

Minutes of the Town Council remote meeting held via Skype, on **Tuesday 24th November 2020** starting at 19:30hrs

Present:

Chair: Cllr P Burton

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

In Attendance:

County Councillor Linda Vijeh

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

1 member of the public were in attendance.

Speaker 1

The speaker talked about the SCC Climate Emergency Fund Community Fund. It was explained that a request had been put to the Open Spaces Committee at their previous meeting for a project in connection with Powrmatic. The application would include the site clearance of 2 acres and a woodland area would be planted. The expected cost for the project is £10,000 and this is the grant that is being requested as part of the application. Somerset Wildlife Trust were supporting the application. The application has to be submitted by the Town Council so the speaker was looking for the Town Council's support. The item was being discussed at agenda item 17. The land being developed is on marginal land and it is never expected to be developed. It is expected to remain that way in perpetuity.

816 Apologies for Absence

Cllr R Swann provided his apologies.

817 Declarations of Interest

Councillors made Declarations of Interest as detailed in the table below:

Name	Agenda Item	Minute No	Nature of Interest	Type of Interest	Action
S Shepherd	22. Land at Canal Way	837	Trustee of Ilminster Educational Foundation	Prejudicial	Spoke when asked.

818 Minutes

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 15th September 2020.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15th September 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

819 Office Action Plan

Consideration was given to the Office Action Plan.
No comments or questions raised.

820 Police Report

Consideration was given to the police report received. The police report provided an update on policing in Ilminster. The written report was circulated ahead of the meeting. It was noted that the beat area for the team was much larger and included more parishes than previously. Confirmation was provided that the police were offering tools and bikes to be marked for free on 12th December in the Summervale Surgery car park. The point regarding the lights on the recreation ground were noted. It was reported that Crewkerne has had low level lighting installed and this could be an option and we may be able to obtain some grant funding for this.

RESOLVED for the Town Clerk to visit Crewkerne and view the lights installed and to research options for our open space.

821 Reports from District Councillors

Consideration was given to the District Councillors report received. Details were provided regarding the Covid 19 tier system and the E-Scooters that were now available to hire in Yeovil. A short discussion was also had regarding the land at Yeovil Town Football Club and the recent press release.

822 Report from the County Councillor for the Ilminster Division

Consideration was given to the report provided by the County Councillor for the Ilminster Division. No queries were raised and no additional comments were made.

823 Payments and Virements

Consideration was given to the report prepared by the RFO.
A query was raised regarding the higher electricity bill on the public conveniences. A suggestion was made to look at changing the lights to LED. The lights in the public conveniences are an ongoing issue as members of the public keep pushing them through the ceiling. The councillors will consider changing the lighting in that area.

824 External Audit 2019/20

Consideration was given to the External Audit report received for 2019/20. There was one notification that we did not fully comply with the exercise of public rights since the period of public rights was only 29 days and not 30 days. The RFO explained that due to Covid 19 the dates had moved and did not usually include a bank holiday. The bank holiday date was counted as part of the 30 days. Comments were made that it was a very good audit.

825 Market Town Investment Group

A discussion was had to confirm that the Town Council were working on an application which included the entrance path/slope into Wharf Lane which had been provisionally approved together with finger posts for the town centre and the five gateway signs into the town.

826 Youth Committee

Cllr Taylor provided a short update on the preparation of a Youth Committee. Discussions had taken place with Tom Tame regarding a youth programme for Ilminster. Ideas are also being looked into for a youth council and a youth worker. There were discussions that 13+ age group feel disengaged. A comment was made that the Town Council need to be mindful of the County Lines crisis and that we don't have the relevant skills to deal with this effectively. A line of communication is being set up with the current Youth Club.

827 Byelaws

Consideration was given to the current Byelaws and that they had not been reviewed since 2014. Byelaws should be regularly reviewed. A small group of Councillors have looked at the current Byelaws and have suggested some amendments using the current Ministry of Housing Model Byelaws. The current Byelaws prohibit bicycles. It was stated that if we are to look at a pump track on our land then the Byelaws would need to be amended first. It was mentioned that the Council need to look at signage to promote the Byelaws. The amendments required a detailed discussion.

RESOLVED to delay further discussions until the Town Council can meet face to face to discuss in detail.

828 2 East Street Survey report

Consideration was given to the survey report received from Alan Young.

RESOLVED to take no further action and not to pursue this property.

829 Neighbourhood Plan

An updated was provided on the current Neighbourhood Plan. The text of the plan will be presented at the next Town Council meeting with a view to moving to consultation on 1st February 2021. Leaflets will be prepared and distributed to the community. Committee are pushing forward with the plan.

830 Council meeting structure

Consideration was given to the current meeting structure. It was suggested that the full Town Council should meet more regularly rather than every two months. Meeting more regularly would be helpful for the public and will provide the opportunity to move matters forward more effectively for the town. Reference was made to the current situation with non face to face meetings and using Skype. It was recognised that it was not easy, especially as some of the Councillors were online all day for their jobs and then spending time in the evenings online. It was recorded that with Covid 19 meeting face to face was not going to happen soon. It was mentioned that the office spend most weeks getting an Agenda ready for the following week and in evening meetings at least once a week.

RESOLVED to change the meeting structure as follows:

Beginning of the month: Planning, Highways and Transport meeting followed by a Resources Committee meeting or an Open Spaces Committee meeting, alternating

each month. A full Town Council meeting to be held each month. Town Clerk will prepare an amended calendar for the next Full Town meeting in January 2021.

831 Badger Culling

Consideration was given to supporting South Somerset District Councils request to refuse badger culling on land owned by the Town Council to support the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (DEFRA) ambition to phase out the cull.

RESOLVED to support SSDC's motion to support Defra's ambition to phase out the badger cull in England.

832 SCC Climate Emergency Fund Community Fund

Consideration was given to the application received from Powrmatic for their Woodland Creation Project. The application is required to be submitted to Somerset County Council by the Town Council.

RESOLVED to support the application with a proviso that the Town Council receive a letter from the CEO or Estates Manager of Powrmatic that when the land was planted and the works completed that as long as Powrmatic remain at that site the land is planned to be maintained as such.

833 Clerks 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	Topic
6/20	25.09.20	Staff Update, Urgent Decision – Rotary Club of Ilminster, Playground Update, Police Report, Christmas Tree Festival, Badger Signage, One Somerset Survey, ISCL, 2 East Street, The Old Magistrates Court.
7/20	02.10.20	Staff, County Councillor Report, Drucers Barber, Remembrance Sunday, Vandalism, Climate Emergency, ISCL, Buggy, Playground Update.
8/20	15.10.20	Staff, Playground Update, Residents.
9/20	23.10.20	Staff, Playground Update, Urgent Decision – IEF, Grants, Remembrance.
10/20	30.10.20	Archie Gooch Pavilion, Ilminster Town Football Club, Halloween Competition, Barge, Budget Workshop, Cemetery Survey, Staff, Badger Culling, Redwood Travel.
11/20	06.11.20	Lockdown, Remembrance, Staff, IEF, Barge, Schools, Ilminster Division County/District Councillor monthly report – October 2020.

834 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 item 20 Magistrates Court, Agenda item 21 Hammerhead Land and Agenda item 22 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 20 Magistrates Court, Agenda item 21 Hammerhead Land and Agenda item 22 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.

835 Premises at East Street

Consideration was given to the premises in East Street. A general discussion was held regarding the building.

A vote was taken at this time to continue the meeting past 9:45.

RESOLVED to continue with the meeting.

836 Hammerhead Land

Consideration was given to the current costs for the land.

RESOLVED to continue with land acquisition.

837 Land at Canal Way

Details were given regarding a meeting held with the Ilminster Educational Foundation. A general discussion was held about the land and long term uses of the land. Councillors were reminded that if they wish to discuss further eight Councillors need to put in writing to the Town Clerk a request that the item is revisited and added to the Agenda..

The meeting closed at 22:18hrs.