

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on
20th February 2024 at 19.30hrs, in the **Council Chamber, Council Offices,
North Street, Ilminster, TA19 0DG**

Chair: Cllr L Taylor

Committee: Cllr B Hamilton, Cllr B Jenner-Hurford, Cllr I MacKillop, Cllr J Karchud,
Cllr S Osborne, Cllr P Sellers, Cllr S Shepherd, Cllr N Tinson, Cllr J Morris

Officers: M Tredwin (Town Clerk), J Earp (Deputy Clerk)

In attendance: No members of public present.

2023-0204-TC Public Forum

There were no members of public who wished to speak.

2023-0205-TC Apologies for Absence

Cllr A Shearman
Cllr M James
Cllr V Keitch
Cllr M Gunn
Cllr D Paul

The Clerk has confirmed that reasons have been provided.

2023-0206-TC Somerset Council Member's Reports

Members **NOTED** the Somerset Councillors reports.

2023-0207-TC Declarations of Interest

Cllr Shepherd – Agenda items 13 Schedule of Charges, and Agenda item 22
IEF Lease on recreation ground.
Cllr Osborne – Agenda item 21 Somerset Council Update

2023-0208-TC Dispensations

There were none requested or granted.

2023-0209-TC Minutes – Town Council

Members **RESOLVED** by that the Minutes from the meeting held on 23
January 2024 as a correct record.

Proposer Cllr Taylor **Seconded** Cllr Sellers

2023-0210-TC Minutes – Planning, Highways and Transport

Members **NOTED** the Minutes from the meeting held on 6th February 2024.

2023-0211-TC Minutes – Open Spaces

Members **NOTED** the Minutes from the meeting held on 6th February 2024. The Schedule of Charges 2024/25 are discussed under Agenda item 13.

23-0071-OS Cemetery Rules

Members resolved unanimously to RECOMMEND to Full Council to agree the amendments for the Cemetery Rules & Regulations as proposed in the General Rules & Regulations, and the Funeral Directors Rules & Regulations, to be introduced with immediate effect.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to agree the amendments for the Cemetery Rules & Regulations as proposed in the General Rules & Regulations, and the Funeral Directors Rules & Regulations, to be introduced with immediate effect.

Proposer Cllr Jenner-Hurford **Seconded** Cllr Sellers

2023-212-TC Mayor/Deputy Mayor Reports

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

2023-0213-TC Police Report

No police report provided.

Members were asked to report any queries directly to officers.

2023-0214-TC Income and Expenditure Report

The RFO reported that an underspend was likely by the end of March. A question arose asking what happens to underspent funds at the end of the financial year. The response was that any underspent funds are either moved to General Reserves or Earmarked Reserves as had been shown at the budget meeting in November 2023.

Members **NOTED** the report.

2023-0215-TC Schedule of Payments

A Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the payments for January 2024.

Proposer Cllr Shepherd **Seconded** Cllr Tinson

B Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the completion of the bank reconciliation for January 2024 and note the account balances as of 31 January 2024.

Proposer Cllr Shepherd **Seconded** Cllr Tinson

2023-0216-TC Schedule of Charges 2024/25

23-0069-OS Schedule of Charges 2024/25

A Members resolved by 5 votes for and 1 abstention (Cllr Shepherd) to RECOMMEND to Full Council to increase the pitch fee charges for 2024/25 by 7.8% as per Option 2 in Appendix 9C from 1st April 2024.

Discussion included the inflation percentage discussion at the Recreation Ground Users Group (5%) which was recommended to the Open Spaces Committee. The Open Spaces Committee agreed to the average between the September 2023 CPI rate (6.9%) and RPI rate (8.9%) which was 7.8%.

Members **RESOLVED** by 9 votes for and 1 abstention (Cllr Shepherd) to approve the proposed Schedule of Charges outlined in Appendix 13B with an inflation figure of 7.8% for cemetery fees and pitch fees.

Proposer Cllr Sellers **Seconded** Cllr Tinson

2023-0217-TC Calendar of Events for 2024/25

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to agree the events listed in the report to Full Council and appended calendar of events for the period from April 2024 – December 2024.

Proposer Cllr Tinson **Seconded** Cllr Karchud

2023-0218-TC Review of Risk Management Policy

A Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Financial Risk Register as presented.

Proposer Cllr Taylor **Seconded** Cllr Sellers

B Members **RESOLVED** to accept the Statement of Internal Control as presented.

Proposer Cllr Hamilton **Seconded** Cllr Shepherd

C Members **NOTED** the Risk Management requirements as laid out in Sections 17.1 and 17.2 of the Financial Regulations (Approved May 2023).

2023-0219-TC Disposal of chemicals

Due to receiving new information, this was removed from the agenda prior to the meeting. Further investigation is underway into the possibility of staff training.

2023-0220-TC Grant application

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the grant for £359 for Harlequin Carnival Club from the 2023-24 Grant budget.

Proposer Cllr Tinson **Seconded** Cllr Karchud

2023-0221-TC Library Grant

Discussion included the extra hours per week for the additional activities. Officers could investigate the possibility of a Service Level Agreement with the Somerset Libraries. To set aside on a separate line, £5,000 in the budget for this purpose.

Members **RESOLVED** to suspend Financial Regulation s.5.8 as the amount was higher than the grant maximum.

Proposer Cllr Hamilton **Seconded** Cllr Shepherd

Members **RESOLVED** 9 votes for and 1 abstention (Cllr Osborne) to agree to a grant of £5,000 contribution towards the Ilminster Library for 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.

Proposer Cllr Sellers **Seconded** Cllr MacKillop

2023-0222-TC Accept a grant towards a replacement noticeboard

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the grant Terms and Conditions for replacement noticeboards dated the 19 January 2024.

Proposer Cllr Hamilton **Seconded** Cllr Taylor

2023-0223-TC Ilminster Town Council's 50th Birthday

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to form a working group of four councillors to discuss and provide options to commemorate the occasion of the Town Council's 50th Birthday and bring their plans to the next Town Council meeting to be held on 19 March 2024. The four councillors are Cllr Shepherd, Cllr MacKillop, Cllr Osborne and Cllr Jenner-Hurford.

Proposer Cllr Shepherd **Seconded** Cllr Taylor

2023-0224-TC Somerset Council Update

The Town Clerk provided an update from the Somerset Council Budget Meeting held earlier on this day. Somerset Council approved their budget, the Highways cuts had been postponed for 12 months, any planned reduction in services had been scaled back, £600K had been allocated for the transition to town/parish councils, however the funds remain with Somerset Council. Any legal costs would be picked up by town/parish councils. Somerset Council were looking at a 20% reduction in their workforce. Ilminster Town Council have been working with Crewkerne Town Council to find solutions, and it was the Town Clerk's opinion that the town/parish councils had been given a rough deal and treated badly by Somerset Council.

Further discussions included being aware of threats but seek out the opportunities that may arise. The legal fees associated with small parcels of land could be significant. The possibility of paying for a retained solicitor.

Members **RESOLVED** to delegate officers 9 votes for, 1 abstention (Cllr Osborne):

- a) To notify Somerset Council that ITC are extremely unhappy that city, town and parish councils are being asked to take over assets and services without financial support being provided to those for whom legal costs and due diligence costs are likely to be wholly disproportionate to their precept.
- b) To establish the areas for entering into SLA's for the maintenance of areas as opposed to taking over ownerships with SC. This to include verges, hedgerows and other green areas.
- c) To discuss the short-term arrangements for interim grass cutting and then the long term plans for land currently cut in Ilminster by Somerset Council.
- d) To negotiate future plans regarding what changes are to take place in respect of drains and pot gully maintenance and clearance. To also establish frequency of street cleaning and level of service that will be carried out in the coming years.
- e) To establish what highways training will be available for Ilminster staff to enable them to take on the duties on behalf of Somerset Council.

f) To vire £6,000 from the Earmarked Reserves allocated in the 2024/25 budget for the Tuckshop/toilets refurbishment to cover the cleaning of the Toilets outside Tesco. Officers then to establish the implications if the lease is transferred to the Town Council.

g) To produce a report detailing the costs and implications of dog and street bin emptying over the next year following meetings with Somerset Council.

h) To work with Somerset Council officers to establish the possible transfer of the two playgrounds at Greenfylde and Blackdown play parks. Details to then be brought back to Members for their consideration.

Proposed: Cllr Taylor **Seconded:** Cllr MacKillop

2023-0225-TC Exempt Business

That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable 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.

Proposed: Cllr Taylor **Seconded:** Cllr MacKillop

2023-0226-TC Cemetery Lodge

Members received an update from the Cemetery Working Group. Difficult decisions need to be made.

Members **RESOLVED** to delegate officers unanimously to source quotes to have the Cemetery Lodge's septic tank upgraded to a modern sewage treatment plant.

Proposed: Cllr Taylor **Seconded:** Cllr MacKillop

Members **RESOLVED** to delegate officers 9 votes for, 1 abstention (Cllr Morris) to complete the actions stated in the Cemetery Working Group's report Option 1.

Proposed: Cllr Shepherd **Seconded:** Cllr MacKillop

2023-0227-TC Staff Update

Members **NOTED** the report.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to appoint the three new members of staff.

Proposed: Cllr Hamilton **Seconded:** Cllr Jenner-Hurford

Cllr Shepherd left the meeting.

2023-0228-TC IEF Lease of Recreation Ground

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to agree the lease and management agreement relating to the land owned by the IEF.

Proposed: Cllr Jenner-Hurford **Seconded:** Cllr Sellers

Meeting ended at 21.22

