

Minutes of the **Town Council** meeting
held in the Council Chamber. The Council Offices, North Street, Ilminster,
on Tuesday 12 June 2018 at 19.30hrs

Present:

Chair: Cllr J Fowler

Councillors: Cllr D Belobaba, Cllr J Dewick, Cllr J Fagan, Cllr M Gunn, Cllr M James,
Cllr V Keitch, Cllr I Mackillop, Cllr A Shearman, Cllr S Shepherd and
Cllr R Swann

In Attendance

Officers: Miss J Norris (Town Clerk) and Mrs D Speed (Deputy Town Clerk)

4 members of the public attended the meeting

471 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Burton and Walker.

472 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were made in respect of any items on the agenda.

473 Minutes

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2018 as a correct record

This item was deferred as the minutes had not been completed.

474 Police Report

There was no written police report nor were any police related matters raised.

475 Somerset County Council Library Consultation

Consideration was given to the Town Council's response to the Somerset County Council Library Consultation. The Mayor stressed that as yet the County Council had not made any decision regarding the future of the Ilminster library or any of those that were the subject of the consultation but it was prudent to make plans as to how the Ilminster Library could be managed if the County Council did decide it could no longer offer the existing level of service, hence attempts were being made to form a Friends of Ilminster Library Group and a meeting was scheduled for 14 June to elect a Chairman etc

Note: 19.35hrs The Mayor took the meeting out of session to enable members of the public to speak.

Speaker 1 said that they believed that the building currently used for the library had been gifted to the people of Ilminster for use as a library.

The Town Clerk responded that the Land Registry entry shows the property has been owned by Somerset County Council since 1957 and there do not appear to be any covenants relating to future ownership or use.

19:38 hrs the Mayor took the meeting back into formal session.

Agenda No 3b

Issues raised by councillors during debate and discussion included:

- the starting point should be that Somerset County Council should keep the library open and that the Town Council opposes any closure
- loss of the library would mean a loss of internet access especially for low income households
- benefits claims have to be made on-line - if internet access is not available at the library people would have expensive journeys to other towns to get the required internet access
- there is little if any public transport to towns where alternative internet access provision may be available
- The amount of money that the County Council is proposing to fund community options is a pittance
- the library is a hub for care workers and social workers to access on-line facilities
- the library is a fundamental focal point of the town
- the amount of non-literary use made of the library e.g. toddler groups seem to have been ignored
- the impact of the extensive new housing developments planned for Ilminster (which already have outline planning permission) seem to have been disregarded

RESOLVED

- (i) that Ilminster Town Council strongly opposes a closure of the public library and the subsequent loss of amenities for the community
- (ii) that the Town Council feels that any decision to limit the library service in Ilminster is very short sighted given the proposed housing developments in the town over the next few years
- (iii) Should Somerset County Council decide in October that Ilminster library is to close the Town Council will support the Friends of Ilminster Library in finding alternative options for keeping the library open

The meeting closed at 19:51hrs