to make dreams a reality.

**684 Response to Consultation on The Local Plan Review**

Consideration was given to suggestions from the Neighbourhood Plan Development Group as to how the Town Council responds to the consultation on the Local Plan Review.

Issues raised or discussed during consideration of this agenda item included:

- The Development Group's input and expectation regarding the Town Council's response
- The Town Council's response should be sent on Town Council headed paper and be signed by the Town Clerk
- Section 3.1 of the draft letter Housing Growth South West of Canal Way, Ilminster - the outline planning permission for homes on this site has been approved
- Section 2.1 of the draft letter - the Town Council does not welcome the 839 homes proposed in Ilminster during the Local Plan period but reluctantly accepts the proposed number
- The draft letter was not circulated to Councillors in sufficient time before the meeting to enable thorough consideration
- Section 4.5 of the draft letter - there is no loss of employment land on the Station Road application site
- Section 6.1 of the draft letter - the bold reference which states "error...." needs to be corrected
- The Town Council has misgivings about the Canal Way development as stated in the comments made when the application was considered

### **RESOLVED**

- (I) that a request is made to South Somerset District Council for a 1 week extension to the response deadline
- (II) That Town Councillors are requested to let the Town Clerk have any comments by a date to be confirmed if and when the response extension time is granted
- (III) The Town Clerk to sign and send the Town Council's response following consultation with the Mayor, Chair of Planning, Highways and Transport Committee and the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Development Group.

### **685 Payments and Virements**

The Schedule of Payments was presented for Council's information.

Issues raised or discussed during consideration of this agenda item included:

- Beagle – is the brand / make of trousers recently purchased for member of the grounds maintenance team
- Is the amount of water rates paid for the Rec consistent with previous invoices?
- Cleaning standard of the toilets

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted

### **686 Archie Gooch Pavilion – Annual Landlord & Tenant Meeting**

Consideration was given as to which Councillors should represent the Town Council at the third annual landlord and tenant meeting (date to be arranged).

Issues raised or discussed during consideration of this agenda item included:

- Cllr James – volunteering to represent the Town Council at the landlord and tenant meeting was noted

**RESOLVED** that the Councillors to represent the Town Council at the annual landlord and tenant meeting regarding the Archie Gooch Pavilion are the Mayor, Deputy Mayor Chair of the Open Spaces Committee and Chair of the Resources Committee.

### 687 Strategic Plan 2019/20-2021/22 – Status Report

Consideration was given to the quarterly Status Report.

Issues raised or discussed during consideration of this agenda item included:

- The Ilminster market is bucking the trend compared to other local markets with regular traders and new traders making enquiries
- Often see queues at the market stalls
- Bus shelter on Orchard Vale has still to be progressed by the Town Clerk

**RESOLVED** that the status report, including the risks and mitigating actions are approved and noted

### 688 Community Events – Recyclable Cups

Consideration was given to a communication about the availability and use of recyclable cups at community events in Ilminster

Issues raised or discussed during consideration of this agenda item included:

- This may be starting point for community events becoming involved in more environmentally friendly practices
- many people do have their own cups

**RESOLVED** that the Town Council supports the concept of the purchase and use of recyclable cups at community events.

### 689 Clerk's Updates

The following Clerk's Updates have been sent by email since the last Town Council agenda was published and no questions were raised at the meeting.

Number	Date	Topics
8/19	16.07.19	1. Staffing
9/19	01.08.19	1. July PHT Committee – On Street Parking Presentation 2. Staff Vacancies
10/19	09.18.19	1. Draft Minutes Planning, Highways & Transport Committee 6 August 2019 2. Ilminster Flooding 3. Road Closure 4. Recruitment 5. Tractor
11/19	15.08.19	1. Assistant Grounds Manager 2. Agency Staff – Grounds Team.

		<b>3.</b> Temporary Road Closure – Station Road, West Street, High Street & Butts <b>4.</b> Gooch & Housego Working Group
12/19	20.08.19	<b>1.</b> Draft Minutes of Town Council 18 June 2019 <b>2.</b> Bullying and harassment
13/19	22.08.19	<b>1.</b> Canal <b>2.</b> Deputy Town Clerk Recruitment <b>3.</b> Admin Officer Recruitment
14/19	03.09.19	<b>1.</b> Grounds Staff <b>2.</b> Budget Workshop <b>3.</b> Special Town Council Meeting

**690 Exclusion of Press and Public**

Consideration was given to taking Agenda Item 18 Apologies for Absence from Cllr Hamilton without members of the public and press present, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted i.e. personal information.

**RESOLVED** that pursuant to the provisions of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for Agenda Item 18 Apologies for Absence from Cllr Hamilton by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted i.e. the disclosure of personal information

**691 Apologies for Absence from Cllr Hamilton**

Consideration was given to the acceptance of the reasons for apologies for absence until 31 January 2020 from Cllr Hamilton

Councillor Hamilton explained the nature of family circumstances which meant she may be unable to regularly attend Town Council meetings and Committee meetings until the end of January 2020

**RESOLVED** that Cllr Hamilton's apologies are accepted for meetings she is unable to attend until 31 January 2020.

**The meeting closed at 21:07hrs**